

Old French Machinery Bought with the Great Canal

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A NOON, Canal Zone, Panama.—Do you want a relic of the French machinery at Panama? Uncle Sam is now closing out the last batch. He has sold it for over \$200,000 to a Chicago wrecking company, and that firm is now digging it out of the jungle and carrying it by the Panama railroad down to Cristobal. It is piled there on a mighty dump and is being broken up and classified. The bolts and nuts are put in one place, the wheels in another, and other bits of machinery of various kinds each have their pile. The dealers recognize about 30 different classifications of iron and steel, and every class is found in the scrap pile. The machinery is first taken apart by cutting the rivets with sledge, and much of the metal is broken into three-foot lengths for convenience in melting. The stuff will be taken to the United States. The finer pieces will probably be sold by catalogue, and the remainder of the steel will go to the foundries to be worked over again.

This last sale makes the total weight of the scrap disposed of between \$50,000 and \$60,000,000 and the value of that sold and used in the work has footed up more than \$1,000,000. The sales have all been made by auction and at so much more than the cost. For this last lot the rate was \$5, and included in the material were old locomotives, dredges, excavators, dump cars, boilers, cranes, steel rails, copper and brass. The canal authorities estimate that at least \$1,000,000 worth of such scrap has been used in making machinery for our work.

Now \$27,000,000 Rusted Away.
 When we bought the canal of the French for \$40,000,000 they gave us an estimate as to the balance of the machinery and supplies on hand. This balance was not paid for, but was thrown in for good measure. I was down here just after we took possession and went with the engineers over the buildings, machine works and warehouses and saw just what there was. According to the French books the value of the whole was \$23,000,000. The above statement accounts for \$20,000,000, but I doubt not, but that Uncle Sam has realized much more than twice that out of the vast equipment which was then on hand. As to the \$23,000,000 estimate that was all down on the French books of account. They were fine bookkeepers, and among the volumes of canal records are eighteen great ledgers, each as tall as a table, as thick as a big family Bible and as heavy as a 10-year-old boy. I am told that some of these ledgers will be shown at the San Francisco exposition.

I have looked carefully over these books and find them wonderful of account keeping. The writing is like copper plate engraving and they are a mass of figures from one end to the other. In the eighteen volumes there are about 90,000 pages and in them every item of expense was put down, even to the cost of the horses, the building of pig pens and the goods in the storehouses. The engineers have told me that they found the supplies to tally with the accounts so kept.

The French Balance Sheet.
 Among other things there was a balance sheet, the items of which alone would fill a page of this newspaper. I can give only a few of them. There were fifty-seven barges, thirty-eight yaws and twenty-one launches. There were 270 steam cranes, 160 steam winches, 800 big pumps of various kinds, 190 rock drills and 190 punching machines. There was a floating drill which, I believe, is now in use, which was valued by the French at \$30,000, and other dredges and drills running into the millions. There were thirty-four American locomotives, valued at \$200,000, and more than 200 Belgian locomotives, together with hundreds of smaller steam engines. There were steel rails enough to build over 200 miles of track and 4,000 dump cars.

Of this machinery a vast amount of it was as good as when it was made, although some had been left in the jungle and had rusted away. The French watched out for their supplies. They coated the machinery with paraffine and other oils, and painted some parts of it with white lead. It is owing to this care that we have been able to use so much of the stuff.

French Dredges Work for Uncle Sam.
 Take, for instance, the dredges. There are French machines working at both ends of the canal. This is so of one of the best dredges of the Balboa channel, which has been remade and equipped with modern appliances. Another dredge, which lay for twenty years sunk in the mud near the Pacific, was taken up, cleaned and repaired, and it is now going out and loading all the sand used for the Pacific and of the canal. Two big dredges were taken out of the mud on the west bank of the Chagres and floated down to the dry docks at Cristobal. Here they were repaired and they are now at work in Limon bay.

We have even used the old dredges of the ladder type, consisting of an endless chain of nineteen steel buckets which scoop the mud from the bottom of the canal and carry it out to a chute at the side into a barge. These dredges had good boilers, and the machinery was found in excellent condition on account



Breaking the scrap

of its careful oiling and painting before it was abandoned.

These dredges cost tens of thousands of dollars. They were brought here in 1880 and they remained in the mud more than twenty years. Their tenders were sited over by the bay and were closed in by a bank of sand six feet high, in which a tree forty feet tall was growing. Our engineers had to cut a channel forty feet wide into the dredges and then take them out and repair them. It is a wonder that they could have been used at all, but I am told that they have done excellent work.

