

PRESIDENT ON THE CANAL

Special Message of Chief Executive Tells of Observations on the Isthmus.

SANITARY CORPS HAS DONE GOOD WORK

President Says There Are Some Honest Critics, but Slanders Have Been at Work in Matter.

(Continued from Page One.)

rest of the work depended, was the problem of sanitation. This was from the outset under the direction of Dr. W. G. Morgan, who is to be made a full member of the commission, if the law as to the composition of the commission remains unchanged. It must be remembered that his work was not mere sanitation as the term is understood in our ordinary municipal cities. Throughout the zone and in the cities of Panama and Colon, in addition to the sanitation work proper, he has had to do all the work that the marine hospital service does as regards the nation, that the health department officers do in the various states and cities of the United States, and in New York when he cleaned its streets. The results have been astounding. The Isthmus has been a by-word for deadly unhealthfulness. Now, after two years of our occupation, the conditions as regards sickness and the death rate are so favorable with reasonably healthy localities in the United States.

I inspected the large hospitals at Ancon and Colon, which are excellent examples of what tropical hospitals should be. I also inspected the receiving hospitals in various settlements. I saw through the number of the wards in which the colored men are treated, a number of those in which the white men are treated—Americans and Spaniards. Both white men and black men are treated exactly alike, and their treatment is in first class hospitals at home. All the patients that I saw, with one or two exceptions, were laborers or other employes on the canal works and railways, most of them being colored men of the ordinary laborer stamp. Not only are the men carefully looked after when they apply for care, but so far as practicable a watch is kept to see that if any ignorant West India negro when he is sent to the hospitals whether they desire to go or not. From my own experience in Ancon and Colon, I am convinced that the management of the hospital service, although occasionally a very ignorant West India negro when he is first brought into the hospital becomes frightened by the ordinary hospital routine, but at present the health showing on the Isthmus is remarkably good, much better than in most sections of the United States that I do not believe that it can possibly continue at quite its present average. There has been for the last six months a high steady decline in the death rate for the zone and the zone, this being largely due to the decrease in deaths from pneumonia, which has been the most fatal disease on the Isthmus. In October there were ninety-nine deaths of every kind among the employes on the Isthmus. This was a record for the zone, 5,500 whites, seven-eighths of them being Americans. Of these white but two died of disease, and as it happened neither man was an American. Of the 6,000 white Americans, including some 1,300 women and children, not a single death has occurred in the last three months, whereas the average rate in the United States the number of deaths for a similar number of people in that time would have been about thirty from disease. This very remarkable showing cannot of course permanently obtain, but it does prove that the best of care is taken the Isthmus is not a particularly unhealthy place. In October, of the 19,000 negroes on the roll, eighty-six died from disease, pneumonia being the most destructive disease and malarial fever coming second. The same showing was a thorough supervision over the colored laborers is, of course, greater than in the case among the whites, and they are also less competent to take care of themselves, which accounts for the fact that their death rate is so much higher than that of the whites. In spite of the fact that they have been used to similar climatic conditions. Even among the colored employes it will be seen that the death rates are not high.

In Panama and Colon the death rate has also been greatly reduced, this being due to the vigorous work of the special brigade of employes who have been inspecting houses where the stegomyia mosquito is to be found and destroying its larvae and breeding places, and doing similar work in exterminating the malarial mosquitoes in short, in performing all kinds of hygienic labor. A little over a year ago all kinds of mosquitoes, including the two fatal species, were numerous about the Colon cut. In this cut during last October every room, every street, every alley, every corner, and every hole was infested with mosquitoes, neither of them of the fatal species, were found.

Coronal, some four miles from La Boca, was formerly one of the most unsanitary places on the Isthmus, probably the most unsanitary. There was a marsh with a pond in the middle. Dr. Gorges had both the marsh and pond drained and the brush cleared off, so that now, when I went over the ground it appeared like a smooth meadow intersected by drainage ditches. The breeding places and sheltering spots of the dangerous mosquitoes had been completely destroyed. The result is that Coronal for the last six months (like La Boca, which formerly was one of the most unsanitary places on the Isthmus) shows one of the most healthy places in the zone, having less than 1 per cent a week admitted to the hospital. At Coronal there is a big hotel filled with employes of the Isthmian Canal commission, some of them with their families. Yes, this healthy and attractive spot was stigmatized as a "hog wallow" by one of the least scrupulous and most foolish of the professional scandal-mongers who from time to time have written about the commission's work.

