

# UNCLE SAM'S PANAMA HOMES.

(Special Correspondence of the Desert News by Frank G. Carpenter.)

PANAMA.—Uncle Sam will soon have 2,000 houses ready for his canal employees. Within the past few months millions of feet of lumber have arrived from the states. Shipload after shipload has come from the Gulf of Mexico and Puget sound, and it is now piled up in the lumber yards at Colon and La Boca and scattered at different points over our 10-mile strip. A big saw and planing mill has been formed out of the old French machinery at Colon, and well equipped tinning, blacksmithing and plumbing shops are in operation at Ancon. At the several stations along the canal route gangs of men are at work building new houses and repairing the old ones left by the French. Altogether there are more than 500 plumbers, painters, carpenters, tinsmiths, masons and other mechanics and laborers engaged in such construction. Outside the cost of the material, more than \$100,000 has already been spent, and it is estimated that more than \$2,000,000 will be expended during the coming year. In the administration building at Panama a corps of architects from the treasury department at Washington, and from New York, Boston and Chicago is working away night and day making plans and specifications, the whole force being under the direction of the supervising architect, Mr. M. O. Johnson, who was formerly one of the architects of the Illinois Central system, and was brought here by Chief Engineer Wallace.

## A PART OF UNCLE SAM'S BARGAIN

During my stay at Panama I have spent much time with the supervising architect. I have traveled with him over the isthmus inspecting the buildings which came to us as a part of Uncle Sam's bargain, and in looking over the plans of the new houses in course of construction. He tells me that we received as a part of our canal purchase more than 2,400 different buildings in various stages of dilapidation. We got 2,200 houses, most of which were cottages intended as the homes of the workmen. A few had been built in the United States and sent knocked down to Panama, and the remainder were made of imported American lumber, roofed with a fine quality of galvanized iron, which has withstood this tropical climate for 25 years.

These houses are to be seen at Ancon and Colon, at the two ends of the canal, and they are scattered in villages all along the route from the Atlantic to the Pacific. They are of different sizes, some of one story, costing from several

hundred to a thousand dollars or more each, and others the magnificent residences built for De Lesseps and his son at Cristobal and the mansion of Monsieur Dingley on the slopes of Ancon, each of which cost from \$50,000 to \$75,000. In addition there are a score or more of great warehouses and machine shops scattered over the isthmus, railroad stations, office buildings and churches at Panama and Colon, hospital buildings which have altogether cost the millions, situated at the two ends of the line, and two big three-story structures in the heart of Panama, one of which is the canal office building, covering a full block, and the other the fine residence of the chief engineer, which was formerly the home of the French canal director.

## RAVAGED BY TIME AND THE WHITE ANTS.

I asked the supervising architect to give me some idea of the condition of these buildings at the time they were handed over to us. Said he: "Nearly everything left by the French was in a state of dilapidation. No repairs had been done for years. The paint had been worn off by the weather and the buildings had also suffered greatly from the white ants. These insects have eaten at the porches, and they have made their way into some of the larger buildings and chewed off the ends of the joists so that one side of the floors is almost entirely unsupported. This was the case with the residence of the chief engineer. The floors were uneven throughout, and one felt very unsafe while walking across them. The supports of the front stairway were almost entirely eaten away, the ants had even fed on the furniture. One chair, for instance, looked perfectly sound but when sat upon it went down with a crash, carrying its occupant to the floor. The ants had consumed the inside of the woodwork, leaving only the shell of the varnish. These ants work in the dark and one cannot tell the amount of their destruction except by sounding the timbers. They are especially fond of white pine, but less so of yellow pine, Oregon fir, redwood and cypress, and for that reason we are using those woods. The French builders coated their girders with tar, but this causes dry rot when the wood is not exposed to the air."

