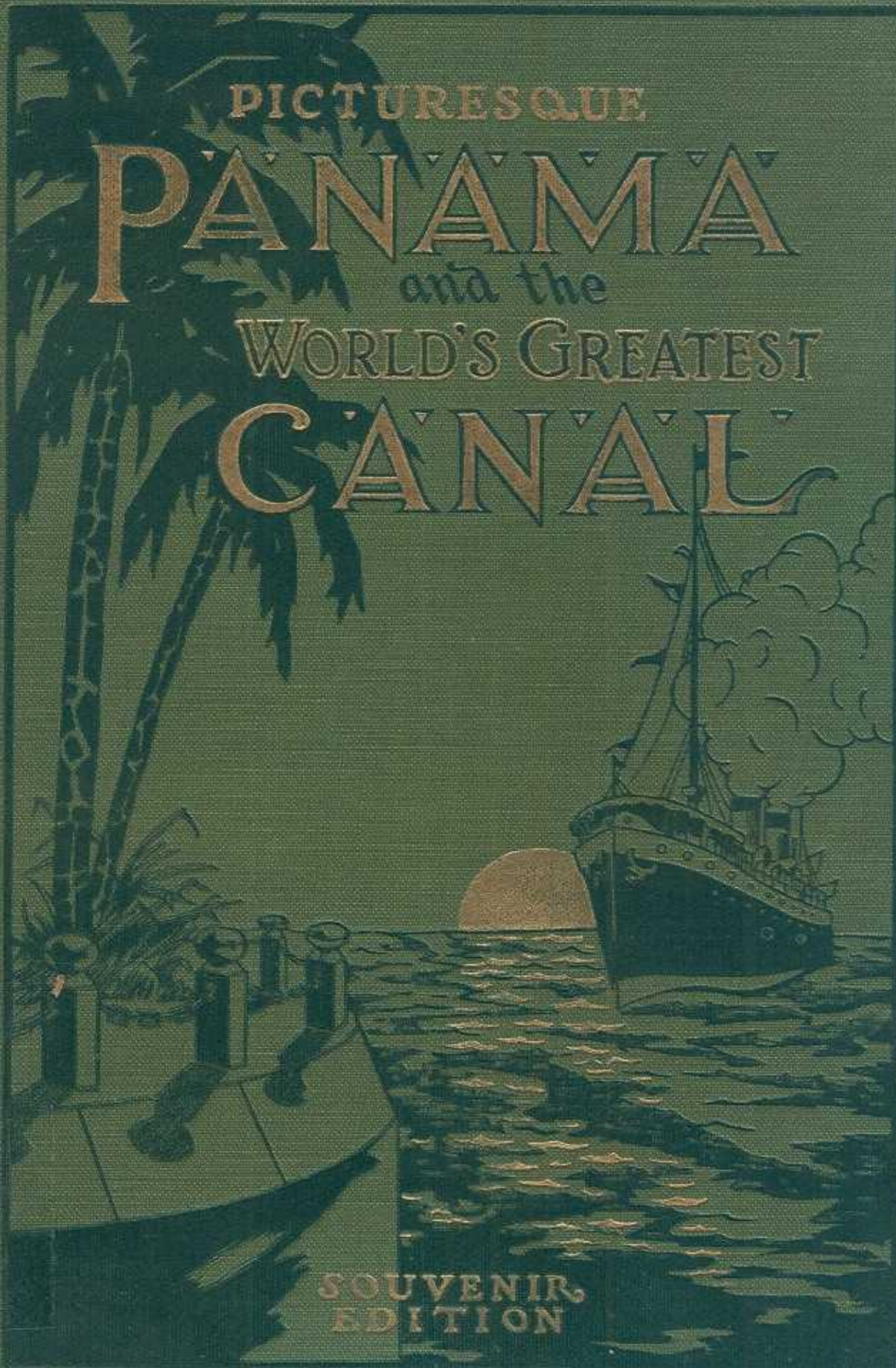


PICTURESQUE
PANAMA
and the
WORLD'S GREATEST
CANAL



SOUVENIR
EDITION



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**COLONEL GEORGE WASHINGTON GOETHALS,
THE BUILDER OF THE PANAMA CANAL.**

Who might be classed as the most absolute despot on earth, although a benevolent one, and the squarest boss a man ever worked for. He is a thorough engineer, a righteous judge, and a stern executioner rolled into one. He realizes that man is but human, and for simple infractions of the rules, is always ready to give the offender another chance, but there will be no second time. A man of prodigious memory, quick to grasp details be they trivial affairs of every day life, or questions of moment; an ear for every one, and the friend of all. The American Nation owes much to the men who rendered yeoman service on the Isthmus; they cannot be too highly rewarded. It owes much to that peerless leader, George Washington Goethals, who, for over six long years has kept the goal steadily in sight, who has never, for a single instant, permitted his determination to waver, who has fought inch by inch until every obstacle has been overcome, and who, through his forceful personality and sense of justice, has compelled the admiration of every one with whom he has come in contact.

