

PANAMA and its PEOPLE

By FORBES LINDSAY



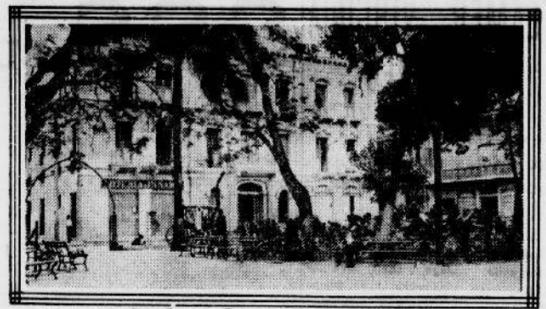
Country Hut



San Felipe de 1688



The Cathedral Panama



Central Plaza Panama

THE people of the states have always entertained an exaggerated idea of the unhealthfulness of the Isthmus of Panama. Even in its worst days it was less diseaseridden than many other parts of the South American continent. As in all tropical regions the natives of the temperate zone can only avoid illness by observing commonsense precautions and maintaining a temperate habit in the matters of diet and drink. At present the canal zone and the cities at either end of it are perfectly sanitary and not unpleasant places of abode. The hospital statistics show that a degree of good health that compares favorably with the experience of the populations of large cities up north. But their appearance is sufficient evidence on this point. A more hearty and vigorous lot it would be difficult to find anywhere. They live clean, well-regulated lives. Their hard work is alleviated by a wholesome amount of leisure and entertainment. They enjoy two conditions highly favorable to the maintenance of good health—interest in life and freedom from worry. The character of the work insures the former and the high salaries the latter.

During the first four months of the year the climate of the Isthmus is not unlike that of one of the eastern states in summer. The thermometer registers about 80 degrees at midday and falls to about 60 degrees in the

evening. Sleep under a blanket is comfortable at night and the early mornings are delightfully cool and bracing, especially on the Atlantic side of the divide. The air from the Pacific does not seem to be as heavily charged with ozone. In the wet season, extending from about the 1st of May to the end of the year, rainfall is abundant and the humidity excessive, but the men seem to go through it without any serious difficulty. The temperature varies hardly more than 10 degrees in its maximum the year around, the mean being 80 degrees.

The physical aspects of the country are diversified. In the zone hills and valleys predominate, with stretches of level savanna upon the borders. The province of Darien is for the most part mountainous wilderness and thick jungle. Some portions of it are practically unknown and rendered uninviting by the hostile attitude of the Indians that occupy it. The impression prevails that rich gold deposits exist in this region and at least one paying mine is in operation.

The provinces of Chiriqui and Veragua, and especially the former, are marvelously endowed with natural resources that are just beginning to attract the attention of the world. The hardwood timber in this territory is worth many millions of dollars and its rubber is equal to the best of the Para variety. In the hills coffee of the best quality is grown and the

plains, with their frequent streams, afford ideal cattle ranges. Doubtless, under development, this region will yield many valuable crops that have not as yet been thought of, but which will be cultivated under the stimulus of the extensive market that the opening of the canal must create. There are already in Chiriqui a few Americans making money and enjoying life in its salubrious climate. The Panama government is anxious to see their number increased by immigration of the right sort, believing that the resultant heaven will be advantageous to the national growth and prosperity. The influence of the United States and its territorial interests in Panama insure exemption from revolution or invasion and guarantee the observance of the rights of Americans. Not but what the Panamanians may be depended upon to do the fair thing. Their leading men are actuated by the best spirit and the people in general display a marked tendency toward improvement and progress. It is not too much to expect that within 10 years the Panamanians will have attained more nearly to the United States standard in government and business methods than any other nation on the South American continent.

About 20 years ago Chiriqui became suddenly famous on account of the curious relics which were unearthed from the guacas, or graves, which are the only traces of their existence left by a people who lived in this region at some prehistoric period. Many years ago an Indian accidentally discovered one of these guacas, which contained a number of gold ornaments. Immediately thousands of natives engaged in the search for similar depositories of treasure. Several hundred thousand dollars' worth of gold ornaments are believed to have been found but they were melted and sold for their weight in coin. At length the attention of archeologists was attracted and systematic digging was instituted, but the graves had become scarce by this time. Many articles of ancient workmanship and quaint design were, however, secured by the various museums of the world.

It is a remarkable fact that the people who constructed these sepulchres left no traces of their occupancy on the surface of the ground, although it appears to be a universal human trait to erect monuments, they left but mounds of rough rock. The graves were made by lining the sides with slabs of stone. In this receptacle were placed stone implements, earthen cooking utensils and various vessels of pottery. In a few instances instruments made of bone and copper articles were added. Now and again, but only in comparatively rare cases, gold ornaments formed part of the collection. These took the conventionalized forms of animals, the tortoise, scorpion, eagle and lizard being represented in castings that display an astonishing degree of

expertness. But of all the various shapes assumed by these curious articles of worship or adornment, that of the frog is most frequently depicted, leading to the surmise that the reptile was held sacred by these people. Rattles, bells and whistles are also numerous among the articles found. It is highly probable that the mineral resources of Panama will be exploited in the near future. Gold, copper, manganese and coal are known to exist in several parts of the country, but as yet very little of its area has been subjected to geological survey. When the canal comes into operation a great demand for coal will arise and the island of Muerto, on the coast of Chiriqui, which is said to be a solid mass of

