

I here use the word *resumption* deliberately; for, from the era of Columbus (1502) down to 1824, that line was the high road between Spain and her colonies, along the West coast, not only for Spanish settlers and merchants, but for whole cargoes of goods and regiments of soldiers. The famous Vasco Nunes de Balbao, so early as 1513, crossed the isthmus, with troops, from his settlement of Santa Maria del Darien, to the Gulf of San Miguel, S. E. of Panama; and the latter, eleven years afterward, viz. in 1524, had already become a city of sufficient importance to have a governor, and to furnish to Francisco Pizarro, Diego Almagro, and Fernando Luque, the men, arms, and ships with which they proceeded to the conquest of Peru. Soon afterward, it became the seat of a Royal "Audiencia," and, until the suppression of the Spanish galleons, and the opening of the free trade, was the grand emporium of all the merchandise from Spain, destined for the southern coast of New Granada and Peru, and the northern ports of Guatemala. During the late war of Independence in Peru, several regiments from Spain were sent up the Chagres to Panama, and from thence, by transports, to Peru; and it was by the same course, that Cruz Mourgeon—the last Vice-king appointed by Spain for New Granada—passed, with his forces, in 1822. The history of the Buccaneers proves that, as early as the days of Queen Elizabeth, our own piratical countrymen, and other lawless inhabitants of the West Indies, were quite familiar with this route, which they passed and repassed at pleasure; and until the trade with the Pacific, by Cape Horn, became open to our own merchants, they supplied the wants of the Spanish colonists on the Pacific coasts, through Jamaica, by the same channel. It is therefore clear, that in *resuming* that old line of communication, without the aid of either Railroad or Canal, (though doubtless either of these would greatly facilitate the transport of passengers and goods,) the Pacific Steam Navigation Company makes no new or dangerous experiment. A British merchant, then sailing on board the vessel whose course is given in the map attached to the present work, so recently as 1824, took on board in Panama and carried to San Blas, a thousand bales of goods, bought and packed in Jamaica, and which had been conveyed across the isthmus, by the way indicated. The expenses on each bale placed in Panama were seven dollars three rials, and consisted of the following items, viz.:

	Dolls.	Rials.
Freight on each bale from Jamaica to Chagres, - - -	2	0
Agency at Chagres, - - - - -	0	4
Freight per canoe from Chagres to Cruces, - - -	1	5
Duty of Deposit in Cruces, - - - - -	0	4
Agency, - - - - -	0	2
Mule-hire from Cruces to Panama (7 leagues), - - -	2	4
In all, - - - - -	7	3

on each bale of about 150 lbs. weight. The canoes on the Chagres are large enough to take eighty of these bales at once; have "Toldos," (a kind of awning, made of cane and palm leaves, impervious to the sun and rain,) are quite safe, and managed, with great adroitness, by negro watermen remarkable for their size and strength.

It would require some nicety of calculation, to enable me to institute an exact comparison between these charges, and those on the same goods carried round by Cape Horn. I am inclined to think, that on goods outward the latter would be the cheapest route; but, on lace, fine linens, silks, and jewelry, the additional expense could not be sensibly felt; and where the object is to be *first* in a market; in the time of war, to save risk; and at all times, to save interest of money, the

Panama and Chagres route—even as it was in 1824, and is now—must be the preferable one, both as regards the above description of goods outward, and bullion, specie, cochineal, and indigo homeward.

Besides the seven dollars three rials above mentioned, I may state that, in 1824, the transit duties levied in Panama were three dollars two rials on each bale; but by a late decree of the government of New Granada, all the transit duties have been abolished, so that, perhaps, at this moment, the whole charges may not exceed six dollars per bale, from Jamaica to Panama. I lately conversed with an intelligent Havana merchant, D. R. Clarke, Esq., now in London, who has been six voyages from Jamaica (backward and forward) to Panama: he never incurred the smallest loss or risk either from the river, the road, the natives, or the climate; but to avoid delay, he thinks that a tram railroad,\* either from the junction of the Trinidad with the Chagres to Panama, or from Portobello to Panama, would be of great use, easily made, and cheaply supported. Perhaps the former would be preferable, on account of the dangerous fevers which prevail in Portobello, but not on the Chagres.

