

## CHAPTER XX

### DIPLOMACY AND POLITICS OF THE CANAL



HAVING built the Panama Canal at a heavy cost of treasure and no light cost of life, having subdued to our will the greatest forces of nature and put a curb upon the malevolent powers of tropical miasma and infection, we are about to give the completed result to the whole world. It stands as a free gift, for never

can any tolls that will be imposed make of it a commercial success. It was the failure to recognize this inevitable fact that made it impossible for the French to complete the task. It will be a national asset, not because of the income gathered at its two entrances, but because of the cheapening of freight rates between our two coasts and the consequent reduction of prices to our citizens. But this advantage will accrue to peoples who have not paid a dollar of taxation toward the construction of the Canal. There is absolutely no advantage which the Canal may present to the people of New England that will not be shared equally by the people of the Canadian provinces of Quebec and Ontario if they desire to avail themselves of the opportunity. Our gulf ports of Mobile, New Orleans and Galveston expect, and reasonably so, that the volume of their traffic will be greatly in-

creased by the opening of the Canal. But if Rio de Janeiro, Buenos Ayres and Montevideo have products they desire to ship to the Orient or to the western coast of their own continent of South America the Canal is open to them as freely as to our ships.

Having given to the world so great a benefaction, it will be the part of the international statesmen of the United States, the diplomatists, to see to it that the gift is not distorted, nor, through any act of ours, divided unequally among those sharing in it. Upon the diplomacy of the United States the opening of the Canal will impose many new burdens and responsibilities.

Scarcely any general European war involved more intricate and delicate questions of the reciprocal rights of nations than did the acquisition of the Suez Canal by Great Britain. Volumes have been



A CHURCH IN CHORRERA



A NATIVE KITCHEN

written on the subject of the diplomacy of Suez. The Constantinople conference called for the discussion of that topic, and the specific delimitation of the authority of Great Britain and the rights of other maritime nations was one of the most notable gatherings in the history of diplomacy. The Panama waterway will bring new problems and intensify old ones for the consideration of our statesmen. The Monroe Doctrine is likely to come in for a very thorough testing and perhaps a new formulation. The precise scope of that doctrine has of late years become somewhat ill defined. Foreign nations say that the tendency of the United States is to extend its powers and ignore its responsibilities under this theory. In Latin

America, where that doctrine should be hailed as a bulwark of protection, it is looked upon askance. That feeling is largely due to the attitude of this country toward the Republic of Colombia at the time of the secession of Panama.

A problem of the highest importance to the credit of the United States in Latin America, which should be settled in accordance with principles of national honor and international equity, is the determination of what reparation we owe the Republic of Colombia for our part in the

revolution which made Panama an independent state and gave us the Canal Zone.

In an earlier chapter I have tried to tell, without bias, the story of that revolution and to leave to the readers' own judgment the question whether our part in it was that merely of an innocent bystander, a neutral looker-on, or whether we did not, by methods of indirection at least, make it impossible



NATIVE HOUSE IN PENOMENE

for Colombia to employ her own troops for the suppression of rebellion in her own territory. As President, and later as private citizen, Mr. Roosevelt was always exceedingly insistent that he had adhered to the strictest letter of the neutrality law—always that is except in that one impetuous speech in San Francisco, in which he blurted out the boast, "I took Panama and left Congress to debate about it afterward".

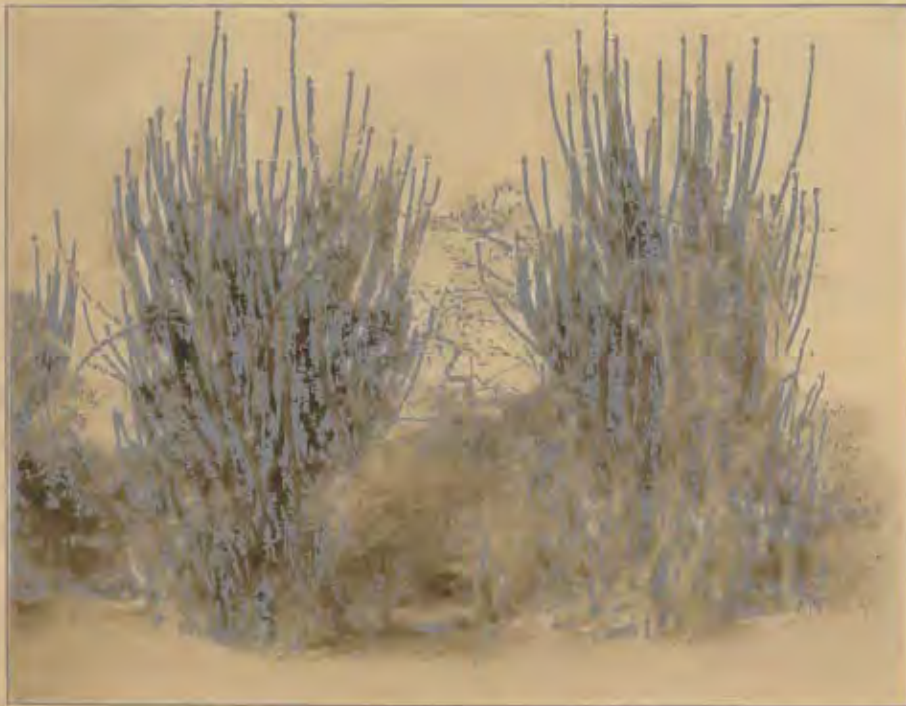
Mr. Roosevelt's protestations of innocence had, however, little effect upon his own friends and party associates, for early in the Taft administration the conviction became general among men in high station that reparation of some sort was due to Colombia for what was—to express it guardedly—our connivance at a conspiracy that cost that republic its richest province—cost it further a lump payment of \$10,000,000 and an annual sum of \$250,000 to eternity. The records of diplomacy are enmeshed in many concealing veils, but enough is known of the progress of the negotiations to reflect



A STREET IN CHORRERA

credit upon the diplomacy of Colombia. That country has neither threatened nor blustered—and the undeniable fact that the comparative power of Colombia and the United States would make threats and bluster ridiculous would not ordinarily deter a Latin-American President from shrieking shrill defiance at least for the benefit of his compatriots. Colombia has been persistent but not petulant. It has stated its case to two administrations and has

wrung from both the confession that the United States in that revolution acted the part of an international bandit. Out of the recesses of the Department of State has leaked the information that the United States has made to Colombia a tentative offer of \$10,000,000, but that it had been refused. But the offer itself was a complete confession on the part of the United States of its guilt in the transaction complained of. Naturally, Colombia declined the proffered conscience money. Panama received from the United States not merely \$10,000,000, but will get \$250,000 a year for an indefinite period. All this Colombia lost and her valuable province as well because the captain of a United States man-of-war would not let the Colombian



GIANT CACTI OFTEN USED FOR HEDGING

Planted close together, these cacti form a barrier impassible by animals

colonels on that day of revolution use force to compel a railroad manager to carry their troops across the Isthmus. The grievance of the Colombians is a very real and seemingly just one.

We hear much of the national honor in reference to canal tolls but less of it in relation to this controversy with Colombia. Yet that controversy ought to be settled and settled justly. It is inconceivable, of course, that it should be determined by restoring the status as it existed before that day of opera-

President Roosevelt wrote the word Panama on the list of nations and moved on vastly pleased with the record.

