The Hamburg-American Line, with offices at 41-45 Broadway, New York City, runs regularly vessels of the “Prinz” class from New York to Colon all the year round, touching at Fortune Island, Santiago, Kingston, Bocas del Toro, and Port Limon. Aside from these, in January, February, March, and April, they put on larger vessels of the type of the “Moltke” and “Victoria Luise” for excursions to the Isthmus, which include stops at Cuba, Haiti, Porto Rico, Trinidad, Venezuela, Jamaica, and other points on the Caribbean. The regular boats take about four weeks for the round trip and the excursion steamers from sixteen to twenty-nine days. This year they will run one excursion vessel from New Orleans in January and February.

The United Fruit Co., with offices at 17 Battery Place, New York City and in New Orleans, have an extensive and excellent service not only from New York and New Orleans but from several other ports. Their best passenger vessels, however, run regularly from New York City and New Orleans. The passage from New Orleans is about two days quicker than that from New York. Their new vessels of the “Pastores” type are 550 feet in length with a gross tonnage of 9,000 tons and special arrangements and facilities for the tropics. They have many different routes and touch at other interesting places aside from Colon.

The Royal Mail Steam Packet Co. have also an extensive service of good boats from New York, including a large variety of tours. Their boats leave regularly, Thursdays or Saturdays, from Pier 13, East River, and their offices are at 32 State Street, New York City. The different itineraries of the vessels that go to Panama include Fortune Island, Cuba, and Jamaica, while some of them touch at the Bermudas, Porto Rico, Barbados, Trinidad, other islands of the Caribbean, Venezuela, and Colombia.

The White Star Line, of 9 Broadway, New York City, runs during the excursion season the “Laurentic” and the “Megantic,” large vessels, to the West Indies and Colon, these cruises occupying about three to four weeks.

The North German Lloyd, with offices at 5 Broadway, New York City, runs the “Grosser Kurfuerst” on three excursions in January, February, and March, not only to the Panama Canal but to the West Indies.
For those desiring to go via or from Palm Beach, Tampa, and other Southern points, the Peninsular and Occidental Steamship Co. will run a large, fast passenger vessel, the “Evangeline,” every two weeks, January to April, from Key West to Colon, stopping at Jamaica and Cuba on the return voyage. The Florida East Coast Railway, Henry M. Flagler’s great achievement, with office at 243 Fifth Avenue, New York, and the Atlantic Coast Line, 1218 Broadway, will make direct connections with this boat via Key West and Tampa respectively.

The Southern Railway, 264 Fifth Avenue, and the Seaboard Air Line, 1184 Broadway, also make connections via Florida, while the former from the East and the Illinois Central and Louisville & Nashville from the Central West connect with the United Fruit Co. steamers at New Orleans.

From San Francisco, the Pacific Mail Steamship Co. regularly runs every week vessels with good passenger accommodations to the Isthmus, taking about three weeks for the trip one way. Their New York offices are located at 17 Battery Place.

Full descriptive data in the form of pamphlets, time tables, and maps can be obtained from the offices of each one of these lines or from the Pan-American Union, Washington, D. C.
On approaching Colon from the north, the first land seen is a range of high hills or low mountains to the south and left, or on the port bow. Coming nearer, the conformation is less irregular and seems to flatten out. Presently, the low-lying buildings and wharves of Colon can be seen to the left with the lighthouse at the water's edge of the town. On the right is Point Toro and its lighthouse with the long breakwater to protect the entrance of the canal, reaching out for several miles and in course of construction. Near the Colon lighthouse looms up the handsome and capacious new Washington Hotel just nearing completion at this writing. In front of it is a great artificial sea-bathing basin or pool, which will prove a strong attraction for tourists. As the steamer turns into its wharf there can be seen at the right the town of Cristobal, which is the port of Colon in the Canal Zone and the home of most of the canal staff located on the Atlantic side. At its western point stands a notable statue of Columbus, which was unveiled by the famous de Lesseps in the days of French control. Just back of it stands the original official residence of the great Frenchman during his brief stay on the Isthmus.

Steamships generally arrive at Colon early in the morning and passengers disembarking find near the wharf the regular or an excursion railroad train which is to take them across the Isthmus to Panama, or to whatever point they may be intending to go. The majority of visitors to Panama come and go on vessels that spend only one night and part of two days at Colon. This time, it should be understood by everybody aboard such steamers, is altogether too short for a complete view and study of the canal, but still it is well worth the journey from afar and enables the traveler to gain a good general idea of this mighty waterway.

