

bankrupt canal company's property "expect to sneak \$7,000,000 to \$10,000,000 out of the boodle." In that view of the case, if the charge be well founded, there will be little sentiment among the general public in favor of doing anything that will give opportunity for such robbery.

An illustration of subsidies that is cited as a warning against giving assistance to the canal project is quoted in the experience of the government regarding the Pacific railways. The United States guaranteed the bonds, but the railways have not paid the money according to agreement. It is freely asserted, and with good show of reason, that on the contrary they have been made the sources of great pecuniary profit to certain stockholders, thus virtually robbing the government for private interest. So far as that accusation is concerned, however, it is hardly a logical argument against subsidies, except in so far that when giving them the government should secure itself; and in the case of the railways it can proceed to collect the forfeit should it be deemed proper. But granting all that has been charged against the Pacific roads in this respect, there can be no question among intelligent, well-informed people that the United States as a nation has profited by the building of the Pacific lines to an amount vastly in excess of the financial cost to the government. It was these roads that made possible the rapid development the West has experienced the past quarter of a century, and without which much of the Rocky Mountain region which is now the location of prosperous cities and towns still would have been an uncultivated waste. If government had not guaranteed the railway bonds, a transcontinental road might still have been an accomplishment of the future.

In urging upon Congress the necessity of favorable action in the canal matter, frequent use is made of the bugaboo that if the United States does not step in at once, Great Britain will be sure to do so at the earliest opportunity, to the prejudice of American interests. This, of course, is merely to catch a passing popular sentiment of patriotism, and not because there is any fact on which to base the assertion. Its use as an argument is, because of its disreputable character, rather to confirm the suspicion of "a job" than otherwise. But financiers, like politicians, catch at every breeze to help their craft along, so the English domination scarecrow is being worked to its utmost.

Should the United States decide to guarantee the canal bonds, it is reasonably certain that a consideration thereof will be that this government will insist on naming the majority of the directors. It would be unwise to require less than this, in view of the vast responsibility assumed. This done, and the administration of the canal is practically in the hands of the United States, as against all other powers. It was to the question of the effect of existing treaties on this branch of the subject that Senator Morgan directed a great portion of his speech of Wednesday.

This brings the matter to an important phase of the situation. The Clayton-Bulwer treaty of 1850, between

the United States and Great Britain has special reference to trans-isthmus canals, both the Panama and Nicaragua propositions then being under discussion. In that treaty both powers agree that the projected canal shall be a neutral highway, and pledge themselves to maintain this neutrality. The United States promises that it will not "obtain or maintain for itself any exclusive control over the said ship canal" nor acquire "any rights or advantages in regard to commerce or navigation through the said canal" which the citizens of Great Britain do not possess, and Great Britain makes the same promises of abstention on her part. In addition, both parties promise that neither will blockade the canal in time of war against the other and neither will capture it. Both powers promise conjointly to protect the interests of the canal builders and the canal itself, and to keep it open as an unobstructed waterway for the commerce of the world.

Notwithstanding the attempts to explain how the United States can secure and maintain control of the canal and still be in accord with the terms of this treaty, the stubborn fact remains that the plain intent of the treaty is against such control, and cannot be honorably disregarded by the United States. And in this matter it would seem that the first step to be taken in the way to the American national support of the canal scheme is to modify or abrogate that treaty. Action by Congress without this would be futile and inadvisable so far as regard for treaty stipulations is concerned, for the country would not be likely to approve riding roughshod over such an agreement.

What will or will not be done with the canal, as may be seen by these statements, is a matter of great uncertainty. There are many arguments on both sides of the proposition, and the most ardent friends of the project must confess that there is yet a vast work to do to clear the way for constructing the proposed great waterway between the Atlantic and Pacific. It is likely, therefore, that the country will hear a great deal of discussion relative thereto before government either rejects or adopts the suggested plan.

A THRILLING SIGHT.

A chill of horror not infrequently attends the suggestion of a volcanic eruption in an inhabited locality, and people do not wonder at the populace becoming terror-stricken when, as in the case of the late volcanic disturbance in the New Hebrides, they can behold within a couple of miles of them fierce flames shooting skyward, cliffs falling into the vast furnace, and streams of molten lava coursing down the mountain side; while at the same time they are shaken up by earthquake shocks and feel the dust and debris from the great fire falling continuously. Such a condition is not calculated to inspire man with a feeling of his own vastness or power, or even of his importance except so far as it relates to his getting as far as possible from the place of danger.

It is not often, however, that persons are permitted to view in calmness and

safety, and at the same time from a near point of observation, one of the most terrific and awe-inspiring of natural phenomena, as was done by the crew of the ship Dart, as it lay off Dip Point, Ambyrm island, one of the New Hebrides, on the occasion referred to, as noted in our dispatches. Shortly after the eruption began, says the commander of the vessel, it became evident that a lava stream, marked by a dense column of smoke, was making its way through the hills to the sea. The ship was stopped some three hundred yards off shore, where it was seen that the stream would emerge, and soon afterwards tongues of flame were seen among the trees, and presently the head of the stream appeared, a red hot mass, with lumps of slag tossing about on the surface. When it reached the water a most magnificent sight ensued. A dense pillar of steam rose rapidly in a perpendicular direction to a height which was afterwards found to be 4,500 feet. A few seconds later, violent submarine explosions of steam took place, the water rising in huge bubbles, some 100 feet high, and then bursting in all directions in radiating tongues of water mixed with black masses, presumably of lava. A considerable swell was set outwards, and as the area of explosions appeared to be extending rapidly the ship was moved to a safer distance.

That the scene was a thrilling one none will question; and so far as dwellers in this land are concerned, it is probable that most of them are content with reading the description, being at the same time thankful that ours is not a country favored by nature with similar illustrations of her capabilities.

LAND FOR WATERSHEDS.

The necessity of cities in this region owning the sources of their water supply and sufficient land adjacent thereto for their proper development and protection is readily recognized by the people generally. This is the case particularly with reference to the inhabitants of Salt Lake, who have never hesitated or complained at any legitimate outlay for that purpose. In connection with mountain streams, the principal source of water supply, an extensive area of watershed is sometimes valuable to the municipality. This is illustrated in the case of City Creek canyon, where a thorough protection and full development and use of the stream therefrom is made possible only by the ownership of the entire watershed of the canyon being vested in the city corporation. Purchases of various tracts of the mountain sides, valueless for other purposes, were made by the municipality, and finally, in 1891, 14,000 acres of railway land was secured, ten years' time being allowed to make final payment therefor, and full control of the canyon was obtained. That all the purchases thus made are now of much greater value to the municipality than the figures of their money cost, cannot be successfully gainsaid.

Two other canyons furnish water direct to the city—Emigration and Parley's. From the latter there is now an extensive waterworks system, constructed at an enormous out-