## EXTRAVAGANT BUILDERS.

"Speaking of the French as builders," continued Mr. Johnson, "their chief idea seems to have been to make the buildings as expensive as possible. This is especially the case with the foundations, which have often cost more than the structures above them. In the laborers' camp at Culebra the cottages stand upon piers of solid masonry three times as large as are needed to carry their loads, and at La Boca there is a two-story house built upon piers 40 feet long, set close together, and of the finest construction. The house framework is not more than 25 feet high. The Ancon hospital buildings stand upon concrete blocks six feet square, where blocks two feet square

## How the Government Will House Its Canal Employees—Two Thousand French Cottages and What is Being Done With Them—Big Houses of De Lesseps and Others—The New Bachelor Quarters at Culebra—How Married Men Will Live—The New Commissary Department—The Cost of Provisions.



HOUSE BUILT FOR DELESSEPS AND LON AT CRISTOBAL. Photographed for the Desert News and Now Occupied by Paymaster Tobey.

would have served, and, indeed, this is so everywhere.

"The work was let out by the French to contractors at so much per cubic yard, so that the more concrete put in the greater the price. One of the most extravagant of their houses is the Folly Dingley, so called because M. Dingley, the chief of the canal who built it, had his family carried away by the yellow fever before he could live in it. That building we are now using for a hospital. It is a two-story cottage, which cost about \$75,000, and it would be considered fine at Newport. The house has an enormous amount of concrete about it, and it has chicken houses and cow-sheds built to correspond with its architecture. The cowshed has a solid concrete floor, the cattle ate their food out of concrete troughs and the horses drank out of a concrete basin of ornamental design

which must have cost at least \$5,000."

## WHAT IS BEING DONE.

I asked Mr. Johnson to give me some idea of the work now going on in his department. Said he:

"We have already repaired several hundred houses. We have thoroughly renovated the canal administration building and that occupied by Chief Engineer Wallace, and have put the hospitals here at Colon in sanitary condition. We are building a large sanitarium on the island of Taboga, to be used as a convalescent hospital, and we will soon be constructing large additions to the hospital at Ancon. The Taboga buildings are about completed. They contain chambers, dining rooms, amusement rooms, kitchens and bath houses. They stand on a high bluff, surrounded by a grove of coconut palms and overlooking the sea. The island has pure water, it affords excellent surf bathing and it will be valuable for our people who are getting well or who have to lie off for a rest."

"We have repaired most of the houses at Cristobal. Uncle Sam's beautiful annex to the city of Colon, and a large force of workmen are now living there. I should say we have repaired 200 at that place alone."

At Culebra, where the most of the

canal work is now going on, we are putting up a bachelor quarters more than 200 feet long, which will accommodate 50 men. Each man will have a room to himself, and there will also be a large dining room, reading room and a social hall. This building will be three stories in height with verandas running around it. There will be double lattice doors instead of windows opening upon the porches, and on the first story the inside walls will be rolling partitions, which will enable the whole to be thrown into one room for lectures and social purposes.

## HOMES FOR CULEBRA.

"We are also building quarters for married men at Culebra. We have designed 30 and are completing four every week. We have 25 portable houses there each consisting of a room and a porch. They will do for bachelors. We are also repairing a number of the old French houses, and a little farther on at Rio Grande Superior are renovating 40 such houses for the workmen. The latter buildings are dormitories, with a special house, containing dining room and kitchen, to be used as a canteen to feed the men."

"In addition to this," the supervising architect continued, "we are repairing

other buildings all along the line. We are putting up a big wharf at La Boca, and we shall add greatly to the hospitals at Ancon, erecting ice plants and cold storage plants there. We are also making roads and are rapidly getting the quarters for the employees into comfortable shape."

## AMERICAN HOMES AT PANAMA.

While in the architect's office I looked over the plans of the different kinds of buildings which are now being made for the American employees. The houses vary according to the rank and salary of the man and as to his family. In the bachelor quarters at Culebra, above referred to, the cottages are 13 feet high. Each bed room is 12x11, with French windows to the floor. The doors open out upon porches and the ventilation is perfect. In that building there will be 42 rooms, each of which will be occupied by a bachelor workman.

