

# Up Country in Panama

By Forbes Lindsay



A STREET IN DAVID

MADE the 300 miles journey up to David, the capital of the Province of Chiriqui, in a coasting steamer of the house-boat type, with open lower deck and galvanized iron roof over all—20 feet out of water and only 6 feet draft with full load.

David was founded somewhat more than a century ago by the first of the Panaman Obaldias, who created a princely estate from a royal grant of land.

David is an attractive place, clean and orderly as a Dutch burg and picturesque as a Tyrolean hamlet. Along the broad, drab lengths of the streets are lined modest dwellings with white-washed walls, red-tiled roofs, and blue and green doors and window shutters. The most pretentious residences are no more than two-storied frame structures, with 10 rooms at most and a patio in the rear. Of the 5,000 inhabitants perhaps 50 are "well to do," in the conventional sense of the phrase. The remainder are superlatively poor, measured by the standard of dollars and cents, but passing rich in fact by reason of having everything that they need and probably all they desire.

Although the dry season was well-nigh spent, everything looked fresh and green the morning that I galloped out upon the llano on my way to Divala. My mose, a long, lean fellow with a melancholy visage, followed at a pace which he never varied, but which later experience taught me could always be depended on to bring him up with me at the end of a ride.

Before us stretched one of the llanos, which lie, like grassy islands in a forest sea, at intervals all along the Pacific slope of the Cordillera. For 6 miles onward and 2 on either side of us the ground extended in a sweep as level as a billiard table and as green. With its thick covering of jentabrillo, the tract looked strikingly like a bit of the blue-grass country of Kentucky.

A well-worn crack indicates the shortest route to the point where the road enters the forest. We kept it in sight for the sake of preserving our bearing, otherwise one might ride unrestrainedly on the darkest night over this flat expanse, unbroken by gullies and devoid of burrows.

These llanos are the "commons" of the people—the poor man's grazing ground. We pass small herds of from 10 to 20 head, nibbling the herbage, which is ample for sustenance but not sufficiently rich and plentiful to condition them for market.

Scattered over the range are a few mares, with foals at their heels. In this country they ride and work only the male horses, leaving the females constantly at grass. This is obviously a bad system, for it retards hereditary transmission and results in the development of serviceable qualities on one side only.

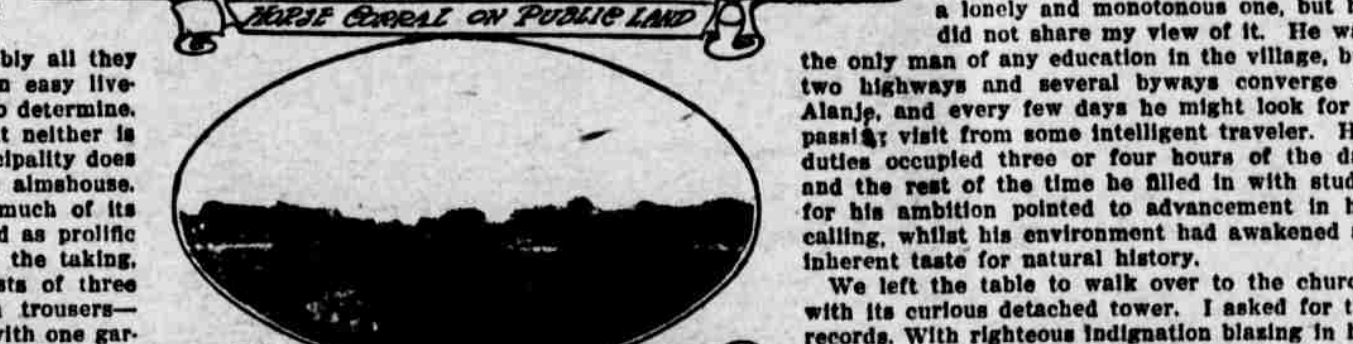
Now and again a traveler jogs by, with a muttered "Buenos dias"—a salutation that is never omitted by man, woman or child. The rider wears a conical straw hat, a cotton shirt, flapping free in the wind, and a pair of blue jeans.



