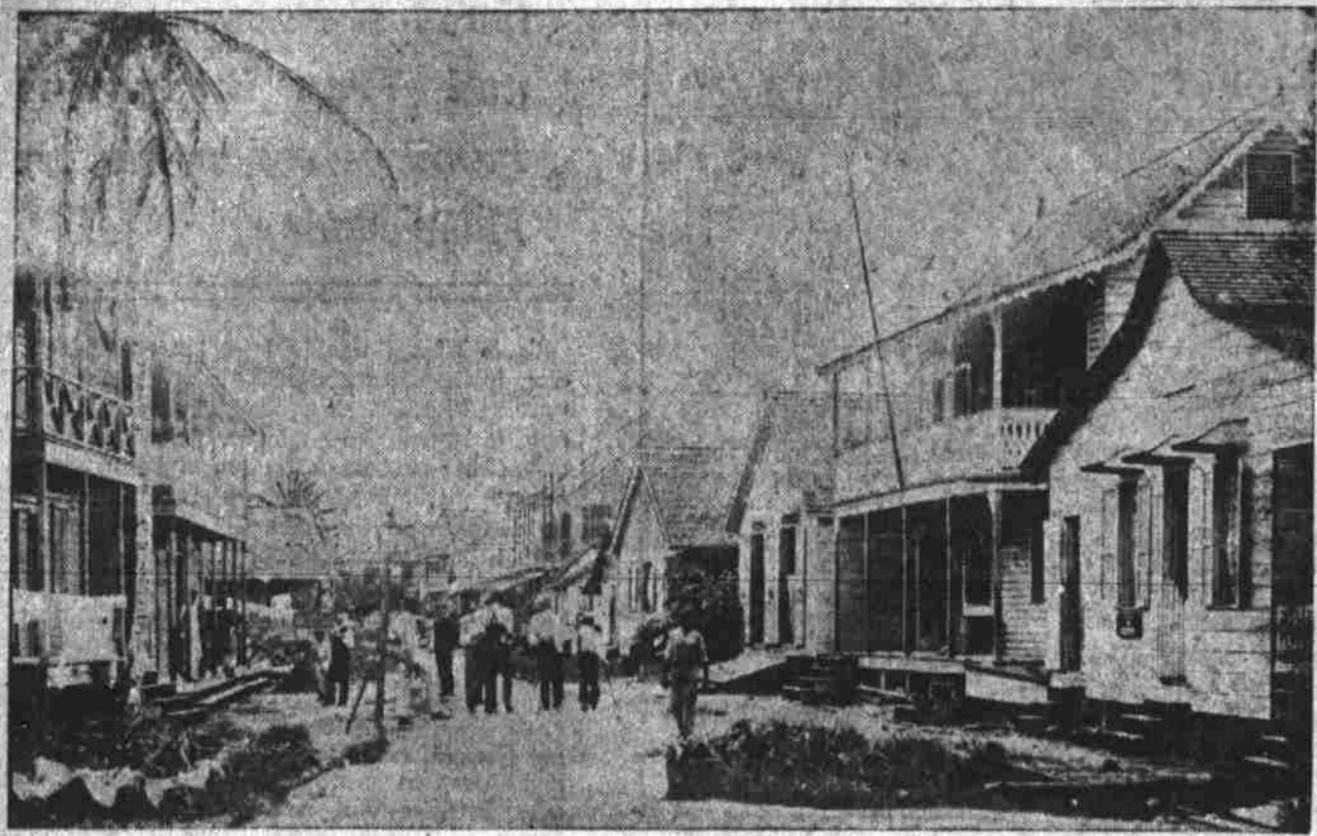


They Are Dreaming of the Good Old Days of French Improvidence at Panama



A STREET IN COLON.

(Journal Special Service.) Colon, Panama, Dec. 17.—These are hopeful days for Colon, and, if cheer can raise its head in this nest of misery, then we of the North are strangers to wretchedness. The wonder of every American, when he sees this reeking little place for the first time, is that there is anyone left alive in it. It sprawls in the mire of the marsh with a recklessness that is abandon itself. Under the houses are stagnant pools of black water, floating with filth, while between them are acum-covered ponds which offend the very sky with their fearful stench. Decay is monarch and rules with autocratic sway. He who would live here cannot escape being a neighbor to rotteness. You meet a dog and it will likely have the mange; if a duck waddles across your path its feathers will be disheveled and its feet will be sore; the pony that staggers at the task of pulling the rickety cab in which you ride, is so poor and weak that you feel it would be a mercy to shoot it, and all the while the procession of dead men and women files solemnly on to that gruesome spot, the world-famed burying ground on Monkey hill.