The situation at the same time is one not to be lightly dealt with. The United States is none too popular at any point south of its own borders. It is at the one time hated and feared. The very Panamanians whom we invested with independence have no liking for us and the hatred of the Colombians for the nation that despoiled them is so general and



*Photo by Brown Bros.*

THE TOWN OF EMPIRE, SOON TO BE ABANDONED

tion. Our investment in the Canal Zone, our duty to the world which awaits the opening of the Canal, and our loyalty to our partner, Panama, alike make that impossible. The Republic of Panama is an accomplished fact not to be obliterated even in the interest of precise justice. As the Persian poet put it:

"The moving finger writes, and having writ  
 Moves on; nor all your piety nor wit,  
 Shall lure it back to cancel half a line,  
 Nor all your tears wash out one word of it!"

extreme that their rulers are entitled to the utmost credit for having observed all the courtesies of diplomacy in their efforts to secure some measure of reparation. The question presents itself, is it wise to leave such a hot-bed of hatred, of resentment perhaps justifiable, in the very midst of Latin America, just when we are hoping by our new Canal to extend and cement our commercial relations with them? Among the Latin Americans there is a very general feeling that our devotion to the Monroe Doctrine is indicative only of our purpose to protect

our neighbors against any selfish aggressions except our own. It is of the very highest importance that this feeling be dissipated, and there is perhaps no more immediate way of beginning that task than by reaching such an agreement with Colombia as shall indicate to other South American governments our purpose of doing exact justice among our neighbors, be they great and powerful or small and weak.

With all the South American countries the commerce of the Canal will tend to bring us into closer

besides maintaining two nitrate plants in Chile does a prodigious business in explosives with the various states—and not mainly for military purposes only. The United States Steel Company has a vanadium mine in Peru where 3000 Americans are working. The equipment of street railways and electric-lighting plants in South American cities is almost wholly of American manufacture. Even without the systematic encouragement of their home government, American business men have begun to make



THE PANAMA RAILROAD BRIDGE AT GAMBOA

relations and to multiply the possibility of international dissension. Moreover, the growing interests of United States business men in those countries form national outposts on which we must ever keep a friendly eye. It is ridiculous to urge upon individuals the task of stimulating and extending our foreign trade if the government is to be wholly indifferent to their efforts. It is known that the great beef packers of Chicago have considerable plants in the Argentine; that a famous iron manufacturer of Pittsburgh has in Chile what is believed to be the largest iron mine in the world; that the Standard Oil Company has its agencies throughout the continent; and the Du Pont Powder Company

inroads upon German and English commercial power in South America, and the opening of the Canal will increase their activities. Today our Pacific coast is practically shut off from any interchange of commodities with Brazil and the Argentine; with the Canal open a direct waterway will undoubtedly stimulate a considerable trade. The more trade is stimulated, the more general travel becomes between nations, the less becomes the danger of war. There is no inconsistency in the statement that the Canal will become a powerful factor in the world's peace, even though it does necessitate the maintenance of a bigger navy and the erection of powerful forts for its defense in the improbable event of war.



A STREET IN CHORRERA

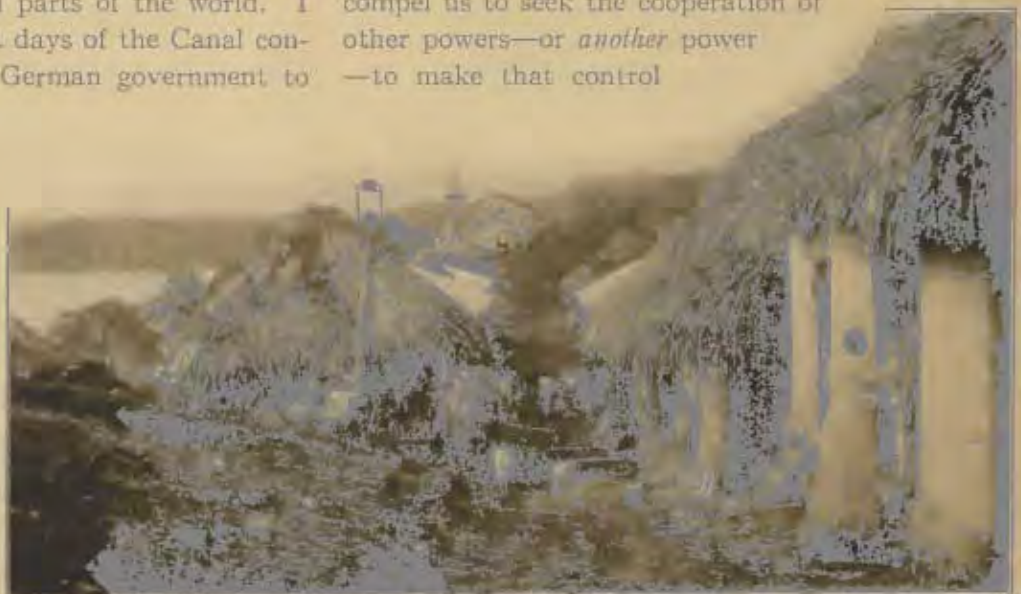
This is but one phase of the influence the Canal will exercise upon countries other than the United States. What it will do for the Latin-American countries immediately adjacent to Panama in the direction of leading them to establish improved sanitation systems, or to perfect those they now maintain, is beyond present estimate. Many such governments have had their representatives on the Zone to study the methods there in force, and while the present writer was there Col. Gorgas was besought to visit Guayaquil to give its rulers expert advice on the correction of the unsanitary state of that city. Members of the staff of Col. Gorgas are in demand as experts in all parts of the world. I know of one who in the last days of the Canal construction was sent by the German government to establish in some of the German South African provinces the methods that brought health to the Isthmus after the days of the futile French struggle with fever and malaria.

It is because of this influence upon foreign peoples, already apparent, that far-sighted people find intolerable the proposition to let the Canal Zone grow up into jungle and return to its original

state of savagery. It can and should be made an object lesson to the world. From every ship that makes the ten-hour passage of the Canal some passengers will go ashore for rest from the long voyage and to see what the Zone may have to show them. Are we content to have them see only the hovels of Colon and the languid streets of Panama—exhibits that give no idea of the force, the imagination, the idealism that gave being to the Canal? Today the Zone is a little bit of typical United States life set down in the tropics. So it might remain if due encouragement were given to industrious settlers. There

is not so much land in the world that this need be wasted, nor have there been so many examples of the successful creation and continuance of such a community as the Zone has been as to justify its obliteration before the world has grasped its greatest significance.

There are not lacking those philosophers who hold that the first political effect of the Canal will be to force us to abandon that attitude of national isolation and aloofness prescribed in Washington's deprecation of "entangling alliances abroad". They hold that this latest and greatest addition to our reasons for solicitude about the control of the Pacific will compel us to seek the cooperation of other powers—or *another* power—to make that control



A PEARL ISLAND VILLAGE

complete. Perhaps the proposition is most frankly stated in this paragraph from Mr. Frank Fox's "Problems of the Pacific".

