

PAYING OFF AT PANAMA.

Handling of the Money for the Workers on the Great Isthmian Canal.

No more interesting scenes could be imagined than those in the various camps on the Panama canal, when the great army of laborers employed by the United States government are paid their wages from a special train filled with money—chiefly bags of \$1,000 each, weighing about 60 pounds. The skilled white laborers and office employees, about 2,500 in all, receive their pay once a month, amounting to about \$250,000, in much the same way as ordinary government clerks are paid in Washington. Of the laborers, however—largely Jamaican negroes—there are at present 15,000 at least, and they draw about \$60,000 a month in fortnightly payments.

One might think that the pay clerks in their train load of specie would feel uncomfortable among this army of dusky giants, especially when the train halts in some small tropical camp and great sacks of silver are unloaded in the jungle. The other day, writes a correspondent at Panama I saw \$60,000 put on the pay car for the so-called "silver men" working at Tabernilla, San Pablo, Cristobal Gatun and Bohio. Some Jamaican colored police were watching the negro boys bringing out the sacks of silver, and others stood by the wagons while the money was put on.

"Sixty," exclaimed Mr. Waldrop, the chief cashier. A policeman climbed onto each truck, the whips cracked, and off went the teams of mules with the cashier and pay clerks bringing up the rear in cabs. Mr. Waldrop did not seem to be afraid about leaving the \$1,000 bags unguarded on the railway station, where altogether there must have been nearly two tons of coined silver. The pay car is, of course, specially constructed, and three lines of laborers face its side doors. These are in pairs, and the men climb up on the car trucks to one of the double doors, receive their money, pass out at the other, and leap down.

The pay counter runs the entire length of the car, close to the doors, and only one man can stand in front of it at a time. Each applicant presents a pink pay certificate giving his number, the amount of wages due to him, and the signature of an official, who certifies that the bearer is the proper person to pay and has given a receipt by signing his name on the certificate.

For further security the laborer shows his diamond-shaped metal tag with his number stamped on it. This usually hangs from his belt, but at the pay counter he holds it up in his left hand, puts down his certificate, grabs off his hat, and holds it out for the showed of silver. The pay clerk compares the number, glances at the signature, and then reaches under the counter and throws rolls of coin and loose silver into the extended hat.

The rolls usually contain \$25 down up in packages by Chinese boys whom the disbursing office, after having tried white clerks and girls, have found to be the most rapid and accurate money counters on the isthmus. Two of them are champions—Chong and Leon. These will count and roll up in \$25 packages over \$25,000 worth of silver dollars in a day, and never make a mistake. These two Chinese boys have counted and wrapped millions of dollars, and not one package has ever been found wrong. Their pay is about \$75 a month.

The scene in the traveling pay train is most interesting. The canal laborers are paid at the rate of eight a minute at each door, or 24 minutes for the entire car. This rate can be kept up, provided no forged or imperfect certificates are presented. Forgeries there are, of course, but of a very stupid kind. Thus three dollars will be altered to \$13 in the figures on the order to pay and not in the receipt! Detection and arrests occur every pay day.

These Jamaican negroes would never dream of stealing money from the pay car in the ordinary way, but such of them as are not wholly illiterate simply glory in trying to demonstrate their less "cultured" brethren what a valuable thing "education" is, and how it can be turned into money.

On goes the pay train into the jungle at Tabernilla and Gatun, as well as the smaller camps, where the negroes, after getting paid, run screaming with delight into the bush, and play like children or monkeys with the glittering silver. The matter of currency in the isthmus is most intricate. Heavy Mexican dollars are furnished by the Panama government to the canal paymaster for the "silver" men; but the "gold men" are paid on the 4th of every month in different currency altogether. The pay certificates are returned to the divisions for redistribution once more to the men; and the time books, time rolls, and pay rolls are sent to the disbursing officer to be checked and examined.

This official is under heavy bonds, and must audit every figure on the rolls. He is therefore obliged to go carefully over 32,500 names on the 1,700 big sheets every month before he will pay out a dollar. In a few weeks' time thousands of other laborers will be imported into the isthmus, when the actual work of "making the dirt fly" begins, and then the pay train will be longer and its staff larger than ever before.

Jamaican Finances.

