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CANAL OF NICARAGUA.

The following article is taken from
the Jefferson (Ohio) Gazette, where
it appears as a communication.

1. The Lake Country of North America may be considered as a prolongation of the Arabian Gulf, Red Sea, and Mediterranean, so far as regards the course of commerce; and the New-York, Welland, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Chesapeake, Delaware, and Raritan Canals, with the Rivers Ohio, Mississippi, Missouri, Illinois, Wisconsin, St. Croix, Red, Yellowstone, Horns, Quicoarne, La Platte, Kansas, Arkansas, Osage, and Red River, of Louisiana, with their thousand tributary waters, may, for some purpose, be considered a continuation of the Canals of China, the River Nile, and the Canals of Holland, and the Manufacturing parts of Great Britain, which countries, like those of Russia and France, owe their internal wealth to these Canals, as the Western country now owes her prosperity to her Rivers, and will owe a million times more to those Rivers, and the Canals which they will feed. Indeed, there is no country on the face of the globe, of the same extent, better adapted to an immense, and gigantic system of Canals, which, circulating through every part, will bring the whole of the extended valley of the Mississippi into cultivation and wealth. Its population will increase in proportion, so that in less than a hundred years, it may reach the enormous amount of one hundred and fifty millions of People. Now, though an internal commerce, connected with manufacturing industry, will undoubtedly sustain even this immense multitude, greater than has ever yet been united under one Government, with the same language, customs, and laws, yet it seems to me that Providence has provided a further help, and has given to the enterprize of Americans a nobler boon than any yet conferred on a commercial nation. It is to turn the whole tide and stream of Commerce backwards, and make it run from West to East, instead of from East to West. For this is the course of that mighty flood of wealth which has ever enriched nations, from Persia, the Eastern Indies, and the Antislavian nation of China, who millions of caravans, with herds of labor, transported over the isthmus of Suez, and now over the snows of Mongolie and Tobolsk, or which Phœnician and Egyptian ships, conveyed by the Persian Gulf, the Red Sea, Nile, and Mediterranean, and Euphrates, to constitute the wealth of Babylon, the luxury and glory of Solomon, the indignation of the Prophets, the envy and pride of Rome,

and the comfort and convenience of modern life. The additional facility of transportation by the Cape of Good Hope conferred immortality and fame on Vasco De Gama, who first encountered and conquered

"The stormy spirit of the Cape," but England, France, and Russia have in vain offered honors and rewards, and expended vast sums to force a Western and easier passage to the treasures of the Antipodes. The rebounding of the North, and the Temperate of Cape Horn present an impracticable, though not an impassable barrier to the enterprize. The true plan is, like Napoleon, to attack the centre; and the object of this paper is to show that, between the two continents of America, the road lies to China and Hindostan. This idea has, of course, been entertained for nearly two centuries, but Spanish policy, or fear, has now first withdrawn her veto and her mantle, (I might add, her dagger,) from the Isthmus of Darien. A canal to join the two oceans, Atlantic and Pacific, has by actual survey been pronounced practicable by three routes at least, and a company is now instituted in England to commence operations immediately at one. I thought, however, to be a national work, and the business of the republicans of Western America. The profits will be theirs, and the magnitude of the undertaking and of its expense, seem worthy two Americas; but particularly North America, as I shall attempt to show. This canal is the crown and capstone of all the others that are or will be made in this country.

2. In the memoirs of the Mexican Revolution by Dr. Robinson, *quem honor et affectum nomine*, one different route for one canal was actually made in 1745 called the Raspadura Canal, by a Priest, through which loaded canoes passed with the assistance of the Indians—the remains are visible to this day, and the fact is mentioned by Humboldt and Robinson. Others have been surveyed and found practicable. The *Atrato* route, by the Gulf of Darien, and the river St. Juan de Chirambira, emptying into the Pacific, and flowing through magnificent forests of dye-wood, and mahogany would require a canal of only four miles and a half, over a level land, and a lockage on the two river Atrato and St. Juan, of about 35 or 40 miles; and to the points of lockage these rivers draw from seven to twenty feet of water, clear navigation. The *Nicaragua* route, recommended by Robertson, is now undertaken by an English Company, which has a bill before Parliament for its incorporation. The map will show that the waters of this Lake flow into the Atlantic through bostemals at the distance only of 90 miles; while on the other side this Lake connects with Lake Leon, from which the Pacific is only 15 miles. The whole height to be overcome by lockage, does not equal one half of the lockage necessary on the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal, or on that of the Susquehanna, and Alleghany; that the Lake, on the summit level nearly, would furnish an inexhaustible supply of water. The Mexican Government has also offered proposals for a contract to carry a canal by the river Huasecuala, that discharges at the Gulf of Vera Cruz, along the heights of Chiltepe or La Guinea, to the Bay of Tehuantepec on the Pacific. This Isthmus is but 125 miles wide; and from the summit level, both of the great oceans of the world can be seen at the same time in a clear day. Other routes might be designated, but these are enough to show the practicability, nay, the facility of the project.