PICTURESQUE

PANAMA

AND THE

GREAT CANAL

THE EIGHTH WONDER
OF THE WORLD

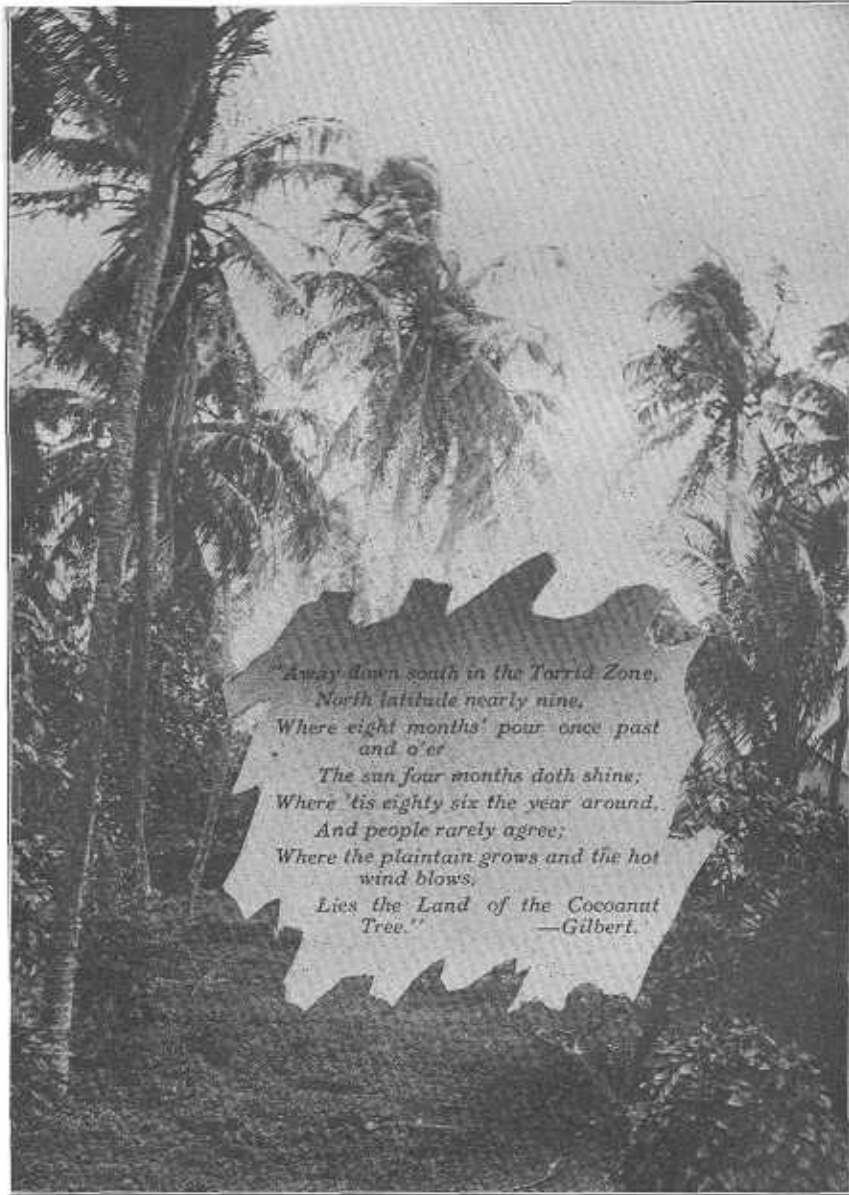
A panorama of the Canal Zone, with the complete story of the building and operation of the Great Canal under the supervision of COLONEL GEORGE W. GOETHALS

BY RALPH EMMETT AVERY
TRAVELER, AUTHOR AND LECTURER

EDITED BY
WILLIAM C. HASKINS
OF THE CANAL RECORD


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by
RALPH E. AVERY

DEDICATED TO THE
MEN OF BRAIN AND BRAWN OF OUR COUNTRY, WHOSE
MATCHLESS SKILL AND INSPIRING COURAGE
MADE THE DREAM OF AGES A REALITY
IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE
PANAMA CANAL



*"Away down south in the Torrid Zone,
North latitude nearly nine,
Where eight months' pour once past
and o'er
The sun four months doth shine;
Where 'tis eighty six the year around,
And people rarely agree;
Where the plaitain grows and the hot
wind blows,
Lies the Land of the Coconut
Tree." —Gilbert.*

FOREWORD

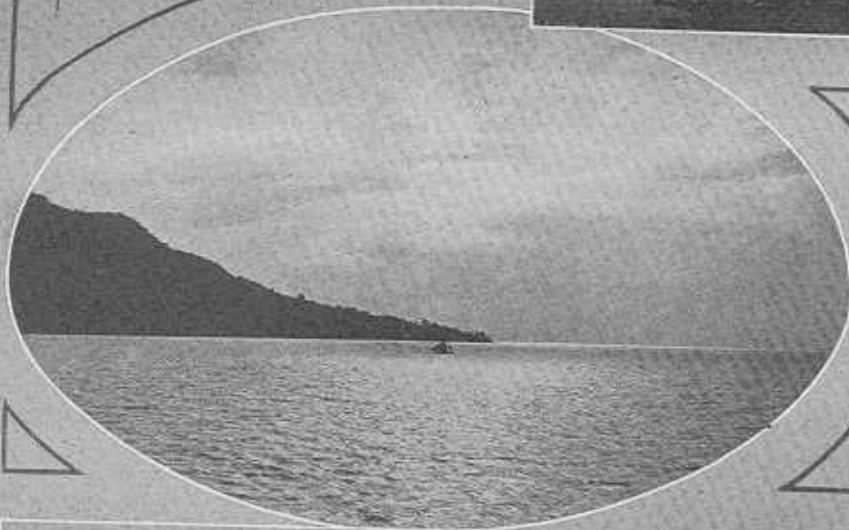
HE eighth wonder of the world, the crowning achievement of man's greatest undertaking, is the construction of the Panama Canal by the Government of the United States and, since this stupendous work has been accomplished in much shorter time than was thought possible, there are necessarily many reasons for congratulations for the skill and perseverance displayed aside from the fact that in completing this enterprise our government has at the same time succeeded in changing the commercial highways of the world.