There were four other ladder dredges nearby which have been put to use, and on the Pacific side the hull of a ladder dredge was raised and prepared for work. The same is true of excavators of one kind or another and also of locomotives and cars.

The French Railroad Material.
 A vast amount of the French railroad material has been used, and some of this machinery is still working. Many of the locomotives left were worth \$5,000 and upward apiece, and there were 257 locomotive cranes, each of which, if we could have had to buy them, would have cost \$5,000.

Some of the locomotives were right out in the jungle. I remember when I was here in 1881 I scared a flock of bats from one of them and was attacked by a swarm of yellow jackets which had made their nest inside the boiler of another. Great lizards, including iguanas, crawled about here and there under the car wheels, and we had to walk carefully for fear of the snakes. That was near Bohio on ground that is now covered by the waters of Gatun lake.

Machinery Drowned in Lake Gatun.
 And just here that lake which we are making by the great dam at Gatun will be more or less impregnated with iron from the French material which will rust away within its bed. A great deal of the stuff has been left in the jungle, and I saw, away off in the trees, a 10,000 excavator twice as big as a threshing machine, up the sides of which the waters of the lake are slowly crawling.

There are also scores of steel dump cars which have been overturned along the line of the old Panama canal, now a part of the lake. In one place there is a tree as big around as a good-sized haystack which has grown over a steel truck and carried it up with it. The metal car is imbedded in the trunk of the tree.

The old French company had altogether over 10,000 cars and 4,000 iron dumping wagons. When they gave up the job they allowed a vast amount of this to go to waste, and when I first came across the railroad, which was about fourteen years ago, after the second French company had taken hold, there were enough car wheels to equip a trunk line of railway scattered along the canal from one end to the other. There were hundreds of car beds which had rotted away. I crumbled some of the wood into sawdust in my fingers.

Queer Things Uncle Sam Got.
 During my stay on the Isthmus in 1906 I visited the warehouses which had been just turned over to our engineers. Among them were buildings which covered as much as ten acres. They were divided into sections and walled with shelves containing all sorts of material. In one place I found 1,000 coal-oil torches laid up like cord wood, and there sheets of zinc and plates of iron were piled one upon another.

At Empire and Colon I saw great machine shops and at Empire the buildings covered about fifteen acres. Some of the French shops were found in the jungle but the brush and trees were cleared away and the old machinery used. This was so at Bas Matichin, where was unearthed a machine shop which had entirely disappeared. It was found to contain a complete equipment of machine tools. It took about three weeks for our gangs of men to cut down the jungle, and within a week or so later the old French machinery was making general repairs of all kinds on the excavators and drills, and on the rolling stock of the train.

Nevertheless, with all their care as



After twenty years in the mud this old French dredge was jerked out and put to use.



Metal car imbedded in the trunk of a tree

to accounts and the sprinkling of the machinery with oil, the graft of the French can be everywhere seen. Every thing was done by contract, and the grafters sent their stuff in by the ton. In many cases the supplies were furnished at so much per piece, the officials getting a rake-off. In the basement of the administration building at Panama we found two cartloads of the finest drawing paper in sheets, each the size of a bedspread. There was more of that paper than could possibly be used for a dozen canals, but our draftsmen consumed what they needed. In the same warehouse there were six tons of steel pens, so rusty that they had to be shaved out into the ocean. There were also bolts made of wood and painted black, to give the impression that they were iron or steel. These were made according to sample, but the model was of wood, and the bolts and screws came in that form painted black. Needless to say, they were useless.

All along the line of the canal are monuments to the fortunes made by the building contractors. Take the concrete work. It was paid for by the cubic yard, and little two and four-room cottages were erected on costly cement foundations, while warehouses had great concrete walls under them. The monuments of these buildings, the wood having rotted away, are still to be seen all along the line of the canal. I counted 500 cement posts in one place.

Cement Baths for Horses.
 Among the other costly concrete construction was that connected with the stables of the officials. Here at Ancon they made a bathtub of cement for the horses. It was fifteen feet wide, seventy-five feet long and four feet in depth and was connected with the water supply. The French engineers had their racing ponies washed off instead of rugging them.

I remember a pigeon that I saw when I looked at that horse bath. It has disappeared now, but I was told that it must have cost at least \$15,000 to make.

It covered about half an acre and was roofed with galvanized steel. The bed of the building was of concrete, divided into pens, each of which had its cement trough, and it was supposed to accommodate about 200 hogs.