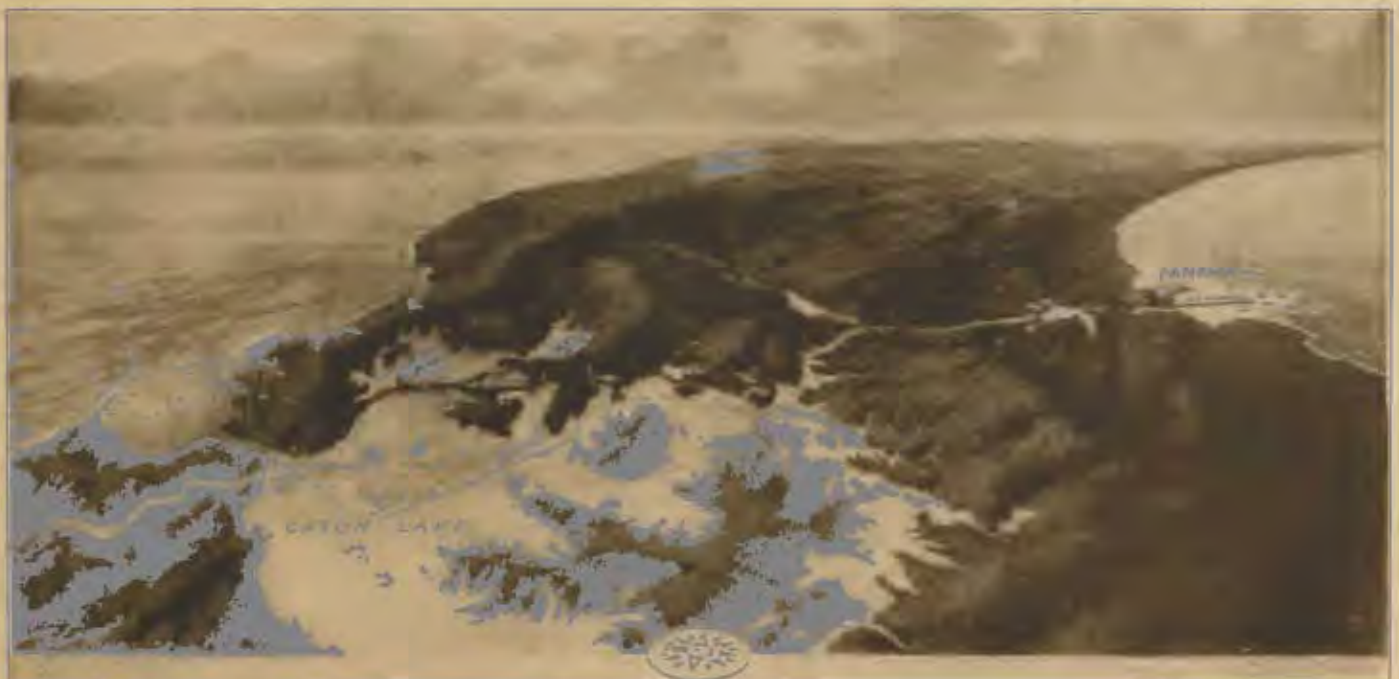
"The friendly coöperation between the United States and Great Britain would give to the Anglo-Saxon race the mastery of the world's greatest ocean, laying forever the fear of the Yellow Peril, securing for the world that its greatest readjustment of the balance of power shall be effected in peace, while rivalry between these two kindred nations may cause the gravest evils and possibly irreparable disasters".

This is no place to discuss this thesis, but even the most casual consideration shows how great a mutual interest the United States and Great Britain have in the Panama Canal and its safeguarding from any disturbing conditions in the Pacific. Until conditions change and the United States regains its place among the maritime nations of the world the bulk of the trade passing through

the Canal will be in British ships. For New Zealand and all of the eastern part of British Australia the Panama route offers the most expeditious connection with Liverpool. Canada, too, is vitally interested in the Canal. By the employment of the system of Georgian Bay and St. Lawrence Canals, which the Dominion government has created, with a foresight far greater than our own, the wheat, even of the Winnipeg region, may be sent by water



DIAGRAM OF COMPARATIVE EXCAVATIONS BY THE FRENCH AND AMERICANS IN CULEBRA CUT



Courtesy of the National Geographic Magazine

BIRD'S-EYE VIEW OF THE PANAMA CANAL



NATIVE WOMAN, COCLE

to Montreal and thence in sea-going ships to the further shore of the Pacific. Even though owned by the United States, the Canal will be a powerful tie to bind closer together the widely separated parts of the British Empire.

That being true it will further cement the spirit of friendliness between the United States and Great Britain. It will accomplish this without formal treaties or proclaimed alliance. The alliance will be tacit, resulting from the very logic of the situation. Great Britain cannot afford to be otherwise than friendly with the owner of the Canal—the little passing tiff over the question of tolls on coastwise shipping notwithstanding. It is idle to ask that the control of the Pacific be assured by an Anglo-American compact. More intelligent is it to assume that any effort to break down that control, which now virtually exists, would be met by action on the part of the two English-speaking nations quite as effective as though a treaty existed. This, too, despite the present Anglo-Japanese treaty which so disquiets our California citizens, but quite needlessly, in fact, because of that convention for it

promises no support to Japan in the event of the latter being the aggressor.

Any formal convention, however, any international agreement for the control of the Pacific which should leave Germany out, would be an incentive to trouble rather than a bright harbinger of peace. For no nation is making more active and intelligent preparations to reap to the fullest the advantages of the Canal than are the Germans. Their nation's great interests in Brazil, Argentine, and Chile, her colonizing activities in Asia, her Chinese port of Kiau-Chou, forcibly wrested from China, all impel her to take a lively interest in the Canal and the Pacific. The Kaiser would not look with any placid indifference upon such an Anglo-American agreement as has been urged, and as its ends can be, and probably

will be attained without formal pronouncement, any open diplomatic negotiations for such a convention would probably be unwise. Enough to say that while speculation concerning such an agreement is quite general among publicists today, no discussion of

it has yet engaged the attention of any statesmen.



RIVER VILLAGE IN CHIRIQUI



THE PEARL ISLAND VILLAGE OF SABOGA



After considering the problem of what the Canal will be worth, let us reverse the ordinary process and figure out what it will cost. Exact statement is still impossible, for as this book is being printed the Canal is months away from being usable and probably two years short of completion if we reckon terminals and fortifications as part of the completed work.

In an earlier chapter I have set forth some of the estimates of its cost from the figure of \$131,000,000 set by the volatile De Lesseps to the \$375,000,000 of the better informed and more judicious Goethals. In June, 1913, however, we had at hand the official report of all expenditures to March, 1913, duly classified as follows:

### CLASSIFIED EXPENDITURES—ISTHMIAN CANAL COMMISSION

A statement of classified expenditures of the Isthmian Canal Commission to March 31, 1913, follows:

PERIODS	Department of Civil Administration	Department of Law	Department of Sanitation	Department of Construction and Engineering	General Items	Fortifications	Total
Total to June 30, 1909	\$3,427,000.20		\$9,073,539.28	\$69,022,561.42	\$78,022,606.10		\$160,745,797.00
Total—Fiscal Year, 1910	709,351.37		1,803,040.95	26,300,167.05	2,803,088.83		31,675,648.20
Total—Fiscal Year, 1911	755,079.44		1,717,792.62	27,477,776.19	3,097,959.72		33,048,607.97
Total—Fiscal Year, 1912	820,398.57	24,729.16	1,620,391.12	28,897,738.10	2,819,926.53	1,212,881.66	35,396,065.14
July, 1912	63,913.12	1,448.53	123,803.64	2,649,246.61	200,970.55	104,126.92	3,143,509.37
August, 1912	62,182.51	1,468.26	123,154.48	2,539,680.83	*98,054.61	111,402.55	2,730,834.02
September, 1912	59,201.01	1,207.82	120,385.70	2,285,979.89	77,003.53	127,168.25	2,670,946.20
October, 1912	64,383.37	2,033.75	137,574.61	2,473,280.76	83,523.30	129,736.37	2,800,532.16
November, 1912	62,200.12	1,892.14	119,031.06	2,420,085.77	75,779.01	300,016.33	2,970,005.03
December, 1912	58,987.96	1,462.18	115,819.26	2,871,977.03	120,946.01	148,152.57	3,287,345.61
January, 1913	57,699.58	1,400.59	114,562.04	2,828,872.06	6,463.72	149,272.77	3,125,339.76
February, 1913	56,580.00	1,049.00	127,324.80	3,784,370.54	123,034.12	314,094.00	4,407,959.46
March, 1913	58,761.04	1,899.22	105,894.08	2,712,218.10	7,706.70	131,940.75	3,003,003.48
Grand total	\$6,255,834.43	\$39,259.65	\$15,902,311.24	\$176,860,954.32	\$87,385,540.71	\$2,609,003.13	\$289,113,591.48