Bad for Man and Beast. She is a brave housewife who can sing in Colon, and the children do not shout so lustily in their play as their rugged Northern cousins. An invisible menace hangs over all. The native wears under the climate and the newcomer, man or beast, falls easy prey to it. A merchant bought some Jersey cows in the States and shipped them to the isthmus. The poor beasts waded around in the mire for a few days, then stood in the damp barn, howling and pinning, until they died. Another resident imported some Barred Plymouth Rock chickens. When let out of their coops they shook out their ruffled feathers, and began scratching bravely enough. But it was only for a short time. They soon became weak. Their legs were not strong enough to sustain their bodies, and they moped around and died one after the other. Some thoroughbred dogs were sent to another man living here. They scampered about in a lively manner at first, chasing the lizards and disturbing the peace of the buzzards, but the blight soon touched them, and they went the way of the cows and the chickens. It's a bad place for any kind of thoroughbred.

Facts About Yellow Fever. It is understood that two years' residence in a tropical climate renders a person immune from yellow fever, but this does not always hold good, as shown in the case of the three sisters of Colonel Shaler, president of the Panama railroad. These ladies had made their home in Colon for several years, yet last May they contracted the disease and all of them died within 14 days. A traveling man may be taken down with it the second day after his arrival. It is now accepted by most medical authorities that the mosquito is the distributing agent of the fever. The way to escape having it is to sleep under a net—the idea prevailing that this particular kind of insect travels only at night—and to preserve regular habits. Men who come to the tropics and abuse themselves by drinking too much, and keeping late hours, weaken their systems, and are more likely to become infected, although this is not saying that a man who takes absolute care of himself will escape the disease. It operates strangely, sometimes avoiding those who invite it most, and attacking others who would appear to be immune. Careful living, even if it is not a sure preventative, at least reduces the prospect of contagion, and,

If the disease is contracted, insures a reserve of strength to resist it. One of the first symptoms of yellow fever is a violent aching in the front part of the head. Backache is another symptom. It is said that with the exception of smallpox, no other disease causes such a severe backache as yellow fever. There may be a chill or not. The kind of fever a person is coming down with can also be told by the tongue. In a case of malaria this organ will be large and flabby, very frequently being indented by the teeth on account of its being so swollen. Yellow fever is indicated by a narrow, pointed tongue, with red tip and edges. That terrible feature of yellow Jack, called black vomit, is caused by a disintegration of the red corpuscles of the blood, allowing the same to ooze into the stomach. Quite frequently this will pass from the mouth of the sufferer with almost projectile force, going fully a yard straight out from the lips.

On account of a better understanding of this dreadful disease, the medical men are combating it more successfully all the while. Formerly 60 per cent of all cases were fatal, but now the mortality has been reduced to 5 per cent. The great advantage lies in a proper diagnosis and getting an early start in the treatment. A healthy person, with prompt and proper care, now has a good chance for recovery.

Prevention Better Than Cure. The proper way of removing all evil is to strike for the root and destroy the cause. The experts have established a good case against the mosquito, and a most sweeping war of extermination will be waged against that obnoxious insect. Its habits are well known now, and the fact that it does not migrate far from its birthplace is one of the most favorable points discovered. This means that a zone which is once cleared of the pest, with proper safe guarding, can easily be kept in a healthy condition. In fact, the filthiest cities in the world, and its distance of all laws of cleanliness has made it a very safe grave yard. It is a dull day here when there are not several funerals. If this abiding place of pestilence can be re-deemed and made habitable, it will be a victory for science greater even than that which was won in Havana.

Turn the Buzzards Out. The dawn of a new era in Colon will mark the passing of the buzzard. This is interesting because under ordinary conditions the buzzard is to the South what the dog is to the North—a necessity. It is part of the local organization. It has served long and well in the street cleaning department, but the new order of things will take away its job, and force this old and faithful employe, who has worked all these years for its board, to seek other pastures. The buzzard is a much maligned fowl. While it is the black sheep of the bird family, it is like other black sheep inasmuch as it is not without its good traits. Vigilance and prompt attention to business may always be expected from it. It is astonishing how quick a buzzard will find out where it is wanted and the old motto, "Work done with neatness and dispatch," fits its case exactly. When a flock of buzzards take charge of a job, they put into effect a splendid system. Some of them are always on duty. They scorn to associate with other members of the feathered tribe. In event of a conflict over the division of spoils in some back yard, a gobbler or a rooster has no more show than a billy goat would have in a contest with a mad bull.

A Back Yard Battle. I was a witness to a disturbance of one who drew the shortest straw was to do the shooting.