Colon Water Supply. The sanitation work in the cities of Panama and Colon has been just as important as in the zone itself, and in many respects much more difficult, yet astonishing progress has been made in both cities. In Panama 90 per cent of the streets that are to be paved at all are already paved with an excellent brick pavement laid in heavy concrete, a few of the streets being still in process of paving. The sewer and water systems in the city are of the most modern type, and the matter of the service having just been completed.

In Colon the conditions are peculiar, and it is as regards Colon that most of the very bitter complaint has been made. Colon is built on a low coral island, covered at low tide with shallow depths with vegetable matter or mud, which affords substance and strength to many varieties of low-lying tropical plants. In September, 1904, a systematic effort was begun to formulate a general plan for the proper sanitation of the city. In February last temporary relief measures were taken, while in July the prosecution of the work was begun in good earnest. The results are already visible in the sewerage, drainage, gutting and paving of the streets. Some four months will be required before the work

of sewerage and street improvement will be completed but the progress already made is very marked. Ditches have been dug through the town, connecting the salt water on both sides, and into these the ponds, which have served as breeding places for the mosquitoes, are drained. These ditches have answered their purpose, for they are probably the chief cause of the astonishing diminution in the number of mosquitoes. Much of the kind are being constructed.

Improvements in Colon and Panama. It was not practical, with the force at the commission's disposal, and in view of the need that the force should be used in the larger town of Panama, to begin this work before early last winter. Water mains were then laid in the zone and water was furnished to the people early in March from a temporary reservoir. This reservoir proved to be of insufficient capacity before the end of the dry season and the shortage was made up by hauling water over the Panama railroad, so that the water supply of the very best water. Since that time the new reservoir back of Mount Hope has been practically completed. I visited this reservoir. It is a lake over a mile long and half a mile broad. It now carries some 500,000,000 gallons of water. I forwarded herewith a photograph of this lake together with certain other photographs of what I saw while I was on the Isthmus. Nothing but a calamity will hereafter render it necessary in the dry season to haul water for the use of Colon and Cristobal.

One of the most amusing (as well as dishonest) attacks made upon the commission was in connection with this reservoir. The writer in question usually confined himself to vague general mendacity, but in this case he specifically stated that there was no water in the reservoir at the time I drank it and it was excellent, and that this particular reservoir would never hold water anyway. Accompanying this message, as I have said above, is a photograph of the reservoir as I myself saw it, and it has been in existence ever since. The article in question was published. With typical American humor, the engineering corps still at work at the reservoir have christened a large boat which is now used on the reservoir by the name of the individual who thus denied the possibility of the reservoir's existence.

I rode through the streets of Colon, seeing them at the height of the rainy season, after two days of almost unexampled downpour, when they were at their very worst. Taken as a whole, they were unhealthful, and in some places, particularly in the Washington block near Grant's administration. All men to whom I spoke were a unit in saying that the conditions of the Colon streets were 100 per cent better than a year ago. The complaints brought to me, either of insufficient provision in caring for the laborers, or of failure to furnish the pavements of Colon, or of failure to supply water, or of failure to build wooden sidewalks for the use of the laborers in the rainy season, on investigation proved, almost without exception, to be due to the unscrupulous conduct of the commission to do everything at once.

Police and Schools. In addition to attending to the health of the employes, it is of course necessary to provide for policing the zone. The police force, which at present numbers over 200 men, under Captain Shanton. About one-fifth of the men are white and the others are black. In different places I questioned some twenty or thirty of these men, taking them at random. They were all well, and they were all doing their work well. With one exception all the white men I questioned had served in the American army, usually in the Philippines, and belonged to the best type of American soldier. Without exception the black policemen whom I questioned had served either in the British army or in the Jamaica or Barbadoes police. They were evidently contented and were doing their work well. Where possible the policemen are used to control people of their own color, but in any emergency no hesitation is felt in using their uniformed force.