A STRETCH OF LLANO



RIVER BOTTOM GRASS LANDS



HORSE CORRAL ON PUBLIC LAND



BURNED OVER BRACK LAND

Bare feet are stuck in the wooden stirrups. He and his steed are festooned with bags, baskets and packages, the tout ensemble suggesting an itinerant Christmas tree. Stuck under the saddle flap, or elsewhere beyond ready reach, is a rifle or shotgun, of ancient make, probably unserviceable, and almost certainly unloaded.

Occasional reminders of less peaceful times are seen in a small wooden cross set in the ground and surrounded by a rude rail fence, indicating the spot where some unfortunate met a violent death in the commission of a crime.

Compadres are bosom companions, bound by a bond closer than that of brotherhood. Only a woman can break that tie, and when compadre turns against compadre hell knows no greater bitterness. These two hacked each other until they fell, gasping and bleeding, and foaming at the mouth, still jabbing with waning strength.

I put this reflection to Pantaleon, but he declared it more likely that they died cursing each other and thinking of the girl. My own conclusion pleased me better, but I felt bound to defer to my mose's superior knowledge of the characteristics of his countrymen.

Presently the road entered the monte, and we rode between wooden walls reinforced by heavy undergrowth. At long intervals we passed small clearings where the settler had cut over the ground, burned the debris where it fell, and scattered his seed with a careless, confident hand.

All over the Pacific slope of Chiriqui is a topsoil, from 6 to 20 feet thick, formed by the volcans from the mountain sides. It is rich as any in the world, but not one-hundred-thousandth part of it has been turned to the account of man.

The pathetic mystery of it is that tens of thousands are slaving in city sweatshops and factories, or painfully wringing a living from a reluctant soil, when land unlimited lies waiting to richly reward any man who will cast a handful of seed upon it.

Ten miles out from David we came to Alanje.

a pueblo of only a few hundred inhabitants, but a place of consideration in this sparsely settled country. There are no hotels in the interior, nor is there need for them where every door is open to the wayfarer. The first glance around the plaza of Alanje will decide the discriminating stranger to head for the comfortable-looking frame house on the south side, with its inviting veranda. Should he not immediately take that direction, the little cura, in his long black robe, is likely to come to the door and about a welcome.

The mid-day breakfast at the curia was an excellent meal, reinforced by good wine and superb coffee. The pleasures of the occasion were heightened by the entertaining remarks of my lively host. He was very young and very optimistic, quite content with his lot and properly impressed with the importance of his work. It appeared to me that his life must be a lonely and monotonous one, but he did not share my view of it.

We left the table to walk over to the church, with its curious detached tower. I asked for the records. With righteous indignation blazing in his eyes, the little cura laid before me a pile of leather-covered manuscripts, molded, worm-eaten, and torn. Not a page was intact, hardly two consecutive lines legible.

"Such neglect is crime," said my host, fervently. "I need hardly say that the damage was beyond arrest when these came into my hands." I fully appreciated his feelings. Indeed, I dare say that my own regret was the keener. Alanje is older than David. In fact, its history merges with the times of the Conquistadores and there is no knowing what wondrous tales may be hidden in those sadly mutilated documents.

"Our church has a legend," remarked the cura, leading me to a large alcove on the left of the chancel. Drawing aside a curtain, he revealed a life sized painting of the Christ in his final agony. It was evidently the work of an artist, but did not betray extraordinary ability.

"I don't know when this came here, but it was certainly before the present generation," the cura explained, with a slight show of embarrassment. "The story goes that one evening a stranger came to the village and, declining shelter elsewhere, begged to be locked alone in the church over night. His request was granted. When the curious villagers came early in the morning to look for him he had gone, and the picture, with the paint fresh and wet, hung where you see it."

I looked at the little cura questioningly. "Oh, I don't know," he said, with a shamefaced smile and a shrug of the shoulders. "At any rate, my people believe the story firmly, and it does them no harm."