Jamaica is now apparently out of her financial difficulties. The governor reports a surplus of \$80,000, and the six per cent. surtax on imports has been removed.

FRANKING IS ABOLISHED.

Postage Stamps Must Be Used Upon All Mail Matter in the Philippines.

The postal administration of the Philippines has taken the step advocated so strongly by Edwin C. Madden, third assistant postmaster general for the United States government, to wit: the franking privilege has been entirely abolished on the islands, and every piece of mail matter, whether private or official, must bear a postage stamp. The motives actuating the insular government in taking this step were the same that suggested to Gen. Madden the desirability of abolishing the franking privilege in the United States; a deficit in the postal bureau. The Philippine officials were satisfied that the postal department of the islands would take care of itself provided it could be placed on a business basis. Under the old regime vast quantities of official mail was being transported and handled from which no revenue was derived; the matter simply bore the usual "penalty card" and was carried free.

The insular bureau is in a sense a law to itself and has authority to handle its postal affairs according to the desire of the department without invoking legislation by congress. The postal department, weary of its regular annual deficit and the unfavorable comment that naturally followed, took the matter into its own hands and issued an order that hereafter all mail of the insular government must carry the requisite stamps. The order went into effect and the various bureaus of the insular government are paying their good money to the post office department of the island and affixing postage stamps to every piece of mail deposited in the office, whether it be a domestic or foreign mail.

The method employed is this: The bureaus of the insular government buy quantities of stamps of various denominations and with a rubber stamp overprint them with the initials "O. B.," which signifies "official business." Money to purchase the stamps is taken from the insular treasury, paid to the postal department, which in turn deposits the money in the insular treasury. It is literally a case of taking money out of one pocket and putting it into the other, yet it enables the postal department to obtain credit for the business it actually does and requires the other departments to charge themselves with a legitimate expense. The insular government as a whole has not made nor lost a cent, beyond the actual cost of printing the postage stamps, which is about ten cents per 1,000 stamps.

In his annual report to congress, Gen. Madden recommended that the franking privilege be abolished and that members of congress and officials in the departments be required to affix postage stamps to all mail sent out. He proposed that specific appropriations should be made which should cover the amount of the cost of stamps used by members of congress and the departments in official correspondence or for prepayment of postage on documentary mail. It was not expected that this scheme would result in any net saving to the government, but it would enable the post office department to wipe out its annual deficit of about \$15,000,000 and this amount would be added to the expenditures of the other departments according to the amount of postage stamps required.

It is not expected that action will be taken along the line by congress at this session, but the matter has had attention at the hands of the house post office committee, and it is acknowledged that there is great force in the recommendations of the post office department. The campaign in this direction will be continued and it is only a question of a few years when all departments and officials will be using postage stamps.

CUTTING INTO OUR MARKETS

Italian Manufacturers Putting Forth Efforts to Build Up Trade in Philippines.

Consul Dunning reports to the bureau of manufactures from Milan on the methods of Italian manufacturers in building up their trade in the Philippines Islands. Lombardy shipped \$380 in goods to Manila in 1903, \$4,000 in 1904, and for the six months ending December, 1905, the shipments from Milan to the Philippines amounted to over \$38,000. Every article sent by the Italians, the report says, is being made in the United States, including hats, paper, cottons, umbrellas, boots, milk, macaroni, paint, hemp, lamps, medicines, preserves, linen, soap, pottery, and wearing apparel. Many of the "Manila" hats coveted by travelers and collectors, the consul adds, are made in Milan and shipped into the east by the gross.

"American shoes" are also made in Italy. Vice-Consul Schiemmer writes from Mannheim, Germany, that he visited a number of shoe stores in that city, which advertised American shoes. Some of the merchants admitted that their stocks were from Milan. One of the shoe store managers was an Italian, who said he saw no reason why American shoes should not be made in Italy just as well as in Massachusetts.

Hawaiian Surf Birds.

That birds of the family termed surf birds in the Hawaiian Islands should leave that paradise of the Pacific to go and rear their young in the tundras of Alaska would seem to many as an extraordinary proceeding. Yet the turnstone and the black-bellied plover and the Pacific golden plover make the long journey of about 4,000 miles thither annually.

FILIPINO RAILROAD MEN.