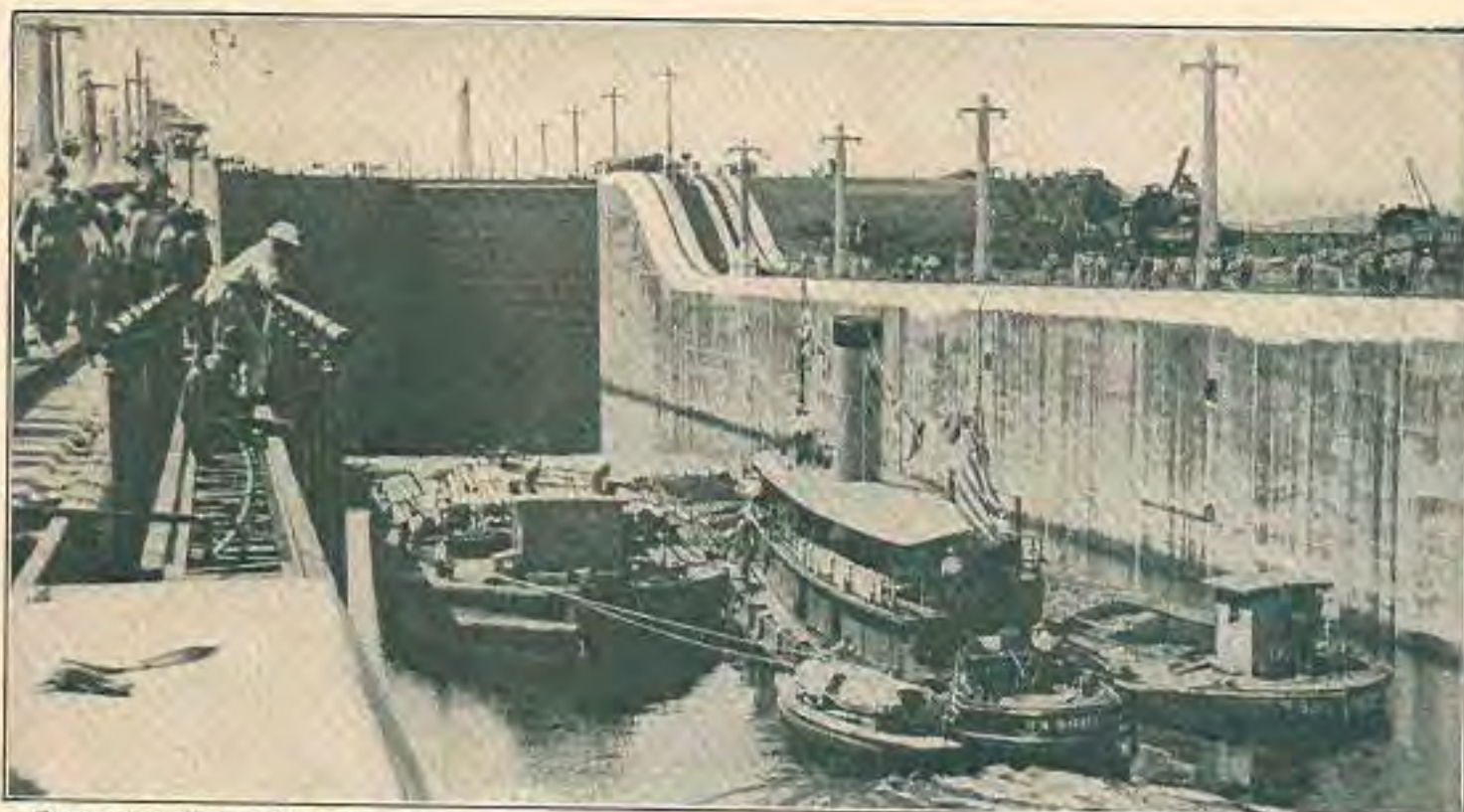
\*Denotes credit.

It will be observed that since the beginning of the fiscal year 1913, expenditures have averaged a trifle over \$3,000,000 a month. This rate of expenditure may be expected to decrease somewhat during the eighteen months likely to elapse before the Canal, terminals and forts are completed. Probably if we allow \$250,000 a month for this decrease we will be near the mark making the future expenditures average \$2,750,000 monthly until January, 1915, making in all \$57,750,000. Adding this to the Commission expenditures up to March 31, 1913, and adding further the \$50,000,000 paid to the French stockholders and the Republic of Panama we reach the sum of \$396,863,593—a reasonable estimate of the final cost of the great world enterprise; the measure in dollars and cents of the greatest gift ever made by a single nation to the world.

It is worth noting that all this colossal expenditure of money has been made without any evidence of graft, and practically without charge of that all-pervading canker in American public work. During a long stay on the Isthmus, associating constantly with men in every grade of the Commission's service, I never heard a definite charge of illegal profits being taken by anyone concerned in the work. In certain publications dealing with the undertaking in its earlier days one will find assertions of underhanded collusion with contractors and of official raids upon the more select importations of the Commissary without due payment therefore. But even these charges were vague, resting only on hearsay, and

had to do with an administration which vanished six or more years ago. Today that chronic libeler "the man in the street" has nothing to say about graft in connection with Canal contracts, and "common notoriety", which usually upholds all sorts of scandalous imputations, and is cited to maintain various vague allegations, is decidedly on the side of official integrity at Panama.

This is not to say that the work has been conducted with an eye single to economy. It has not. That is to say it has not been conducted in accordance with the common idea of economy. All over the land contractors, apprehensive of the effect of the Panama example of government efficiency in public work, are telling how much more cheaply they could have dug the Panama Canal. Probably they could if they could have dug it at all. But the sort of



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THE TUG BOHIO WITH BARGES IN MIDDLE GATUN LOCK

economy they are talking about was definitely abandoned when Col. Gorgas convinced the Commission that it was reckless extravagance to save \$50,000 or so on wire screens and lose forty or fifty lives in a yellow-fever epidemic. The contractor's idea of economy was emphatically set aside when Col. Goethals determined that it was cheaper to pay engineers one-third more than the current rate at home, and make such arrangements for their comfort on the Zone that they would stay on the job, rather than to pay ordinary prices and have them leave in haste after a month or two of dissatisfied and half-hearted work.

From which it appears that a new definition of "economy" is needed in the application of the word to the Canal work.

