

American Provinces, whether as an element of commercial progress and improvement, or as a means of drawing more closely the ties which unite us to the Mother Country; and, while increasing the advantages we derive from that connection, enhancing the value of these colonies to the empire.

I have met with no account of any very recent proceedings towards the establishment of the interoceanic communication between the Atlantic and the Pacific. The last expedition organized to survey the Isthmus of Darien, was in 1854, when the Governments of England, France, the United States, and Granada, assisted in the object of the expedition. The result of that survey shewed that the harbours of Caledonia and Darien, were in every way adapted as the termini of the suggested Canal. It was further ascertained that a range of mountains varying from 900 to 1600 feet in height form the water-parting of the country, at a distance of only five miles from the Atlantic; the distance between the tidal waters on the opposite coast being under thirty miles; but such is the character of this mountain range, that no canal could be there constructed without tunnelling, though a railway might be constructed between ports, not more than thirty-six miles apart, the summit level to be crossed not exceeding nine hundred feet above the sea. Other lines, having the same object, have been suggested and discussed, but the present unsettled political condition of the territories through or near to which any such communication could be established, seems to postpone indefinitely any practical attempt to realize the design.

In passing from this subject it will not be altogether inappropriate to refer to a matter which has been recently discussed, and on which new light has been thrown by Captain Becher, R.N. I allude to the question where Columbus made his first landing on this side the Atlantic. Navarette names Turks Island as the one which the natives called Guanabani, and on which the discoverer conferred the name of San Salvador. Washington Irving or the other hand decides in favour of Cat Island, situated fully 300 miles distant from Turks Island, and which, on every map that I have seen, is marked as the San Salvador of Columbus. Meenoz, who was the Spanish Cosmographer-in-chief for the department of the Indies, in a history of America, of which he lived to publish only the first volume, points out Watling's Island about fifty miles easterly of Cat Island, as the first landfall, and this view Captain Becher supports and confirms.