Natives in Manila Take Readily to the Work of Operating Electric Lines.

The experiment made in depending solely on native Filipinos to man the cars of the Manila Electric railway has proved eminently successful. Although this kind of help was used exclusively in building the lines, which were opened to traffic last April, it was feared by some that a certain well-known tendency toward unreliability in the native character would manifest itself in the new work, more exacting than any natives had heretofore been called upon to perform in numbers since the American occupation.

"It is generally known," said P. E. Fansler, assistant to the president of the New York company, by which the system was built and operated, "that the natives are wonderfully quick to learn up to a certain point, where a childish unreliability has blocked further progress in the attainment of a thoroughly civilized status. That it is rather a matter of proper and well directed tuition seems to be the lesson in the present case. As was generally anticipated, the operating manager in Manila, Mr. Belden, met with instantaneous success in instructing the native mind in the technique of street car operation, but contrary to general anticipation the usual bete noir—instability—seems to have been quite thoroughly overcome."

"It is felt now that the native has lived up to the requirements of the job fully as well as the white man could have done under any conditions and probably better, taking the climate into consideration," said he. "It must be remembered that to operate a modern electric car in the crowded streets of an oriental city, where the traffic and pedestrians are absolutely at variance and unaccustomed to so foreign an element, calls for the full measure of steadiness and resourcefulness to avoid accident. It is a fact that under these trying conditions the Manila Electric railway is being operated with what may justifiably be considered a minimum of accident and that through the demonstration by the Filipino motorman of his full possession of those very qualities that the more cursory examiners have declared to be wanting. Fully to appreciate the peculiar demand for steadiness one must have had experience in trying to progress through the streets of a far eastern metropolis. Pedestrians use the roadway very often in common with vehicles and may generally be persuaded to make way only when their lives are actually in danger. A narrow escape from death is uniformly treated as a good joke, not only by the observers, but by the principal as well. Under the circumstances the almost complete freedom from serious accident in the operation of the line is decidedly noteworthy. The conductors, too, uniformly show the ability to live up to the requirements of their work. They perform their duties expeditiously and with tact and are, moreover, quite honest."

"These facts are significant of the possibilities in the native Filipino character when given just opportunity to display itself and will prove especially interesting to Americans watching the industrial development of the islands."

MORO BANDS' FANATICISM.

No Course But to Hunt Down and Kill Them, Says Gov. Scott, of Sulu.

Maj. H. L. Scott, governor of the Sulu archipelago, about to return to his post, made a parting call on the president. As he left the White House, says a Washington report, he said that he thought Gen. Wood's attack on the Moros at Mount Dajo would improve conditions in Sulu.

"I hope," he said, "that our soldiers will not again be compelled to give battle to the Moro bands. The chief of the band that was exterminated the other day is perfectly friendly to this country. He tried hard to keep the band from continuing their warfare against our government in the islands, but was unable to do so. They were determined on disobeying all law, on killing and acting to suit themselves, and they did not propose to surrender."

"They proposed death to surrender. See this band?" and Maj. Scott held out his right hand, which showed two fingers missing. "Well, I tried 50 times to get the leader of the band that gave me these wounds to surrender. While I lay in the hospital three months I sent him word often, asking him to surrender and assuring him fair treatment. His name was Panglim Hassam. He disregarded every message we sent and returned defiant and insulting messages. Nothing remained but to hunt him and his band down and engage them in battle. He was finally killed. That is the sort of character we must deal with among these fanatical people. Not a soldier of this country wants to shed blood, and every soldier regrets the necessity for hostile action."

Negro Advancement in Hayti.

Yet in Hayti the negro has worn the epaulettes for one century and one year, and there he proves that the negro as a race, when left alone, is incapable of self-advancement. No one can expect him to develop resources. Time is an unmarketable article. A day is not worth a banana. In his precious logwood forests, rather than cut only the timber that is ready, he strips it all, and burns over the hills afterward. To restore such useless waste of vast treasure nature must have 30 or 40 years. A provident man grows heartsick at the sight. Again, wherever a new industry rears its head, at once the negro's bludgeon falls.—World's Work.

CONDITIONS IN PANAMA.

Only Objection of Returned Visitor Was in the Matter of Rations.

