

Big Wages for Uncle Sam's Panama Canal Workers

CULEBRA, Canal Zone, Panama. —This letter is about the biggest army of workmen ever gotten together. I refer to the men who are now digging the canal down here at Panama. They number about 35,000. When Chopps built the pyramids he had 20,000 laborers, and when the great church of Santa Sophia was erected at Constantinople the workmen were just half that number. But in both of these cases the labor was more or less forced, and the pyramid fellahin worked like the Israelites under the lash of the taskmaster. The laborers here are free agents. They can lay off if they please, and they are only kept on the job by getting the highest wages and best treatment of any man of their kind upon earth.

The man in charge of this army is the chief quartermaster at Panama. His name is Colonel C. A. Devol, and he is an officer of the regular army. He has not only recruited and hired the labor, but he provides their houses and quarters and gives them their wages. He is also in charge of all materials and supplies on the isthmus, having eighty-eight warehouses, which if joined together would cover an acreage bigger than that of a good-sized farm. He has charge of the draft animals and he does the delivering and toting about of almost everything and everybody except that done by the cars.

Uncle Sam's Big Labor Force. Colonel Devol tells me that the labor problem has been one of the most difficult of any connected with the canal, and that it has worried every company which has done business down here on the isthmus. When the Panama railroad was first built the contractors sent to China for laborers, and they died like flies. Later on so many other workmen were buried that it is said the road cost a man for every tie laid in its tracks. The first French canal company scratched the world to find diggers, and they buried a large part of those whom they found. The men would not stay and they were always recruiting. Uncle Sam has had good labor ever since he began his construction and the job has become so popular that he can now have all the men he needs without advertising. During the past four years the average number employed has been 35,000, although at times it has run as high as 38,000 and more. This is an enormous force to be used in any undertaking outside those connected with the army and navy, but it is handled like one vast machine.

Silver and Gold Men. You have all heard of the silver and gold men of the Isthmus of Panama. It is under those two names that the men are classified. The silver man is the common every-day litter-of-earth, hewer-of-wood and drawer-of-water. He has a mighty small brain and sells only his muscle. He is usually a white Spaniard or an Italian, or a black man from one of the West Indian islands. He is hired by the authorities here on the isthmus, and has been recruited by agents sent to different parts of the world. During the past four years we have had on the average 25,000 of these in the shape of West Indian negroes and about 5,000 more as laborers from Europe.

The gold men are the skilled employes, those who act as superintendents, foremen, civil engineers and mechanics. They manage the big machinery, run the trains and do all the skilled work. They are hired through the bureau at Washington, and many of them are subject to civil service examinations. The silver man gets from 90 cents to \$1.80 a day for his nine hours' work. The gold man receives on the average at least \$150 per month, and, in addition, a six weeks' vacation, with a month of sick leave and one of injury leave, which brings his pay very much higher. He has also extra advantages in the way of quarters and housing, and he is in short about the best treated workman of all those who sell their brains and muscle to the industrial world.

A Talk With Colonel Devol. But it will be more interesting to let Colonel Devol, the quartermaster in charge of these forces, tell you about them. I have spent an afternoon with him here at Culebra and have asked him many questions as to the men and their work. "One was as to the trouble of getting the laborers together," said Colonel Devol. "The organization of the canal force was not an easy one. When we took hold, Panama had a bad name and it was difficult to get men. November 1, 1904, the total force was 3,500, of whom only 600 were Americans. We had considerable sickness and this force was not permanent, although it steadily grew in numbers. It was made up largely of men who would stay only a few months and then go away. Nevertheless, it steadily grew. We found a large amount of recruiting was necessary, and within the next year or so we brought in over 45,000 silver men. Of these more than 11,000 came from Europe, about 19,000 from Barbadoes and the balance from the other islands of the West Indies and Colombia.

"We had labor agents at Paris who did the recruiting from Spain, getting about 500 laborers at a time and sending them over. We had to advance the money, and it actually cost us \$40 per man for every Spaniard, although that sum was returned to the government in the first two wage payments. "It cost us \$1.50 per head for the laborers from the West Indies. This sum was not paid back, but was charged to the expense account. When I arrived here in 1908 we still had recruiting agencies in Barbadoes, Trinidad, France and the United States. But we need nothing of this character now. Indeed, we are offered more labor than we can use and we are sending men back home rather than bringing them here."

