

the communication be first opened; it matters not which of them will become the more important. If both communications be simultaneously opened, we conceive there will be no want of commerce to render the districts through which they will pass flourishing in the highest degree.

The Isthmus of Costa Rica will be the proper and natural route for part of the commerce of Guatimala, Peru, and Chili. The Isthmus of Tehuantepec will be the route for the commerce of the vast range of coast on the Pacific ocean, stretching from Guatimala to the north-western extremities of the American continent. The advantages which this last-named Isthmus enjoys, by being in the heart of a thickly settled, rich, and healthy country, have been already described; and its proximity to the United States renders it, in our estimation, the most important spot at which to perfect the first communication between the two oceans.

Tehuantepec on the Pacific ocean, and Guasacualco on the Atlantic, ought to be declared *free ports* for the commerce of all nations. Property passing by this route should pay only a small toll or trifling duty, for the purpose of keeping the canal or the road in a constant state of good order. We have stated, that large vessels

can enter the rivers Tehuantepec and Guasacualco, and ascend the same to within about fourteen leagues of each other. We have shewn that a good carriage road could be promptly made, so as to transport property of every kind to and from the respective rivers. Making, therefore, large allowances for unexpected obstacles, we think that by this route cargoes of all kinds of merchandise could be transported from one ocean to the other, *in less than six days*. The productions of Guatimala, of Oaxaca, of La Puebla, of Mexico, of Valladolid, and of Guadalaxara, instead of being conveyed, as they are at present, an immense distance by land to Vera Cruz, would be carried to the ports of those provinces on the Pacific coast, and embarked for Tehuantepec, thence pass over to Guasacualco, and from the latter be embarked for Europe, the United States, or elsewhere. The future products of the great province of Sinaloa, of Old and New California, and of all the north-west regions of America, could be brought to the Isthmus of Tehuantepec. The fabrics of Europe and of the United States could be carried to Guasacualco, passed over to Tehuantepec, and thence be circulated through the vast regions we have just mentioned. The products of China

and of the East Indies would likewise be brought to this Isthmus, dispersed over Guatemala, Oaxaca, and all the eastern sections of the Mexican empire adjacent to the Gulf of Mexico; and be carried with rapidity to the river Mississippi, to Florida, and indeed to all parts of the United States, and to Europe.

The intercourse between the United States and its territory on the north-west coast of America, would be carried on with safety and rapidity by the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, instead of by the present tedious and perilous route round Cape Horn: and *steam navigation* might be introduced in the Pacific ocean, so as to effect an entire revolution in the present commerce of the whole Southern Sea. It is not only along the vast coast of the Pacific ocean, from Valparaiso to Columbia river, that steam vessels could be used, so as to triumph over the obstacles which have hitherto impeded the navigation of those seas, but we perceive no difficulty to the traversing of the whole Southern ocean in steam vessels. The voyage from Manilla to Acapulco has frequently been made, by dull-sailing Spanish ships, in *seventy-five days*: and at certain seasons of the year, it has been performed by vessels whose top-gallant sails were not once taken in during the voyage. Violent

storms are seldom experienced in the Pacific ocean, excepting in the vicinity of Cape Horn and in the high latitudes to the north-west. Such a vessel as the steam-ship *Fulton*, could perform a voyage between Oaxaca and China, with infinitely less sea-risk than attends the voyages she is now performing between New York, Havana, and New Orleans. A steam vessel could perform the voyage from Tehuantepec to China, in *from fifty to sixty days*; and indeed, were we to calculate on the favourable winds at certain seasons of the year, united to the power of steam, it can be proved that it is practicable to perform the voyage between Oaxaca and Canton, in *less than fifty days*. We forbear dilating on the importance of this invaluable art to the commerce of the Southern ocean, lest some of our readers should deem our sketch an enthusiastic flight of fancy; but to those who are conversant with steam navigation, who are acquainted with the wonders it has already performed in the internal navigation of our country, who have examined the structure of the steam-ship *Fulton*, and who have marked the improvements that are yearly adding strength to the power of steam, our expectations will not appear too sanguine.