Doubtless for centuries to come the world-wonders of the Panama Canal will be told in story and in picture, but the eloquence of the theme itself will never be exhausted while reverence for mighty deeds finds lodgment in the hearts of men.

Recognizing as much as one man could the magnitude and importance of the work being performed on the Isthmus, the Author for almost two years dwelt among the activities of this gigantic enterprise, and in these pages authentically presents to the reader his chronicles of the step-by-step progress of the construction from beginning to completion, as well as the successful installation of the world's majestic waterway from ocean to ocean.

Clothed as it is in a beauty of typography and art illustrations in keeping with the grandeur of the subject he feels assured of a cordial reception on the part of the public of the result of his efforts.

THE AUTHOR.



SUNRISE, SUNSET AND MOONLIGHT SCENES ON PANAMA BAY.

During February and March the moon is particularly bright, due to the clear atmosphere which prevails in the height of the dry season. On certain brilliant evenings it is possible to read in the moonlight. The cloud effects are perfect and the rainbows magnificent. One of the prettiest effects, which happens but rarely, is a rainbow at night.



THE history of the Panama Canal begins with the search for a western waterway to the Indies, and for fame and gold, by those hardy adventurers who followed in the wake of Columbus. These men, fresh from the Moorish wars, and equipped for a struggle with Italy which did not come to pass, looked for new fields to conquer. Nothing suited them better than the discovery of a New World peopled by heathens waiting to be converted by the sword to the Christian faith, after their gold, of which they seemed to have plenty, was stripped from them to fill the empty coffers of Spain.

This search by the followers of Columbus was fairly successful, so far as fame and gold were concerned and, although no direct water route was found to the Indies to the west, it naturally led to the settlement of the Isthmus of Panama, the narrow strip of land separating the two great oceans and forming the connecting link between North and South America. The establishment of settlements on both coasts and the short distance between them, led to the building of crude roads and trails for the early mule trains. These trails led to the construction of a railroad, and the railroad to a ship canal, for trade follows settlers, and water is the natural highway between nations. The story of the Isthmus is, therefore, in a measure, the evolution of transportation routes.

EARLY DISCOVERERS

The first European to sail along the coast of Panama was Rodrigo de Bastidas, who sailed from Cadiz in October, 1500, and first touched the continent near the island of Trinidad, and from there went west as far as Nombre de Dios. With him on that voyage was Vasco Nuñez de Balboa, who, later, was to discover the great South Sea, and Juan de la Cosa, who had sailed with Columbus on his second voyage and was considered one of the most able mariners of his day.

Columbus sailed from Cadiz on his fourth and last voyage in search of a passageway to the Indies in May, 1502. On this voyage he skirted the shores of Honduras and Costa Rica, to Almirante Bay and Chiriqui Lagoon on the coast of Panama. At the latter place he was told by the Indians that, if he

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would continue his course to the east, he would soon come to a narrow place between the two seas, and this led him to believe that his search for a strait was nearing success; that he would soon pass into the Indian Ocean and thence around the Cape of Good Hope to Spain, surpassing the achievement of Vasco



Statue of Columbus and Indian Girl. Presented to General Mosquera of Colombia in 1868, by the Empress Eugenie, and afterwards turned over to Count DeLesseps. Now occupies a commanding position on Cristobal Point.

de Gama, the Portuguese, who had already sailed around Africa (1497-1498) in his search for a water route to the Indies. Columbus continued on his way and passed the site of the present city of Colon at the Atlantic entrance to the Canal, and on November 2, 1502, arrived at a harbor 18 miles northeast, which he named Porto Bello, signifying beautiful port. He stayed there a week stormbound, and then continued on past Nombre de Dios, thus overlapping the voyage of Bastidas. He gave up his unsuccessful search for a strait eventually, and took to the more practical work of hunting for gold. His attempt to found a colony at the mouth of the Rio Belen, southwest of Colon, failed, and on May 1, 1503, he sailed from the shores of the Isthmus. He died on May 20, 1506, still believing that he had discovered the eastern shores of Asia. This belief was shared by all the early voyagers until the discovery of the Pacific Ocean in 1513.