3. All these routes would pass through some extent of country, whose resources and natural wealth would no doubt amply compensate for the increased distance of navigation. But the art of civil engineering, and the wealth of nations is at such a height at present that they are fully competent to complete a more direct route. From the Cove between Point St. Blas and Porto Bello, on the Atlantic, to the Bay of Panama, on the Pacific, could be more than fifty miles; and as the waters of the Atlantic, forced into the Caribbean Sea by the impetuosity of the Gulf Stream, necessarily elevate themselves on the Eastern Shore at St. Blas, an excavation sufficient for canal, or more certainly, a grand tunnel, might be made, which would directly connect the two oceans. The tunnels on the Duke of Bridgewater's Canal in England, made under the direction of the truly illustrious and useful Brindley, a poor man, exceed half that distance. Hence the project I recommend. Let our Government unite their resources with those of Governments of Mexico and South America. Let this excavation of tunnel be made at this place, and where the ground admitted of it, let good roads be made alongside and adjacent to the canal—the distance less than from Philadelphia to Lancaster, or Pittsburg to Weeling. Let the country be divided into small farms or lots, and sold or leased to or given to the workmen of the canal. Let large cities be laid out as emporiums or deposits of commerce, and let them be regulated by law—purely commercial, and guaranteed by all the Governments concerned. Let foreign merchants and capitalists be invited, protected, and encouraged, by every privilege which can be granted to a community purely commercial. Let them govern themselves like the Hans Towns, the United States Bank, or the English East India Company but remain under the protection and guard of the American nations; and let the territory attached to these cities or emporia, be limited to the extent of ten or fifteen miles on each side of the canal. By the consent of nations, let this spot enjoy an immunity from the exercise of any military authority. And now let us view the consequences.

4. These cities must necessarily become the *emporium* of the commerce of the whole world. The canal and the road between them, would be a street or passage through which the commerce of the East Indies, China, Asia, and the West coast of America, must meet the commodities and the capital of Europe, Africa, the Mediterranean and the Atlantic, or Eastern coast of America, and of the valley of the Mississippi, with all its canals and tributary rivers. It may be stated as an axiomatic truth in commerce, that these depots or emporia, necessarily flourish and become rich, while they retain the transportation or carrying trade, and keep as it were the storehouse of the world. What Alexandria, Tyre, Carthage, Bagdat, Venice, Constantinople, Canton, Calcutta, Amsterdam, and London, have been, or are, would not equal the probable opulence or amount of business concentrated in these; because they have successively enjoyed only part of that trade, the whole of which would here unite in mass. Like Alexandria, too, we might confer on these cities the names of Washington and Bolivar, the one the hero of true patriotism, the other of true glory.

5. The People of these cities and of their territory, being totally engaged in trade, and in the business of buying and selling, and of transportation, must necessarily become

the consumers of the produce of other countries, which they would earn by their labors. They would of course consume the teas and silks of China, the sugar of the West Indies, and the wines of Europe. But they would be of the most importance to the Western country of the United States, and the inhabitants of the valley of the Mississippi, and of the lakes. They could not send to the Baltic or the Mediterranean for their breadstuffs, but they must naturally look to us for their wheat, their rye, and their barley.

Hence, they would constitute a market for the whole country between the Apalachian and the Rocky Mountains, which, by an easy navigation down the Mississippi, and across the Gulf of Mexico, would ensure subsistence, employment, and wealth, to the countless millions that are issuing from the loins of the Republicans of the West. All would come in for their share of the wealth derived from these cities and their canals, and that by the easy means of a skill a canoe, a flat boat, a keel boat, a steamboat, or, at most, a schooner. How much such a market is wanted, and what must be its value, may be determined from the present experience and prospects of this fertile region, whose produce rots in the barn for want of a market. These People would consume not only our breadstuffs, but, as our manufactures increase, we might supply them with our manufactures, such as silks, muskets, paper and cotton goods, of China and India; and our timber, iron, earthenware, tobacco, fruits, and stock, or salted provisions, with all, in short, of Western products, would find there a natural and ready sale.

6. On the woollen, and on all other manufacturers, or on woollen growers, alone, the advantages of this canal would be most auspicious, and not remote. The concentration of trade at that spot would enable the Western growers and manufacturers of wool to supply, not only that market, but the whole of the Spanish Main and immense population of Mexico, by the easy, safe, and cheap navigation of Mississippi and Mexican Gulf, so as to undersell all European or English competitors whose long voyages, in expensive vessels, and in a hot climate, destructive to the rigging, and the lives of their sailors, exposed also to other dangers, and the expense of insurance, could be rendered abortive by the more simple and less expensive transportation of flat boats, steamboats, light sloops, or schooners, whose voyages and arrivals besides would be more certain in point of time. Add to this, the supply of the Eastern coast of Asia, the innumerable Islands of the Pacific, part of the Russian Empire, and the whole of the Western and Northwest coast of America, and what limit shall we assign to the hopes of the woollen trade of the valley of the West? It is within the range of probability that an immediate trade across the Pacific, carried on partially also by the Chinese merchants themselves, might so far dissipate the prejudices of the Celestial Empire, particularly when peltries become dear or expensive, that woollen cloths, grown on the banks of the Ohio, and manufactured by the Wills's of Xenopolis, might be substituted for the crummes and wools of Yakutsk or Mongolia, in the market of Nanking or Peking. It is no objection to say, that the naval and commercial powers of France and England have in vain attempted it. The effects of trade and interest, of policy and persuasion, of fidelity and direct intercourse are more powerful than the suggestion of war. Why a gentleman for Mr. Dickinson, if that

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