

# DESERET NEWS.

BY W. RICHARDS.

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## For the Deseret News. THE PAST YEAR.

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BY MISS. E. R. SNOW.  
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A year—what is a year? 'Tis but a link  
In the grand chain of time extending from  
The earth's formation, to the period when  
An angel standing in the sun shall swear  
'The chain is finished---time shall be no more.'

Then, by the pow'r of faith, that pow'r by  
which

The great Jehovah spake and it was done,  
And nature mov'd subservient to his will;  
Earth leaves the orbit where her days and  
nights

And years and ages have been measur'd long,  
By revolution's fix'd unchanging laws;  
And upward journies to her native home.

Where is the year? Envelop'd in the past,  
With all its scenes and all its sceneries  
Upon its bosom laid: The year has gone  
To join in fellowship with all the years  
Before and since the flood: leaving behind  
A train of consequences—those effects  
Which, like a fond paternal legacy  
That firmly binds with int'rest, kin to kin;  
Unite the future, present, and the past.

The year is gone! None but Omnipotence  
Can weigh it in the balance and define  
The good and evil mingled in its form.  
None but an Omnipresent eye can view  
The fountains and the springs of joy and grief,  
Of pain and pleasure, which within its course  
It open'd and has caus'd to flow thro' out  
The broad variety of human life.  
None else is able to explore the length  
And breadth—to fathom the abysses and  
To pry into the cloister'd avenues  
Of this life's sceneries, and testify,  
Or count the seeds of bitterness which yield  
Pois'nous effluvia, proving, when infus'd  
Into society, its deadliest curse;  
Or number the bright rays of happiness,  
Whether in sunbeams written, or defin'd  
By those soft pencilings of light,  
Whose want of dazzling brilliancy, is more  
Than compensated by their constancy  
In every day attendance,—little joys,  
Which shed a soothing influence on the heart,  
Yet imperceptibly—by habit made to seem  
More like appendages than gifts bestow'd.

But who, with common-sense and eye un-  
clos'd—

With sensibility enough to keep  
The heart alive—with warmth enough to give  
An elasticity to half its strings;  
But finds inscrib'd upon the tablet of  
The memory, a reminiscence of  
The year departed, deeply written there

In characters that stand in bold relief;  
And more especially in these last days  
When nature, seeming conscious that her time  
Of dissolution is approaching; hastes  
With all the rude impetuosity  
Of the tumultuous hurricane; to close  
Her labors. Ev'ry spirit is arous'd  
Both good and bad, each to its handy work,  
Diffusing in the walks of social life  
Their honey and their gall: each heart im-  
bibes

That, which is most congenial to its own  
Inherent qualities of character;  
Of which a full developement is wrought  
By the effective hand of circumstance.

A few more years of hurried scenery  
Will tell the tale—the present drama close—  
Decide the destiny of multitudes  
And bring this generation to the point  
Where time extending to its utmost bound,  
Will tread the threshold of eternity.

## From the N. Y. Herald. MANDINGO INDIANS.

Very Interesting Intelligence from the Isth-  
mus of Panama.

GORGONA, April 24, 1849.

JAMES GORDON BENNET, Esq.—

Here I am, in excellent company. I fell  
in with Col. Hughes, engineer-in-chief of the  
Panama railroad, a few days since. I am, by  
his kindness, to accompany his party on an  
expedition to Mandingo Bay, Isthmus of Pan-  
ama. For the localities I must refer you to  
the map, which will save me the trouble of  
describing places.

In the company are Wm. H. Sidell, Esq.—  
he is the chief engineer of the Panama divi-  
sion; Wm. Norris, Esq., who is chief engi-  
neer of the Chagres division; and Dr. M. B.  
Halstead, surgeon and naturalist.

I will give you some account of their sci-  
entific proceedings.