The best way to visit Panama, by far, is to come on one steamer, spend a week there, and then return or pass on. A three weeks' absence from the United States on this plan gives an excellent opportunity to become thoroughly familiar with the canal. The time there can then be divided, with two or three days at Colon, including visits to Cristobal, Gatun, and Culebra, and four days at Panama with visits to Culebra, Pedro Miguel, Miraflores,
Balboa terminal and points in and about Panama and Ancon. By stopping at the large comfortable hotels in Colon and Panama, and taking the daily special excursion and regular trains of the well-run Panama railway, the visitor can spend one of the most interesting weeks of his life on the Isthmus, and it will be well worth the trip also in years to come after the canal is completed and in working order.

The traveler who arrives one day and leaves the next generally is taken in a special excursion train across the Isthmus to Panama City, leaving Colon in the morning and returning at night. This train makes stops at the Gatun Locks and Dam and at Culebra, and sometimes at Pedro Miguel and Miraflores Locks with a detour to Balboa, but from Culebra it generally proceeds to Panama City direct. In this case many persons elect to stay over night at the Tivoli hotel or elsewhere in Panama, in order to see that city and its surroundings, and then return to Colon the next day in time to catch their steamer. This possibly is the best way to see the most. Every day, however, extra sight-seeing excursion trains are run either from Panama or Colon which enable
visitors by a little study of plans to see most that is worth seeing.

In this connection let me say a word about letters of introduction. Don’t ask for them and don’t present them unless you have some special mission to undertake or errand to execute! Col. Goethals and his subordinates will do all they can for you whether you come with or without letters of introduction, but they will bless you if you don’t present any. They are all literally overwhelmed with such letters, and you are simply doing the common ordinary thing when you deliver them. There is every facility for seeing the canal without the aid of letters of this kind and, by presenting them or taking up time to find the officials to whom they are addressed, you may miss seeing much that you want to see and can see just as well without letters. You escape also embarrassing the officials in Washington and others who are continually being requested to provide letters of introduction, but who feel like apologizing to the overworked men on the Isthmus for sending more people to them to worry them and take up the time which Uncle Sam needs for the work.

On these excursion trains go trained lecturers who tell you just what you want to know, and of whom you can ask endless questions; whereas, if you go about with an official he may or may not explain to you what you do not understand and you hesitate to bother and bore him with a lot of inquiries.

If one has time before crossing the Isthmus or after he returns from Panama to go about Colon and Cristobal, he should visit the great plant of the Quartermaster and Subsistence Departments under charge of Col. C. A. Devol, Chief Quartermaster, and Lieut.-Col. Eugene T. Wilson, Subsistence Officer, from which each day go out the food and supplies for 45,000 employees and the stores and materials to keep the vast work proceeding without a break. The homes of the staff located at Cristobal, the Columbus Monument, the Avenue of Palms, laundry plants, the storehouses, the commissary, the busy docks and wharves, are well worthy of inspection. In Colon, the native bazaars and shops are interesting, and in them one can buy cheaply clothes, hats, and anything and everything he needs during his visit to Panama, and some curious things of souvenir character. A ride to the hospital on the east side of Colon is enjoyable and
PANAMA CITY FROM ANCON HILL, LOOKING TOWARD THE PACIFIC

Water Reservoir in foreground: Canal Administration Building at left with new Panama National College just beyond
shows how well equipped is the Canal Commission to care for
the sick. The new hotel Washington and its bathing pool will
be the Mecca of nearly every traveler. If interested in railways,
he may care to inspect the offices and terminals of the Panama
Railway Company, of which J. A. Smith is the energetic and
capable General Superintendent.

Those who take photographs or wish to purchase them will
find several places on the main street running parallel to the
railroad where they can get films developed or purchase pictures
of the canal and environment. Horse conveyances are in
abundance near the wharves and railway station to carry pas-
sengers in every direction.

The money in common use is silver, the Panama dollar or peso
being exactly equal to fifty cents in United States money, but
the latter is readily taken in payment for all kinds of services or
purchases. The newcomer should always understand clearly,
however, in what money he is dealing, or else he may pay double
what is expected and not be told or reminded that he has made
a mistake!

If a few days can be spared for a stay in Colon, there are several
interesting side trips which can be made. At Mount Hope,
formerly known as Monkey Hill, is the famous, or, possibly in
view of its history, ill-famed cemetery where are buried large
numbers of the Frenchmen and other foreigners who perished by
the hundreds during the unsanitary times of the pioneer régime.
A view of this is a grim reminder of death's awful charge upon
the first effort to build the canal.