How He Made \$100,000.
 I hear many stories from the old stagers at Panama of how money flowed in the first days of the French canal. The Isthmus was flooded with gold, common engineers took contracts and got rich, and every one who sold or bought grazed his palm. I was told last night of a worthless beachcomber who had been discharged by his employer, a New York contractor, just on the eve of the departure of the latter for home. A few months later the New York man returned and saw his old employee dressed in snow white, wearing a \$50 Panama hat and having a black valet to hold up his umbrella. The New Yorker said:

"Why, man, your circumstances seem to have changed!"
 "They have," was the reply. "I am rich now and have made a fortune on contracts."
 "How did you do that?" was the next question.

"It was easy enough. You remember that hill with the big hole at one side of it along the line of the canal about eight miles from Colon?"
 "Yes."

"Well, I took a contract to fill that hole for \$50,000. A man named Jones had just got another contract to cut down the hill for \$100,000, and so I charged him \$50,000 to put his hill in my hole. This gave me a clean \$100,000 without spending a cent."

It is said that another man measured up a part of the Chagres river as a section of his excavation contract and got money for it.

I do not know as to the truth of these stories. I only know that it is pretty well established that the first French company spent something like \$200,000,000 within a space of ten years, and that the second company spent \$50,000,000 or \$100,000,000 more. Altogether the French spent

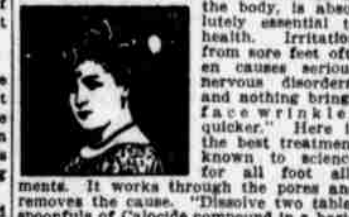
within \$100,000,000 of what it will have cost us when our canal is completed.

The total amount spent by Uncle Sam will be under \$375,000,000, and in this is figured the \$40,000,000 paid to the French. For that we got in round numbers about \$7,000,000 worth of usable excavation, over \$9,000,000 worth of Panama railway stock and \$1,000,000 worth of maps, drawings and records. We got \$2,000,000 worth of good buildings, \$1,000,000 worth of lands, \$2,000,000 worth of material and equipment and other items, making up in the neighborhood of \$45,000,000. It was a square deal, and, all told, was one of the best of the many made by our great Uncle Sam.

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The Doctor's Advice by Dr. Lewis Baker



The questions answered below are general in character, the symptoms or diseases are given and the answers will apply to any case of similar nature. Those wishing further advice free, may address Dr. Lewis Baker, College Bldg., College-Hillwood Sts., Dayton, O., enclosing self-addressed stamped envelope for reply. Full name and address must be given, but only initials or fictitious name will be used in my answers. The prescriptions can be filled at any well-stocked drug store. Any druggist can order of wholesalers.

While I have frequently given same in these columns I gladly do so again for there is great danger in neglecting to treat this weakening health and comfort, making disease. Mix one ounce of tannic acid with two ounces of anti-septic vinegar powder. Use a teaspoonful in a quart of warm water twice daily as an injection with syringe.

"Tom M." writes: "I am only twenty years old, but I am falling out very rapidly. My scalp is covered with dandruff. What can I get to cure it?"

Answer: Go to your druggist and ask for tablets tripeptone and take according to directions, and you will soon be entirely cured of all dandruff trouble and constipation. This is the best treatment known for all kinds of stomach trouble.

"Anna" says: "I am nervous, hysterical and very thin. I am nervous. What can I take to regain my original vitality?"

Answer: You will gradually regain your original strength by using syrup of hypophosphites comp. I am, I assure you, a very healthy man. Mix and take a teaspoonful before meals. This is the best system tonic that I know of.

"Mr. Jack" writes: "I am greatly embarrassed on account of my weight. In the last two years I have gained flesh so rapidly that I am getting very uncomfortable. Please tell me what to do."

Answer: Do not get the ordinary pills and tablets for obesity, but use the safe, harmless and quick acting medicine. Get them separately so as to avoid any substitution. Aromatic seltzer, 1 can; and glycol arbutin, 1 oz. Mix by shaking well and take a teaspoonful after each meal for the first three days and after that take two teaspoonfuls as long as may require. After the first week or two you should lose a pound a day.

"Edna T." writes: "I wish you would recommend a remedy for kidney and liver trouble. I have dark spots before my eyes, dandruff and also twinges of rheumatism."

Answer: I have received many letters from people who have used the following remedy and been cured of all trouble such as you mention. Get three grain sulphur tablets (not sulphur tablets), and take according to directions given. They are sold at any well stocked drug store and are thoroughly reliable.

"Louise" writes: "Get the following prescription filled and give 10 to 15 drops in water before meals to cure your little boy of bedwetting. Comp. fluid extract, 1 oz.; tincture of rhubarb, 2 drams; and tincture of cubeba, 1 dram. This should be given one hour before meals."

"Anastasia M." writes: "You ask for a prescription for the local treatment of whitish or leucorrhea, and

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