

Why Did Not Colombia Ratify the Canal Treaty?

A Lack of Development Has Kept the Country Self-Centered and Its Statesmen Selfish.

FAILURE on the part of Colombia to ratify the Hay-Herran treaty, which would have assured the completion of the Panama canal, has brought that country more prominently before the world than it has been at any time since the organization and failure of the de Lesseps company in 1889.

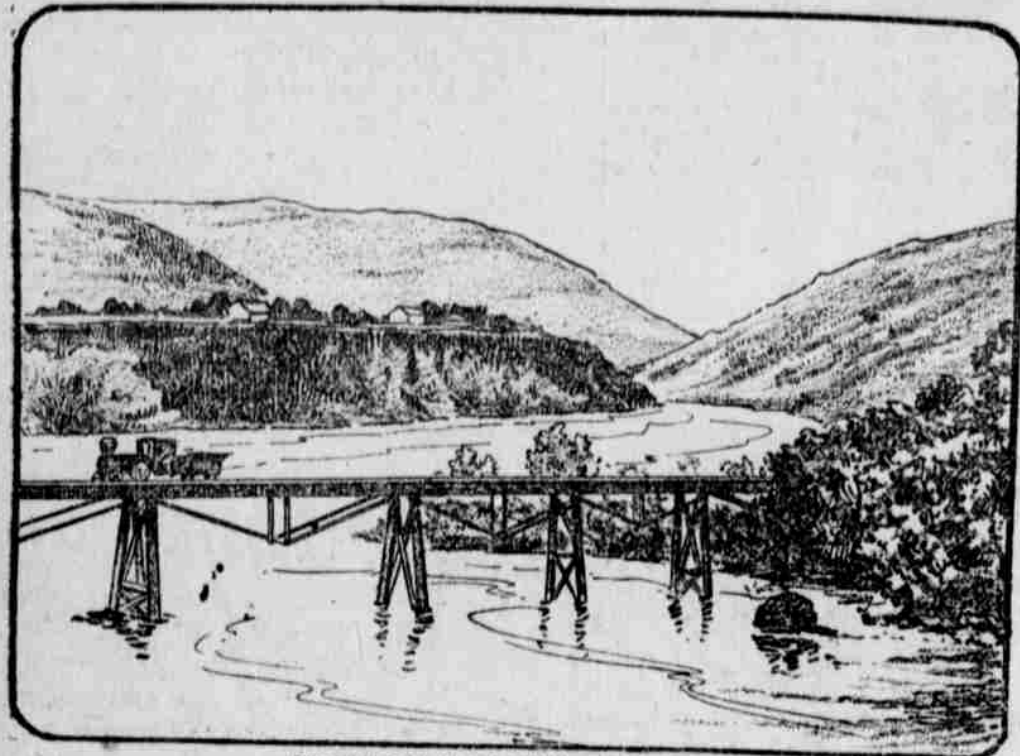
Save for the one state of Panama, there are but few of the South American republics of which less is known in general than of Colombia. Its lack of transportation facilities, and its great mountain ranges, which seemingly stand as a barrier against invasion from without, prevent us from cultivating an acquaintance with our swarthy cousins of the south.

The question for which we are most anxious to find an answer is, "Why did Colombia refuse to ratify the canal treaty?"

The topography of the country offers at least a partial answer to that question. It has prevented a development both of resources and of character; it has made possible the local contentions that have kept the country in almost a constant state of commotion and internal strife. By keeping the world out it has made "grafters" of those within, and it was a lack of understanding between those within as to the division of the "graft"

exist, these have never been known since the rule of the Spaniard was overthrown. The greatest of mineral and agricultural wealth lies waiting for the call of man. Given security for their investments, the men would come quickly enough, without it the country will continue to lie dormant.