Whatever may be the influence of the Canal on the position of the United States as a world power, its influence on the industrial life at home is likely to be all pervasive and revolutionary. The government is the

largest employer of labor in the land. It ought to be the best employer. On the Zone it has been the best employer, and has secured the best results. When government work is to be done hereafter it will not be let out to private contractors without hesitation and discussion. A consideration of the results obtained by the State of New York in its latest expenditure, by the methods of private contract, of the Erie Canal appropriation of \$101,000,000, will go far to show the superiority of the Panama system. In a recent interview the Secretary of the Navy, Josephus Daniels, declared it to be the policy of the Department to build battle-ships in navy yards so far as possible—a policy which the shipbuilding interests have steadily resisted in the past. It is not too much to infer that the success of the army in digging a canal encouraged the Secretary to show what the navy could do in building its own ships.

If the system and conditions of employment that have existed in Panama could be applied to public



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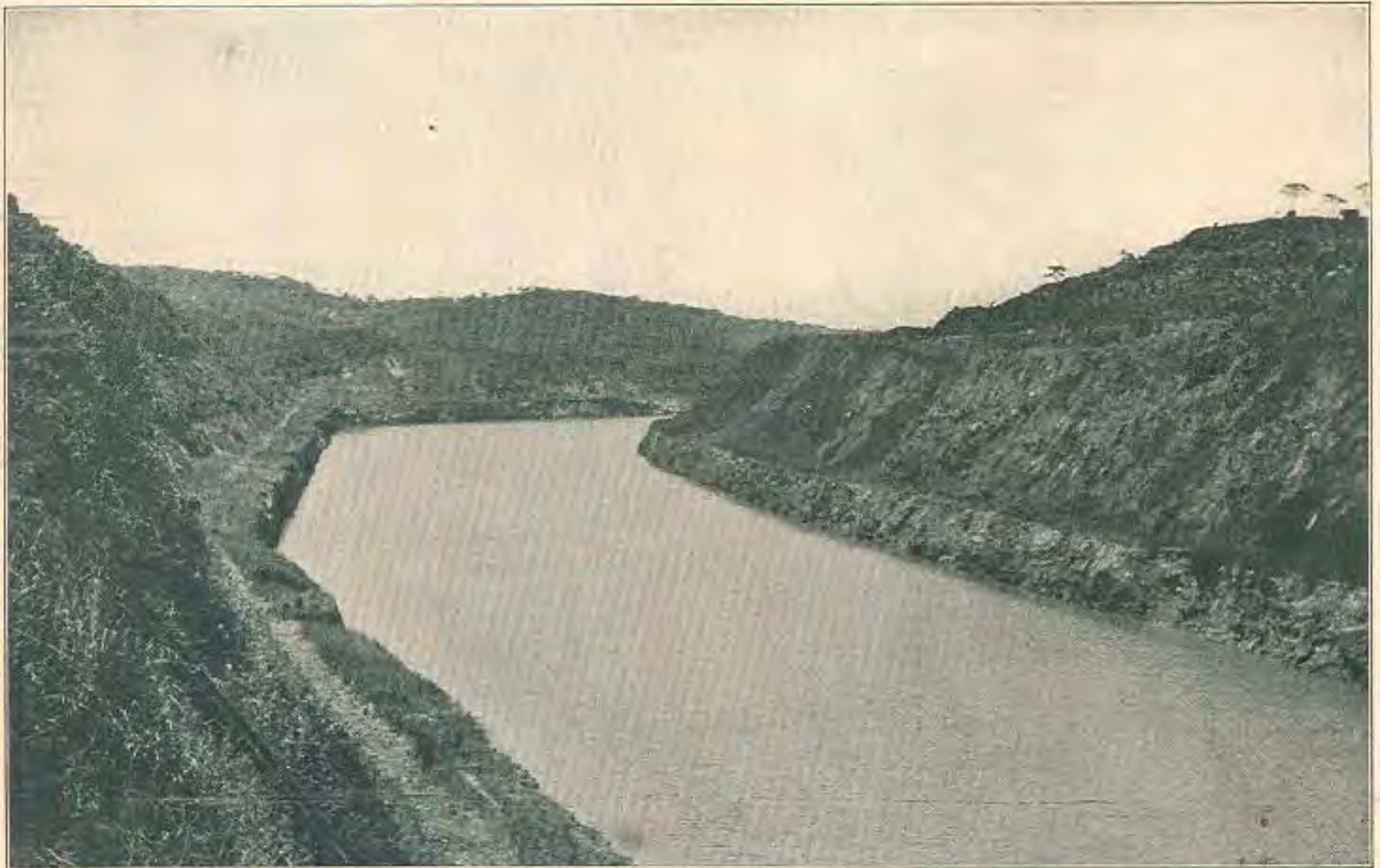
LOOKING DOWN CANAL FROM MIRAFLORES LOCK TO THE PACIFIC

service in all other parts of the United States, the condition of all labor, all industry, all professional service would be correspondingly improved. For with the most extensive employer setting the pace all others would have to keep step with it.

When the long account comes to be balanced we may find that the United States will owe quite as much to the Panama enterprise on the moral as on the material side. Of course it is going to increase our trade both foreign and domestic—that, as the

cities along the Atlantic coast. At the same time the output of our eastern steel mills and New England cotton and woolen factories will find a more expeditious and cheaper route to the builders and workers of the Pacific coast.

Incidentally the labors of the Interstate Commerce Commission are likely to be multiplied almost incalculably. For it must be accepted as a fact that free competition is no longer a complete regulator of freight rates whether by rail or by water. Any



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CULEBRA CUT PARTIALLY FILLED WITH WATER