The rooms will be furnished by the government. Every man will have his own furniture, consisting of two tables, a bed, a mattress, a hatrack, two chairs and toilet conveniences. Wardrobes and book shelves will be built into the houses, and it is expected that they will be lighted by electricity. Such quarters are for our mechanics, namely, carpenters, plumbers, painters and others. Men of a higher rank, such as chiefs of departments, chief clerks, etc., will have better accommodations and more furniture.

## HOW OUR MARRIED MEN WILL LIVE.

The married mechanics and their families will have good accommodations. Many of the French cottages are now occupied by them, and those which have been repaired are comfortable. Each cottage has several large rooms with wide windows and doors. The walls, as is the case with nearly all the buildings here, are of wood painted in bright colors, no plaster or paper being used. A common type of building is a one-story cottage, containing two rooms and a kitchen, with verandas at the front and back and a shower bath in the rear. The rooms are 12x11; the partitions do not extend clear to the roof, in order to provide plenty of air, lattice work reaching from the top of the wall to the ceiling. All such buildings, including the old French cottages, are of a one-story construction, with concrete roofs, giving free air circulation under the floors.

The next grade of houses is intended for the married foremen and clerks. These are also of one story and cost about \$1,500 apiece to build. Each is 45 feet long and 15 feet wide with a six-foot veranda running around the three sides. Each contains a living room, a bed room, bath room, servant's room, pantry and kitchen. The rooms are large and the houses comfortable. A still better class have an extra bed room. Such houses will be occupied by clerks with large families.

In addition to these some two-story cottages are now being built, which have living and dining rooms on the first floor and bed rooms above. Such houses will have porches, top and bottom, and the upper portion will be screened so that the family can sit out of doors during the evening.

The quarters for the officers are even better than those already mentioned, some of them having six rooms with furniture to correspond to the houses. All the houses will have shower baths and all will be supplied with cold water.

## COOKING AND EATING.

As to the cooking and eating arrangements, the bachelor quarters will have kitchens and dining rooms, which will be run on the contract system, each man paying his own proportion

of the actual cost. Contracts for supplying the board for such quarters will be let out to the lowest responsible bidder, and each man will pay his share of the contract price. If he chooses, however, he need not eat in the quarters. There will be canteens outside and a man can go where he pleases. The canteens will be of different grades. At some meals will cost much more than at others, and one can accommodate his stomach to his pocket. There will also be coffee houses where a man may buy what he pleases and pay for what he orders. The present rate for board at Culebra is, I am told, just about \$5 per week.

## THE NEW COMMISSARIAT.

"As to those who wish to keep house and board themselves, the commissary will soon have a commissary department like that found at our army posts. This will be in charge of Paymaster E. C. Tobey, the chief of materials and supplies, and it will result in the men and their families getting their food and clothing as low, if not lower, than the same things could be bought in the United States. This department will import all sorts of American provisions and the other necessities of life, and will furnish them to the men at a little over their actual cost, including that of managing the department. It is probable that fresh meat will be sent down from America and kept in cold storage here, and that the commissariat may also furnish ice and vegetables."

## COST OF PROVISIONS AT PANAMA.

At present nearly every good thing eaten at Panama comes from abroad. The isthmian soil is good and the climate such that almost anything can be raised; but we get our sweet potatoes from Peru, Irish potatoes and cabbage from New York, and other vegetables from New Orleans. Everything is high. Chickens, for instance, cost 75 cents each, and eggs about 50 cents a dozen. Eggs are sold in the markets in couples, two being wrapped up in a corn husk with strings about the middle and at the ends to keep them from breaking. Fish are to be had in great variety and comparatively cheap. Fresh meat is dear and poor in comparison with that of the United States. Tropical fruits are delicious and cheap. One can buy a pineapple for 7 cents and a coconut for 5 cents, while bananas are one cent each. One of the best fruits here is the papaya. It looks like a cross between a muskmelon and a gigantic cucumber, and when cut open shows a rich yellow flesh. The papaya is eaten with a spoon; it is much liked for breakfast or desert. It grows at the top of a little tree, being attached by a stem directly to the trunk.

