

GETTING READY TO OPEN the PANAMA CANAL

PREPARATIONS BEING RUSHED FOR WEDDING OF OCEANS NEXT MONTH.

A Simple but Picturesque Incident Will Usher Into Practical Use the Greatest Engineering Feat of Modern Times—Commission Busy With Details of Celebration That Is to Mark Consummation of Greatest of Undertakings.



The wedding of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans at Panama is scheduled for next month.

This consummation of the greatest engineering enterprise of all time will be as impressive as it is simple. There will be an explosion. A mass of earth will be hurled into the air, obscuring everything for the moment. Then will come the thunder of rushing waters—the first sweep of the mighty torrent through the full length of the canal.

THE ceremonies at the official opening of the Panama Canal in the early part of 1914 will be the subject of a Nation's care. A special commissioner already is in Washington and is taking up the various plans of the grand celebration and festival to take place when the first heavy draught ships are sent from the Atlantic to the Pacific.

But when the oceans meet next month the exercises will be much more modest. Indeed, there will be almost nothing to inform the great American public that at last these two oceans have been brought together for the betterment of commerce.

Colonel Goethals, clad in the white soldier's uniform which has made him a figure during the canal enterprise, will stand just beyond the mud of Gatun dam. With him will be a little staff of officers, men whose faces are wrinkled by care and browned by constant exposure to the tropic sun.

Behind them a knot of civilians will be huddled, a splash of color against the green of vegetation. When the explosion comes there will be a mighty rush of water as a valley, trees and shrubbery and all, is inundated by the tremendous inlet.

That will be all. The mighty dredges will go into the huge valleys so recently created, towing out huge trees which have been left in the lake's bottom. And over the green spillway there will sweep for days and days a mass of vegetation torn from earth by the waters.

When the big celebration begins next year it will represent the combined genius of the War and Navy Departments. Secretary of War Garrison and Secretary of the Navy Daniels are even now holding conferences which are slowly bringing the plans into shape.

Later they will hold conferences with Colonel Goethals, and with him will finally decide upon the complete celebration to take place when the canal is capable of floating the giant battleship Oregon, on whose bridge the Secretary of the Navy will stand as she plows through the still waters. There will be dances and receptions and banquets and speechmaking and fireworks when the work of the canal is finally finished.

Mr. Dodge, in charge of the division of publications of the Isthmian Canal Commission, recently stated that the plans for the opening of the canal were really merely an extension of the work which has been done in the past.

"When the canal is opened next month," said he, "it simply means that the last great feature of the work is to be begun. The men who are in charge of this work will have as arduous and steady a task for months as the men who handled the shovels at Culebra cut.

"For under the waters of the canal there are dying forests, swamped by the entrance of the waters. And the sliding earth of the canal's bottom must be removed and the channel made safe before the big vessels of the world may enter.

"The dredges which are to be employed from now on will find a steady and difficult task in removing the waste vegetation and earth from the canal.