Edward T. Shea, the former sheriff of Prince George county, Maryland, arrived here yesterday from Panama on his way home to pass his vacation. He has been employed as a foreman on the Panama railroad at Paraiso, and will return there early in May, says the Washington Star. Mr. Shea went to Panama about nine months ago, and during the time he was there he was sick only two days.

"During the nine months I was there," he said to a Star reporter, "I did not have to go to the hospital. The climate is different from what it is here, but it is a matter of only a short time before one can become acclimated and get to enjoy it. The only fault I have to find with conditions there is the matter of feeding the men. Unless something is done to change the quality of the food there will be a scarcity of labor there in a short time."

He explained that a man who has been there six months is entitled to a leave of absence of six weeks. Many of them who come away on their leave of absence do not return. Unless a change is made in the matter of feeding or an increase is given in the matter of pay, Mr. Shea repeated, the government will experience trouble in getting the necessary help from the United States.

Mr. Shea said that he was one of a number of passengers who came from Havana aboard the steamer Panama, formerly the City of Havana, and the steamer reached New York Sunday. Many of the men, he said, had on thin clothing, one of them wearing a duck suit and an overcoat. He was from Boston, however, and did not mind it much. Those who had only thin summer clothing had expected to reach New York Saturday or Monday and intended to purchase new clothes as soon as they arrived, but they reached there Sunday and some of them felt the effects of the weather to an uncomfortable extent before they were able to make purchases. The Boston man, wearing his white duck suit and overcoat, attracted attention as he walked about the streets.

Workmen coming away on leave of absence pay only \$20 each way for their transportation. The trip on the Panama was a pleasant one and was greatly enjoyed by those who were homeward bound to visit friends.

HOW MOROS ARE CIVILIZED.

Learn, Little at a Time, the Shrewd Business Methods of the Western World.

The Moros, like all other natives of the Philippines, are possessed of a consuming desire to carry a "pass," some sort of an official certificate as to character, home, business, etc., of the bearer, and they are willing to pay any amount therefor, and never think of it as taxation, writes R. L. Bullard, in Atlantic. On this weak point the Moros showed the first signs of yielding. Then the plan of indirect taxation caught, pleased, and overcame them, as it catches wisest men than they. Imported cotton cloth paying duty at the custom house had long been reaching the Moros through a few coast traders, and was now in large use among the Moros. Touching the jacket of the nearest datto: "You are a lot of foolish and ignorant children," I said. "You are haggling about paying taxes when you have already been doing it for years, and have been giving the Americans money to pay me to pay the interpreter and all my soldiers." This at once struck their attention. The explanation followed. They understood it remarkably quickly. They saw the humor and the truth of the thing, and, wondering at the finesse that had been able to make them contribute to their own subjugation, yielded in a sort of unpleased way, feeling, no doubt, that it was useless to hope to escape a people who could devise such a smart system of getting money from other people without the latter's even knowing it. To my help also at this juncture came my old friend, the priest Naskalim, the metropolitan, as it were, of Lanao, with, if not a revelation, something better—wisdom—to his people: "It is the will of Allah, ta-Allah. The Merciful, who has many names."

In these ways government and civilization have gained upon them.

Volcanoes of Philippines.

An interesting feature of the Philippines, which has as yet been neglected, is their score or more of volcanoes. This addition makes the list of volcanoes in the United States a very important one. The volcanoes of America, or the United States, are of especial interest, and they are found in the western country, as a rule west of the Rocky mountains. One of the most beautiful of these is Mount Shasta, 14,440 feet high, which rears its massive twin cones in northern California. Mount Helena in Oregon, 12,600 feet in height, is a majestic volcanic peak, and Mount Hood, 11,225 feet, has a world-wide fame for its beauties, little thought being given to its activities in the early geological history of the continent. Other famous peaks are Mount Jefferson, Mount Adams, Mount Rainier, Mount Baker and Mount Lassen.

Porto Rico's "Lazy Bug."

Capt. Bailey K. Ashford has had so much success in fighting the "lazy bug" in Porto Rico that Government Agent Harris has been sent to the island to be instructed in his methods, with a view to introducing them among the men digging the Panama canal.

RAILROADS ON ISTHMUS.

New and Old Lines Which Cross the Panama Neck and Their Traffic.