As to servants, they are comparatively cheap here, but by no means so good as our servants at home. I know one lady who has a girl come in for half of each day. It is her duty to cook the dinner and clean up the house, and her wages are \$5 per month.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.

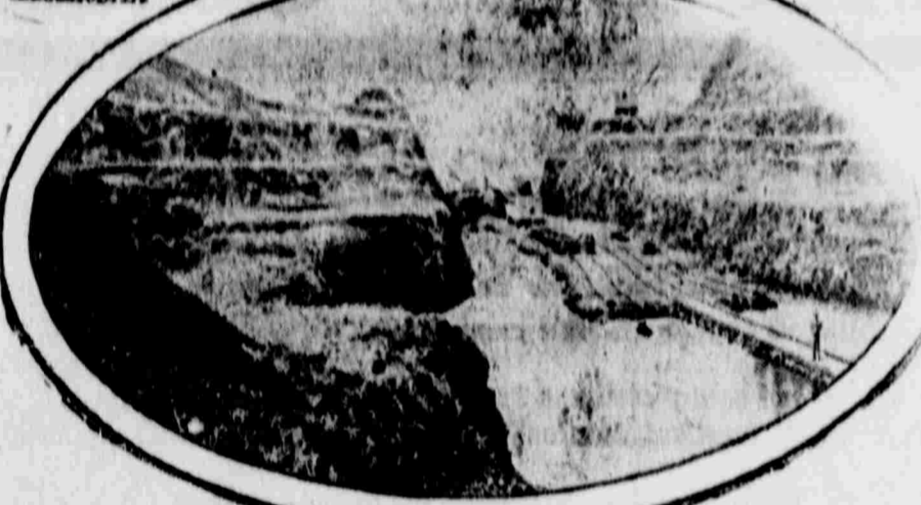
## A Positive Necessity.

Having to lay upon my bed for 14 days from a severely bruised leg, I only found relief when I used a bottle of Hallard's Snow Liniment. I can cheerfully recommend it as the best medicine for bruises ever sent to the afflicted. It has now become a positive necessity upon myself. D. R. Byrnes, Merchant, Doverville, Texas. 25, 50c, \$1.00. Sold by Z. C. M. I. Drug Dept.

## DENVER & RETURN, 118

Via D. & R. G., May 7, 8. See D. & R. G. agent for particulars.

THE EXCAVATION AT LACORONITA



EXCAVATION AT CULEBRA CUT.

This gives a good idea of the progress of the excavating work at Culebra cut, on the Panama canal. Chief Engineer Wallace is devoting especial attention to this portion of the canal and the progress being made is most flattering.

## OPENS HIS LABORATORIES.

Doctor Pierce Asks Visitors to Go Through His Establishment to See Process of Manufacture.

## PROVES MEDICINES PURE.

For the purpose of showing the purity and honesty of his medicines, the "Favorite Prescription" and the "Golden Medical Discovery," Doctor R. V. Pierce has thrown open to public inspection his laboratories and works in Buffalo.

At any time visitors are made welcome and shown through the establishment by competent guides.

These guides explain the detailed and scientific work of the skilled chemists and just how and of what the modern medicine is made.

