

resumption of the old line of communication between Europe and the Pacific, can restore their former prosperity, and develop the latent resources of their beautiful country; and they are prepared to make every exertion to secure so desirable an object.

Had the line of steamers above suggested been now in operation, it is obvious that the present French blockade of the Atlantic ports of Mexico could have been counteracted, by sending the cargoes of vessels warned off, to Chagres, across to Panama, and thence to the Mexican ports of the Pacific.

In conclusion, I may state that I understand proposals for steam navigation on the Atlantic ports have been submitted to the Mexican government by a firm of great standing in that country and in London, and that a favourable answer is expected by the first packet.

## III.

## EXTRACTS.

## I.

PANAMA AND THE PACIFIC. A MEMORANDUM SENT TO THE FOREIGN OFFICE, ON THE ADVANTAGE OF USING THE ISTHMUS OF PANAMA AS A MORE RAPID MEANS OF COMMUNICATION BETWEEN EUROPE AND THE PORTS OF THE PACIFIC OCEAN. BY THE HON. P. CAMPBELL SCARLETT.

In passing within the last few months down the coast of South America, on the Pacific side, from Valparaiso, through Lima to Payta, in the neighbourhood of Guayaquil, and to Panama, and from thence to the Atlantic Ocean across the Isthmus of Darien, I had occasion to observe the truth of representations frequently made to me, by British merchants in those settlements; how much shorter, and more certain might be the communication of intelligence from those places to England by that route, than by the passage round Cape Horn. That passage in merchant vessels to and from England direct, averages

	DAYS.
For Valparaiso .....	100
.. Lima .....	110
.. Guayaquil .....	120

a length of time, which is not only inconvenient for commercial objects, but which in some degree, cuts off the British settler from correspondence with his friends and family, and unnecessarily pro-

longs the period of receiving such intelligence as the British consuls in those quarters, may find it expedient to convey to the government. Whereas the passage by Panama might, with ease, be effected in the following periods:

	DAYS.
From Valparaiso .....	62
.. Lima .....	51
.. Guayaquil .....	46
as the following details will show:	
From Valparaiso to Lima .....	11
.. Lima to Payta or Guayaquil .....	5
.. Payta to Panama .....	10
Across the Isthmus .....	1
Thence to England, touching at one of the Windward Islands .....	35
Making in the whole .....	62*

Taking Lima as a central position, by this calculation, it appears that the difference of time in conveying correspondence from the western coast of South America to England, may be thus stated:

	DAYS.
From Lima by Cape Horn .....	110
.. .. Panama .....	51
Difference of time in favour of the route by the West Indies .....	59

The passage from Panama to Chagres is perfectly easy, being only twenty-one miles by land, and the remainder by a river, safe and navigable for boats and canoes. This was the route by which the several towns and provinces on the Pacific Ocean made their communications with Europe, before the separation of the Colonies from Spain; but the frequent revolutions which have taken place in South America, and the consequent poverty and want of enterprise in the Spanish part of the population, seem to have put a stop to the regular and periodical communications between these places, which were formerly established by public authority.

\* This is unnecessarily long. The journey, by way of the isthmus has been accomplished from Lima to Liverpool in 46 days.

This communication might be very easily effected by the addition of a few small fast-sailing vessels of war, or steamers, which should make periodical visits to the towns I have mentioned.

The advantage of a direct communication between Panama and the West Indies, has already been felt and obtained by the practice of the admiral on the West India station, who is accustomed to despatch a sailing vessel of war, at stated periods, to Chagres, in order to bring official and other correspondence, as well as specie, from the Pacific coast of South America.

I am the more induced to make these representations from a conversation I had with Commodore Mason, in which he expressed his concern, that he had not adequate force under his control, to give protection to British commerce on the South American shore of the Pacific, and his confidence in the opinion, which has been much confirmed by my own observation, as well as by the report of others, more competent than myself, that such commerce has a tendency to increase if duly protected; and that if vessels of war were more frequently enabled to visit the various ports on the coast from Valparaiso to Panama, better security would be afforded to the British merchants against the revolutions, to which the property of all persons resident on those shores is so often exposed, from the feebleness of the governments and the successive changes, which are the consequence of that weakness.