Inasmuch as so many, both of the white and colored employes, have brought their families with them, schools have been established, the school service being under the supervision of the American teachers. The American teachers are employed by the colored pupils there are also some white and one colored American teacher, most of them being colored teachers from Jamaica, Barbadoes and St. Vincent. The rooms were good, and it was a pleasant surprise to see the pride that the teachers were taking in their work and their pupils. There seemed to me to be too many schools in the zone, but the new high license law which goes into effect on January 1st will probably close four-fifths of them. Resolute and successful efforts are being made to minimize and control the sale of liquor.

Next in importance to the problem of sanitation, and indeed, now of equal importance, is the problem of securing and caring for the mechanics, laborers and other employes who actually do the work on the canal and the railroad. This great task has been under the control of Mr. Jackson Smith, and on the whole has been well done. At present there are some 6,000 white employes and some 19,000 colored employes on the Isthmus. I went over the different places where the different kinds of employes were working; I talked with the mechanics, laborers, and both at their work and in their homes; and I conversed with probably a couple of hundred of them all told, choosing them at random from every class and including those of the most diverse nationalities. I found that those who did not come specifically to present grievances almost invariably expressed far greater content and satisfaction with the conditions that did those who called to make complaint.

Nearly 6,000 of the white employes had come from the United States. No man can see these young, vigorous men energetically doing their duty without a thrill of pride in them as Americans. They represent on the average a high class. Doubtless to Congress the wages paid them will seem high, but as a matter of fact the only general complaint which I found had any real basis was the complaint that the men upon the Isthmus was that, owing to the peculiar surroundings, the cost of living, and the distance from home, the wages were really not as high as they should be. I found that the men who spoke to me felt that they ought to be receiving more money, a view, however, which the average man who stays at home in the United States probably likewise holds as regards himself. I am glad to say, however, that the commission is now in a position to make such a change as the men desire, and I may then communicate my findings to the canal committee of the two houses.

meat laborers as to the conditions of their work and what, if any change, they wished. I received many complaints from the mechanics, and foremost of these were complaints they themselves contradicted one another. In all cases where the complaint was as to their treatment by any individual it proved on examination that this individual was himself a West India man of color, either a policeman, a storekeeper or an assistant storekeeper. Doubtless there must be many complaints against Americans, but those to whom I spoke did not happen to make any such complaint to me. There was no complaint of the housing, but I saw one set of quarters for colored laborers which, though poor, and this was in an old French house. The barracks for unmarried men are roomy, well ventilated and clean, with canvas bunks for each man, and a kind of false attic at the top, where the trunks and the belongings of the unmarried men are kept. The clothes are hung on clotheslines, nothing being allowed to be kept on the floor. In each of these big rooms there were tables and lamps, and usually a few books or papers, and in almost every case there was a stove, the books being the property of the laborer himself. The cleanliness of the quarters is secured by daily inspection. The quarters for the married negro laborers were good. They were neatly kept and in almost every case the men living in them, whose wives or daughters were in the zone, were far better satisfied and of a higher grade than the ordinary bachelor negroes. Not only were the quarters in which these negro laborers were living much superior to those in which I am informed they live at home, but they were much superior to those to be seen in the jungle of Panama itself, beside the railroad tracks, in the lower class of native Panamanians live, as well as the negro workmen when they leave the employ of the canal and go into the jungles.

Food Supplies. The housewives purchase their supplies directly, or through their husbands, from the commissary stores of the commission. All to whom I spoke agreed that the supplies were excellent, and all but two stated that there was no complaint of the prices. These two complained that the prices were excessive as compared to the prices in the States. On investigation I did not feel that this complaint was well founded. The married men ate at home. The unmarried men sometimes ate at private boarding houses, or private messes, but in no case were the answers of those whom I questioned, at the government canteens or hotels where the meat costs 30 cents to each employe. This 30-cent meal struck me as being as good a meal as we get in the United States. The food was good, and the cooking was good. One-fourth of the men whom I questioned stated that the meals furnished at these government hotels were good, the remaining one-fourth that they were not good. I myself took dinner at the hotel, and I found the food to be good, whatever having been the case.