THE FIRST SETTLEMENT

After the unsuccessful attempt of Columbus to found a settlement in Castilla del Oro (Golden Castile), as the Isthmus was termed, two colonizers were sent out by King Ferdinand. One of these, Diego de Nicuesa, a Spanish nobleman, more fitted for the court than for a command in the wilderness, was given control of all the land between Cape Gracias á Dios, Nicaragua, and the Gulf of Urabá, or Darien, the eastern limit of the present Republic of Panama. The other was Alonso de Ojeda, who accompanied Columbus on his second voyage, and in addition had made two trips to the continent independently. Ojeda was placed in charge of the land east and south of the Gulf of Urabá called Nueva Andalucia. Both of these expeditions outfitted and sailed from Santo Domingo in November, 1509.

Associated with Ojeda were Juan de la Cosa, as lieutenant in the future government, and a lawyer named Bachellear Enciso, who furnished most of the money to equip the expedition. It was arranged that Enciso should remain at Santo Domingo to collect recruits and supplies, procure another ship, and join Ojeda later at the proposed colony.

Ojeda landed near the present city of Cartagena, Colombia, founded in 1531. Here he attacked and overcame the Indians with a part of his force,

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but in following up his victory, his men became scattered, and all those who had landed were killed, with the exception of himself and one other. Among the killed was the veteran Juan de la Cosa. Ojeda then entered the Gulf of Urabá and founded the town of San Sebastian on the eastern shore, but was soon compelled to return to Santo Domingo to obtain men and supplies. He left the new colony in charge of his lieutenant, Francisco Pizarro, famous in history as the conqueror and despoiler of Peru, with the understanding that if he did not return within 50 days the colonists should decide among themselves the best course to follow. He finally reached Santo Domingo, after suffering shipwreck and many hardships on the island of Cuba, and found that Enciso had departed long before with abundant supplies for the colony, but he was unable to recruit another force to follow.

Pizarro and his men, suffering for lack of food, waited anxiously and in vain for the return of Ojeda, and then abandoned the colony and sailed for Cartagena. Here they found Enciso with reinforcements and provisions. With Enciso was a stowaway in the person of Vasco Nuñez de Balboa. Enciso insisted on Pizarro and his men returning with him to San Sebastian. On their arrival, they found the settlement destroyed by Indians. They were without food, and at the suggestion of Balboa, who had sailed along these shores with Bastidas, they crossed the Gulf of Urabá, where it was reported the Indians were less warlike and provisions could be obtained. It was necessary, however, for them to defeat a band of Indians under a powerful chief named Cemaco, who disputed their landing, but they obtained the much needed supplies, and founded the settlement of Santa Maria de la Antigua, the first on the Isthmus. They were now in the territory which had been assigned by the King to Nicuesa and, consequently, had no right there. The ambitious Balboa took advantage



Columbus Island where Christopher Columbus stopped to repair and scrape the bottom of his ships before proceeding on to Spain.

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of this circumstance and the fact that Enciso was disliked by his men, for the reason that he allowed no private trading with the Indians, to depose him, and asked Nicuesa to come and take charge of the colony.



November 2, 1502, Columbus arrived at this harbor, 18 miles northeast of Colon, which he named Porto Bello, signifying beautiful port. Rock for the concrete used in the locks at Gatun was obtained at this point.

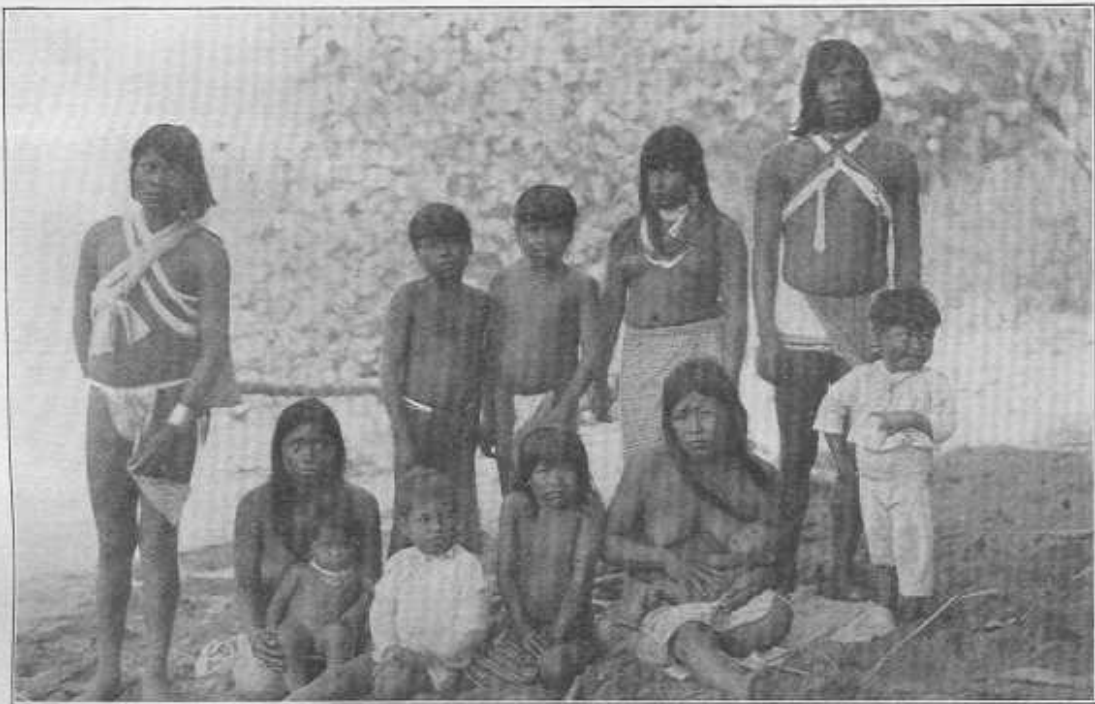
Nicuesa had already sailed from Santo Domingo, taking along with him about 700 colonists. During the voyage, a terrific storm arose, wrecking some of his ships and causing the loss of 400 lives. In the tempest the ships became separated; some of them reached the coast at the mouth of the Belen River, and others the mouth of the Chagres River. After collecting his men, Nicuesa left the Belen River, and after doubling Manzanillo Point shortly landed, saying: "We will remain here in the name of God." This was the site of the town of Nombre de Dios, the oldest existing settlement on the Isthmus. During American canal times, the sand for the concrete in Gatun Locks was obtained here, and in 1910 and 1911, the sand dredge cut through the hulks of two old ships, believed to be relics of the days of Nicuesa. The dredge pumps also drew up bullets and other small articles.