The establishment of steam-boats would render the return of correspondence, against the prevailing southerly winds, of equal rapidity. The trade-winds are not violent in that sea, and men-of-war, in particular, have generally made passages down the coast with great despatch; however, the introduction of steam navigation in the West Indies, having already shown that merchant sailing vessels are disposed to carry sufficient coal in ballast, for the supply of fuel; it is equally obvious that the same facilities might be afforded to carry out coal to the Pacific coast, until such time as, from its raised value and the increased demand for it, the inhabitants of those regions may think it worth their while to work the veins of coal, which are well known to exist at various places on the western coast.\*

London, Sept. 6, 1835.

\* South America and Pacific. Lond. 1838. Vol. II. p. 281.

## II.

EXTRACT FROM "STATEMENTS AND DOCUMENTS RELATIVE TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF STEAM NAVIGATION IN THE PACIFIC." BY WILLIAM WHEELWRIGHT, ESQ.

THE establishment of steam navigation along the shores of the Pacific Ocean, in connexion with the passage of the Isthmus of Panama to the Atlantic, has long excited much interest, and this has been more strongly manifested as the commerce and intercourse with those countries have increased.

In consequence of instructions from the British Government, addressed to the British Consuls General in Chile and Peru, directing them to inquire into the best means of establishing a communication between Great Britain and the Western Coasts of South America, by way of the Isthmus, public meetings of the British and Foreign merchants were convened for this object. At these meetings in Chile and Peru, the Consuls General presided, and committees were appointed to examine my plans and statements, which, after the fullest investigation, were unanimously approved of, and sanctioned at subsequent general meetings.

The subject of steam navigation in the Pacific, has occupied my attention for the last four years; and that I have carefully considered it, the extent and minuteness of my calculations will I trust prove. The feasibility of the proposed plan, and the authenticity of the facts upon which I have based my expectations of success, have been established by the reports of the committees appointed to inquire into them; and, large as the anticipated profits of this undertaking may appear to those not intimately acquainted with the local peculiarities of the Pacific States, I will nevertheless assume that the correctness of my statements will be generally admitted, supported as they are by the evidence of disinterested parties whose probity, as well as practical knowledge of the subject, is the best assurance that my data have been fully and fairly examined.

Her Majesty's Government considering the advantages that must accrue to the trade of this country with the Pacific, and to commerce in general, by the establishment of a more prompt communication, has deemed the undertaking entitled to its support, and conferred on the Pacific Steam Navigation Company a Royal

Charter: and as these advantages will be common to all nations, it is only reasonable to look for the friendly disposition of other Governments.

The Governments of the Pacific States equally impressed with the benefits that must result from the Establishment of a rapid communication along their shores, as tending to increase their commerce and improve the political and moral condition of society, have materially assisted in furthering this object, by granting to the undertaking for a term of years, exclusive and valuable privileges for the navigation of their coasts.

It will be seen by the Prospectus, that Her Majesty's Government has determined on the early establishment of steam-packets to the West Indies, which, with the co-operation of steam navigation in the Pacific, will reduce the communication between Great Britain and the coasts of Peru and Chile, from a period of four months, to one of thirty or forty days.

This accelerated and easy communication must naturally tend to an increased intercourse, and a more extended trade with the west coast of South America. The uncertainty and fluctuations which at present attend all mercantile operations with those now distant markets, will in a great degree be obviated by the means of transmitting frequent and regular advice; while the returns for shipments will be available three or four months earlier than they are under present circumstances.