If the visitor enjoys seeing old ruins which are really remarkable
in their architecture and carry him back almost into the medieval
times, he should make a boat trip down the Chagres River from
Gatun and inspect the old ruins of Fort Lorenzo at the mouth
of the river, which was built by the Spaniards to guard this en-
trance and command the sea. Vast sums of money were expended
in this wonderful construction and it is one of the most interesting
ruins of the Western Hemisphere. A whole day can be spent in
making this trip with full reward for the effort. The boat ride,
moreover, down the river, surrounded on both sides by the tropical
jungle and overhanging trees, is an interesting experience.

If it can be so arranged, a trip on one of the Government boats
to Porto Bello, the point on the coast west of Colon where most of the rock is being obtained for the Point Toro breakwater, is worth while, because there can be seen some of the finest old fortifications of the days of the Spanish Conquest. Even the old guns and cannon balls in use in those times still remain upon the bastions. Were these ruins and those of Fort Lorenzo at the mouth of the Chagres River readily accessible, every visitor to the Isthmus would feel that they were alone deserving of a trip all the way from New York to see.

In driving and walking about the clean, well-paved streets of Colon, it is difficult to imagine what the place looked (and smelled) like eight years ago when the United States began the cleaning up of Colon and Panama. The whole town was a pest hole, except a small section at the northeast end under the practical control of the railroad. Slimy, stagnant water backed up under most of the buildings and the streets were mud holes in the rainy season. It was, indeed, a most discouraging place and scene for the eyes of us pioneers to look upon when we arrived on the Isthmus in those days of early 1904 which literally tried
men's souls. Yellow fever, Chagres fever, and malaria dominated the situation. Now all is changed through the instrumentality of sewers, waterworks, paving, and general sanitation—and skilled administration.

Colon is a cosmopolitan place and in its 15,000 population can be found representatives of nearly a score of peoples and languages. It reminds one much of Port Said without the offensive criminal, immoral, and gambling characteristics of the entrance to the Suez Canal. Cristobal, its zone neighbor, could be regarded as a model town in any state or country, and is excellent evidence of wise American direction and administration.

The only towns or settlements deserving of a special visit apart from the canal between Colon and Panama are those at Gatun, Gorgona, Camp Elliot, and Camp Otis, Empire, Culebra, Paraiso, Corozal, and Balboa, and these can be omitted if the time is limited. The chief things to see in them are the neat, well-arranged, well-kept houses, offices, barracks, school buildings, hospitals, and shops. Everything is orderly, clean, suggestive of system, work, and health. Frills are entirely lacking except in the form of pretty flower gardens and other exterior or interior ornamentation done by the deft hand of some wife, mother, or daughter. The whole atmosphere and effect are those of business
but not of discomfort. The Young Men’s Christian Association houses provide reading rooms and clubs for a considerable element of the staff. These have facilities for billiards, pool, bowling, checkers, and dominoes, and light drinks. There are several women’s clubs and other social and literary organizations of both sexes which are often meeting. Dances are held frequently and well attended. So far Col. Goethals has issued no order against the "turkey trot" or the "tango," and it is whispered that sometimes he lets up in his seriousness and trips a few steps as nimbly as his son!

Baseball is as popular in the Canal Zone as it is in New York or San Francisco, and there are clubs galore from Cristobal to Balboa. During the cooler months the championship of the zone is fought out with as much seriousness as the recent conflict for the World’s Championship between the Giants of New York and the Red Sox of Boston. Basket ball and tennis are also popular and have a considerable following. Band concerts by the Isthmian Canal Band are given at different points on different days, moving picture shows are constantly exhibiting, and occasionally there are good dramatic or vaudeville entertainments.
There is also real "society" on the Isthmus. Teas, dinners, and receptions are given which, in the quality of the personnel, the good looks and cleverness of the women, the "doing-things" quality of the men, compare favorably with similar gatherings in Washington and New York. The male element does not have much time for "playing" in society and it is too tired when night comes for late-hour festivities, but on appropriate occasions and at necessary intervals it does its part handsomely. The large army of prominent visitors constantly arriving increases greatly the number of social functions. Certainly, no person who has friends or acquaintances on the Isthmus ever lacks attention, and everybody from the members of the Commission down the line is liberal and kindly in his or her hospitality.

Of the places connected with the canal and figuring prominently in any story relating to it, Panama City is the most important and interesting.