"How about Central and South America? Have these countries furnished much labor to the canal?" I asked. "No," replied Colonel Devol. "We recently brought in forty or fifty Peruvians and paid them 20 cents an hour. But as a rule our labor has come from the sources I have mentioned."

Spaniard vs. the West Indian Negro. Here the question arose as to the efficiency of European cheap labor in comparison with the West Indian labor, and Colonel Devol said: "We are, you know, paying the Spaniards more than the West Indians. We fixed the wages at the beginning of the work, estimating the Spanish labor as worth two and a half times that of the Jamaican. We then established a rate of 20 cents gold per hour for the Jamaicans. As the work has progressed the most of the men on the canal believe that the Spaniard has only stood pat, while the negro has steadily gained in efficiency, and it is my own belief that the negro is now about as good as the Spaniard, although he still receives less pay. Indeed, my respect for this



COL. C. A. DEVOL, CHIEF QUARTERMASTER



SILVER LABORERS FROM NORTH SPAIN



Jamaica Negroes at Work on New Panama Railroad

negro labor has risen during every year of my stay. The West Indians are teachable and anxious to learn. I use many of them as mule drivers and, although they were at first very poor, they are now as good as any in this country."

The White Man and the Tropics. "But cannot the negroes stand the sun of the tropics better than the white men?"

"I think not. The white man can work here quite as well as the colored man. The Americans are perfectly healthy, and I see no reason why they should not work here all their lives. It is different in the Philippines. The heat there is more intense and more enervating. When I went to those islands I weighed 180 pounds, and I lost something like eight or ten pounds during my stay. Here I find it difficult to keep my weight down, and my health is excellent."

"There has been much apprehension as to the unhealth of the tropics and the tropical heat," continued Colonel Devol. "This is so as to both animals and men. When we took possession of the Philippines we tried to acclimate our mules. At first I kept them under canvas during the heat of the day for fear the sun would hurt them. I soon found this useless, and after a short time put them to work as soon as they came off the boats. I distributed thousands of them throughout the islands, and they thrive there quite as well as at home."

"As to the Americans on the isthmus, you will not find a healthier class of workmen anywhere else. Their death rate is exceedingly low, and far lower than that of the United States. Even including the colored labor, we find that our death and health rates are quite as low as those of most other parts of the world."

The Negroes and the Whites. "How about order? Do you have much trouble in keeping the colored men in check?"

"No. I doubt whether you will find a more quiet body of workmen anywhere else on the face of the globe. We have more than thirty thousand colored men on our rolls, and we have had no serious labor trouble since we began. There are no brawls and no drunkenness to speak of, and the men are universally polite and respectful to the Americans. Nearly every silver man you meet takes off his hat, and it is a common expression among the West Indians that this is a white man's country."

"But are our white women safe on the isthmus?"

"As far as the West Indian negroes are concerned they are absolutely safe. They can go about as freely as in any part of the United States. My own daughters have been here every summer. They ride all over the country without an escort, and they have never had any trouble of any kind. Indeed, I have not known of a single case down here where a negro has molested a white woman."

"How do the wages of the silver men compare with those they receive at home?"

"They are much higher. The Jamaicans and Barbadians get three times as much as they would at home."

FEET SORE? BEWARE!
YOUR HEALTH'S IN DANGER
YOU MIGHT GO THROUGH LIFE LIMPING—SUFFERING

People who have brain trouble, backache, spinal trouble, dislocation of small bones, strained vital cords and numerous other serious troubles fill their stomachs with medicines and rub their bodies with ointments. Yet in ninety cases in a hundred, these same people have not reached the seat of the trouble. If they had only taken care of their FEET these terrible afflictions would have occurred. Sore, burning, squeezed, tired FEET—OH! THE POOR THINGS!—covered with blisters, bunions and corns will cause you to strain and limp. Your feet become overworked—they need a rest and treatment. But you keep right on abusing them—you strain when you walk. And do you know the RESULTS? The vital cords and bones of the body—connected with the feet, become injured—strained—dislocated. And what are the results? You may go through the rest of your life limping—frowning—suffering. Your feet each morning with that marvelous new remedy we hear so much about—making and water. The powerful Antiseptic in SANATITE DRAW OUT the poison and pain. Blisters will heal and corns and bunions will cease to be cruel punishment. SANATITE is about—SANATITE—all the sores will vanish. It's in a dry form in a powder puff. Simply dust it on the feet—no fussing or mussing with soaking and water. The powerful Antiseptic in SANATITE DRAW OUT the poison and pain. Your DRUGGIST has SANATITE in 3c and 5c packages—get one before you ruin your health. Don't try anything else—take no chances—insist on SANATITE. It can't be supplied. SEND 25c DIRECT TO THE GEMMEL-SIDE CO., Makers of Denver Mud, 1524 1/2 15th Street, Denver, Colo.