Specie and bullion are constantly remitted, and that with ease and security by the Isthmus of Panama; the means of transporting goods are likewise abundant, and the whole have been exempted from transit duty by a late decree of the Congress of New Grenada. The Directors, being satisfied that whatever tends to facilitate the commerce of the west coast must materially benefit the Company, have in contemplation a plan for insuring all property shipped in their vessels, if it be desired; by which means bills of lading will at once become available and transferable documents. Thus the proposed undertaking is of the greatest importance to the merchant and manufacturer whose commercial operations are directed to the Pacific; their property will be placed more within their own control, and on a footing of greater security; while the facilities extended to trade cannot fail to give it a new impulse, to increase its importance and eventually to produce a greater demand for British manufactures.

The local trade, also, would derive great advantages from an accelerated communication between the several ports in the Pacific. Owing to the present irregularity of advices, vessels are often indefinitely detained at the different ports of the Coast; and from the same cause no changes in markets can be beneficially and mutually acted upon. By steam, a regular interchange of advices would be established every fifteen days, and many voyages would be performed in forty or fifty hours, which now occupy twenty or twenty-five days.

There are other interests in South America, of too important a character to be lost sight of, and which must reap the benefit of any measure that tends to the development and improvement of the resources of that country. To the different States, loans to the amount of millions of British capital have been made, for which no return has been received; nor, till an amelioration of their domestic and international affairs be brought about, can any such be expected. One great cause of the political instability of the South American governments, is the absence of prompt communication, by which the efforts of the executive to suppress rebellion are constantly frustrated. The difficulties of journeys by land, and the uncertainty of voyages by sailing-vessels, impede that regular and rapid intercourse which steam navigation alone can supply,—an intercourse essential to the well-being and advancement of those countries. The effect of it would be, to strengthen the executive authorities, to promote the industry of the people, and to contribute to an improved state of public and private credit.

The accompanying letter of Captain Fitz Roy, of Her Majesty's Navy, corroborates also a very important fact, as regards the accelerated and easy communication which can be effected between the Pacific coast, Australia, New Zealand, and the various islands in that ocean. By traversing the Isthmus of Darien, the long and turbulent passage round Cape Horn would be avoided, and the period of four months, now occupied in performing the voyage from Europe to those distant parts of the world, would be reduced to about sixty or seventy days. This is an interesting point as relates to the civilization of the inhabitants of the numerous islands of the Pacific, to which the Missionary Societies have, for a considerable time past, been directing much of their attention. A tedious and painful voyage will be exchanged for one of comparative ease; and

the difficulty of access, which now so much obstructs their labours, will be greatly diminished.

While the important and interesting colony of Australia will be so greatly benefitted by the establishment of steam navigation in the Pacific, its influence over the immediate as well as the more remote sections of the British empire must not be overlooked. The island of Jamaica will once more become an entrepôt of supplies for the northern ports of the Pacific, and, to a great extent, be enabled to resume that lucrative trade by which her prosperity was formerly so much promoted.

There is no difficulty in crossing the Isthmus of Panama. The journey from the Pacific to the Atlantic, is easily effected in eighteen hours, while the return occupies two days. By the proposed line of road, from Panama to the junction of the rivers Trinidad and Chagrès, to which point steamers of from four to five hundred tons may navigate without difficulty, the whole journey across could be accomplished in eight or ten hours.

Having in the course of the preceding observations endeavoured to prove the great benefits which must accrue from the establishment of steam navigation on the waters of the Pacific, I have now to show that the means and facilities for carrying it into operation are amply sufficient.

Coal exists in Chile in great abundance, and is obtainable at a very cheap rate; it may also be had from England at a moderate price; while the nature of the trade between the west coast and Australia, would ensure an abundant and cheap supply from that colony in case of need.

The increasing trade of England with the west coast, is the best proof of the security which is there afforded to commerce. If the merchant and manufacturer whose goods are often deposited for lengthened periods in the public custom-houses, and frequently sent to the interior on long credits, enjoy a security which enables them to repeat and gradually to increase their shipments, how much greater security will be afforded to the company, whose vessels will sail under the British flag, be under the protection of a British squadron, and possess the special guarantee of the separate local governments.

The means of repairing vessels are abundant. Guayaquil is an excellent arsenal, and particularly favourable for the repair of steam-