From the river Mississippi, a steam vessel

could with ease perform a voyage to the port of Guasacualco in *six* days. Allowing *seven* days for the transportation of property across the Isthmus, and *fifty* for the voyage to China, it will be seen that by steam navigation a voyage could be performed from the United States to China in *sixty-three days*. This will be more clearly evinced, by the following actual computation of the distances:—

	Statute miles.
The <i>ordinary route</i> from Philadelphia to Canton . . . . .	16,150
By <i>steam-boat navigation</i> and conveyance through the Isthmus of Oaxaca, from and to the same places:—	
From Philadelphia to Guasacualco. . . . .	2,100
Passage over to Tehuantepec, by land and water . . . . .	120
From Tehuantepec, by the islands lying nearly in the direct course to Canton—	
To the Sandwich islands. . . . .	3,835
Ladrone do. . . . .	3,900
Canton . . . . .	2,080
	9,815
	12,035
Actual distance saved . . . . .	4,115
From Philadelphia to Columbia river, by the <i>usual route</i> of Cape Horn . . . . .	18,261
From the same to the same, by the <i>proposed route</i> :—	
To Guasacualco, and overland. . . . .	2,220
From Tehuantepec to the Columbia . . . . .	2,760
	4,980
Actual distance saved . . . . .	13,281

[The preceding calculations were furnished by Mr. Melish.]

We calculate, likewise, that steam vessels could perform the voyage from Columbia river to Tehuantepec, in *from eighteen to twenty-four* days, more especially by taking advantage of the proper seasons. Along the whole range of the Mexican and Californian coasts, there are safe and convenient harbours, which would afford refreshments, and shelter from storms. It is true that this immense extent of territory is at present but thinly settled, and that the wretched inhabitants, by the barbarous policy of the Spanish government, have been excluded from all intercourse with the civilized world. The whole of the country adjacent to the Pacific ocean, with its noble rivers and fertile soil, is nearly in the same state as at the period of its first discovery by the Spaniards. The only ports on the Mexican coast that have been permitted to enjoy any trade, are San Blas and Acapulco; but even this trade was so complete a monopoly, and encumbered by so many restrictions, that it scarcely deserved the name of commerce, and was comparatively of little utility to the inhabitants in general. The western sections of Mexico have been supplied almost exclusively with articles carried by land from Vera Cruz. The impost charges at that place, the enormous expense of land carriage over such a vast extent of territory, and the numberless ex-

actions on the route, increased the price of foreign merchandise to four or five times its original cost; whereas, had the articles been landed at Guasacualco, conveyed across the Isthmus, and thence transported by water to the fine bays and rivers along the coast, the expense would have been trifling, and the route performed in one-third of the time that was occupied in transporting them by land.

When those restrictions shall be removed, under which the Mexican people have so long suffered, that is, when their country shall no longer be subject to the control of Spain,—when human industry shall be allowed the scope which reason and nature dictate,—and when the inhabitants of Mexico shall be permitted to enjoy an unshackled traffic with all nations, how extraordinary will be the change in their condition! Not only will the beautiful intendancies of Guadalaxara, Valladolid, La Puebla, Mexico, Oaxaca, and Vera Cruz, become the regions of comfort and opulence, but all the internal provinces, and even Old and New California, will soon become flourishing and populous countries. Let the reader cast his eye upon the map, and behold the position of the great provinces of *Sonora*, *Sinaloa*, and *Biscay*, adjacent to the Gulf of California; let him trace the route of the river *Colorado*, from

its source to its discharge in the Californian Gulf, and view the noble rivers of *Tinpanogos*, *Buenaventura*, and *Felipe*, discharging their waters on the coast of New California; let him then anticipate the future importance of this country, when a government made by and for the people shall there be established. The country through which those rivers flow, and the coasts of both the Californias, have remained a desert, not because the soil and climate are, as some writers have represented, unfavourable to the residence of man, but because the Spanish government had studiously barred the door to their settlement and improvement.

We have perused some interesting manuscripts respecting the Californias, and the provinces of Sinaloa and Sonora; one in particular, written by *Padre Garcia*, who travelled from the mouth of the Colorado to its source, a distance of more than six hundred miles. We have read others, written by the friars who resided at the different Missionary establishments on the coast of California. They represent a very small part of the peninsula of Old California as being a rocky and sterile country; but all New California, nearly up to the Columbia river, and all the interior of the pro-

vince of Sonora, they extol for its fertility of soil and purity of climate.

It may not be amiss here to remark, that about eight years since, we met with a Russian gentleman, who had visited Monterey, on the coast of California, and who was in possession of a great stock of valuable information respecting those countries. He spoke in the most favourable terms of the climate, and represented the soil to be excellent. We have little doubt but that the journal of this Russian was laid before his government; and it may have given rise to those projects of the Russian cabinet which have been recently spoken of. It has been rumoured, that a secret treaty was actually entered into between Ferdinand VII. and the Emperor of Russia, by which the former transferred to the latter a considerable part of New California; but, owing to the remonstrances of the government of Great Britain, upon receiving intimation of such treaty, the court of Madrid has never openly avowed it, or carried it into effect. Whatever credence may be given to this report, we know that the Russians, in pursuance of their system of advancing their power wherever a foot-hold can be gained, have planted their banners on several parts of the American continent. Their settle-