Work of Construction. The work is now going on with a vigor and efficiency pleasant to witness. The chief problems of the canal are the La Boca cut, the Culebra cut, and the Culebra cut. The Culebra cut must be made, anyhow; but of course changes as to the dams, or at least as to the locks adjacent to the dams, may still occur. The La Boca dam offers no particular problem, the Culebra dam is a matter of time, and there is a practical certainty, not merely as to what can be achieved, but as to the time of achievement. The Gatun dam offers the most serious problem which we have to solve, and yet the ablest men on the Isthmus are engaged on the task. After a certain solution along the line proposed; although, of course, it necessitates great toll, energy and intelligence, and although equally, of course, there will be some little risk in connection with the work. If the La Boca dam is completed, the Culebra cut will be practically a low, broad mountain ridge behind which will rise the inland lake. This artificial mountain will probably show less seepage, but the work will be more difficult, and the exact locality of the locks at this dam—as at the other dams—is now being determined. In April next Secretary Taft, with three of the ablest engineers on the Isthmus, will visit the La Boca dam. The three engineers will make the final and conclusive examinations as to the exact site for each lock. Meanwhile the work is going on steadily and with a vigor.

Recreation and Amusement. One of the greatest needs at present is to provide amusements both for the white men and the black. The Young Men's Christian Association is doing good work, and should be in every way encouraged. But the government should do the main work. I have specifically called the attention of the commission to this matter, and something has been accomplished already. In addition to the recreation and amusement which are to be kept well and healthily, I call the special attention of Congress to this need.

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To Thin People THE FLESH BUILDER Let the scales decide whether you pay for

Do you want to increase your weight? Do you want to look better—healthier—more plump and attractive? Are you tired of being called "skinny" by your friends—and sympathized with by your acquaintances? Do you want to add from 10 to 20 pounds of good solid substantial permanent flesh—do you want to get your digestive organs in good condition and put yourself on a disease-defying basis? We believe there are many people who would gladly give \$100.00 for a few more pounds of robust flesh. We want every one of these people to know of this announcement—to know that they can be helped. We have already helped many people who are at once to add flesh without risking a cent in case of failure. Ninety-eight persons out of every hundred will report gain if they take advantage of this latest discovery of Battle Creek food experts.

In two cases out of every hundred there are conditions which cannot be overcome. In these cases not one cent is asked for all the food supplied. For years a number of the most eminent food specialists in Battle Creek began experimenting, proving, testing. The result of their discoveries is now presented in PEPTOL—the new flesh builder. PEPTOL is a concentrated vegetable fat and starch. It relieves the digestive organs of the work assimilating starch. It presents fat in a way to be quickly taken into the system. It is the shortest route to flesh tissue. PEPTOL also increases the "appetite juice" makes you eat, makes you long for mealtime. This is exactly what PEPTOL will do for you. We cannot state how many pounds you will gain the first month but we do positively and absolutely guarantee that you will gain in flesh. If you do not gain your money will be refunded without question or quibble—and your word is sufficient.

PEPTOL will shortly be on sale at all drug stores—but the first supply must be ordered direct from us. The Peptol Company, - First National Bank Building, - Chicago. (Laboratory: Battle Creek, Mich.)

last three months, in the rainy season, steady progress is shown by the figures: In August, 24,000 cubic yards; in September, 20,000 cubic yards, and in October, 20,000 cubic yards. In October new records were established for the output of individual shovels as well as for the tonnage haul of individual locomotives. I hope to see the growth of a healthy spirit of emulation between the different shovel and locomotive crews, just such a spirit as has grown on our battlefields between the different gun crews in matters of marksmanship. Passing through the cut the amount of work can be seen at a glance. In one place, the entire side of a hill had been taken out recently by twenty-seven tons of dynamite, which were exploded at one blast. At another place I was given a presidential salute of twenty-one charges of dynamite. On the top notch of the Culebra cut the prism is now as wide as it will be; all told, the canal bed at this point has now been sunk about 300 feet below what it originally was. It will have to be sunk about 100 feet further. Throughout the cut the drilling, blasting, shoveling and hauling are going on with constantly increasing energy, the huge shovels being pressed up, as if they were mountain howitzers, into the most level places, where they eat their way into the hillsides.