With a territorial area of some 500,000 square miles, Colombia has less than 400 miles of railway, and this small amount is divided into a dozen short sections far removed from each other. With half a dozen promising harbor along the Caribbean sea, there is no means of reaching the interior of the country through them save by the Magdalena river and its tributaries, or by pack mules. Not only is it without railroads, but without wagon roads as well. The capital is reached either through Barranquilla or Cartagena, Caribbean seaports, thence by railroad for a short distance to the Magdalena river, then by river steamers to Honda, and from there by pack train to Bogota. The river portion of the journey will occupy anywhere from seven days to as many weeks, depending entirely upon the political condition of the country, the seven days being the quickest time possible. Honda is 600 miles from the sea, and from there to Bogota is a three days' mule journey over roads with which our forest corduroy cannot fairly be compared. Two short lines of railway run from the Mag-



THE MAGDALENA RIVER AT HONDA.

that prevented the ratification of the treaty.

When de Lesseps purchased the rights to construct the Panama canal it was under the old constitution when the various states of the confederation were virtually sovereign within themselves, and but little of the purchase price found its way to the pockets of the Bogota politicians, the larger part of it remaining in the state of Panama. The constitution was changed again in 1885 to the present form, which leaves the different states but little more than departments that are governed from Bogota. The Colombian politician, far removed from the world's activities because of a lack of development that would bring the world to him, knows, or at least cares, little for the welfare of other peoples or their interests. What he does know is that the world wants a canal across the Panama isthmus, and the question with him is, "How much will the world pay for the privilege of building it?" In no other capital of the world would a lobbyist, supplied with a fair allowance of gold, find so easy a task at settling a vexed question. But the government at Washington cannot stoop to the level of the corporation and employ the services of a few of these law-buying individuals, while, on the other hand, it is more than hinted that certain American railroad interests are not averse to "seeing" the men who have the giving of the canal-building privilege in their hands.

Panama is valuable to Colombia only to the extent of what the Bogota government can get out of the canal franchise across the barren little state, or, falling in getting anything from that, her revenue from the operation of the Panama railway. Panama wants the canal. The politicians who compose the Bogota government want it when it brings the right price for them individually. Until there is an individual settlement, or an arrangement of terms of division among themselves, they will continue to fire the country with patriotic speeches, of which such a treaty as the late one offers every opportunity. There is no more patriotic politician in the world, so long as there is no gold in sight to close his mouth, as our Spanish American cousin.

Develop Colombia, bring her capital, and all of her rich interior, into closer every-day relationship with the world, and these conditions will change within a few years. Colombia offers every inducement for development save that which must come from the government itself—stability and security for investments. Save for a few short periods, so short as to prove the rule that they do not

dalena, one at Honda and another at Puerto Berrio, but they are of no importance to the country at large. Bogota has two short lines of some 15 miles each, connecting nearby towns. The other railroads in operation are equally unimportant from the commercial standpoint. So it is that practically the entire commerce of this naturally rich country must be carried by the 42 little river steamers which operate on the Magdalena and its navigable tributaries.

Colombia is a self-centered country from which the world can expect but little in the way of favor save upon a dollars and cents basis for its self-centered statesmen. Of hearty public sentiment there is, and can be, but little, if any, under such conditions, and the conditions can only be changed by development.

Of opportunity for development there is an abundance. The vast mountain ranges of the country are teeming with minerals in valuable quantities. Gold, silver, platinum, lead, iron, mercury, antimony, limestone, potash, soda, magnesia, alum, salt, coal, asphalt and emeralds abound. Of the latter Colombia has virtually the only extensive deposits in the world, yet it lies idle. Gold and silver are being mined in a small way by a few English and American corporations which pay dearly for the privilege, while with practically all of her other vast mineral resources nothing is being done.

On the elevated plains maize, wheat, and in fact all the cereals are grown with success, and her tropical products, including tobacco, cotton, sugar, coffee, cocoa, and fruits grow with wonderful exuberance, but without a market because of a lack of development. Of manufacturing there is none, nor will there be under present conditions.

The darkness of Asia is not blacker than that of this new world republic, and from it we may expect but little as a favor either to the world, or to us.

DANIEL CLEVERTON.

One Advantage.

"So you think it is an advantage to a boy to be reared in the country?"
"To be sure," answered Farmer Corn-tassel. "A boy has a heap better chance in the country. For instance, when a boy is surrounded by orchards and melon patches, he can have a stomach ache without the doctor jumpin' to the conclusion that he's got 'pendicitis.'"—Washington Star.

The Only Way.

Bertha—So they were divorced?
Bert—Yes; the cook said she wouldn't work where there was more than one in the family.—Puck.