Nicuesa's situation was desperate, as he was without arms or provisions, but fortunately there arrived shortly his lieutenant Colmenares, who brought supplies, as well as information concerning the new settlement at Antigua. Nicuesa declared his intention of going there and taking all the gold found by Ojeda's men as rightfully belonging to him. News of his intention reached Antigua before he did and, on his arrival, he was met by an armed mob,

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the attack on Nicuesa to return to Spain. Knowing that they would immediately go to the King and ask that he be dispossessed, he started in to obtain the gold which he knew the King thought more of than all else, and to make new discoveries which would help his cause. The gold he obtained from the Indian chiefs of the Darien. It was made the price of peace, and Balboa showed his shrewdness by making allies of the Indians after he had obtained their treasure. Such an alliance he made with Careta, the cacique of Coyba, who after his village had been sacked by the Spaniards, left with Balboa one of his daughters as a hostage. Balboa accepted the Indian maiden, of whom he became very fond and, although they were never married according to the Christian rites, she considered herself his wife.

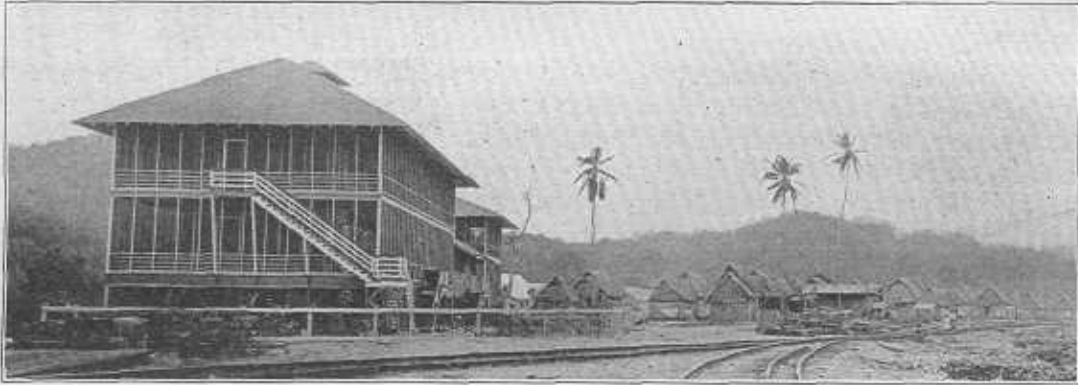
Balboa started from Antigua on September 6, 1513, to cross the Isthmus and find the great sea to the south, of which the Indians, knowing the cupidity of the Spaniards, had told him glowing tales of the riches of the great race of people which inhabited its shores. Fighting the different tribes which he met on the way, subduing and making friends with them, on September 25, he reached a hill in Darien from which it was said the South Sea could be seen. Halting his men, Balboa made the ascent alone, and was the first European to gaze upon this heretofore unknown ocean. Six days later, September 29, 1513, four hundred years ago, he waded into the ocean and took possession in the name of the sovereigns of Spain. This was in the Gulf of San Miguel, so named for the reason that it was discovered on St. Michael's Day. He also performed a similar ceremony when he reached a point of land at the entrance to the gulf. Balboa subdued the local Indian chiefs, who gave him presents of gold and also many pearls from the Pearl Islands a few miles off the shore, and confirmed the rumors of a powerful and rich nation to the south. The Pearl Islands, so



A family of Indians, Darien.

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named by Balboa, could be plainly seen, but he did not visit them at that time on account of the roughness of the sea and the frailty of the available Indian canoes. He named the largest of the islands, Isla Rica, which is now known as San Miguel, or Rey Island.



Nombre de Dios, the oldest existing settlement on the Isthmus. Sand was obtained here for the cement used in the Gatun Locks.

Balboa returned triumphant to Antigua after an absence of about four months. His messenger telling of his great discovery did not reach the King, unfortunately, until after that monarch, listening to Enciso's complaints, had sent out a new governor to take charge of the colony.