The above remarks are made, presuming that Her Majesty's government establishes a line of steamers through the West Indies as far as to Chagres, and that the Pacific Steam Navigation Company take the passengers and goods up at Panama, in the Pacific, carrying them thence, on their way south and north, without delay; for the reader will find that a vessel (a fast-sailing schooner, of the class known under the designation of "*Clipper*") took thirty-two days in sailing from Panama to San Blas, a voyage which, by a steamer proceeding direct, might be accomplished in nine days. A dull sailing vessel would have taken perhaps sixty days, or more, to perform the same voyage, from the extreme difficulty of sailing out to the westward from Panama Bay, in consequence of calms, alternating with squalls from all directions, and the struggle she would have to maintain, in proceeding along the coasts of Central America and Mexico, against opposing winds and currents. The same "*clipper*" (though to go eleven and eleven-and-a-half knots per hour, was not unusual with her,) took twelve days on her voyage from Valparaiso, in sailing from the Equator to Panama. I mention these apparently uninteresting minutiae, to establish the important facts, that even were such a canal made as the author of "*California*" recommends, without steamers ready at Panama (as the Pacific Steam Navigation Company proposes to have them,) to carry on, at once, goods and passengers northward and southward, little advantage would be gained, as regards ports to the southward of Payta, or northward of Manzanillo, on the coast of Mexico. The saving of time would not be very great, and the expense, *allowing for tolls on the canal*, would, I fear, not be much less, than by the voyage round Cape Horn.

I do not think that steamers from Panama northward, would pay the owners farther than San Blas or Mazatlan: were, indeed, the tide of emigration setting strongly to California or the settlements on the Columbia River, occasional trips *might* be made *so far*, profitably; but as for Wahoo, Jedo, Canton, and other places named in the calculations above given, steamers from Panama to them will never pay, until in the progress of discovery, the expenses of steamers are brought down more nearly to a level with those of sailing vessels. If ever this desirable event be realized, the ideas here thrown out will assume a practical importance; and it will behoove Great Britain, as queen of the sea, to maintain by *steam* the same naval character which she has earned by *canvas*. The Isthmus of Panama will then become a point of very great importance.

\* I mean a road with rails, where the carriages and wagons are dragged by horses and mules, both of which abound and are cheap in the Isthmus.



The author of "California" hints the possibility that the Isthmus might be ceded to some European State: if it ever should be so ceded, the nation holding it will acquire an immense influence and power over the communications of the world, (supposing the above improvements in steam,) with a territory well-wooded, well-watered, fertile in the extreme, rich in gold and pearl fisheries, capable of supporting a numerous population, and not, by any means, generally unhealthy; while the inhabitants will acquire that wealth and prosperity, which the advantages of their situation secure to them. But even allowing—as is most probable—that New Granada will continue to retain its sovereignty over the Isthmus, there is nothing in the history or character of that Republic which can justify our fears that it will not religiously maintain its stipulations in favor of the route across to Panama. Of all the South American Republics, New Granada has shown the greatest respect to public faith; and the Hurtados, the Arossamenas, the Gomezes, the Quezadas, the Paredeses, and other respectable inhabitants of Panama, are too much alive to the continuance and improvement of the *old overland intercourse*, whereby their city has flourished, not to protest against any injurious imposts, or prejudicial interference. I believe that hitherto, no passenger nor merchant travelling across to Panama, can justly complain of any outrage, either to his person or property, from either the local authorities, or from individuals. They are all aware, that nothing short of the 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 favorable answer is expected by the first packet.

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 neighborhood 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 prolongs 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 favor 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.