PLEASES HIS VANITY.

Something That Makes an Old Foggy Swell Up and Fly Off His Trolley.

"I'm experiencing that swelled and all-hot-up feeling these days," remarked an old-time government clerk as he rode down to his office the other morning, relates the Washington Star. "I find it kind o' hard to get in and out of doors that fitted my proportions easily enough only a short time ago, and now I know, in a sort of way, how J. Pierpont Morgan feels when he puts through some colossal deal."

"Why? Well, they gave me a stenographer last week, down at the office. I've been pegging away at the same old desk for about thirty years now; but, somehow or another, I can't help feeling that I've had a big boost along, now that I've got a stenographer. I'm bound to admit that I've got the big head a heap over having that shorthand man all to myself. Feel a hull lot more cheery than I've ever felt since I first entered the government service, and I guess I'm strutting about the halls of the old building these days in a way that makes the messengers grin when my back's turned."

"But I just natchally can't help it—this thing of having a stenographer to boss around has got me going. My wife, with her eagle eye, has already observed the habit I've developed of keeping my shoulders well thrown back since they gave me the stenographer, and I guess the fact that I've got a stenographer tickles the good old girl just as much as it does me—only she says now, with the woman's fatuous belief in the ability of her husband, no matter how much of a dummy he may be, that I ought to have had a stenographer years and years ago. Anyhow, durned if I don't actually believe that that stenographer business has pleased me more than a \$200 h'ist in my pay would have done—it gives me that sense of importance, you know—something that I've never experienced before in all of the long years since I entered the employ of Uncle Sam—makes me feel like somebody, instead of just a nobody. I could just feel myself swelling up when they first sent that young shorthand fellow to me. Of course, I tried to get away with the bluff with him that I'd been used to dictating to stenographers all my life, but he's a pretty shrewd youngster, that stenographer of mine, and I'm afraid that he was next to the fact that dictating was a dead new game to me, although he didn't let on—these kids are pretty diplomatic in their dealings with us old codgers nowadays. He could see how much good it was doing me to touch the button on the side of my desk that summons him, and to clear my throat in a heavy, ponderous sort of way, and to begin dictating indorsements to him, and he was willing to let me go on imagining from the first that I was some punkins."

"It's not so much the help that the young pot-hook-writing fellow gives me in my work, the chance that he gives me to rest my eyes, the burden that he's taken off my shoulders. I was used to the work and I didn't mind it. But, dear me, suz, and, likewise, gosh all hemlock, it's the real-thing feeling of having a stenographer all to himself that sort o' throws an old foggy like me off his trolley, and if I don't just puff up and dust before the leaves begin to swirl in the ditches, why, it'll be a caution, that's all!"

Needlework Hint.

An ingenious way of dealing with odds and ends of embroidery silk is to take a square of white cheese cloth and mark out on it small, pear-shaped figures about two inches or more long; outline them with yellow, and fill them in with different colored silks, such as deep red, blue, plum, green, old rose or gray, blending the tints artistically. Quite a Persian effect is thus produced, and the pears may easily be drawn on the cheese cloth from a newspaper pattern. Arranged like a border around an open square, containing a monogram, the effect is excellent. The ruffle which finishes this yellow is of coarse lace, with a design outlined with embroidered silk.—N. Y. Post.

Just Wanted a Chance.

"Mister Judge," called out the colored witness, after he had been on the stand a full hour, "kin I say a word, huh?"

"Yes," replied the judge. "What is it?"

"Hit's des dis, suh; Ef you'll des make de lawyers set down en keep 300 two minutes en gimme a livin' chance I'll whirl in en tell de truth!"—Atlanta Constitution.

Sweet Corn Pudding.

One pint corn, two tablespoonfuls melted butter, two tablespoonfuls granulated sugar, two eggs beaten light, two cupfuls milk, saltspoonful salt, a small pinch of soda; chop the corn fine, add eggs, sugar, butter, salt and milk, in which soda has been stirred; bake half an hour in a covered pudding dish, then uncover and brown.—Good Literature.

Pumice Soap for Scouring.

Two pounds cocoonut oil, one pound soda lye, one and a quarter pounds pumice stone in powder, one-quarter ounce oil of thyme, one dram of bergamot.—American Queen.

