

tions along the line of the Zone. In their "Coats" of slate-color paint, and immaculate-white "Cuttings," which glisten beneath the rays of the early morning sun, these remnants of past French days laugh at Old Father Time, and cheat him out of the traces of the years which, on his onward journey, his relentless hand had stamped upon them!

From the standpoint of an American Canal, Bas Obispo marks the first page in the history of the advent of the present administration on the Isthmus; for it was here that "Camp Elliott," the Head Quarters of the American Marines, situated on a high promontory, from which you look down upon a vast and beautiful country of low-lying hills and far-stretching valleys, clothed in perennial verdure, was first established for the purpose of accommodating some four hundred and fifty men that had arrived in Colon by the transport "Dixie," on that ever memorable night of November the 5th, 1903. Here, the "Boys" in khaki pitched their tents and mounted

their guns cheerfully, in readiness for the emergency of war, which was rumored all around as being imminent with the outwitted Colombians, and their vaunted allies, the San Blas Indians, whose combined strength was computed at something like forty-five thousand men in all. But as the days wore on, and no sign of the enemy appearing, there was less occasion to be wary, and so the "Boys" had lots of time on hand, which they dedicated to the innocent amusement of composing doggerel-rhymes, that were, finally, set to music and sung by them in every house they visited.

In chronicling the incident of the "Dixie," with which a new era for Panama began, I recall to mind another, and yet more serious, one in connection with the political happenings of that troublous and agitated period, which is bound to make an interesting chapter in the history of the Republic of Panama.

I refer to the four hundred and seventy-five Colombian Officers and Soldiers, who had threatened the Town of Colon that day,



Across the Bas Obispo River.



"Camp Elliott," the Headquarters of the American Marines.

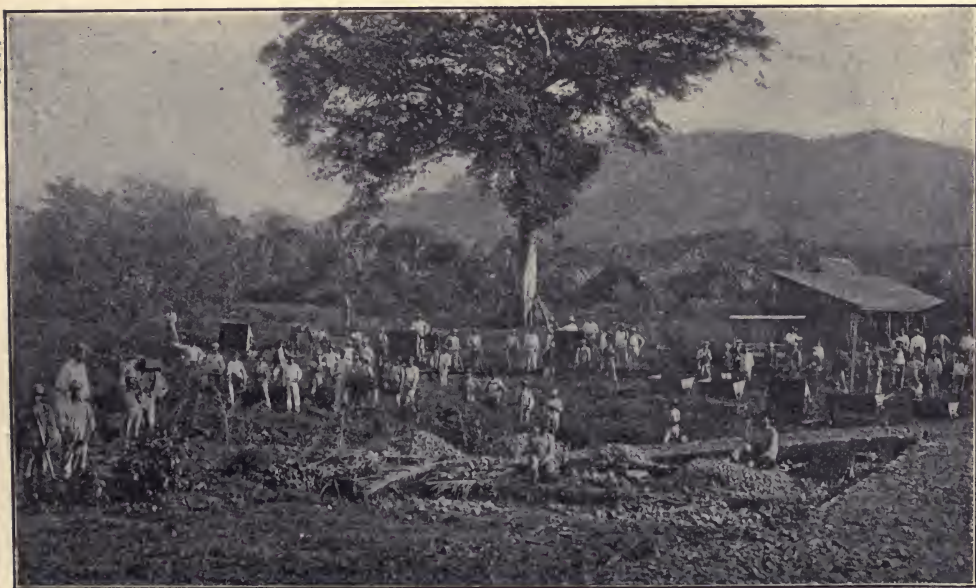
November the 5th, 1903, against a handful of men from the United States Gun Boat "Nashville," whose number was afterwards augmented by some forty raw recruits, collected here and there in a hurry—men who had never held a gun in their lives before—men whose maiden-hands trembled nervously as they shouldered their first rifle!