The following table demonstrates that a vessel, sailing from England, and doubling the Cape of Good Hope, has to sail as follows:

I. 1st, for Ceylon, - - - - -	10,760 miles (geographical).
2nd, for Calcutta, - - - - -	12,770 "
3rd, for Port Jackson, - - - - -	16,950 "
4th, for Canton, - - - - -	16,700 " without touching at the Indies.
5th, for Panama, - - - - -	24,140 "

II. That the same sailing from England, and doubling Cape Horn, will be:

1st, for Valparaiso, - - - - -	10,840 miles.
2nd, for Panama, - - - - -	15,716 "
3rd, for Canton, - - - - -	23,156 "
4th, for Ceylon, - - - - -	26,616 "
5th, for Port Jackson, - - - - -	20,840 "

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



III. That the same vessel, sailing from England, and passing through the canal at the Isthmus of Darien, will have to sail only:

1st, from Europe to Panama,	- - - -	4,171 miles.
2nd, " Canton,	- - - -	11,612 "
3rd, " Valparaiso,	- - - -	9,048 "
4th, " Port Jackson, and Hobart-town,	- - - -	11,530 "
5th, " Ceylon,	- - - -	15,072 "

## COMPARATIVE TABLE.

	By Cape of Good Hope.	By Cape Horn.	By Panama Canal.
To Ceylon, -	10,760	26,616	15,072
To Port Jackson, -	16,650	10,840	11,536
To Canton, -	20,970 (touching at Calcutta.)	-	-
" -	16,700	23,156	11,612
To Panama, -	24,140	15,716	4,171
To Valparaiso, -	25,950	10,840	9,048
To Lima, -	26,200	12,936	6,952

I. Distances, in a right line, of the principal stopping-places for steamships, departing from Falmouth, by the Cape of Good Hope, in India, Sumatra, China, Australasia, Islands of Owhayi and Otaheite, and upon the Western Coast of America:

From	To	Geographical miles.	Total.
Falmouth -	Canary Isles, -	1,860	-
Canary Isles -	Cape Verd, -	840	-
Cape Verd -	Ascension Isles, -	1,210	-
Ascension Isles -	St. Helena, -	720	-
St. Helena -	Cape of Good Hope, -	1,740	6,400
Cape of Good Hope -	Cape of Aquilles, -	720	-
Cape of Aquilles -	Isle of France -	1,820	-
Isle of France -	Ceylon, -	1,820	-
Ceylon -	Bombay, -	960	-
Ceylon -	Madras, -	750	-
Madras -	Calcutta, -	1,260	7,330
Ceylon -	Batavia, -	1,680	-
Batavia -	Swan River (coast of Australasia) -	1,630	-
Swan River -	Hobart-town (Van Dieman's Land) -	2,160	-
Hobart-town -	Port Jackson, -	720	6,190
Port Jackson -	Sandwich Islands, -	3,600	-
Port Jackson -	Society Islands, Otaheite, -	3,104	6,704

## FROM ENGLAND TO CANTON.

From	To	Geographical miles.	Total.
Falmouth -	Batavia, -	15,410	-
Batavia -	Canton, -	1,780	17,190
Canton -	Owhayi, -	3,960	-
Owhayi -	Panama, -	3,480	24,630

From which we see that, by doubling the Cape of Good Hope, they sail from—

1st, Falmouth to Calcutta, -	- - - -	13,730
2nd, Falmouth to Canton, -	- - - -	17,190
3rd, Canton to Panama, -	- - - -	7,440—38,360

II. Distances, in a right line, of the principal stopping-places, for steamships sailing from Falmouth by way of Cape Horn, for Panama, Australasia, Canton, &c.

From	To	Geographical miles.	Total.
Falmouth -	Terceira, (Azores) -	1,620	-
Terceira -	Olinda (Pernambuco) -	2,520	-
Olinda -	Rio Janeiro, -	1,460	-
Rio Janeiro -	Buenos Ayres -	1,400	-
Buenos Ayres -	Cape Horn, -	2,040	9,040
Cape Horn -	Valparaiso, -	2,200	-
Valparaiso -	Lima, -	2,096	-
Lima -	Panama, -	2,780	7,076
Falmouth -	Panama, -	-	16,116
Panama -	Owhayi, -	3,480	-
Owhayi -	Canton, -	3,960	7,440
Falmouth -	Canton, -	-	23,556
Canton -	Batavia, -	1,780	-
Batavia -	Ceylon, -	1,680	-
Falmouth -	Ceylon, -	-	27,016