as at home. They have also free quarters and their food is furnished at the rate of 9 cents a meal. The Spaniard gets more than twice what he can make in Spain and his meals cost him only 40 cents per day. We have good quarters for housing the Spaniards, and we have barracks for the negroes with canvas beds which can be raised and lowered. These beds are kept cleaned and are steamed every few days.

"We find that the Jamaicans prefer to have huts of their own, and many of them have drifted out into the brush. They have knocked up shacks of poles and such boards as they can find and have brought their families, as they call them, from Jamaica to live with them. A year or so ago we had 25,000 negroes in our barracks, but we have now only 7,000, and the number grows less every day."

"How about the Spaniards? Do they hold to their quarters?"

"Yes, and the same is true of the Italians."

"Are the Americans on the isthmus satisfied with their jobs?"

"I think there is no doubt of that. You

will find kickers everywhere, but the most of the Americans are contented, and their only regret is that the job is coming to an end. Indeed, they ought to be satisfied. They get the biggest wages of their kind and receive on the average from 25 to 50 per cent more than they could get in the states. Every man of them has six weeks' vacation and those who need it thirty days' sick leave. They are hard workers, but they have plenty of recreation, including tournaments and games and a system of club houses which is free. They have a reduced rate of living through the commissary stores, where goods are sold at as near cost as possible, and Uncle Sam pays their house rent and gives them their quarters. The gold men work only eight hours a day and those who are married have, in addition, what amounts to \$40 a month outside their salary. The bachelors have what is an equivalent of about \$15 per month.

What Employes Get for Nothing. "I do not understand just what you mean by these allowances, Colonel Devol."

"I mean the things that the canal employes gets for nothing, which, if he were

in the United States, he would have to pay for. We give every man free quarters and free fuel, light, water and medical attendance. The married man receives more than the single man, and he costs more. He lives in a house which costs us at least \$150 to build and furnish, and he saves at least \$20 in the rent of that house. He gets about \$7.50 worth of free medical attendance, \$1 in free transportation over the railroad, more than \$5 in free light and more than \$3 worth of fuel. We take care of his grounds and carry away his garbage. We do not charge him for janitor service, and altogether \$40 is a low estimate of what he has in addition to his salary. In the same way the bachelor receives \$14 or \$15 in addition to his pay."

Uncle Sam's Homes for Employes "You have charge of the homes of the employes?"

"Yes, that is under the quartermaster's department. Our houses, as you know, are all modern and up-to-date. They are screened from mosquitoes and furnished with modern plumbing and bathrooms, and each house has its kitchen, parlor, bedrooms and living room. Men who get

less than \$200 per month live in four-family houses. Those who have between that and \$300 have bungalows and cottages, and those who have from \$300 to \$400 a month have two-story houses.

"The barracks buildings of the silver employes each accommodate seventy-two men. Their arrangements are modeled after those of the United States transport and they are each under the charge of a janitor, who keeps them clean. The floors are scrubbed twice a week and the bunks are taken out and boiled in an iron tank to kill the bugs and other vermin."

"Have you been able to use many of the old French buildings?" I asked.

"Yes, there were 1,700 of them, and we took them at a valuation of \$2,000,000. They ranged in size from two-story cottages up to the big De Lesseps home at Cristobal. A great many of these buildings are in use today. They gave us homes at the start, which was a very important consideration to our work."

Our Men Earn Their Wages. The conversation here turned to the pay of the men, and Colonel Devol showed me the books by which he keeps track of the labor of these 35,000 employes. The system is a complete one, including timebooks for odd days and even days, so that the men in the office can check off the time, and still have the time books in use.

Everything is done by system and it is impossible for a man to get more than he earns. The paying is through pay checks by means of pay cars, which go

from station to station and hand out the money. It takes twelve days to pay all the men on the canal. A pay car starts out about the first of the month, and it is not until the 12th that all the men have been paid. The amount of silver used every month is more than \$1,500,000, or, if it were loaded upon two-horse wagons, as much as eighty horses could haul over a country road.