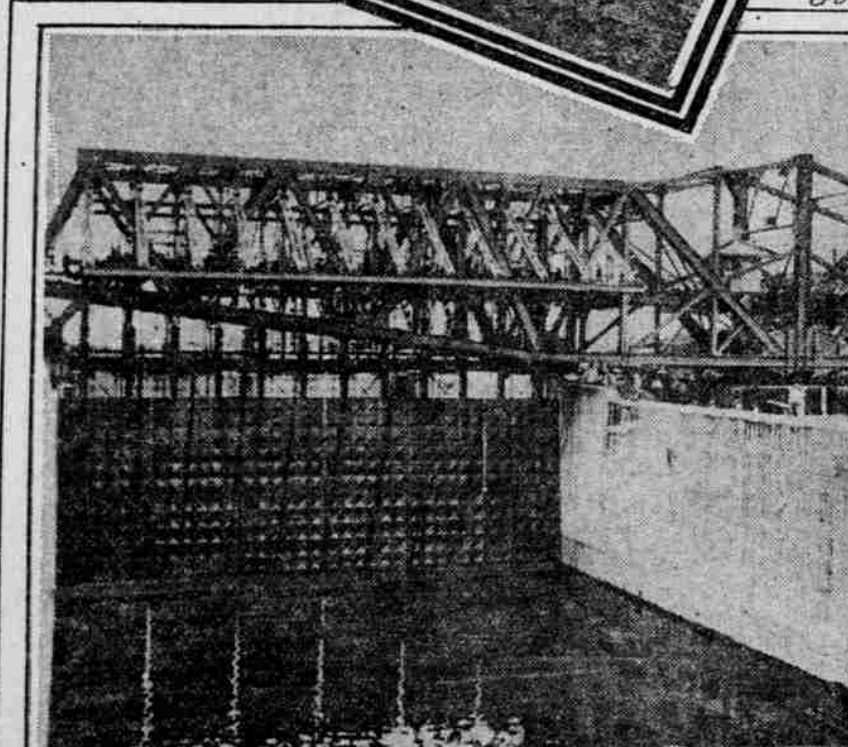
"Thus when the dike at Gatun dam is blown up it will be the signal calling the men to work for the final stretch in the completion of the canal. How long it will take I do not know. There are many who, visiting the canal when this work is in progress, will hardly realize that the canal is at last open to navigation."

It is almost impossible to realize what this enterprise means when you are far away from the scene of activities. You have heard that we maintain in Panama a beneficent despotism, a "military government" which keeps thousands of workmen busy six days out of seven, and which, notwithstanding its mighty throng of husky laborers of many nations, preserves a discipline that would be a credit to a model city. Few can appreciate what this tremendous government means.

I have talked to men in Washington who are the most instrumental in the completion of the canal. This most stupendous engineering feat of the ages



Gatun Lower Locks, Interior View of North Approach Wall.



Emergency Dam, Gatun Locks

building the canal is being conducted, he was enthusiastic over what had been accomplished.

"I regard the Panama Canal," said he "as the highest tribute which can be paid to the United States Army. For absolute efficiency, workmanlike progress and thorough order there has been nothing within the memory of man which has equaled the work of Goethals at the Panama Canal."

Then I spoke to Secretary Daniels, of the Navy Department, whose fleet must bear the brunt of the defense of the canal. The Secretary will be on the bridge of the first heavy-draft vessel to pass from the Atlantic to the Pacific through the waterway. That ship will be the battleship Oregon, if present plans carry.

"When the American fleet, the first heavy draft vessels to pass through the canal, shall make its initial trip," said he, "I desire to be on board the flagship, because I want to watch the progress of those mighty vessels behind me—warships which are to be tremendously benefited by this new waterway."

"It is worth the while of the thinking man to consider what this canal will mean to the Navy Department. Of course there are so many benefits that it is possible for a man, considering the entire giant project, to forget for a moment the single, individual group which is aided."

