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The Astorian guarantees to its advertisers the largest circulation of any newspaper published on the Columbia River.

SUCTION DREDGES

An indication of the large amount of river and harbor improvement work now under way or contemplated by the United States Government is given by the fact that at present ten suction dredges are being built, two of which will be sent to the Great Lakes, two to New York harbor, two to the Mississippi river, two to Charleston, S. C., one to Galveston, and one to Savannah, Ga. The contracts for building these vessels have been distributed to a large number of builders, possibly for the purpose of hastening their completion. Five are being constructed by the Maryland Steel Company, two by the James Reilly Repair and Supply Company, and one each by the W. R. Trigg Company, the Petersburg Iron Works Company and the New York Ship Building Company.

The mechanical equipment of the dredges for salt water service will include surface condenser outfits, with air pumps, feed pumps and fire pumps. The dredges for the Great Lakes are provided with large cross compound, double-acting air pumps and jet condensers. The air pumps are of novel arrangement, inasmuch as it is possible by the manipulation of valves and cocks provided for the purpose, to cut each pump in half, and run one side entirely independent of the other side. This practically provides a spare pump in each installation without the necessity of being over-weighted with duplicate machines, and at the same time secures the advantages of compound steam cylinders.

These dredges are the largest in capacity ever built and are designed in each case for the special work which they will have to do. They are self-propelling, sea-going dredges, and do not depend upon the assistance of tug-boats or other craft to move them around from point to point. Some of these vessels are fitted with immense bins, in which the dredged material is deposited, and when full the vessel propels herself out to deep water, dumps the sand or mud and steams back to repeat the operation. Others are arranged for depositing the dredged

material into large scows fastened alongside the vessel.

The operation of these machines is interesting. A long, flexible tube, 12 to 15 inches in diameter, drops down from the side of the vessel 20 to 30 feet or more to the bottom of the river or harbor upon which the dredging operation is being performed. The upper end of this tube is connected to an immense rotative centrifugal pump, revolving at the rate of several hundred revolutions a minute and capable of handling many hundreds tons of water an hour. The lower end of the tube is manipulated from the vessel against the sandbars and mudbanks, and as the water is sucked upward by the centrifugal pumps a large proportion of sand and mud goes with it. The centrifugal pumps discharge this water with its suspended material into the tanks on board the vessel or into scows, where the heavy matter quickly settles to the bottom, the water flowing back into the sea.

EXCELLENT DESIGNATION

The people of the new republic of Panama have been officially designated "Panamans." Ever since the establishment of the independent isthmian republic there has been some uncertainty as to what its people were to be called, together with much discussion and much variety of practice. "Panamese" was used by some, "Panamists" by others, and again "Panamanian" was employed. Official pronouncement upon the subject was delayed, and, meantime, word coiners' fancies ran riot. The same thing occurs whenever there is occasion for making a new word, but not always does authoritative judgment finally fix so surely upon the right form as it has done in the present case.

There can be no doubt that "Panamans" and "Panaman" are the best of all the words proposed. It is a common reproach of the English language that rules of analogy do not uniformly prevail in it, in spelling, in pronunciation or in etymology. If analogy is desirable, we should certainly observe in the formation of new words. Analogy unmistakably indicates "Panaman" and "Panamans" as the proper forms for adoption in this case. The well-nigh universal practice in America in forming proper adjectives and names of people from the names of their countries is to do so by adding to the latter either "n" and "ns" or "an" and "ans," or in a few cases, for sake of euphony, "ian" and "ians." The formation of American and Americans from America sets the example. So we have Mexicans, Cubans, Dominicans, Haytians, Jamaicans, Guatemalans, Nicaraguans, Costa Ricans, Colombians, Venezuelans, Brazilians, and so down to Patagonians. The apparent exceptions—Canadians, Salvadoreans and Peruvians—are really nothing but slight euphonic modifications of the same rule by analogy with practically universal American usage; therefore, we must say "Panaman" and "Panamans."

The fatal issue of a recent French duel causes discussion of what the Parisian fencers call the "Coup de Monserrat." The history of this stroke is romantic. The hero of the story was a young Parisian musician engaged to be married to a young lady of Bordeaux. Quarrelling with a cousin of

his fiancée, he got his ears boxed at the Bordeaux Club. Ignorant of fencing he dared not resent the insult, and renounced his engagement. But he also took fencing lessons from one Monserrat, a maître d'armes of Toulouse. Monserrat taught him one trick only, and he practiced it for a year. At the end of that time he returned to the Bordeaux Club, slapped his man's face, and, being called out, instantly ran his opponent through the body with his cunning lunge.

Former Governor Geer has been placed in charge of the editorial department of the Salem Statesman. Mr. Geer is one of the very best writers in the country, with a clear-cut way of expressing bright ideas that attracts his readers. He has wide knowledge of public affairs in Oregon and in the nation. The ex-governor seems not yet to have grasped the idea that discussion of his past political vicissitudes is not an essential, or even interesting, part of his new duties. However, Mr. Geer will make the Statesman's columns brighter and more popular, and his addition to state journalism is a valuable one. The Astorian wishes him well in his new field.

The success achieved by Mark Twain during his boating days on the Mississippi river was due not only to the fact that he was a skillful pilot, but that he was an earnest one, as well. During a talk over old times at Mr. Clemens's summer home, Quarry Farm, Elmira, N. Y., recently, a guest who knew Mr. Clemens in those days told the others how the genial humorist once missed his boat. Instead of inventing an excuse, as many of his companions did, he reported to his superior officer as follows: "My boat left at 6:10. I arrived at the landing at 6:30 and could not catch it."

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