BALBOA'S UNFORTUNATE END

The new governor was named Pedro Arias de Avila, commonly called "Pedrarias the Cruel," which nickname he won in the New World by his method of extorting gold from the Indians. With Pedrarias was Hernando de Soto, who was later to discover the Mississippi River, and Diego de Almagro, who was to become the partner of Pizarro in the conquest of Peru. Unlike Balboa, Pedrarias did not try to make friends with the Indians, but in many instances repaid the hospitality which they extended to him as a friend of



Shrines are common along the waysides and at the entrance to villages, but this one has been placed in a hollow tree. The photographer discovered it near Gorgona.

Balboa with the utmost treachery, destroying their villages, killing women and children, and selling those who survived into slavery. He undid what Balboa had been in a fair way of accomplishing, that is, the settlement of Darien, for the Indians were everywhere aroused and repaid cruelty with cruelty as often as an opportunity was presented.

Pedrarias strove to establish a line of posts for communication between the two oceans in accordance with the ideas of Balboa, but without success. The first of these was located on the Atlantic coast at a place named Santa Cruz.

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In the meantime, the King had recognized Balboa's discovery with a commission as Adelantado of the South Seas and Viceroy of the Pacific coast, an empty title, as he was subject to the orders of Pedrarias. Pedrarias, jealous of Balboa's achievement, held up this commission and kept Balboa fighting for his liberty in the court of Antigua on trumped up charges. Finally Balboa made an alliance with Pedrarias by promising to marry one of his daughters, who was at that time in Spain, and went a few miles up the coast to a place called Acla, between Antigua and Santa Cruz, where he established a settlement and had timbers cut and shaped which could be readily built into ships with which to explore the new sea which he had discovered. These timbers were carried across the Isthmus by Indian slaves and were set up in San Miguel Bay.

While at the Pearl Islands, from where he made several short cruises, Balboa heard of the coming of a new governor to supersede Pedrarias. Thinking this governor might be hostile to his plans, he sent messengers to Antigua to see whether or not he had arrived. If he had, he instructed the messengers to return without allowing their presence to become known, and he would then leave on his voyage of discovery before orders for his recall could be delivered. His messengers went to Antigua and found Pedrarias still in charge, for the new governor had died on his arrival. One of them, however, told Pedrarias that Balboa was contemplating treachery and the founding of an independent colony on the Pacific coast. The bitterness and jealousy



A wayside cross, or shrine. Some of these are very old.



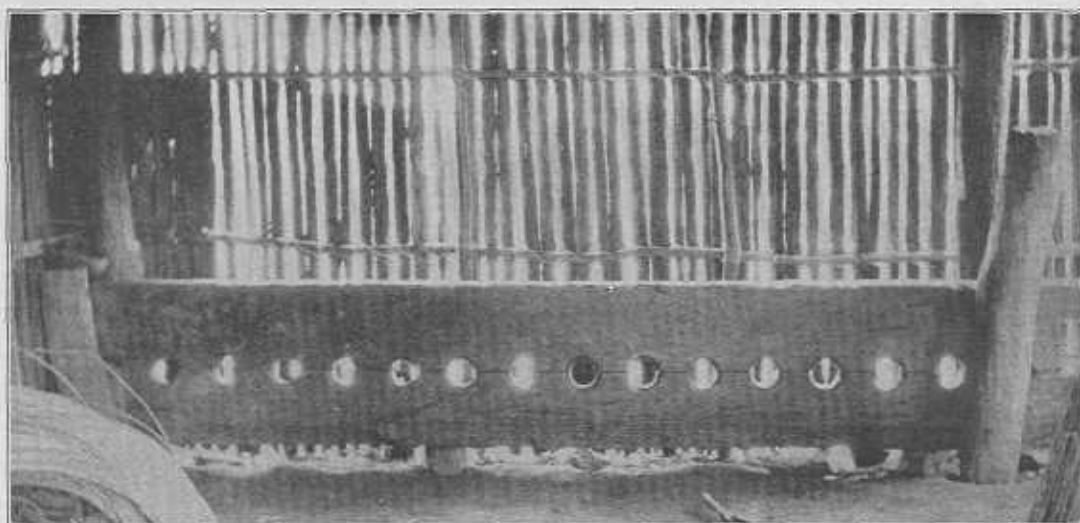
Village of San Miguel on Rey Island, one of the larger of the Pearl Island Group.

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of Pedrarias for Balboa again came to life, and he sent Francisco Pizarro, who was later to finish the work Balboa had planned to do, to bring him back to Acla. At Acla, Balboa was given a mockery of a trial for treason, and was beheaded with four companions in the latter part of 1517. Second only to the discovery of the South Sea was the demonstration of the practicability of an Isthmian transit.

SETTLEMENT OF OLD PANAMA

Pedrarias seeing the advantage of a settlement on the new ocean as an outfitting station for future exploring expeditions, crossed the Isthmus and, on August 15, 1519, founded Panama, situated about five miles east from the new city. The name "Panama" is supposed to have come from an Indian word meaning a place abounding in fish, and tradition relates that the town was built on the site of an Indian fishing village. In the same year the Atlantic port was transferred to Nombre de Dios, directly north of old Panama, and a few years later Antigua and Acla were abandoned to the Indians.



Some of the interior villages have no jails stout enough to hold a prisoner, so the stocks are resorted to.

On September 15, 1521, the settlement at Panama was made a city by royal decree, and the first bishopric in the Americas was removed there from Antigua. The new governor sent out, opportunely for Pedrarias, died on his arrival, as did several others who followed, and Pedrarias ruled until the arrival of Pedros de los Rios, who took charge on July 30, 1526. Before his arrival, Pedrarias took refuge in Nicaragua where he had already established a settlement.