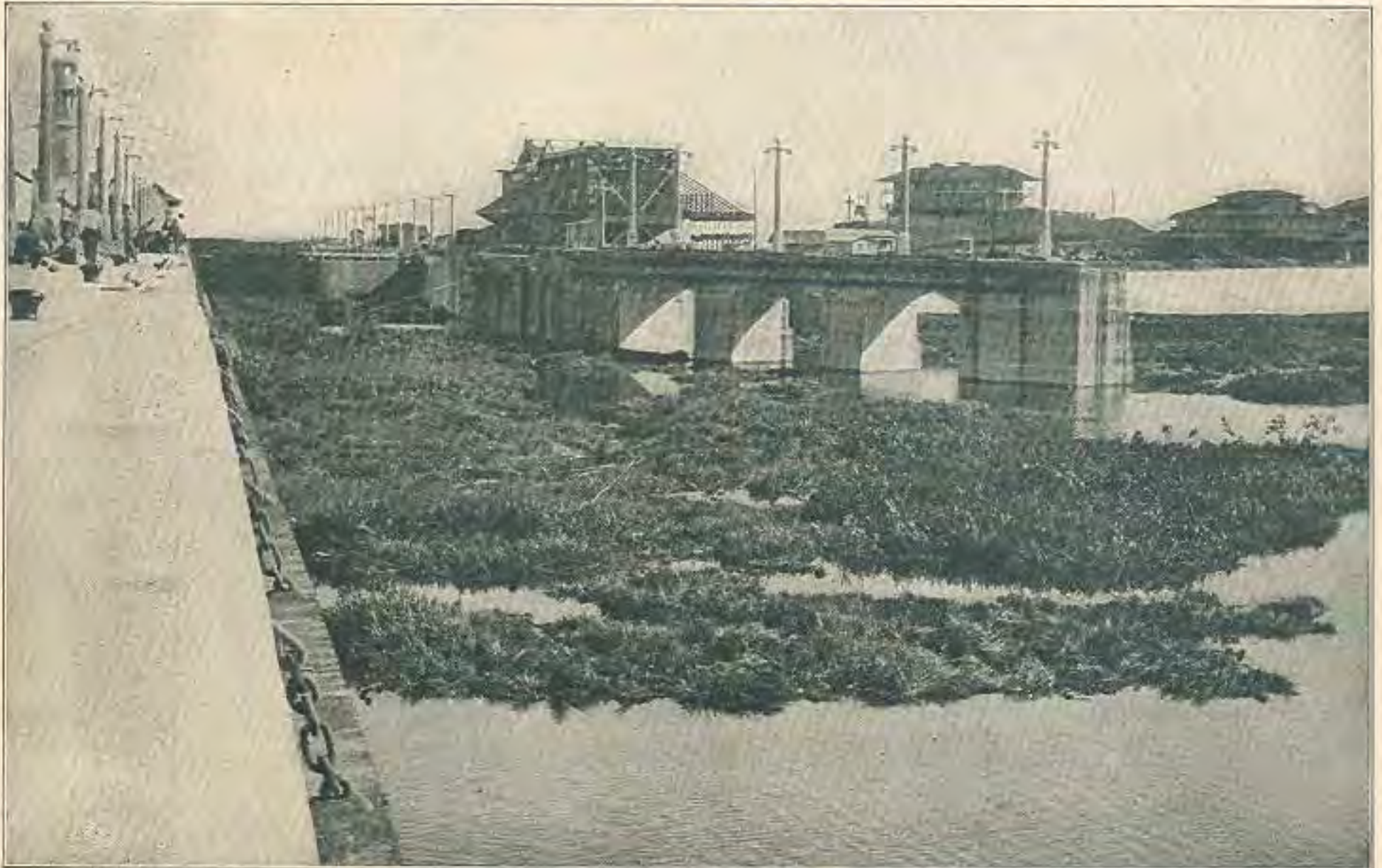
French say, goes without saying. It will cheapen the cost of building cottages in New York suburbs, because lumber will be brought from the forests of Oregon and Washington for half the freight cost now exacted. It will stimulate every manufacturing interest on the Pacific coast for coal from West Virginia will be laid down there at dollars per ton less than now. The men who catch and can salmon in the rushing waters of the Columbia, the men who raise and pack the luscious oranges of southern California will have a new and cheaper way of carrying their products to the eager markets of the great

one can charter a ship and send it through the Canal with the same rights and privileges that a long established line will enjoy. But not every independent ship can find dockage facilities at both ends of its voyage, although it is true that the enterprising cities of the Pacific coast are warding off monopoly by building municipal docks. Moreover, the owner of the independent ship will have his troubles in getting the railroads at either end to handle his cargoes and distribute them at such charges as will leave him any profit. Indeed the independent ship will be but little of a factor in fixing rates. That

will be done by the regular lines. Normally there should be keen competition between the railroads and the steamships with a very marked drop in rates. But it will not be well to base too great hopes on this possibility. Transportation rates, even where there is nominally free competition, are not often based wholly on the cost of the service. What the traffic will bear is more often the chief factor in rate making. Because ships can carry freight from New York to San Francisco for three

less vigilance and probably necessitate a material extension of its authority.

In other than material ways the nation will largely profit. I think that the fact of the Canal's having been built by army engineers will go far toward correcting a certain hostility toward the army which is common in American thought. The Canal proves that the organization of the army, the education of its officers, is worth something in peace as well as in war. Of course this has been shown before in



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#### FLOATING ISLANDS IN GATUN LOCK ENTRANCE

These islands, formed of aquatic plants with entwined roots and a little soil, must be towed away by tugs and sent over the spillway lest they block navigation.

dollars a traffic-ton less than the railroads does not imply that they will do so. Nor does it ensure that railroad rates will drop spasmodically, in a vain effort to keep all the business away from the ships. Rather is it probable that certain classes of freight like lumber, coal and ore will be left wholly to the ships, and some form of agreement as to the essentials of the general rate card will be arrived at. It is this agreement, which in some form or other is sure to come, that will engage the attention of the Interstate Commerce Commission, arouse its cease-

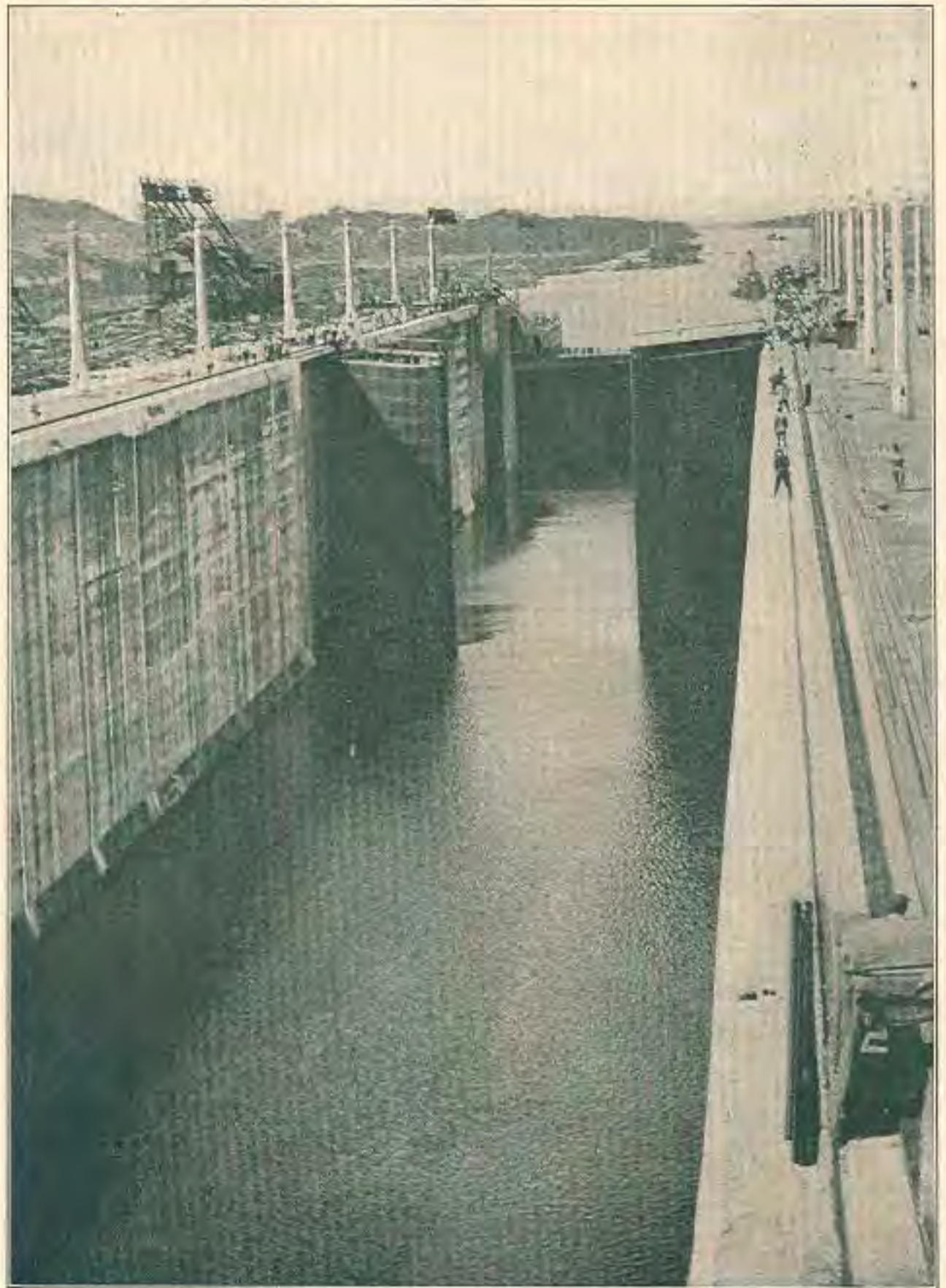
countless public works scattered over the land, but never hitherto in a fashion to command such attention and to compel such plaudits. There were five Colonels, besides "The Colonel," on the Commission which put the big job through, and I do not believe that the most shrinking civilian who visited the Isthmus on either business or pleasure found any ground to complain of militarism, or was overawed by any display of "fuss and feathers."