The Gum Shoe Men. I asked Colonel Devol if any stealing or graft had been discovered in connection with such payments. He replied: "No. This is the cleanest job that Uncle Sam has ever undertaken. We have had scandals in the Philippines, in Cuba and more or less in the administration of almost every one of our home cities. I know of none here on the canal zone and our system of supervision is so complete that it is almost impossible for anything of that nature to escape being caught at its very beginning."

"Take, for instance, padding the rolls such as has been done in many big jobs. There is none of that here. We have line inspectors called gum-shoe men, who go about through the various divisions in ordinary clothing. No one knows them, and they have the right to ask the foremen for their time books and verify them as to the men employed and the hours that they work. Any discrepancy is immediately reported. These men are everywhere, and the foremen know that a dishonest report is sure to be discovered." FRANK G. CARPENTER.

MAY BECOME A NATION OF BEARDED WOMEN

If You Value Your Face, Beware of So-Called Hair Removers. They Cause a Soft Fuzz to Come Back a Stiff, Bristly Beard.

It is the opinion of eminent authorities that if women continue to remove superfluous hair with worthless, poisonous depilatories, it will be only a question of time before we will have a nation of bearded women, because even when a downy growth is removed by these compounds and concoctions, it is sure to grow out again coarser and heavier after each removal and eventually will become a stiff, bristly beard. Then it will be necessary to resort to the use of the razor, because no preparation will be strong enough to remove it without ruining the skin.

It can be safely said that eczema will most likely become a national disease if women continue to use so-called depilatories. Nothing has done more to produce serious skin troubles and eczema than the use of these preparations. While the harm caused by them is not always noticeable with the first few applications, the real injury plainly manifests itself after frequent and continued use.

It has stood the test of time. It was the largest selling depilatory ten years ago and more of it has been sold each year since than the combined sales of the nostrums. The mere fact that fake-dangerous preparations are short-lived should alone be sufficient warning to avoid the use of any depilatory but that of proven merit.

Don't be deceived or deluded by alluring and impossible claims of impostors, who usually resort to publishing testimonials procured for a money consideration from one or two physicians of questionable standing, or from some unknown woman, who is dubbed as a "great society leader." More than likely the preparations were never used by the writers of the so-called testimonials. Tell any one of them that DeMiracle Chemical Company will forfeit Five Thousand Dollars if it can be proven that their so-called superfluous hair "cures" ever eradicated one single growth of superfluous hair.

For years we have been cautioning women against the use of poisonous pastes, powders, fake "beauty article recipes" and so-called liquid "cures," but it seems that some brave women willing to be humbugged, because as soon as one fake hair has gotten all he can out of confiding women, another takes his place, and so it will continue as long as women will permit themselves to be victims of such impostors.

If you don't mind taking the risk of disfigurement, why pay twenty-five cents to one dollar or more for such worthless preparations, when you can procure from any drug store for five or ten cents, a sufficient quantity of the ingredients to last a year.

It must be borne in mind that after the growth of hair is stimulated by the use of so-called depilatories it will necessitate a much longer and more serious treatment with DeMiracle than it would have otherwise required. Therefore, isn't it safer to stop experimenting and use the world-famous DeMiracle which is acknowledged by eminent authorities everywhere as the standard depilatory—the one perfect, non-poisonous, safe and harmless preparation that dissolves hair, thereby taking the vitality out of it, consequently retarding and preventing an increased growth.

The best and most convincing proof that DeMiracle is the only absolutely reliable and trustworthy hair remover is that it

is used by the most eminent and successful depilatory. Some unprincipled ones tell you they cannot procure it so that they may more easily influence you to purchase their own or possibly some other dangerous, worthless substitute under another label for a few cents more profit. To protect you from just such imposition, if your dealer will not supply you, mail us \$10 and we will send you, all charges paid, in plain, sealed wrapper, a \$100 bottle of DeMiracle, and we will make you a present of a full-size jar of DeMiracle Cream. If you care to, give us the name of the dealer who tries to sell you a "just as good" imitation or substitute. Write for free booklet which will be mailed sealed in plain envelope. DeMiracle Chemical Company, Dept. 52, Park Ave., 129th and 130th Sts., New York. You can always procure DeMiracle without argument in Omaha from Sherman & McConnell Drug Co., and Loyal Pharmacy.

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