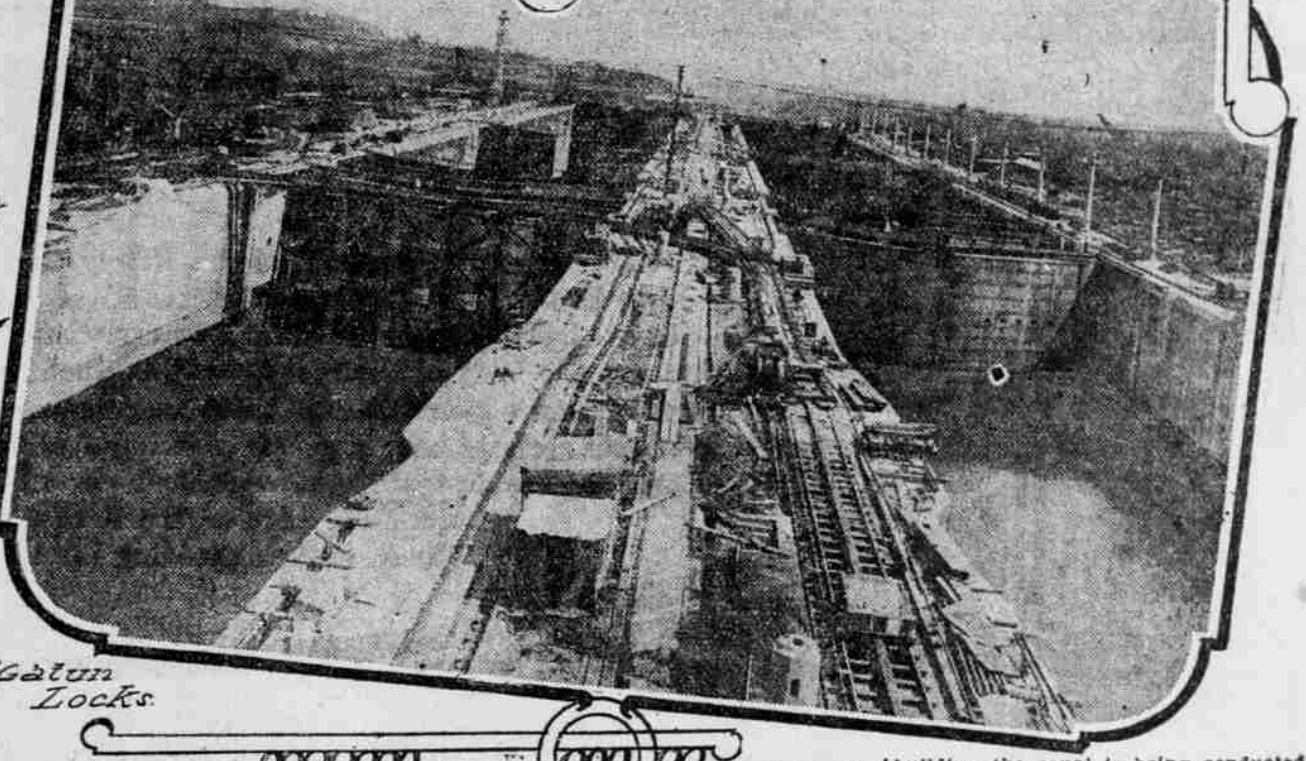
"When the Spanish-American war broke out a vessel, in order to reach the scene of battle, rounded Cape Horn and there were days and days of anxiety on the part of the American people while this fateful voyage was being made."

"When this canal is opened the days of the isolated ship will be over. We can send our ships from coast to coast should an attack be made on either side of the United States we could soon throw the entire force of our entire fighting strength to meet the invader without delays, without dangers and without mishaps."

"When the canal has been completed the American Navy's work, as I see it, will begin."

"I may not pause to elaborate on the possibilities to all industries of the exportation of raw products as a result of the building of the canal. Some of the larger cities of the United States have great facilities in the way of long-established steamship lines, but I am confident that the opening of this new water route to the Pacific, while not diverting, perhaps to any appreciable extent the vast trade of New York City and other great cities of the Atlantic, will create an enormous new trade as our country progresses and will eventually make the cities of the South Atlantic, the Gulf and the Pacific Seaboard second to none in shipping facilities."

"It is a wonderful project. Industry will advance by leaps and bounds. Every business will profit by its construction. And the Navy will not be the least among the varied interests which will benefit when the Panama Canal is opened."—John Alfred Watkins.



Recent Slide, Culebra Cut.

the canal. And no man is too small to get justice from Goethals.

On Sunday mornings he conducts his impromptu court. One man believes that another man has stolen a pig belonging to him. He goes to see Goethals. In the musty warmth of the Government house the complainant enters a darkened room where, sitting behind a severely plain desk, is a man, square-headed, rather stern-faced, clad in immaculate white. Only the eyes of the man show his latent humor. He is the alpha and omega of the canal and many of his workmen will shake their heads dubiously when his rule is flaunted and smoothly as a door by the last administration.