Making Treaties with Menelek of Abyssinia

The Ethiopian Monarch of East Africa Has, as a Rule, Treated Visiting Diplomats Courteously.

THE United States is about to negotiate a trade treaty with Abyssinia. Robert P. Skinner, the American consul general at Marseilles, has been selected to perform the delicate and important mission. He has been in close conference with the officials of the state department regarding his expedition, and the public is denied the details of Mr. Skinner's instructions, but there is no reason to suppose that the negotiations with Menelek II. will go beyond that of securing favorable conditions for the encouragement of American trade with the Abyssinian kingdom.

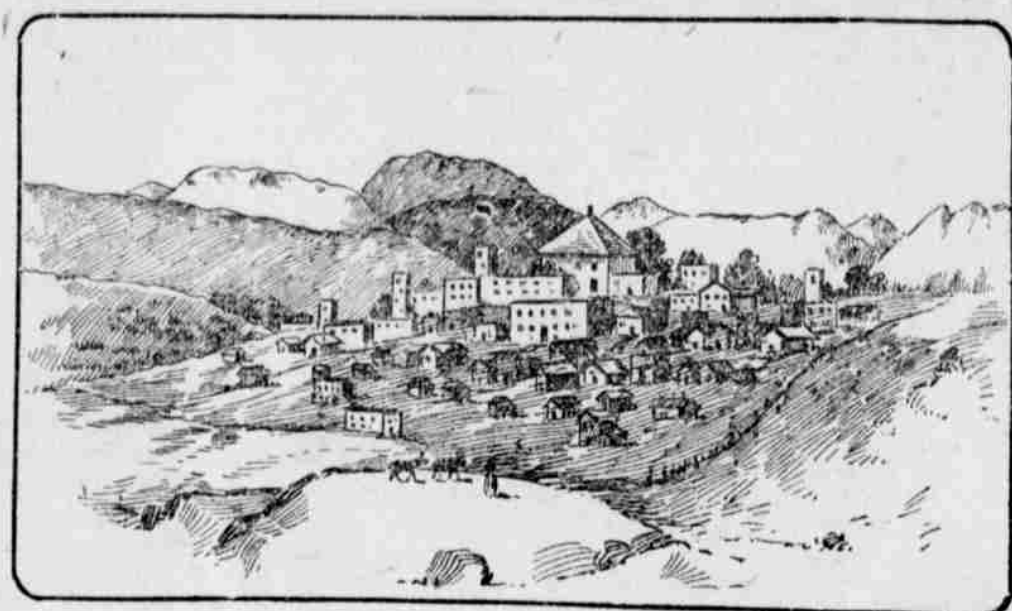
This country lies in the eastern part of Africa, below Egypt and the Sudan, and is reached through the port of Massowah, on the Red sea. Massowah is under control of Italy, and the mention of Italy in connection with Abyssinia recalls the comparatively recent and disastrous attempt of the former nation to enforce the terms of the treaty of protection made in 1889 and which was abrogated by Menelek in 1893. This was followed by the terrific war which is still fresh in the memory of the republic, and which resulted in making Menelek and Abyssinia important factors in East African affairs.

Abyssinia, which is part of the ancient Ethiopia, claims to possess the

mute, and barely allowed the envoys to see the tip of his nose. He swathed his head and face, as well as his body in his shamma, or toga, embroidered in various colored silks in a broad stripe down the center of the cloth, a badge of nobility worn only by the king and his chieftains.

Here is the message which the king condescended to send to Sir William Hewitt during the three weeks of waiting, and which shows the pride and arrogance of the Ethiopian Christian monarch, and to which pride and arrogance it is feared Menelek is not a stranger: "Message of King John, by the Almighty King of Zion. May it reach Sir William Hewitt, commanding ships of war in the East Indian station. How do you do? Thank God, I and my army are quite well. I am taking some baths. I send you Ras Alula (one of his chieftains) to assist you in counsel, provisions and everything. As your excellency is going to make friendship between two kingdoms, don't be in a hurry to go back. I will come soon."