Happily, however, the necessity to open up hostilities never arose that day, which had been to each and all of us one of the type of a veritable Waterloo; excepting, of course, "The voluptuous swell of music;" "The dance and the joy unconfined;" but not the "Hurrying to and fro;" nor the "Mounting in hot haste" of the people into coaches; for everywhere you turned, there were men, women, and affrighted children—the women half dressed, and their hair disheveled—dashing madly, down the streets in search of places of refuge, which some found on board the steamers in the harbor at the time, while others, less fortunate, were compelled to hide themselves behind large bales of cotton that were piled up in

the Freight house of the Panama Rail Road Company, and which served as a barricade against a possible attack from the enemy outside. But, despite of all these necessary precautions, not a single shot was fired; for eight thousand dollars American gold, and enough champagne to drown the feelings of an inglorious defeat, had done the deed, and carried away the laurels of that anxious day, on the night of which, synchronously with the arrival of the "Dixie," the Royal Mail steamer "Orinoco," bound for Cartagena with the Army on board that had menaced Colon, moved out of her pier, the while ten thousand sighs of relief went up from the hearts of those who had begun to return to their respective homes, after three days and nights of discomfort and anxiety; deprivations and sickness; then—Presto!—The Republic of Panama.

EMPIRE.

If there is any Station along the line of the Zone, that has caught the full spirit of



Empire in 1883, in the French days.



Empire in 1907.

Canal operations; that has felt the thrill of the gigantic work which is going on all around it, that Station is, surely, Empire, otherwise called "Camacho," which being only one mile and a half distant from the Culebra Divide, is rendered a very important Section of the great Interoceanic Water-way.

As the train hauls up to the Passenger Depot, this fact is evidenced immediately by the busy hum of things about the place—by the clink-clank-clink of the chains of the monster steam-shovels, the echoes of countless hammers' resounding through the air, the tooting of whistles in all directions, and by the distant boom of heavy charges of dynamite, all of which are unmistakable indications that life is a strenuous one in this particular part of the country. Here, there are extensive Warehouses and well-equipped Machine-Shops, in addition to which there is at present in the course of construction, an Electric Light Plant, which is calculated to light up Culebra Station as well.

The old Native Empire Settlement, situated a little distance down the tracks, looking towards the north, which for four decades had been the stopping-point of the trains running between both termini, is relegated to the dead Past now, the new Empire, having taken its place as the Freight and Passenger Station in that District, which comprises "*Camacho*," *Cunette*, *White House*, and the Native and American Empires.

The American Empire, which is one of the largest towns along the line of the Rail Road, is a most beautiful spot, nestling between a group of low-lying hills, upon whose gradual-heights the residences of the employes of the Isthmian Canal Commission are situated. In addition to these, there are the Hospital, Hotel, Public Free School and Commissariat buildings which, being of the more pretentious type of structures, rise up dwarfing the smaller houses that go to make up a picturesque cluster of the whole in spotless white and slate-color

paints, that now distinguish the properties of the Isthmian Canal Commission.

As a place of residence, Empire, even to the most fastidious tastes, should leave nothing at all to be desired. Situated, as it is, upon a high elevation, and having an ample supply of good drinking water and complete modern sanitary arrangements, there is no reason why it should not be as healthy a spot as can be found in any other part of Christendom. And this is so true of Empire that the Accounting and Disbursing Departments of the Isthmian Canal Commission, whose offices were formerly located in Panama, were lately transferred there, along with their respective staffs, numbering about one hundred men, most of them being Americans.

With regard to domestic life for the married folks at Empire, this has been rendered comparatively easy and inexpensive since the inauguration of the Refrigerating-Car Service, by which system the employes of the Commission and the Panama Rail Road Company at every Station along the line,

enjoy the incalculable boon of being furnished, daily, with fresh meats, fruits and vegetables of all descriptions, eggs, cow's milk and ice, all of which, excepting the latter article, manufactured in Colon, are brought over to the Isthmus from the best markets of the United States of America. And yet, despite of these immense advantages, hitherto unknown in this part of the world, there are lots who are not satisfied, and kick about prices which, however, when compared with those charged by the local merchants for inferior articles of consumption, whose assortment is not, by any means, varied, the balance in the scale of comparison will, invariably, result in favor of the imported commodities. But then, I suppose there must be "kickers" in every sphere and clime, the Isthmus not excluded; for it boasts of many who can well be termed Born-kickers—free, easy and extemporaneous Kickers, who will kick, even though there is nothing absolutely to kick about, until their last day upon this side of Eternity.



Culebra in 1884, in the French days.

CULEBRA.