The Canal Zone is now being equipped with an electrical supply sufficient to handle all of the locks and the light houses as well. These high concrete lighthouses have a strange appearance now, standing as they do in the midst of a wide waste of land, a little while they will be the guide posts of the long stretch of water.

The monstrous locks, though heavy enough to crush a house, will be moved as easily and smoothly as a door by the electrical power supplied.

The lighthouses will operate automatically, flashing and going out, from dark until sunrise.

When the canal is opened the big boats will be carried through the locks upon the little cars run by electricity. These trams will be operated much like switch engines and will haul ships big enough to carry a thousand or more on board without inconvenience.

It is now stated positively that no ship will be allowed to go through the canal under her own steam. The little "trolley cars" as they are called by the workmen, will be panting and pulling day and night as the big ships from all parts of the world are brought up to be loaded or unloaded.



Col. G. W. Goethals.

I have talked recently to the men in Washington who are directly interested in the Panama Canal project. Representative Adamson, of Georgia, in whose committee originated the law under which the Panama Canal was operated, was the first man I saw. As chairman of the House committee on interstate and foreign commerce, he has had most to do with the adoption of the code of civil law for Panama in the House.

"It may surprise you," said he, "to find that the Panama Canal is going to have a government of its own, which, I believe, will be superior to the government of many an American city. Did you ever stop to think that the Panama Canal had the benefit of the wisdom of the entire United States Government when the law governing the conduct of its affairs came into being?"

"In other words, Congress has devoted its time to preparing a law for Panama which shall have none of the weaknesses which are found in other governments."

"Do you believe," I asked, "that the Panama government in all of its features will surpass any other municipal or state government?"

"I believe it will," he replied, "I believe that the Government will be as good and as free from corruption as it has been in the past—and that is high praise."

When I spoke to Secretary of War Garrison, under whom the work of

building the canal is being conducted, he was enthusiastic over what had been accomplished.

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You Must Vote in Argentina.

Like almost every feature of democracy as at present conceived—for instance, referendum, initiative, proportional party representation, etc.—the obligatory vote has been first tried in Switzerland. Some years ago several cantons introduced and practiced it with indifferent success. The first country to imitate Switzerland on a national scale was Argentina, where municipal, district, state or Federal elections take place once every few weeks, but usually not more than 15 per cent of the voters go to the polls.

An old-style Latin-American revolution in Argentina is now quite as unlikely as in the United States, but if ever that country was near having one it was when the attempt was made to bring into court thousands of citizens liable to a ten-peso fine for not having appeared at the polls and at least having cast a blank vote, if they did not want to take sides.

The Argentine trial with the obligatory vote has thus far not been a success. For the same reason, practically all of those who have an opinion of their own go to vote anyhow, while the balance, if they vote at all, are merely what the ward heeler knows as "cattle."

However, it might be well to watch further the experiment now made in Argentina, and maybe we may not only teach but learn something from one of our sister republics.

Warm Plants in Alpine Snows.

Pathfinder.

The Alpine flower, called the soldanella, produces heat sufficient so that it grows even under a considerable covering of snow. If the snow is not too deep the plant sends its stem up through the snow, which is melted by the heat. If the snow is deeper the heat melts a little hollow chamber out about the plant, thus giving it room to expand and blossom. It has been found that some of the most practical alpine plants, which are common in the Mediterranean region, develop a temperature of as high as 100 degrees when their buds are opening. To a lesser degree probably all plants furnish their own heat under certain conditions, but ordinarily vegetation, being by nature adapted to its surroundings, gets the heat it needs from the soil, air and sun. Animals are of a higher order than plants partly because they are more independent of their surroundings.

Witness Fees After 53 Years.

Pittsburg Gazette Times.

Reuben Winters, a man who was a witness in court in Norristown, Pa., 53 years ago, came to collect his witness fee a few days ago.