On the road between Alanje and Divala we crossed several streams. A better watered country than this could not well be imagined.

Divala is a little settlement of 50 to 60 huts and, perhaps, 300 inhabitants, who are entirely dependent upon the ranch and insure it a constant supply of labor. The people cultivate little patches, from which they derive almost all the foodstuffs they need. A few weeks' work in the year at 60 cents a day will produce enough money for clothing and a moderate indulgence in the luxuries that are to be had at the village trading store.

Divala is 15 miles from anywhere, but the most unlikely place to look for an American family in a bungalow that has the appearance of having been transplanted from a New Jersey suburb. Mrs. Wilson has lived in this out-of-the-way corner of the earth for five years, and has had the companionship of her infant during the past eighteen months. There is not a woman of her own race within 40 miles. This is isolation, indeed, and I suspected that she must find it irksome, though she would not admit as much.

Twelve years ago Leslie Wilson came out from California and settled in the neighborhood of Divala with half a dozen Americans and Britishers. Thus the settlement of Divala was formed and a large proportion of the ranch turned into Potrero without a penny of outlay. The disturbed condition of the country reduced the prices of all property, and Wilson was able to buy the nucleus of his stock at very low figures.

The owner of Divala has worked hard and intelligently for ten years on the improvement of his property. Today he has 5,000 acres of as fine land as any in Chiriqui, well stocked and furnished with all the necessary buildings. The ranch is easily worth \$50,000. Not a bad result of an enterprise started twelve years ago with \$300 capital.

## DRESS OF THE ESKIMO WOMEN

Their Apparel is the Same Summer and Winter and is Worn in the Same Way.

New York.—The dress of the Eskimo women is the same summer and winter, and is worn in the same way, writes Anna Blstrup, wife of the Danish governor of Greenland, in *The Century*. It consists first of a shift— which, in spite of the name, is, nevertheless, not shifted very often—made of common cotton stuff, and cut in the simplest possible form, with no embroideries. Over this they wear the



Eskimo Girl in Full Dress.

tiniak, or bird's skin, with its colored cotton stuff for daily use, and woolen, silk or velvet for Sundays and holidays. The hood is never used by the women, who always leave it hanging down. Around the neck the young girls wear a collar more than a quarter-yard wide, made of glass pearls, set in the most varied patterns. This pearl collar is worn only by young girls, and by wives until they have got their first child. After that, the pearls are used as fringes and tassels for the amaut.

The pet garments of the girls, and of married women, too, are the breeches and the kamiks. They take much time to make these garments as fine as possible. The breeches, which are worn next the bare body, are made of costly sealskins or reindeer skins. They are not fastened to the body by anything, but their stiffness keeps them in place. The Greenlanders know nothing of buttons or hooks or buckles or braces, at least on the women's garments.

The kamiks consist of an inner stocking of skin with the hair inside, and an outer boot made of dyed or painted skin in the most screaming colors—bright red, blue, violet. The most valued are the white half-boots which are used on Sundays, holidays and on certain occasions like marriages. The sole of the kamik is not hard and stiff, but soft and pliable. Between the soles of the inner and outer kamik is a layer of straw, that every day must be taken out and dried.

The hair-top, the national head-dress, is the darling of every young girl, and is put up twice or thrice a week. It is not taken down at night, and the women sleep with the top hanging out over the pillow's edge, which looks exceedingly funny if one happens into a sleeping-room at night. Round the top are wound ribbons of different colors, like standards, announcing the state of their bearers. The wives wear blue in all shades, the maidens red, the unmarried mothers green in all shades, and the widows wear black. All other colors are forbidden. In front they like to fasten on the ribbon some shining object a brooch or an old ear-ring. For lack of other things, they will pin on a piece of colored silver or gold paper. To get the top firm and stiff, the hair must be drawn very tight. In some the hair on each side of the head is torn out, and two large bald spots appear, which are not very becoming.

## STEAL \$21,000 IN TOWELS

Passengers on the Southern Pacific Railway Also Take Linen From Boats.