The Canal Zone was, of course, a rural community harboring about 65,000 people scattered along a

railroad 47 miles long. Yet in the story of its government there is much that is instructive to the rulers of our American cities. Every head of the Department of Sanitation in an American city would profit by a study of Col. Gorgas's methods in dealing with the problems of dirt, sewage, and infection. Indeed many of the ideas he developed are already being adapted to the needs of North American municipalities. It is becoming quite evident that the scientific method of controlling insect pests by destroying their breeding places is the only efficient one. The larvacide man in the waste places, or the covered garbage can, and screened stable are not as melodramatic as newspaper shrieks of "Swat the Fly", but they accomplish more in the end.

The management of the Panama Railroad by and for the government affords an object lesson that will be cited when we come to open Alaska. Though over-capitalized in the time of its private ownership and operation the railroad under the direction of Col. Goethals has paid a substantial profit. Though rushed with the work incident to the Canal construction it has successfully dealt with its commercial business, and has offered in many ways a true example of successful railway management.

But to my mind more important than any other outcome of the Canal work, is its complete demonstration of the ability of the United States to do its own work for its own people, efficiently, successfully and honestly. That is an exhibit that will not go down. The expenditure of fully \$375,000,000 with no perceptible taint of graft is a victory in itself. There



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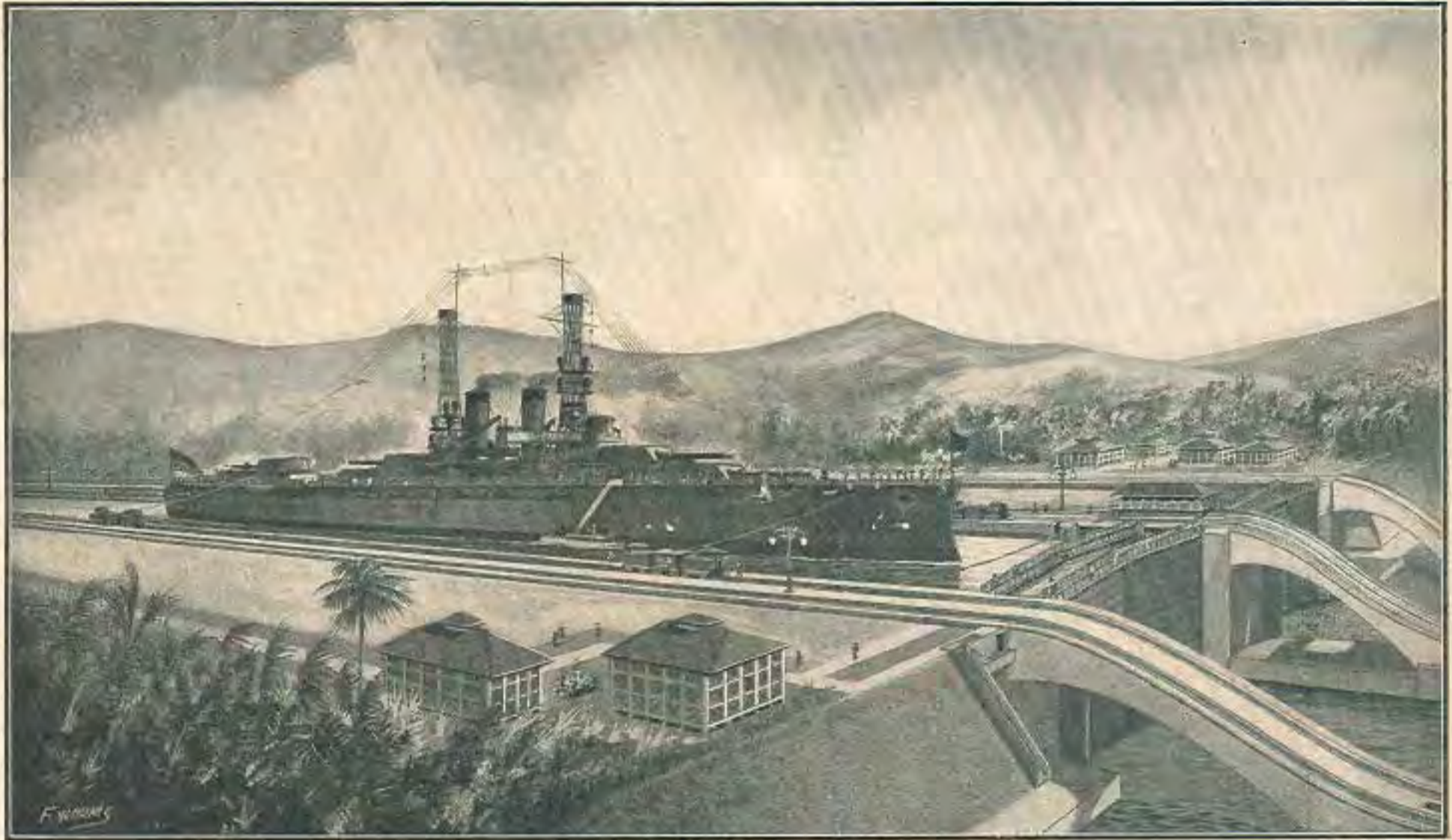
THE FIRST BOAT THROUGH. 1.

The commission tug Gatun, with members of the commission aboard, is approaching the lower Gatun lock from the Atlantic end of the Canal. The two pairs of gates are opening for her admission.

are exceedingly few of our great railroad corporations that can show as clean a record, and the fact somewhat depreciates the hostility of some of their heads to the extension into their domain of the activities of the government. In urging this point no one can be blind to the fact that the Zone was governed and the Canal work directed by an autocrat. But the autocrat was directly subject to Congress and had to come to that body annually for his supplies of money. It was dug by the army, but no one now

doubts that the navy could have done as well, and few will question that, with the Panama experience as a guide, a mixed commission of civilians and military and naval officers could efficiently direct any public work the nation might undertake.

wholly by the United States, it is to exist for the general good of all mankind, it should be, in the ages to come, the greatest glory attached to the American flag. In abolishing human slavery we only followed last in the train of all civilized nations.



THE FLAG IN TWO OCEANS.

The Oregon steamed 10,000 miles in 1898 to carry the flag from the Pacific to the theater of war in the Atlantic. Ten hours of steaming through 50 miles of canal will henceforth make our fleet available in either ocean.

So with the Panama Canal approaching completion we can see that its effects are to be manifold—domestic as well as foreign, moral as well as material, political as well as economic. If it be properly conducted in its completed state, managed and directed upon the broad principle that, though paid for

But in tearing away the most difficult barrier that nature has placed in the way of world-wide trade, acquaintance, friendship and peace, we have done a service to the cause of universal progress and civilization the worth of which the passage of time will never dim.

