

nation to prevent the incursions of the Spaniards. The climate appeared favourable for European constitutions, the more elevated parts being cool and temperate. The soil is favourable for cultivation, and would produce many valuable articles for export. On the sea coast on both oceans, there are excellent harbours, secured from tempests by islands, and surrounded by eminences which rendered them easily fortified against hostile aggression. The lakes and rivers furnished an inexhaustible supply of fish, and the woods were plentifully stocked with game of various kinds.

Patterson, reflecting that England, of all other nations, had the greatest interest in this undertaking, as it would connect her European trade with that of her West-Indian, American, African and East Indian possessions, determined to offer his project first to her; and, for this purpose on his return to Great-Britain, went to London. Here, however, he had but few acquaintances, and no protection; and after bringing himself into the notice of monied men and persons of power, by giving the aid of his talents to help in forming the Bank of England, a project then upon the tapis. He met with the not unusual recompense of these people adopting his plans and passing them as their own, while the few to whom he mentioned his Darien scheme only discouraged him from attempting it.

Finding his project not likely to meet with the attention it deserved in England, he went to the Continent, and submitted it to the Dutch, the Hamburgers, and also to the Elector of Brandenburg. The two former of these, though deeply interested, received his proposal with the greatest indifference; from the latter he met with a friendly reception for himself, but nothing farther. Baffled in his views, by his expectations failing on the Continent, he again returned to London, where the casual meeting with one of his countrymen enabled him to put his scheme in operation, under very favourable auspices. This gentleman was Mr. Fletcher, of Saltoun, who persuaded Patterson to offer his project to his own countrymen, and who, from his extreme *amor patriæ*, was desirous that they should have the benefit, glory, and danger of it. Mr. F. was a gentleman of fortune, and unincumbered with a family; possessing an ardency of feeling and a sanguine disposition, which well qualified him for assisting in such a project as the one in question. Though he belonged to the side of politics called the Country Party, his independent spirit gave him free access to the Ministers. By him Mr. Patterson was introduced to the Marquis of Tweeddale, then Minister for Scotland, and who was, on the representation of Fletcher, induced to adopt the project. Lord Stair and Mr. Johnston, the two Secretaries of State, along with the Lord Advocate, Sir James Stewart, and all their political connections and relatives, joined in it. Through the influence of these characters, "in June, 1695, a statute was procured from Parliament, and afterwards a charter from the Crown, in terms of it, for creating a trading company to Africa and the New World, with power to plant colonies and build forts, with consent of the inhabitants, in places not possessed by other European Nations."

This accomplished, Patterson now threw his project open to the world, and commenced procuring subscriptions for a company. A