Col. Hughes, among his numerous investi-  
gations as to the various routes from the Pa-  
cific to the Atlantic, obtained information of  
the existence of a route through the Domingo  
country, which was represented as having  
only eight miles of land carriage. Upon ob-  
taining this information, he decided to pro-  
ceed and examine this route in person. Ac-  
cordingly, on the 19th of April, we left the  
harbor of Chagres in the steamer Orus, Cap-  
tain Tucker, whose skill as a navigator, and  
his attentive civilities to the party, will long  
be held in pleasant remembrance. Col.  
Hughes, taking advantage of this good op-  
portunity, ordered the steamer to course  
around the shores of Lemon Bay, which is  
situated some six miles from Chagres, in a  
northeasterly direction. This noble bay is  
about four miles wide at its entrance, and  
about three miles in length. On the eastern  
side the island of Manganilla is situated, con-  
taining about 900 acres of high and dry land,  
twelve feet above high tide, affording an ad-  
mirable position for a large city. At its sou-  
thern extremity a passage of about sixty feet

separates it from the main land. On its eas-  
tern side, the sheet of water which divides it  
from the main land is about half a mile in  
width, from three to five fathoms deep. Thus  
surrounded by sea, and open to every breeze,  
it cannot be otherwise than healthy. Col.  
Hughes having previously selected point Co-  
co Solo in this bay as the Atlantic terminus  
of his railroad, was well pleased to find that  
the information he had gathered at home, on  
which he had based his original instructions  
to his engineers, was correct in every partic-  
ular.

He found here an admirable terminus; a  
safe harbor, of sufficient capacity to contain  
300 sail, the best anchorage, with a depth of  
water from five to seven fathoms in the cen-  
tre, and from two to three fathoms in some  
places within ten feet of the shore. This  
splendid harbor requires no breakwater. It  
can be entered with safety in any wind. This  
is the opinion of Capt. Tucker, and also of  
other experienced navigators.

After leaving Point Coco Solo, we shaped  
our course to Porto Bello, meeting with some  
turtle fishermen on the beach of Margaritta  
Island, their nets expanded, and numerous  
decoy turtles (made of wood to represent the  
female,) floating a few inches under water.  
Green turtles are not so abundant as last year,  
nearly every fisherman having forsaken his  
calling to become a boatman or carrier upon  
the Chagres river, in consequence of the tre-  
bly advanced prices for labor, induced by the  
influx of California emigrants.

The coast, from Lunar Bay to Porto Bello  
is highly picturesque; the lofty summits of  
the Cordilleras—the boundary of the two  
oceans—proclaim the grandeur of their cre-  
ation:—

"Here, hills on hills in solemn grandeur rise,  
Rocks, rich in gems, and mountains big with  
mines,  
Whence many a bursting stream auriferous  
plays."

Early in the afternoon we arrived at the  
old Spanish city of Porto Bello. Captain  
Tucker had decorated his ship with flags on  
every mast, and upon rounding to, fired a  
salute. All the vessels in the harbor display-  
ed their colors, among which were several of  
the New Granadian flag. The inhabitants  
crowded the ramparts and hills, and we were  
soon assured of a hearty welcome.

The object of Col. Hughes' visit to this  
city was to examine into the merits of a route  
to Panama, which had been peculiarly extol-  
led by the governor of Porto Bello, and it re-  
sulted in the appointment of an assistant en-  
gineer, John May, Esq., to make a reconnoi-  
tre of the same.

A boat put off from the citadel, bearing the  
governor and suite, who were received on  
board with due honor. After an hour's con-  
versation, we were invited on shore, and pro-  
ceeded to inspect the once powerful water  
batteries—now, alas in decay. The splendid  
brass guns lay unheeded on the ground—a  
splendid wreck of Spanish pride. The can-  
non balls, yet in artistic piles, resting to their  
centres, were, on this occasion, used by the  
gallant captain of the Orus, his equally gal-  
lant brother, and the amiable surgeon, as