

ten the most extravagant statements, such as, that by cutting a canal of about twelve leagues, following the course of the Ravines at the foot of the mountains, a passage may be opened as wide as the gut of Gibraltar, from the Bay of Panama to the navigable waters of Cruces or Chagre. Other reporters have stated that such water communication cannot be accomplished but by locks and tunnels passing over an elevation of at least 400 feet!" with many other absurdities, whose inaccuracy has been proved by a farther and more intimate knowledge of the country. But notwithstanding the wide difference between these reports, and also between others who have surveyed the country, there is one point in which they all appear to coincide, namely, that a good road might be made from Panama to the head of the navigation on the river Cruces, on which property of any description might be transported; and as the distance between these places is only twenty-three miles, this place affords the shortest route between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans which has yet been discovered, and where a communication could be made at the least expense.

The discovery of a practicable passage across this isthmus, although revived by this publication of Mr. Robinson's, and our knowledge of it much enlarged, is not new. As far back as 1698, we find Mr. Patterson in one of his plans for the Darien Company, has the following remarks.

"In our passage over land from Caledonia harbour, we have six leagues of a very good way to a place called Swatee; from Swatee to Tubugantee we have between two and three leagues not so passable, by reason of the turnings and windings of the river, which must often be passed and repassed; but a little industry would make this part of the way as passable as any of the rest. At Tubugantee there is ten feet at high water, and so not less, in the river till it fall into the gulph of Balona, which enters the south. This is called the pass of Tubugantee. The other pass, being that of Cacarica, lies beyond the bottom of the gulph of Uraba, in about six degrees north. Its distance from the harbour of Caledonia I reckon thus, viz. To Cape Tiburoon, eight or nine leagues; from thence to the bottom of the gulph, 25 or 30 leagues, and from the bottom of the gulph they go up the great river; about 12 leagues from thence they pass up a river on the right hand called Cacarica, for about six leagues, and land at a place where there is a narrow neck of land, not above two English miles broad, of good passable way. After passing this neck of land, they come to the navigable part of a river passing into the South Sea, called Paya; from thence they have 14 or 15 leagues into the South Sea."

About 35 leagues to the westward of Caledonia harbour there is another pass, from the river Conception on the north, to that called Ciapo on the South Sea, but this Mr. P. represents as circuitous and difficult.

Mr. Patterson, an obscure Scotchman, without friends, fortune or patronage, had the talents to devise and render acceptable, a project not surpassed by the splendid genius of Columbus; and to his indefatigable exertions are owing the formation of the once famous DA-