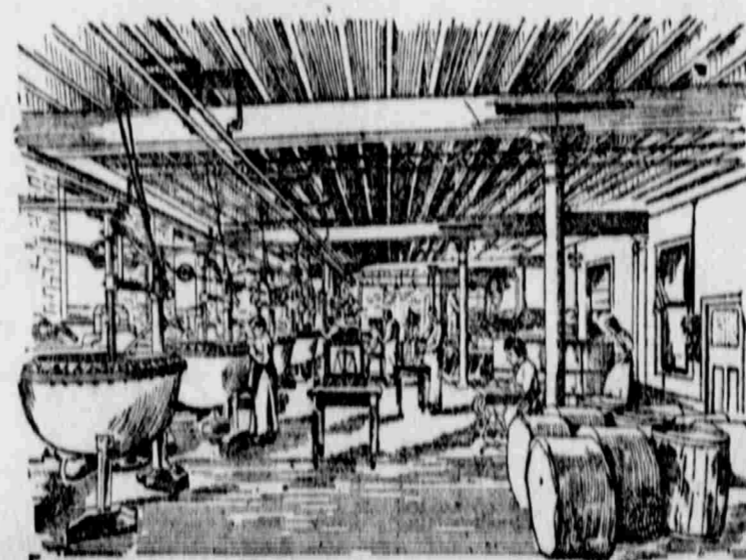
To every visitor is also explained the system by which every user of Dr. Pierce's medicines receives individual care from one or more Specialists.

For forty years Dr. Pierce has been actively engaged in the manufacture of his prescriptions. His fully equipped laboratory has grown and expanded until now it is the largest and most complete one known. Dr. Pierce's success is real. There is a steadily increasing demand for his medicines, proving conclusively that they are not nostrums, but reliable remedies for diseases.

Specially educated for the medical profession, he early supplemented his studies by extensive and original research in its several departments. In these specialties he has become an authority and recognized leader. Many of his remedies have been adopted and used by leading physicians in their private practice.

This success, of course, has not grown without awakening criticism and arousing comment. A man who has the courage to break away from the narrow ethics of the medical profession and advertise broadcast his medicines for men and women is sure to be assailed.

A visit is worth while if only to witness the excellent methods by which each applicant for aid, whether he be correspondent or a patient at the sanitarium, receives the care of eminent Specialists in medicine and surgery.



A MODERN SCIENTIFIC LABORATORY.



THE GATHERING OF MEDICINAL PLANTS.

Dr. Pierce's Golden Medical Discovery is the most efficient spring tonic and blood purifier known. It has stood the test of time—is safe and certain.

## THE PROOF

From long experience Dr. Pierce acquired the knowledge of how to combine the ingredients in just the right proportion in his "Golden Medical Discovery" for the treatment of chronic diseases.

This medicine contains the non-alcoholic extracts of the following native plants:

- GOLDEN SEAL (*Hydrastis Canadensis*).
- QUEEN'S ROOT (*Stillingia Sylvatica*).
- STONE ROOT (*Collinsonia Canadensis*).
- CHERRYBARK (*Prunus Virginiana*).
- BLOODROOT (*Sanguinaria Canadensis*).
- MANDRAKE (*Podophyllum Peltatum*).

Scientifically Prepared by Experienced Chemists at the Laboratory of the World's Dispensary Medical Association, Buffalo, N. Y.

**Monsieur Chauffeur**

Says:

**"The Oldsmobile foils not, but it spins."**

It runs easily, steadily and surely.  
It is easy to keep in perfect order.  
The new carburetor that is on all 1905 machines is producing more power than the machine ever had—more than you really need.

Oldsmobiles are kept abreast of all mechanical advancement. When there is something that would make it better, it is on the Oldsmobile at once.

The result is it has every desirable and practical mechanical part. It is very near the ideal machine we all have in our mind's eye.

The Standard Runabout has 7 h. p. (actual and proven) and that means power to burn.

Send for our catalogue and hear our story. Talk to one of our agents and ride in the cars and see for yourself. Then you will become an Oldsmobile enthusiast.

For a 2 cent stamp we will mail you a copy of "Goop Talk"—a clever bit of automobile nonsense.

**Utah Automobile Co., MOBILE**

57 Market Street.  
State Agents for  
**OLDS MOTOR WORKS,**  
Detroit, Mich.

Standard 7 h. p. Oldsmobile Oldsmobile 20 h. p. 2-Cylinder Runabout.  
Touring Car.