Culebra! Who has not heard of Culebra? Since the month of January, 1880, when the French began operations, Culebra has been on the tongues of men, the world over, as a thing unachievable—as an engineering impossibility!

The French, however, who had prepared their plans well, and had studied them out carefully, paid no attention, whatever, to this expression of opinion, which they knew, as an absolute fact, had emanated from those who were friends of Nicaragua, and, consequently, sworn and open enemies of the favored Panama route, but proceeded, at once, with the tremendous task of demolishing the Culebra Mountain, in the performance of which they proved to the world, at large, the feasibility of their scheme, and did good work until 1888, when, as many of us have good reasons to remember, operations were, suddenly, suspended.

Then came an idle lapse of some fifteen

long years of weary, patient waiting—fifteen years of great suspense and anxiety—hoping, each day, that something would turn up to save the increasing gravity of the situation which, from a financial and commercial standpoint, had just begun to threaten the whole Isthmus with ruin, when the Americans came to the rescue, and thus averted the crisis that seemed inevitable.

Let us admit that there have been serious engineering difficulties to contend with at Culebra; but, on the other hand, let us admit, also, that there have been men at the helm of affairs, in this district, endowed with the necessary skill and ability to cope with those difficulties which, to-day, are, happily, surmounted through the indomitable will of those who have identified themselves with the great Culebra problem.

That the judgment, therefore, pronounced by the enemies of Panama, with regard to the impracticability of Culebra, was, altogether, without foundation, the work done by the French, in their day, and the progress made by the Americans, since

1903 up to the present time of writing, in themselves, alone, are ample proof and testimony.

But the simple telling of it, on my part, could never convey to the mind of the reader, the full extent of what has, really, been accomplished at this important Section of the Canal. The magnitude of it all must first be seen before it can be intelligently appreciated, even by those who saw Culebra in her virgin integrity, in her pristine glory, compared to what she is, to-day,—a wreck of her former magnificence!

The Americans have done good work at Culebra; and what of course, has contributed largely to this has been the use of up-to-date machinery, such as the steam-shovel, for instance, which is the backbone and sinew of the work of building the Canal across the Panama Isthmus. Culebra, besides being the objective point to-day, is the keynote of the whole gigantic undertaking, and the dream of Mr. John F. Stevens, the Chief Engineer, who is interested, heart and soul, in the final demolition of the Cule-

bra Mountain down to a point below the level of the sea!

Culebra, of course, is the busiest Section of all. In the "Cut," blasting goes on almost continually; and some heavy "charges" have been set off lately. The heaviest of these was the one which contained six thousand pounds of dynamite and twenty-five tons of black powder, which scattered fifty thousand cubic yards of rock and dirt in one great heap!

The day I paid a visit to this Section of the Works, everything that wore wheels appeared to me to have been in motion, each one vieing with the other in the race for the goal of the World's great work: There were "dump-trains" moving, one after the other, in rapid succession, along the banks of the "Cut"; engines puffed away and snorted busily; and, last, though not the least, a fleet of steam-shovels in operation, all of them telling, in their own see-saw vernacular, of the glorious thing they were doing for the benefit of the nations of the World! The graceful motion of their sharp-teethed



The Great Culebra Cut.



The Great Culebra Cut—a charge of 6,000 lbs. of Dynamite
25 Tons Black Powder going up into the air!

dippers, as they swung, to and fro, around their tireless chains, stopping mid-way to plunge deep down into the bosom of Mother Earth for their prey of rock and dirt, which they picked up greedily and finally disgorged into old French "dumps" or W. W. Scrapper Cars, with a loud burst of white-steam-laughter that curled up into the air and resounded through the "Cut" triumphantly, impressed me with the idea that these monster things, but mere parts of machinery assembled together as a unit, were almost as sentient as human beings themselves.

On the occasion of President Roosevelt's late visit to the Isthmus, and which, by the way, has immortalized Panama and the Panama Canal, he related to a large and representative audience, at a reception given in his honor at Cristobal, on the night of November the 17th, that, in the course of his examination of the Works, he had stopped at Culebra, where he had seen over one of the steam-shovels in operation, a banner which bore the legend:



President Roosevelt and Party going through the Culebra
Cut on a Special Train—Car "La France."