San Francisco, Cal.—Twenty-one thousand dollars' worth of towels were "lost" by the Southern Pacific railroad last year and for that reason women who ride on its trains and boats will be compelled to furnish their own towels hereafter. The towels were stolen from the washrooms on the trains and boats, as many as a hundred towels disappearing on one run. Even roller towels were taken though the company padlocked the racks to keep them from being removed. The towel thieves simply cut the towels and slipped them off. In dividend towels disappeared so fast that they were replaced with rollers after being used but a short time.

## Sees a Cure in Poetry.

Louisville, Ky.—"Poetry has as practical value as vaccination," declared Rev. Dr. E. Y. Mullins, president of the Southern Baptist Theological seminary here in an address to a local literary club. Duly read and appreciated, he said poetry is a real cure for the diseases which attend the feverish quest for gold. This virtue, he reasons, lies in the fact that thorough enjoyment of it demands relaxation.

## Loss of Appetite

Is loss of vitality, vigor or tone, and is often a forerunner of prostrating disease.

It is serious and especially so to people that must keep up and doing or get behindhand. The best medicine to take for it is the great constitutional remedy

## Hood's Sarsaparilla

Which purifies and enriches the blood and builds up the whole system.

Get it today in usual liquid form or chocolate tablets called Sarsatabs.



## NOT SYMPATHETIC.



The Hospital Doctor—What did the farmer say when you fell out of his barn and broke your arm?  
"Tramp—Didn't say nothin'. He wuz too busy a-laughin'."

## Ruskin Pitted Americans.

It is not only the half million bricks of Tattershall that have been numbered for trans-shipment across the Atlantic. Ruskin, when he was a boy, pitted the Americans for being so unhappy as to live in a country that has no castles. They will have a castle now, and no nation likes to be pitted. But the other importation, made by Mrs. Gardner as an addition to her Italian villa near Boston, was that of an entire chapel as it stands, with all its interior furnishings, even to the half-burned candles in the altar. The monks who served the chapel had been scattered by the strong hand of the law, and the building was to be devoted to the pick ax. The courageous American lady had it packed up in a Venetian hill country, where it stood, and carried down piecemeal and embarked.—London Chronicle.

## Small Circulation.

Shopman—Here is a very nice thing in revolving bookcases, madam.  
Mrs. Newrich—Oh, are those revolving bookcases? I thought they called them circulating libraries.—Christian Register.

Prudent men look up their motives, letting familiars have a key to their hearts as to their gardens.—Shakespeare.

## THE TEA PENALTY.

A Strong Man's Experience.

Writing from a busy railroad town the wife of an employe of one of the great roads says:

"My husband is a railroad man who has been so much benefited by the use of Postum that he wishes me to express his thanks to you for the good it has done him. His waking hours are taken up with his work, and he has no time to write himself.

"He has been a great tea drinker all his life and has always liked it strong.

"Tea has, of late years, acted on him like morphine does upon most people. At first it soothed him, but only for an hour or so, then it began to affect his nerves to such an extent that he could not sleep at night, and he would go to his work in the morning wretched and miserable from the loss of rest. This condition grew constantly worse, until his friends persuaded him, some four months ago, to quit tea and use Postum.

"At first he used Postum only for breakfast, but as he liked the taste of it, and it somehow seemed to do him good, he added it to his evening meal. Then, as he grew better, he began to drink it for his noon meal, and now he will drink nothing else at table.

"His condition is so wonderfully improved that he could not be hired to give up Postum and go back to tea. His nerves have become steady and reliable once more, and his sleep is easy, natural and refreshing.

He owes all this to Postum, for he has taken no medicine and made no other change in his diet.

"His brother, who was very nervous from coffee-drinking, was persuaded by us to give up the coffee and use Postum and he also has recovered his health and strength." Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

Read the little book, "The Road to Wellville," in pgs. "There's a Reason."

Ever read the above letter? A new one appears from time to time. They're genuine, true, and full of human interest.