This sort ope morning recently. The cook had thrown a lot of refuse over the back fence, and in the mess was some spoiled fish. A feathered patrolman promptly reported for duty. Some chickens were near, and they, too, began an immediate invoice of the pile of scraps. The chickens got to work first, but Mr. Buzzard had the enticing smell of bad fish in his nostrils, and after executing a couple of preliminary circles in the air, he alighted, and opened the battle by pulling a couple of tall feathers out of the nearest roosters. The chickens outnumbered the scavenger and the whole outfit went to the defense of their outraged companion—it is a very grave and humiliating thing for a rooster to lose his tall feathers. The tactics of that buzzard were wonderful. He side-stepped and ducked, and every little while he would upstart one of his opponents with the result that, out would come more feathers. If there was an instant's delay in the attack he would help himself to more fish, for that was what he was there for. In the end he had pulled so many feathers out of the biggest rooster that he looked half undressed. When the fish was all gone the victor cast one scornful look at the subdued flock of chickens, and flew away without a single note of triumph, for buzzards do not crow.

Appointed by Abraham Lincoln. Mr. Oscar Malmos, the United States consul at Colon, is doubtless the oldest man in the American consular service, and has probably served longer than any other man in it. He is nearly 77 years of age, and was appointed by Abraham Lincoln in 1865, just three days before that lamented statesman was assassinated. Mr. Malmos was consul at Winnipeg, and then called to Chicago of the Northwest, when it had only 400 inhabitants, and was still under the rule of the Hudson's Bay company. Later he served in Nova Scotia for 11 years, and during the trouble with Great Britain over the fishery question, he traveled 900 miles in canoes and fishing smacks, collecting evidence to support the American contention. He has held stations in Roumania, Scotland, France, Spain and Bohemia, and he still keeps posted on the affairs of all the nations in which he has been stationed. He is a bachelor and an enthusiastic student. He is an accomplished linguist, being able to converse in six languages. For three years he has been in charge of the office at Colon, and the recent revolution here was the third uprising he has experienced in his career. He is a man of frugal habits and carries himself with the dignity of a gentleman of the old school. He has a little table to himself in the corner of the hot diningroom, and as he sips his single glass of wine or lingers over his after-dinner cigar, many people pause to pay their respects to the courtly old veteran who has grown to gray in the service of his country.

Campers on the Border. The members of the little colony of Americans in Colon are mostly employes of the Panama railroad, and their families. Their home is about the only place in the isthmus where a stranger can draw his breath in comfort. During the recent trouble the newspaper correspondents would go over on Sunday, as they said, "to get a shower bath," and they are very brave about it all, but they are looking to the north and hoping that civilization will not be long in overtaking them. FREDERIC J. HASKIN.

MA'S PHYSICAL CULTURE. From the Baltimore News. Sis takes Calisthenics, Injun clubs an' such. Reaches f'r her toes ten times 'N' each time makes 'em touch; Raises up her arms an' Sweeps 'em all around 'em; Kicks her heels three times 'thout Ever touchin' th' ground. Ma takes phys'cal culture In th' washin' tub— Gets th' clothes an' soaks 'em down 'N' 'en begins to rub; Makes ten thousand motions Up an' down 'at way— She gets lots o' exercise In a workin' day!

Sis goes t' th' gym an' Travels on the rings, 'N' 'en she takes a big, deep breath, 'N' 'en she yells an' sings— Says it's good f'r weakness In th' lungst an' Tennis is her hardest work— Ought t' see her play! Ma, she washes dishes, 'N' 'en she sweeps th' floor, 'N' 'en she scrubs th' marble steps Clear up t' th' door; 'N' 'en she chops th' kindlin' When work is through— Has t' do it, 'cause pa, he's Calisthenics, too!

Both take phys'cal culture, But I tell you this; They's lots o' diff'unce 'tween th' kind My ma takes, an' Sis! Her Idea of It. BARGAYNE—There's an agitation to reduce the price of the theatre seats. Mrs. Bargayne—Oh, Henry, won't it be lovely when one can buy a matinee ticket for \$1.49!

BRUTALITY IN THE BRITISH ARMY. It Was Finally Put Down by the Soldiers Themselves. "There is only one way of putting down brutality in the army," said the gray-haired man with the military cut, when the brutal treatment of German soldiers at the hands of their officers was discussed. "Soldiers have got to do it for themselves, and to do it with the rifles. I have seen men treated worse than dogs in the British army, and I saw it put a stop to. "It is over half a century ago since I enlisted as a boy in a regiment that was recruited from the West of Ireland. At that time flogging was the punishment that was most frequently inflicted, and a man would be tied up and flogged to death for the most trifling offense. It was little wonder that our regiment made a reputation for recklessness when we were sent out to India on active service. The men were tired of life, and three or four of them had already committed suicide. "The commanding officer was a blood-thirsty brute without a single good impulse in him, and the men often threatened under their breath to put a bullet in his back at the first engagement. They would have done it, too, but that the colonel was such a daredevil himself, and would throw himself into the hottest spot with such reckless courage that no one had the heart to murder him in the heat of an engagement. "When we got back into barracks he treated the men worse than ever and one night a young man named Murphy, who had been flogged, blew out his brains with his own rifle. Then a dozen men got together and agreed to draw lots to decide who was to shoot the colonel down on parade. Murphy's elder brother got straws of different lengths, and the

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