SPAIN'S POWER SPREADS

Following this period in Isthmian history many parties set out inland to explore the country, and outposts were located in the provinces of Chiriqui and Veraguas. These explorations were made in accordance with the desires of Charles V, who took a great interest in the exploration of the South Sea and the discovery of a strait connecting it with the Atlantic Ocean. After he came to the throne of Spain in 1516, he charged the governors of his American colonies to examine the coast line from Darien to Mexico for a possible waterway.

In accordance with this policy, Gil Gonzales de Avila was sent out from

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Spain in 1521, with instructions to make a search along the coast for the western opening of a strait. Gonzales dismantled and transported his ships across the Isthmus and rebuilt them on the Pacific side. In January, 1522, he sailed from Panama bay and went as far as the Bay of Fonseca, where he landed and discovered Lake Nicaragua. On this voyage Gonzales met men sent out on similar service by Cortez, who, later, established a transit route across the Isthmus of Tehuantepec in Mexico, following pretty closely the present railroad. This route was started in much the same manner as the one across Darien, through the necessity of transporting suitable lumber from the Atlantic coast of the Isthmus to build ships with which to explore the Pacific coast. When Pedrarias learned of the discovery of Lake Nicaragua, he immediately laid claim to it, and as the country was rich in gold, established a city at Granada



Old Fort at Porto Bello.

near the shores of the lake after subduing the Indians. In 1529, Captain Diego Machuca thoroughly explored the lake and discovered its eastern outlet, the San Juan River. Sailing down this stream he finally reached the Atlantic Ocean, and sailed along the coast until he arrived at Nombre de Dios, thus opening up another route across the American Isthmus.

The first extensive explorations to the south were the voyages of Pizarro and Almagro in 1524, which ended in the conquest of Peru. In 1527, an expedition sailed up the Rio Grande, carried their canoes across the divide at Culebra to a tributary of the Chagres, down which they sailed to its mouth, thus going over the present Canal route.

PERIOD OF THE GREAT TRADE

Permanent settlements were now located at Nombre de Dios and at Panama, and between these two points was established a paved trail or "royal

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highway," for the commerce across the Isthmus at that time was steadily on the increase, making Panama a place of mercantile importance. In 1534, a route by water for boats and light draft vessels was established from Nombre de Dios along the coast and up the Chagres River to the head of navigation at Cruces. From Cruces there was another trail to the city of Panama. Over these trails pack trains carried on the trade, the river being used in the wet seasons, and when the attacks of the Indians and Cimaroons, (negro slaves, who rebelled and were outlawed), became too frequent on the overland trail. This trade consisted of gold and ornaments stripped from the temples of the Incas, gold from the mines of Darien and Veraguas on the Isthmus, silver from Bolivia, pearls, and also wool, indigo, mahogany, dye woods, cocoa, and tobacco, all bound for Spain, for which the colonists received clothing and food-



The three ancient bells of Cruces. This town was one of the oldest on the Isthmus, and was the head of navigation on the Rio Chagres before the days of the railroad. Abandoned in 1913 on account of its being in the lake area.

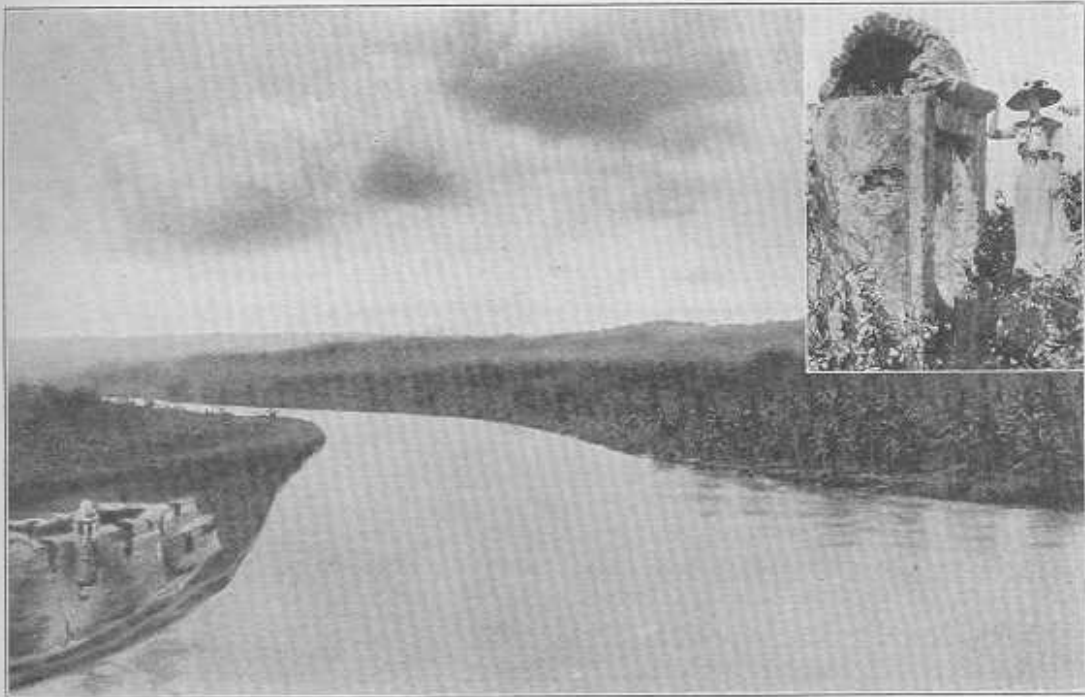
stuffs in return. For nearly two hundred years the trails from Panama to the towns of Nombre de Dios and Porto Bello were the richest trade routes in the world. Some of this trade even originated across the Pacific in the Philippines and the Indies. Later, after the period of the great trade, 1550-1750, and up to the time of the Panama railroad, the part water and part overland trail from the mouth of the Chagres to Cruces, 34 miles, and thence to Panama, 18 miles, was used by the colonists when California and Oregon were opened to settlement, and by the gold seekers in California in the days of '49.