ments commence at the island of Kodia, in  $57\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  north latitude, and  $152\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  west longitude. They occupy an important position in Norfolk Sound, in  $57^{\circ}$  north latitude, and  $135^{\circ}$  west longitude, where they have a strong fort, mounting upwards of one hundred pieces of heavy cannon; and in the year 1813, they had descended as far south as  $38\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$  north latitude, and settled at Badoga, distant about thirty miles from the northernmost Spanish settlement in California. Let the Russian imperial flag be planted on the American continent, by force or by negotiation, it will be better for mankind than that the country should remain a desert under the dominion of Spain. Whether Russians, citizens of the United States, or Mexicans, shall predominate among the settlers along the northwest coast of America, is a point that can only be determined by time; but in proportion as the whole coast shall become thickly settled, will the importance of the Isthmus of Tehuantepec be augmented, because it must eventually be the great channel of communication between Europe, the United States, and the northwest coast of America.

The fine rivers we have before mentioned have their sources on the confines, and some of them within the limits of the United States,

The whole of the region lying west of the Rocky Mountains, or Northern Andes, abounds in excellent streams, which discharge themselves into the Pacific, along the coast, or in the Gulf of California; and consequently, in proportion as the interior of that vast country shall become settled, so will its intercourse with the civilized world, by the route of Tehuantepec, gradually become more important. In fact, it is impossible for the imagination to form any proper conception of the magnitude of the commerce that will pass through the Isthmus of Tehuantepec, when Mexico and South America shall enjoy the blessings of liberal governments.

The Mexican dominions alone are capable of yielding subsistence and comfort to more than treble the present population of all Spanish America. The rapid progress of the United States may serve as an example of the growth of population in new countries blessed by liberal governments. The calculations of Franklin and Jefferson have been fully realized. We more than double our population every twenty-two years; an increase which, regulated by the laws of population, will continue, until the surface of our territory shall become as generally cultivated, and as thickly inhabited, as that of Europe and Asia. Give to Mexico the

advantages of a good government, open her ports to the commerce of the globe, encourage emigration from all parts of the world, and, in fine, let her pursue the course marked out for her by reason and nature, and she will soon become as flourishing as any part of the New World. We have before remarked the great physical advantages possessed by Mexico, as respects the climate and soil; and we do not believe that there is any part of our globe capable of sustaining a greater population upon the same space of territory. We therefore do not doubt, that from the day that Mexico takes her rank among the nations of the earth as an independent power, governed by wise and liberal institutions, she will continue to double her numbers every twenty-two years, until the whole of her vast regions be covered with inhabitants. Let us calculate her probable population a century hence. Fixing on the year 1825, as the epoch of the commencement of her independence, and supposing her population at that time to be 7,000,000

In 1847	it will be	14,000,000
1869	—	28,000,000
1891	—	56,000,000
1913	—	112,000,000

We are aware that such calculations would

have been deemed visionary, thirty or forty years ago; and that even at present their accuracy may be doubted by many of our readers: but in the minds of those who have noted the increase of population in our own country, and have reflected on the happy and important influence of liberal civil institutions, we feel assured, our estimates will neither excite surprise or incredulity. Several enlightened writers of the present day, and, among others, the Abbé de Pradt, admit the correctness of this rate of increase.

Every successive census of the United States displays an increase greater than the calculation alluded to. If, then, by this ratio, our country, a century hence, shall contain *one hundred and forty millions*, and Mexico *one hundred and twelve millions*, of persons, how deeply important will the *Isthmus of Tehuantepec* become to those two nations! To Mexico, in particular, this Isthmus is the great bridge that unites her northern and southern with her eastern and western sections. To the United States, it is not only of high importance as respects the possessions of the republic on the north-west coast, and the great share of the carrying trade that will be secured to our citizens by their enterprise and the superior advantages derived

from their proximity to the Mexican Gulf, but because *the maritime superiority of the New World appears destined to remain with the United States*. The vast extent of our coast from Passamaquoddy to the river Sabine, the immense internal navigation of our great rivers, and our fisheries, will ere long employ a greater number of individuals than are engaged in the pursuits of navigation in all Europe. In the event of the United States being engaged in any future war, that is popular (and in no other do we hope they will ever be engaged), there can be procured a sufficient number of seamen, from the great sources just mentioned, to man a fleet equal to that of any nation in Europe. We shall therefore not only be capable of protecting our future commerce along our coasts, but also of extending that protection to whatever place our enterprise and interests may carry our flag. At a distant period, it is not improbable that some of the great states in South America may possess a respectable marine, but none that will ever vie in strength with the navies of the United States. Mexico can never become a great maritime power. Although her rivers are numerous, and several of them flow through an immense extent of territory, yet, from the great elevation of more