The Panama canal is so great an enterprise that it overshadows other important work that has been done to facilitate commerce between the Pacific and Atlantic oceans, across the wasp-like waste connecting North and South America. We have heard something of the Panama railroad and also of the Vera Cruz-Pacific railway, which affords communication between the two coast lines. Perhaps not so much is known of the new national railway built across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec by a combination of American capital and the Mexican government. A report from Special Agent Pepper to the consular department says:

"As it exists to-day the Tehuantepec National railway is an unusually good work of railroad construction and seems capable of sustaining all the freight traffic that can be obtained for it. The road is standard gauge of four feet eight and one-half inches. For the clayey soil there is rock ballast and gravel. The ties are cross-tied pine, California redwood and native hardwood. Eighty-pound steel rails are employed. The best steel bridges with solid masonry and abutments are utilized wherever a river is to be crossed, and this is especially important on account of the torrential rains in the wet season. The locomotives and rolling stock are of the best equipment. With this solid construction there seems to be no question about the railroad standing whatever strain may be put upon it."

Thus it appears, says the Indianapolis News, that the old line across the Isthmus at Tehuantepec has been rebuilt and modernized. It is not regarded as a rival to the canal when it is completed, but it is designed to carry a heavy traffic during the period of the canal construction. It will carry the overflow traffic which the Panama railroad cannot take care of, on account of the necessity of using its facilities for the construction work of the canal. Connecting with the new railroad on either coast will be steamship lines, and a great traffic will doubtless be developed, which will reach its full flower when the canal is put into operation. It is evident that tremendous commercial possibilities have developed in recent years, and that there is to be a marked increase of commerce across the isthmus long before the canal is finished.

PACKING COCOA SEEDS.

Method Tried in Samoa Thought to Be of Value for the Philippines.

Consul General Helmsrod, of Apia, submits a method of packing cocoa seeds for export which has been practically tried in Samoa with excellent results, and which he believes may be of special value to planters in the Philippine Islands.

The seeds should be selected from ripe pods and well washed in water, then placed on a rough towel and gently rubbed in order to remove most of the pulp, taking care not to damage the skin. The seeds are next placed in a current of cool air for 24 hours. The packing material is composed of equal parts of vegetable mold and finely ground or pounded charcoal, moistened just enough to resemble earth taken out of a shaded place. If the packing material is too wet, the seeds will rot, and if not moist enough the seeds will absorb all the water and perish. A tin box eight by four by four will hold about 200 seeds if packed as follows: Place a layer of earth and charcoal about three-fourths of an inch deep on the bottom of the tin box and lay the seeds in rows, leaving a little space between each. Spread another layer of the charcoal and earth, then another layer of rows of seeds, and so on until the box is full. Packing a slip of material across when the lid fits will help to keep the moisture in. When wetting the charcoal and earth, it is a wise precaution to do it 12 hours before being wanted, as this gives the water time to permeate the whole mass evenly.

Tree of the Canaries.

The dragon tree of the Canary Islands is notable for the existence of individuals believed to be the oldest living vegetable organism in the world. The age of one tree, in particular, the once famous dragon tree of Tenerife, has usually been estimated to be from 4,000 to 6,000 years, having thus an antiquity comparable with that of the pyramids. This wonder of the plant world was 70 feet or more in height, and survived intact until the year 1819, when during a terrific storm one of the large branches was broken off. A similar storm in 1867 stripped the trunk of its remaining branches and left it standing alone. This tree derives its common name from a reddish exudation known as dragon's blood, found in the sepulchral caves of the Guanches, and supposed to have been used by them in embalming their dead. It is said to have been at one time an important article of export from the canaries.

Fifteen-Ton Piece of Coral.

The dredger Governor, in the old Pacific mail dock, did herself proud by landing a 15-ton piece of coral on dry land. The big scoop had been delivering ordinary loads, when the boom dropped and the engine started to haul in a fresh load. Then the gear groaned, and things commenced to make a big fuss, and more steam was given and everybody stood by. Balanced as neatly as an egg in a spoon came up a coral rock far too big to get in the scoop, and just able to cramp in under the gin block.—Honolulu Commercial Advertiser.

SOME MODERN BUCCANEERS.

Scheme for Revolution in Panama That Was a Purely Business Enterprise.