With a cosmopolitan population of 40,000, with a romantic history going back four centuries, with ancient walls and bastions still standing in its limits, with old half-ruined churches of rare architecture yet in evidence, with quaint houses and narrow streets mixed with modern construction and well-paved avenues, with hotels, office buildings, and lottery offices dating back to the French days contrasting with new private and public structures and palaces erected in the recent days of the Americans, with all varieties of stores, shops, curio haunts, run or patronized by all classes and types of men and women, and withal a picturesque location on a peninsula extending into the Pacific and backed up by a splendid guardian hill called "Ancon," Panama never fails to interest the traveler and student.

Comfortably housed at the Tivoli hotel, the visitor can easily spend several days at Panama seeing the sights and resting between his trips to various points along the canal.

What is there to see at Panama City is frequently asked by those who cross the Isthmus and spend a day in the capital of the little Republic.

There is really much to see if one is really interested and has the time. Back of the hotel Tivoli is noble Ancon Hill, on whose slopes are the beautiful grounds and capacious buildings of Ancon Hospital, while nearer at hand are the airy and well-built offices
and homes of the civil administration, judiciary, law, and sanitation staff. Looking in an opposite direction towards the Pacific and the Bay of Panama one can discern in the distance the graceful ruined tower of “Old Panama,” which should be the objective point of a motor trip. Recently, the Government of Panama has cleared away all the jungle and undergrowth which obscured the remains of the buildings, plazas, and streets of this rich and wicked capital of the old days which was destroyed by the Buccaneer Morgan in 1671.

En route to “Old Panama” one passes along and through the “Savannas,” which is an open, rolling country close to the sea and the site of the country homes of the richer Panamanians. A good automobile road reaches the entire distance of several miles. It requires two hours to make the trip comfortably and satisfactorily. If en route you are fortunate enough to be entertained at luncheon or tea by some hospitable Panamanian, you will come away with a high opinion of the quality and refinement of your host and his family. The average visitor to Panama sees little or nothing of the high-class native life and can not appreciate what a considerable well-educated, much-traveled, and socially-refined element of people it possesses. During my stay of one year at Panama before the American colony had reached its present large proportions, I saw much of the home life of the native families and gained a most favorable impression of their social activities. I remember a social picnic and dancing club, which had a membership of over one hundred young ladies, called the “Club Iris,” and I am frank to say that I know of no similar club in any American city that could get together more real pretty girls in the same membership.

On the other hand, I have keen and pleasant recollections of many men in and out of the government of Panama, in both private and public life, whose friendship and fellowship I cherished. I was particularly impressed with the number of clear-headed, logical-minded, and common-sense acting men I constantly met in my official life, and who were honestly desirous of helping Panama become a government worth while and develop a name for stability, order, and progress.

Panama suffers from the class of visitors who make only flying visits to the Isthmus and, coming into contact with only one
class—the cab drivers, policemen, and small shop-keepers, and ordinary workmen—return to the United States or Europe and write stories about the "Spigotties," as the average lower class is commonly described by the American canal employes, as if they were the only people at Panama.

A drive around Panama, or a walk if one has time, should include visits to the Cathedral on the main square, Plaza Independencia, the Lottery Office, the old French office or administration headquarters, the Hotel Central, and the new municipal
building, all facing the same plaza. Not far away, on a side street, is the American Legation, which was the home of the Chief of the Canal in the French era, and where at the present writing (December, 1912) presides the Hon. H. Percival Dodge, an able and hospitable minister. On another near-by street, overlooking the bay, is "La Presidencia," the residence of the distinguished President of the Republic, Dr. Belisario Porras, with an attractive little Spanish patio. Beyond and near the sea is the magnificent new National Theater or Opera House, and the new government building or National Palace, both structures which would ornament any large city of the United States or Europe. The American Consulate General, now in charge of Consul General Alban G. Snyder, is on the main street leading from the railroad station to the main plaza.

The far and long-famed "Flat Arch," in the ruins of the old San Domingo Church, should be seen by every traveler and student. This is said to be the longest flat arch in the world, and having been built two centuries ago it is a monument to the
architects and masons of those days. There is a legend that the architect, after having designed several arches which fell, planned and built this one and then, sitting under it called upon it to fall and destroy him or last forever! Perhaps its greatest usefulness is to answer by its simple presence and long existence all arguments, dire predictions, and false prophecies of those who contend that the locks and heavy work of the canal are in danger of momentary destruction by earthquakes.

Other churches of interest are San Felipe de Neri, the oldest in Panama; San Francisco, in Plaza Bolivar, and having also a flat arch and big doors with old-fashioned nail heads; Santa Ana in Santa Ana Plaza; San José, with old Spanish altars on Avenue A; and de la Merced, Avenue Central.