The Residence of Mr. Jno. F. Stevens, Chief Engineer, at Culebra.

the most important Station on the Zone—the pillar of the one part being well supported by the gentleman of the hour; while the amenities of the other are ably executed by his amiable Lady who, by her charming manners, has succeeded in making herself the most popular figure among the best social circles on the Isthmus.

At Culebra, the Panama Rail Road branches off to a comparatively new line, called "The Deviation," built by the French, and inaugurated on the 3rd day of March, 1901, and which opened up the loveliest bit of country and scenery to be found in any part of South or Central America.

"The Deviation" is five miles long; and about one mile and a half from where it begins, there is an Iron Bridge, one hundred and twenty-five feet long, spanning the "Rio Grande," which was dammed into a lake in order to divert the course of the waters of the rivers from the Canal Works at Culebra.

The lake is beautiful! In its silent, glassy depths are mirrored, inverted, the stately

mountain-peaks, green with the growth of ages past; and tall and graceful-bending bamboos fringe the edges of its uncomplaining waters.



A bit of the Culebra Deviation.

PART VI.

The present City of Panama, which was founded in the year 1519, is situated about five miles and a half west of the original city, known, to-day, as "Old Panama," which was captured by Buccaneer Morgan and his handful of daring adventurers on the 28th of January, 1671, and immediately afterwards reduced to ashes, because it was discovered by Morgan that he had been cleverly outwitted by the Panamanians who, anticipating the attack on the city, had placed on board of a vessel lying in the harbor, all the gold and silver ornaments of the convents and the churches, the King's silver and jewels, as well as all the other valuables belonging to private individuals. For, at the time written of, Old Panama was the distributing centre of the rich countries of the South, such as Chili and Peru, for the immense cargoes of treasure, which were



The Rio Grande Lake.



Bridge spanning the Rio Grande.

As in all other Spanish-American countries, the majority of the houses in Panama are massive stone structures built in the days of Spanish domination; but the buildings which are now going up, betray marked signs of the more modern school of architecture.

The principal public thoroughfares and places of interest, are two Parks: one in the *Plaza Santana*, and the other in the *Cathedral Square*. Then, there is the *Bovedas*, or Sea-wall, a powerful fortification which overlooks the beautiful Pacific Ocean and the distant Islands in the harbor. At each of these three resorts, the National Band, consisting of some thirty pieces, delights the ears of the lovers of music with a concert weekly.

Since the advent of the Americans on the Isthmus, Panama has undergone some remarkable improvements. The streets, that were once of cobblestones, difficult and uncomfortable to walk upon, are now, almost all of them, paved with bricks imported from the United States for the purpose,

The *Aguadores*, that formerly went about the city on their two-wheeled barrel-carts, selling water to the inhabitants, by the bucket, the only means of supply in those days, have now been superseded by the installation of an up-to-date system of Water-Works, which, so far, has been one of the greatest boons conferred on the city, for the reason that it has afforded the means of proper sewerage and good sanitary arrangements, that have contributed so largely to improve the health conditions of Panama.

At Ancon, on the outskirts of the city, and within the boundaries of the Zone, the magnificent hospitals of the Commission are situated 'midst the luxuriant growth of palms and cocoanut-trees, which are fanned by the soft, refreshing breezes of the Pacific.

The population of Panama is variously estimated, but, in the absence of an official census, I do not think I will be far wrong in setting the figures down to 35,000 souls, al-



The Cathedral Square, Panama.



The Bovedas, Panama.

most every one speaking the English language fairly.

The Panamanians are a kind and intelligent lot of people—hospitable to strangers always; and no one is better able to testify to these facts than I am, having resided on the Isthmus, and been associated with the sons of Panama, for a checkered period that covers some thirty-three years and over.

In Panama, as they are in almost every other small city of the world, the pleasures of social life are somewhat "slow" and limited. Occasionally, however, there is a break in the dull round and monotony of things, either by a dance at the "International," or by some musical entertainment at the "Commercial," the two most prominent clubs in the City. Then, on Sundays, or on any other day of leisure in the week, there is the pleasure, for those who are fond of outdoor sports, of mounting a good, swift steed and riding far out to the sunny forest, and to the beautiful Savannas of Panama.