I happen to know of two Americans of position who had inside information of the conditions in Panama, and who sat in a room in the New Willard in Washington, one night in the fall of 1903, consummating plans for putting through the revolution, obtaining a charter from the new republic, and forming a company of capitalists, writes Capt. Lloyd Buchanan, in Lippincott's Magazine. Mr. Pierpont Morgan was to be asked to organize the company. The total cost of the revolution was to be under \$150,000, and all the equipment needed in addition to what the junta could supply was a pair of moderately fast small steamers, chartered, four six-inch guns, with ammunition, and 50 Krag rifles. The steamers and weapons were to be handled by Americans and Englishmen who had no special calling on earth. I have every reason to believe that, if Mr. Roosevelt had failed to act as he did, and any private concern had taken up the construction of the canal, a revolution would have gone off with an accuracy and style that has never been surpassed. But, unfortunately for art, Mr. Roosevelt did act.

South America, Mexico and the West Indies are threaded everywhere by the trails of these adventurers of life. In Curacao you can find hatching any sort of scheme you choose—from a plan to smuggle a couple of bolts of silk and a case of champagne into Venezuela, to a plot to overthrow a republic and putting a new dictator in its capital. I met there in the same day a ruined American gambler, begging his passage back to the states, and the sons of Guzman Blanco, the banished ex-president of Venezuela. The former stopped me opposite a Dutch cigar store and told me with the most pointed frankness what he wanted, but the latter, over their cigarettes and long legs, mourned, evasively of exile and confiscated estates in general. It is, then, not for me to say why they were frizzling on that sun-baked islet within 50 miles of the Venezuelan coast, when they might as well have been in the dear Paris that they know and love so well. But probably they knew—and Castro. I think I did, too.

HONOLULU POULTRY EXPERT.

Claims to Be Able to Predetermine the Sex and Fertility of an Egg.

C. W. Weatherwax, a chicken fancier of Honolulu, claims he has discovered a process whereby he can tell the sex of an egg and whether it will be fertile or not. Weatherwax has been experimenting with eggs since 1894 and is now in a position to give the results of his investigations to the world. He has used thousands of eggs in his experiments and kept two 50-egg incubators going all the time.

He claims to be able to tell whether the produce of an egg will be a rooster or a hen, and if the chick has a fair chance to reach maturity.

"I am willing to make a public test with 100 eggs," said Weatherwax, "in order to prove my assertions. The eggs may be marked according to my prediction with an indelible pencil before being put in the incubator. In nine cases out of ten it will be found that I am right."

Mr. Weatherwax claims that he is the first white man to possess this remarkable knowledge. Poultry papers are unanimous in declaring that there is no way of telling a fertile egg before putting it in the incubator. They maintain that even if the egg be broken, the germ cannot be seen with the naked eye.

Weatherwax undertakes to teach the whole thing in five minutes. He declares that no mechanical devices or chemicals are used.

AWFUL DISEASE ON GUAM.

Gangraena, Which Destroys Upper Part of Victim's Face, Worse Than Leprosy.

Gangraena, a tropical disease more repulsive than leprosy, has become so prevalent on the island of Guam that Lieut. McNamee, U. S. N., acting governor of the island, has recommended the establishment of a hospital for the isolation of the disease, which is believed to be highly contagious. Admiral Rixey, surgeon general of the navy, has approved the recommendation and it is probable that a \$5,000 hospital will be erected immediately near the leper hospital on the island. Lieut. McNamee says the disease destroys the upper part of the face by slow ulceration and is more horrible, both to the victim and to his companions, than leprosy. As 400 cases have developed its isolation is imperative.

Naval surgeons have investigated the disease in parts of South America and the West Indies, and their reports indicate that there can be little doubt that it is a distinct malady, and one which does not yield to the treatment given tuberculosis, leprosy and other diseases common to tropical countries. Cases of gangraena have been treated in New York which are believed to have come from Brazil and Panama.

When News Reached Honolulu.

The cable as it comes here is abbreviated. For example the name of John J. Smith comes as "Jjemith." It was this custom that led a local paper one day to announce that "Mrs. Jalogan had been elected president of the Red Cross Society." Mrs. J. A. Logan is still the president.—Hawaiian Star.