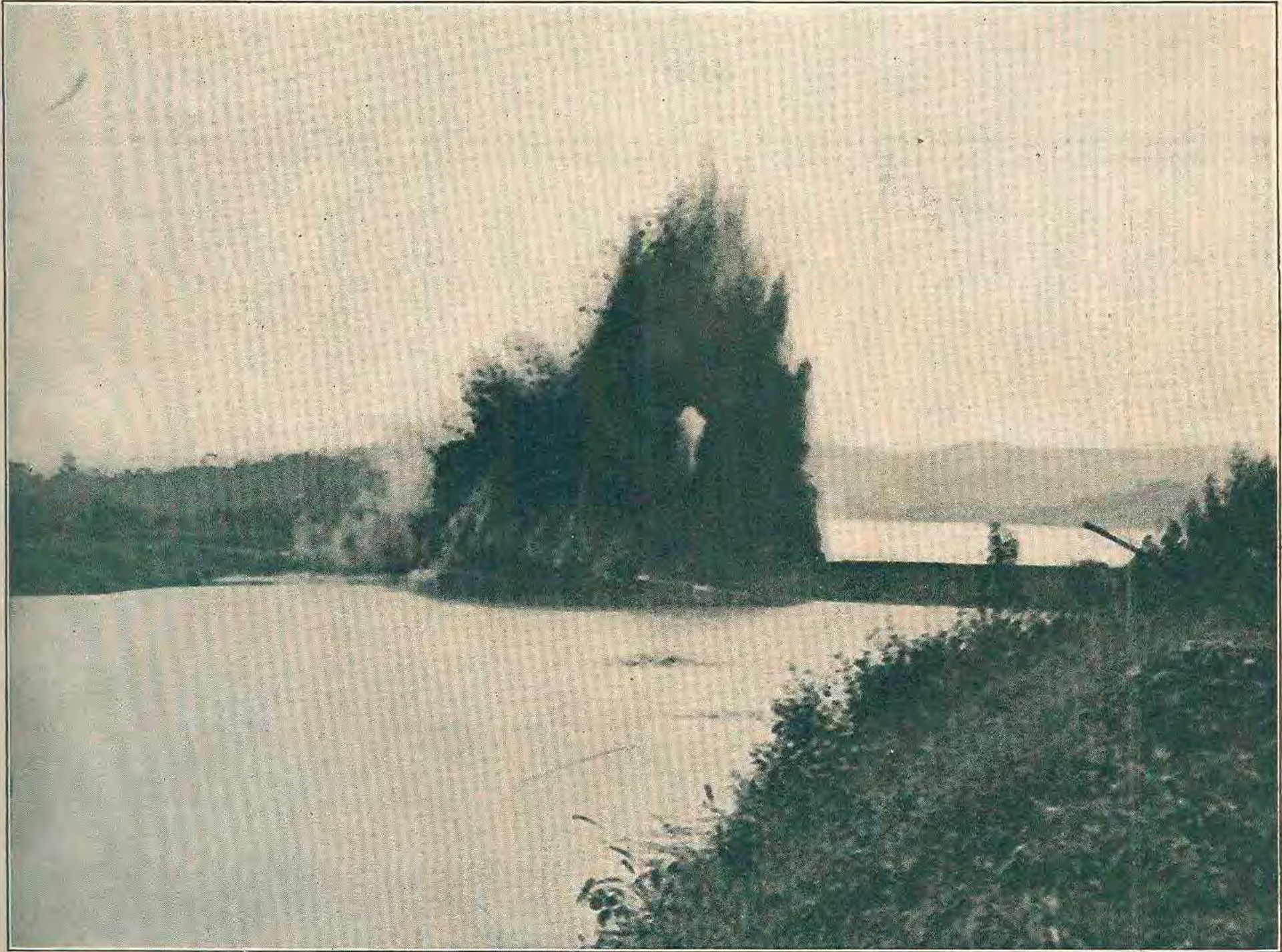
**E**ARLY in the afternoon of October 10, 1913, President Wilson, standing in the executive offices of the White House, pressed a telegrapher's key. Straightway a spark sped along the wires to Galveston, Tex., thence by cable to the Canal Zone and, in an instant, with a roar and a quaking of the earth a section of the Gamboa Dyke,

which from the beginning has barred the waters of Gatun Lake from the Culebra Cut, was blown away. The water gushed through, though not in such a torrent as sightseers had hoped for, since pumps, started on Oct. 1st, had already filled the cut to within six feet of the level of the lake. But presently thereafter a native cayuca, and then a

few light power boats sped through the narrow opening, and there remained no obstacle to the passage of the canal by such light craft from ocean to ocean.

By the destruction of the Gamboa Dyke on the date fixed Colonel Goethals carried out a promise he had made long before to himself and to the people. It was on the 10th of October, 1913, that

October. On the 26th of September the first vessel was raised from the Atlantic level through the three steps of the Gatun locks to Gatun Lake. There was no particular pomp or ceremony observed. The craft was merely an humble tug employed regularly in canal work. Indeed it is said that it was not at "the colonel's" initiative that the ceremony of having Gamboa Dyke blown up



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#### THE CONTINENT'S BACKBONE BROKEN

The blast that destroyed Gamboa Dyke completed water connection between the Atlantic and Pacific.

Balboa strode thigh-deep into the Pacific Ocean, and, raising on high the standard of Spain, claimed that sea and all countries abutting upon it for his sovereign. The United States just four centuries later celebrated one of the final steps in opening to the commerce of all the world the water-way between the oceans.

The demolition of Gamboa Dyke was the culmination of a series of steps forward toward the completion of the canal during the first week in

by wire from the White House was observed. That quiet but efficient army engineer signaled his service on the canal rather by doing things than by celebrating them when done.

From the Pacific end the first lockage was effected on October 14, when the tug *Miraflores* with two barges was put through the *Miraflores* locks, and floated on Lake *Miraflores*. The locks at Pedro Miguel were in condition to elevate the boats to the level of Culebra Cut, but there was not at



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#### THE FIRST BOAT THROUGH. II.

The *Gatun* is in the lock, but the gates are not yet closed. They can be seen folded flush with the wall. When closed water will be admitted from the sides and bottom of the lock, raising the boat 28  $\frac{1}{2}$  feet to the next lock.

the moment enough water in the cut to receive and float them.

Not long before the first lockages to the level of Gatun Lake there occurred very great activity

of the Cucaracha slide, filling the canal bed from side to side. As a result no actual passage of the entire canal was then possible for boats of commercial size. The material thus blocking the cut is mainly soft earth, and suction dredges were speedily installed by which it was pumped out and deposited behind the hills bordering the canal and nearly two miles away.

When the Gamboa Dyke was blown away the villages on the south side of the canal became wholly inaccessible. Culebra, Matachin, Empire, Gorgona,—all stirring towns during the busy days of canal construction,—could no longer be reached by railroad, and their abandonment, determined upon long before, became final. The houses which had been the admiration of all visitors to the Zone were taken down in sections and removed to sites of the new towns which the commission intends shall be permanent. Culebra lasted longest, as it could still be reached by shuttle trains crossing the canal on a precarious bridge near the Pedro Miguel locks; but it in the end vanished with the rest.

There remain no epoch-making events to be celebrated in the progress of the canal to completion. As the dredges make further inroads upon the Cucaracha slide, larger and larger vessels will pass through, without

ceremony, until the canal is open to all. The final celebration, January 1, 1915, will not precede but follow long after the actual employment of the canal by the commerce of all nations.





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