Abyssinia is divided into several districts, with a chieftain over each district, who only is accountable to the king, and who exercises absolute power over the lives and property of the inhabitants of the district. When Sir Hewitt's expedition entered the first district of Abyssinia after leaving Massowah, it was startled and thrilled by its reception at the hands of one of



ADOWA, THE CAPITAL OF ABYSSINIA.

primitive Christianity, and boasts of possessing the relics of St. Mark, the evangelist. Egypt, which was once a Christian kingdom for 295 years ending A. D. 640, was subsequently swallowed up by the darkness of paganism, but Abyssinia has ever held fast to Christianity, even though distorting it with strange superstitions and fierce fanaticism of even sterner savagery than animated the old Crusaders, with whom hatred to the heathen was equivalent to love of God. The Abyssinians trace the origin of the empire to the days of Solomon and the queen of Sheba; the present king, Menelek II., claiming to be a direct lineal descendant of the two. The religion is a strange mixture of Judaism and Christianity. Great pride of race and religion animates this singular people, whose monarch bears the haughty title of Negus Negusti (King of Kings), and who styles himself "Defender of the Faith."

Just what experiences await Mr. Skinner and his marines, and the kind of reception he will receive at the hands of the warlike, aggressive and independent ruler it is hard to tell. It is interesting, however, in connection with this proposed expedition into the heart of Abyssinia, to recall some of the experiences of former expeditions. That of Sir William Hewitt was the most noteworthy. It was when Gordon Pasha was shut up in Khartoum, and the Egyptian garrisons in the eastern Sudan were menaced by the Mahdi's fanatical followers, that it became necessary to seek the favor of the Abyssinian monarch to permit the Christian inhabitants and garrisons bordering on the Abyssinian frontier to pass through that country to the coast. And it was on this mission that Sir Hewitt was dispatched in 1884.

It is to be hoped that Menelek will not be as slow in receiving the American mission as his predecessor on the throne, King Johannes, was in admitting the English party into his august presence. It was three weeks after Sir Hewitt reached Adowa, the capital, before the embassy was summoned to pay its respects and make known the object of its mission. It was a long and hard journey of many days in reaching Adowa, and the stay there was one of privation, for, for several days after reaching there, supplies were withheld, the subjects of the king being absolutely under the control of their ruler, who wished to impress the foreigners with the powers which he exerted. And when the conference was granted, it could hardly be called such, for the Negus played the

these chieftains. Fifteen hundred cavalrymen suddenly appeared in the distance. At a given signal they turned sharply, facing the foreigners, and then charged with seeming fury straight at them. They were all fire-looking men, with headgear of handkerchiefs of various colors, or simply white tape tied round their close, curly hair, after the fashion of the ancient Romans. Some sported lion manes, which fringing their dusky faces made them look almost as savage as that beast himself. Skins of black leopard, over their red and white togas, swathed their bodies. As with crouched spears and uplifted targets they bore down upon Sir Hewitt and his party they yelled like maniacs, madly shaking their weapons in defiance; and when within a few paces, with one accord they suddenly curbed their horses. So quickly was this done that their chargers reeled back upon their haunches. Each warrior at the same time lowered the point of his spear and in silence bowed his body before the envoys.

The earliest visit of Abyssinia was that of the Portuguese, who in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries prosecuted a search for the kingdom of Prester John. The English expedition, in 1867, against King Theodoros, was the first that really opened the country and let some light in on its dark and unknown places. Great was the surprise of Christendom to learn that Abyssinia was a nation which had a knowledge of Christianity and prided herself upon a history which reached back to King Solomon's day. Then came the difficulties with Italy in 1887, which were finally terminated in the following year by the drawing up of a treaty in which the sovereignty of Italy was in a measure recognized. This treaty was made under King John. Menelek seized the throne upon the latter's death, and as this singularly able king gathered strength he was tempted in 1893 to abrogate the treaty. Italy's attempt to force Menelek into subjection was a most humiliating failure, and Abyssinia has constantly gained prestige among the nations since that day. Now comes the effort of this country to make a commercial treaty with Abyssinia, which opens up a new epoch to that country and possibly to the United States as well.

His Joy Would Keep.

Nurse—The doctor says your wife cannot possibly recover, sir.
Enpeck—Well, I'm not going to build up any hopes on what he says. Doctors are not infallible.—Chicago Daily News.