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WORK ON CANAL

Members of Commission Review Progress for President.
GOOD HEADWAY IS BEING MADE
Cost of Excavating Material Reduced to 50 1/2 Cents a Cubic Yard, Against 79 Cents Paid by French Company.

Washington, Oct. 14.—Members of the Panama canal commission now in Washington called today by appointment on President Roosevelt. A short time afterward, John Barrett, American minister to Panama, had a conference with the president. The commission remained with the president about half an hour. As they left the executive office they said the visit was a "purely complimentary call" on the president and was without special significance. It is known, however, that they discussed with him the conditions on the isthmus of Panama which have arisen since the acquisition by this country of an American zone, and the differences between the commission and the government of Panama. What, if any, conclusions were reached was not disclosed.

The commissioners left with the president a memorandum giving in detail the work accomplished on the isthmus. Surveying parties are at work in the vicinity of Colou, making plans and estimates for an inner harbor; also at Gutan, surveying and boring at the various proposed dam sites in that neighborhood, and for a cut-off between Gutan and Tiger Hill. At Bohio the surveyors are making detailed surveys and studies and investigating the various damsites that have been proposed in that locality.

An engineering corps along the main line of the canal in the vicinity of Culobra is making surveys to determine the feasibility of straightening the lines of the French company and to determine the amount of material removed and to be removed in accordance with the different canal plans under consideration. Another engineering force is constructing a reservoir in the valley of the upper Rio Grande, which will furnish a minimum supply of 2,000,000 gallons of water a day for the City of Panama; also a distributing reservoir for the City of Panama at Ancon. It is also making surveys and estimates for a sewerage system for Colon and plans are being prepared for the construction of a harbor there.

The average amount of material taken out of the Culobra cut has been from 1,000 to 1,500 cubic yards a day. This is with the use of old French machinery available. Three modern steam shovels, which are to be put at work on Culobra Hill, will increase the cut five feet.

In August, the unit cost of excavating material was cut to 50 1/2 cents a cubic yard, while during the time Major Black was in charge of the canal work the cost, according to the French methods of excavation, was 79 cents a cubic yard.

EXCHANGE IDEAS ON WARSHIPS.

Important Conference Attended by British Expert.
Washington, Oct. 14.—An important conference was held at the White House this evening by the president. Admiral Dewey, Secretary of the Navy Morton, Sir William White, formerly naval chief of the British navy, Admiral Cappel, chief naval constructor of the United States navy, Rear Admiral Converse, chief of bureau of navigation, Rear Admiral Frederick Rodgers, Rear Admiral K. D. Evans and Commander Sims, inspector of target practice of the United States navy. The general subject of battleship construction was considered at the conference, views being exchanged between Sir William White and the American naval officers.

The conference was called by the president, Sir William White being asked to attend. Sir William favored the construction of fighting ships and not those that could run away. This met with the president's approval. The idea found favor to have sold many of the gunboats and cruisers, purchased during the recent war, which were maintained at great expense, and whose complement of officers could be used advantageously on the new battleships.

Dewey Offers to Assume Command.

Washington, Oct. 14.—Admiral Dewey has again offered to assume command of the combined fleet in the Caribbean sea and direct the winter maneuvers. If his services can be spared from the presidency of the general board at that time Secretary Morton will certainly accept the admiral's offer. It is probable the admiral will leave in the Mayflower early in the new year and assume command of the fleet at Guantanamo. The fleet will reach Guantanamo between January 8 and 10.

Snow Falls in New York.
New York, Oct. 14.—The first snow of the season fell at Albany, Schenectady and a number of other places up the state today. It melted as fast as it fell.

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