

umbrella in long and pendulous leaves through which we saw the clusters of large nuts, amongst which the merry monkeys gambol with gluttonous delight. We then turned westerly along the coast and after about three hours sail neared the town of Aspinwall situated on a low marshy Island in what was Navy Bay near the old Isthmus of Darien, famous in the history of Scotch enterprise—an enterprise though ridiculed—rightly conceived and nobly begun, with two millions of gold, one half of all that Scotland then owned; but blasted by English jealousy, collision with the East India Company, and the fact of the projectors being in advance of the times, crushed finally by the treachery of the heart which sanctioned the massacre of Glencoe, the King of England having forbade the British Colonies even to sell food to the Emigrants, and thus encouraged the Spaniards to destroy the Company which King William himself had but lately chartered.

But in our own day the Isthmus of Panama has become famous by a stupendous work of American enterprise and ingenuity, boldly planned and successfully carried out; a work which owed its development to three men whose names will be imperishable in the history of American Commerce; W. B. Aspinwall, J. L. Stephens, and Henry Chauncey, the projectors of the Panama Railroad. The idea of an inter-oceanic communication had been entertained for centuries, the whole commercial world was alive to its advantages, New Grenada unable to undertake it had freely offered the privilege to any nation rich enough to perform it—England looked at it with longing eyes but quailed for once before the magnitude of the difficulties; France did more, surveyed the country and entered on a contract, but too many millions were found necessary and she let it go by default. In 1848, Congress authorized contracts for the establishment of two Mail lines of Steamships, one from New York and New Orleans to Chagres, the other from Panama to California and Oregon; the inducements were insufficient, but at last Mr. Aspinwall and the famous George Law did enter on the enterprise, but the wisest fancied it must fail, gold not yet having