Railway Improvements. The most advanced methods, not only in construction, but in railroad management, have been applied in the zone, with corresponding economies in time and cost. This has been shown in the handling of the heavy freight departments or bureau cars into ships on the Panama railroad, where, thanks largely to the efficiency of General Manager Bierd, the saving in time and cost, has been noteworthy. My examination tended to show that some of the departments (and doubtless necessarily) have become overdeveloped, and could now be reduced or subordinated without impairment of efficiency and with a saving of cost. The chairman of the commission, Mr. Stevens, who has been in the zone constantly in view, and is now reorganizing the government of the zone, so as to make the form of administration both more flexible and less expensive, subordinating everything to direct efficiency with a view to the work of the canal commission. From time to time changes of this kind will undoubtedly have to be made, for it must be remembered that in this giant work of construction, it is continually necessary to develop departments or bureaus which are vital for the time being, but which soon become useless; just as it will be continually necessary to put up buildings, and even to erect towers, which in ten years will have to be given place to taller and more useful structures. Some could be used for furnishing the foundation for filling in. For much no possible use could be devised that would not cost more than it would bring in.

Work of Construction. The work is now going on with a vigor and efficiency pleasant to witness. The chief problems of the canal are the La Boca cut, the Culebra cut, and the Culebra cut. The Culebra cut must be made, anyhow; but of course changes as to the dams, or at least as to the locks adjacent to the dams, may still occur. The La Boca dam offers no particular problem, the Culebra dam is a matter of time, and there is a practical certainty, not merely as to what can be achieved, but as to the time of achievement. The Gatun dam offers the most serious problem which we have to solve, and yet the ablest men on the Isthmus are engaged on the task. After a certain solution along the line proposed; although, of course, it necessitates great toll, energy and intelligence, and although equally, of course, there will be some little risk in connection with the work. If the La Boca dam is completed, the Culebra cut will be practically a low, broad mountain ridge behind which will rise the inland lake. This artificial mountain will probably show less seepage, but the work will be more difficult, and the exact locality of the locks at this dam—as at the other dams—is now being determined. In April next Secretary Taft, with three of the ablest engineers on the Isthmus, will visit the La Boca dam. The three engineers will make the final and conclusive examinations as to the exact site for each lock. Meanwhile the work is going on steadily and with a vigor.

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the complaints proved absolutely baseless, save in two or three instances where they referred to mistakes which the commission had already itself found out and corrected.

Slanders and Libelers. There remains an immense amount of as reckless as to the truth, and who are engaged in the slanders are of foreign origin I have no concern with them. Where they are Americans, I feel for them the heartiest contempt and indignation; because, in a spirit of wanton dishonesty and malice, they are trying to destroy the work of the kind ever attempted, and are seeking to bring to naught the efforts of their countrymen to put to the credit of America one of the giant feats of the ages. It is a kind of crime against the people, and the slanders are of foreign origin I have no concern with them. Where they are Americans, I feel for them the heartiest contempt and indignation; because, in a spirit of wanton dishonesty and malice, they are trying to destroy the work of the kind ever attempted, and are seeking to bring to naught the efforts of their countrymen to put to the credit of America one of the giant feats of the ages. It is a kind of crime against the people, and the slanders are of foreign origin I have no concern with them. Where they are Americans, I feel for them the heartiest contempt and indignation; because, in a spirit of wanton dishonesty and malice, they are trying to destroy the work of the kind ever attempted, and are seeking to bring to naught the efforts of their countrymen to put to the credit of America one of the giant feats of the ages. It is a kind of crime against the people, and