III. Distances by the projected Canal at Panama:

From	To	Geographical miles.	Total.
Falmouth -	Terceira, -	1,620	-
Terceira -	Chagres, -	3,540	-
Chagres -	Panama, across the Isthmus of Darien, -	12	5,172
Panama -	Owhayi, -	3,480	-
Owhayi -	Canton, -	3,960	7,440
Falmouth -	Canton, -	-	12,612
Falmouth -	Panama, -	5,172	-
Panama -	Lima, -	2,780	-
Lima -	Valparaiso, -	2,096	10,048
Panama -	Otaheite, -	3,540	-
Otaheite -	Port Jackson, -	3,104	-
Port Jackson -	Hobart-town, -	720	7,364
Falmouth, -	Hobart-town, -	-	17,412

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 advantages 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 dispatch 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



ports on the coast from Valparaiso to Panama, better security would be afforded to 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 steamboats 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 the passage down the coast with great dispatch. 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, 1835. Vol. II. p. 261.

## No. 2.

Since my return to the United States, I have seen the following interesting letters in the National Intelligencer, on American Antiquities, from Mr. Colcraft.

It is to be hoped that he will shortly favor the public with an accurate drawing of the characters on the tablet.

GRAVE CREEK FLATS, (Va.) August 23, 1843.

I have devoted several days to the examination of the antiquities of this place and its vicinity, and find them to be of even more interest than was anticipated. The most prominent object of curiosity is the great tumulus, of which notices have appeared in western papers; but this heavy structure of earth is not isolated. It is but one of a series of mounds, and other evidences of ancient occupation at this point, of more than ordinary interest. I have visited and examined seven mounds, situated within a short distance of each other. They occupy the summit level of a rich alluvial plain, stretching on the left or Virginia bank of the Ohio, between the junction of Big and Little Green Creeks with that stream. They appear to have been connected by low earthen intrenchments, of which plain traces are still visible on some parts of the commons. They included a well, stoned up in the usual manner, which is now filled with rubbish.

The summit of this plain is probably seventy-five feet above the present summer level of the Ohio. It constitutes the second bench or rise of land above the water. It is on this summit, and on one of the most elevated parts of it, that the great tumulus stands. It is in the shape of a broad cone, cut off at the apex, where it is some fifty feet across. This area is quite level, and commands a view of the entire plain, and of the river above and below, and the west shore of the Ohio in front. Any public transaction on this area would be visible to multitudes around it, and it has, in this respect, all the advantages of the Mexican and Yucatanese teocalli. The circumference of the base has been stated at a little under nine hundred feet; its height is sixty-nine feet.

The most interesting object of antiquarian inquiry is a small flat stone, inscribed with antique alphabetic characters, which was disclosed on the opening of the large mound. These characters are in the ancient rock alphabet of sixteen right and acute angled single strokes, used by the Pelasgi and other early Mediterranean nations, and which is the parent of the modern Runic as well as the Bardic. It is now some four or five years since the completion of the excavations, so far as they have been made, and the discovery of this relic. Several copies of it soon got abroad, which differed from each other, and, it was supposed, from the original. This conjecture is true: neither the print published in the Cincinnati Gazette in 1839, nor that in the American Pioneer in 1843, is correct. I have terminated this uncertainty by taking copies by a scientific process, which does not leave the lines and figures to the uncertainty of man's pencil.

The existence of this ancient art here could not be admitted, otherwise than as an insulated fact, without some corroborative evidence in habits and customs, which it would be reasonable to look for in the existing ruins of ancient occupancy. It is thought some such testimony has been found. I rode out yesterday three miles, back to the range of high hills which encompass this sub-valley, to see a rude tower of stone standing on an elevated point, called Parr's point, which commands a view of the whole plain, and which appears to have been constructed as a watch-tower, or look-out, from which to descry an approaching enemy. It is