After Nombre de Dios was destroyed in 1597 by Sir Francis Drake, the royal port was changed to Porto Bello, 17 miles to the southwest. This change was beneficial, as Nombre de Dios was always unhealthful, while Porto Bello had a better harbor and was nearer to the mouth of the Chagres and Panama.

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Porto Bello became one of the strongest fortified of the Spanish settlements in the New World. Here, came the Spanish galleons once a year to collect the King's treasure, and to bring supplies for the colonists, and here, each year, on the arrival of the ships, the merchants would congregate to take part in a big fair which was held during the annual visit of the fleet.

The town is situated on a bay about a mile and a half long by 2,500 feet wide, and the ruins of five of the six forts which guarded it, as well as an old custom house, can still be seen, although partly covered with jungle growth. One of the six forts was on the side of the hill on the opposite side of the bay from the old town and where the Isthmian Canal Commission has been quarrying rock for the past four years for Canal work, and it was dug away by steam-shovels. After Porto Bello became the royal port on the Atlantic, the Chagres



Mouth of the Chagres River. The old fort on the left and one of the turrets on the right.

River and the Cruces trail came into general use as a highway, although there was also an overland road, and to protect this route from pirates who were becoming bold enough to attack fortified towns, Fort San Lorenzo was built in 1601 at the river mouth.

THE SCOTCH BUBBLE

England lost its opportunity in 1698-1700 to gain a foothold in the Isthmian trade by failing to lend its aid to the colonization scheme of William Patterson, a Scotch financier, who had already founded the Bank of England. Patterson's plan, which eventually cost about 2,000 lives and \$100,000 in money, was designed to break up the monopoly of the British East India Company in the Oriental trade by founding a colony on the shores of Darien, and opening up a free trade route across the Isthmus from Acla to the Gulf of San Miguel, over the same route taken by Balboa nearly 200 years before. Permission for the

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formation of the company with this end in view was obtained from King William. His approval, however, was later withdrawn at the instigation of the East India Company, when it realized that its monopoly was in jeopardy, and instructions were issued to the governors of the British colonies in the West Indies and North America to withhold any aid to the Scots who had already departed for Darien. The opposition of the East India Company forced the new project to return all the money subscribed for stock in England, and to raise the necessary funds in Scotland only.

On November 1, 1698, three ships and two tenders containing 1,200 men reached the Darien from Leith, and founded the town of New Edinburgh on the Gulf of Calidonia, near Acla. Here they were welcomed by the San Blas Indians who saw in them future allies against the Spaniards. But the Scots had no intention of fighting, much to the disappointment of the Indians, although they must have known that their invasion would be resisted by the Spaniards. The first expedition managed to stay eight months, during which time their numbers were sadly reduced by sickness and famine. On June 20, 1699, two hundred and fifty survivors, with Patterson who had gone out to the colony as a volunteer, and whose wife and son had died there, left for New York, which place they reached on August 13. Meanwhile, the company at home, not knowing of the abandonment of the colony, sent out a second band of 300 recruits. This party arrived at New Edinburgh on August 13, the same day that their predecessors reached New York. Finding the half-completed Fort St. Andrew deserted, they immediately left for Jamaica with the exception of a few men who insisted upon remaining. A third expedition consisting of four ships and 1,300 men was sent out from Scotland, and reached New Edinburgh on November 30, although rumors of the failure of the first attempt had been received.

At last the Spaniards determined to oust the invaders who, unable to accomplish much on account of internal bickerings, the opposition of England, and a high death rate, sent out a fleet of ships from Cartagena on February 25, 1700, to invest the port by sea, while a land force blockaded it in the rear. On March 31, after many sorties against the Spanish forces, the colonists surrendered and were allowed to depart with honors. The colony had been reduced to about 360 persons, and these were so sick and feeble that it is said the Spaniards had to help them aboard their ships and set the sails for them.

“A Nation given to the world,
A giant’s task begun,
Show what our Uncle Sam can do
In an orbit of the sun.
O great indeed is our Uncle Sam
And his greatness ne’er shall cease!
For greatest of all his conquests won,
Are his victories of peace!”
—*Gilbert.*

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In an orbit of the sun.
O great indeed is our Uncle Sam
And his greatness ne’er shall cease!
For greatest of all his conquests won,
Are his victories of peace!”
—*Gilbert.*