The old sea-wall and fortress at Chiriquí Plaza, called “Las Bovedas,” is one of the really picturesque sights of Panama and commands a comprehensive view of the Bay of Panama and the whole water front. Near by are up-to-date clubs of Panamanians and Americans, which make a marked contrast to these old buildings of the times when social clubs were not in vogue.

The market place on the water front, the Chinese shops, the Panama hat stores, the bird and monkey shops, the offices of the pearl merchants, and the curio shops provide abundant opportunities for the traveler to part with his money, with the result that when he returns to the hotel he engages in a long argument with his cab driver, in order to save enough to pay his hotel bill when he leaves that night or the next morning. And he will dislike to leave the Tivoli, for it is a comfortable and hospitable place—with allowances, of course, for limitations in space and attendance when great crowds from an incoming excursion steamer temporarily swamp its corridors and facilities.

A motor or carriage ride to Balboa, the Pacific terminus of the canal, only a few miles away, is worth while. The road is a good one and an opportunity is provided, if not already enjoyed by the excursion train, to inspect the docks, buildings, and the work which is going on at that end of the canal. One branch of the road goes by the native and Chinese cemeteries, which are unique to the average foreigner and worth seeing. If in going from the Tivoli hotel the road is taken along the shoulder of Ancon Hill, a fine view is obtained of Panama City, the bay, the breakwater
in course of construction which will connect Balboa with Naos Island, and the channel of the canal leading out to sea.

In going to or returning from Balboa, or in a separate excursion, a ride should be taken around the northern slope of Ancon Hill, where a fine panoramic view can be had of the route of the canal in the direction of Miraflores, Pedro Miguel, and Culebra Cut. This view also gives an excellent impression of the general land conformation of the Isthmus and makes one clearly realize the engineering difficulties which have been surmounted.

If a stop of several days is made at Panama, a trip should be made by water across Panama Bay to Taboga Island, famous for its wonderful pineapples and for its attractive sanitarium or rest house for convalescing invalid employees. A round-trip day's steaming also, almost to the south, which could be undertaken in a large steam launch or a specially chartered tug, permits a visit to the well-known Pearl Islands, where profitable pearl fisheries have been conducted for a great many years, enriching the native fishermen and the merchants in Panama.

A launch ride from Panama out through the bay around the islands and up the Pacific channel of the canal to Balboa gives
an excellent idea of the Pacific approach to the canal and the
location of the fortifications which are to protect this entrance to
the great waterway.

If several days are spent at Panama, at least one of them
should be reserved to be used for a special visit to Culebra, an
inspection of the construction and engineering administration
building with its relief map of the canal and its model of the
locks, which are explained by an experienced lecturer, a look at
the hotels and homes of the employes, the Y. M. C. A. building,
as showing the welfare work, and an intimate view of the famous
Cut itself. The Pedro Miguel and Miraflores locks might be
included in this excursion but are better saved for another day.
Balboa, with the construction of terminal wharves, a dry dock,
repair shops, coal deposits, warehouses, and supply depots, will
be an interesting point during the next two years, while on the
canal side of Ancon Hill near Balboa will presently be built the
permanent main administration building of the canal and the
zone.

At Ancon, a day can be instructively spent in visiting the civil
administration building and its various offices to see how the
work is carried on, the schools to note how the young American
transplanted to the tropics is taught "to shoot," the hospitals
to learn how carefully the sick or injured are doctored and nursed, 
the police and fire department to be convinced that life and 
property are both well guarded, and the courts to hear real jus-
tice dispensed and the law respected.

If the traveler is fortunate enough to be invited to the homes 
of any of the officials at Ancon, Culebra, or elsewhere, he will 
not only enjoy the call, lunch, or dinner, but have an oppor-
tunity of observing first-handed the interior of remarkably com-
fortable and sanitary houses usually made delightfully attractive 
and hospitable by the deft touch and finesse of the women mem-
ers of the family. If he is at the Tivoli on the night of a ball, 
he will see men, women, and young ladies of such bearing, charac-
ter, looks, and dress that he would be proud to class them as 
coming from his own home. Very few anemic faces or tropical 
complexions will catch the eye.

If he will take time to watch both men and women playing 
lawn tennis, riding horseback, walking, or otherwise playing in 
their hours of recreation, he will discover few signs of tropical 
enervation. If, moreover, he should be invited to join in a 
friendly game of bridge, he will soon find out that the tropical 
climate does not lessen the skill of the canal staff or of the femi-
nine contingent who like the game there as much as they do in 
New York or Washington.