HOUSEHOLD NOTES

A little rubbing over with beeswax will stop chair rockers from creaking. Cheesecloth makes the best general duster for wood, silk or fine ornaments. Brown skin patches may frequently be cured by drinking large quantities of water every day. Nail holes may be filled with plaster of Paris mixed with vinegar, or beeswax, and painted over. Shoe buttons should always be clipped off as soon as the shoes are bought, and then reset with fasteners. Fine talcum powder, rubbed on gently, will clean photographs that have become matted by greasy fingers. When washing woodwork, use enough spirits of ammonia to soften the water. It will not injure the paint. To make a tough fowl tender, add a pinch of baking soda to the water it is cooking in while it is boiling. Ammonia should never be left uncorrected near a fire. Its fumes are unhealthy and are inflammable. Even when rolls are very stale they may be freshened by dipping into ice water or by heating in the oven until crisp. Never allow a mirror in the sick room; to look at the reflection it gives is apt to seriously depress the patient. A little butter added to water in which vegetables are boiled will lessen the tendency of the water to bubble over. Clothes that have been dyed should never be put through the wringer, for creases will be made that are hard to get out. To wash dishes in which there have been eggs, soak them in cold water for a time, after which they will be easy to clean. When the fingers are stained from fruits, dip them in strong tea, rub with a nailbrush, then wash in warm water. Silk rags woven after the style of the old-fashioned rug carpet make attractive pillow covers as well as door hangings. Left-over coffee and tea, mixed with the stove blacking, will cause it to give a better polish and one that will last longer. A clean white cloth should be kept for the purpose of dampening linen before pressing it. Don't use the first rag that comes to hand. A newspaper laid on the tin tray beneath the gas stove is a great labor saver. It can be easily renewed, and will save a great deal of cleaning. The little china jars in which beef extracts and such things come should be saved as they make excellent moulds for jellies and pressed meats. If a piece of newspaper is placed over seams, tucks and pleats of silk or other thin material the pressing process can be satisfactorily done. Whenever a tin can containing fruit or other canned goods bulges on the side it indicates that the contents have generated gas and are unfit to eat. The family should be trained to know that three heavy meals a day are bad for the health. Either breakfast or luncheon should be light and simple. Shoes can be made to last much longer if several pairs are kept and worn alternately, no pair more than a day, while the others are allowed to reactivate themselves. It is a good thing when cutting tomatoes, to frequently pass the knife over the surface of a large, freshly cut onion; it gives a very delicate flavor. A paste of gasoline and flour is excellent for cleaning a white plume. The plume should be dipped in re-

peatedly and the paste rubbed in gently, after which the plume should be shaken out of doors until the gasoline evaporated. The flour will then shake out, taking the dirt with it. Only the finest thread should be used in embroidering a pillow for baby; otherwise the embroidery may prove uncomfortable for the little one's head. The neatest laundry bags to hang on the closet door are the ones made of two large bordered towels, with three sides sewed and a draw string run through the top. China silk should not be dried before ironing. Roll it up in a cloth for a few minutes to absorb the surplus moisture, and then it may be ironed with a hot iron. Instead of throwing away candle ends that are too short for use, they can be melted and mixed with equal parts of turpentine and used as a polish for woodwork floors. Pretty covers for books and magazines, especially for the summer cottage, may be made from cretonne. It is not hard to make, washes easily, and slips on and off with ease. Toothpicks are dangerous, as splinters from them are often unconsciously swallowed by the user, and cause intestinal troubles. Any good dental floss is preferable to them. If ordinary sweets disagree with a child, honey may be used as a substitute. When taken with bread it is easily digestible and may be eaten with impunity. It is also very nutritious. It is not a good plan to go to bed feeling hungry, but nothing should be eaten at bedtime that is hard to digest. Waters and warm milk, hot water and brown bread, or a few dates, will serve very well. A splendid addition to the kitchen equipment is a small microscope, to be used for examining dates, prunes, figs and cereals to find out if they are infested with any sort of insect life. Window rods for sash curtains should always be painted with a fine white gloss paint. If this is done there will be no rusting to spoil the curtains, and the rods will not bend out of shape so easily. Creamed eggs is a chafing dish dainty. Make a cream sauce of two tablespoonfuls of butter, two of flour, one pint of milk; add six hard-boiled eggs cut into slices, and heat thoroughly. Place a newspaper over the ice before setting desert upon it. This will prevent the very frequent and embarrassing disaster of having the deserts spoiled by slipping off the ice when it melts. It is a good thing at this season to live for a week or 10 days on a cereal diet, with a moderate quantity of fruit and an occasional egg; and also to give up coffee and tea for the time being. Shades for the center lamp can be easily made at home. Either buy or make a wire frame and cover it with crepe paper or shimmering silk. If the silk is used in sets of fillet net will make the shade very attractive. Sewing frequently makes the little finger sore by reason of the thread being drawn back and forth over the second joint. To prevent this either wear a protector made from the finger of an old glove, or put on a small patch of court plaster. Good looks and health will be prolonged if resting is regularly indulged in in a proper way. This does not mean simply sitting still. The body should be relaxed, all tight garments removed, and the most comfortable position possible found. In steaming or boiling a pudding, as the water boils away add more boiling water. If cold water is added the foodstuff will not be boiling for a short time, at least, and this may prove disastrous for the pudding.

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It should prove a valuable source of supply. American capital and enterprise may find a favorable field here and in other directions. Fruit growing will surely become one of the chief industries of the Isthmus. The country about Chiriqui bay is already devoted largely to this business, but with improved transportation facilities the entire region along the Costa Rican border—which is as rich as any in the tropics and capable of easy development—will become one vast fruit orchard.

One does not get a correct estimate of the Panamanians from travelers who make flying visits and only come in close contact with the lower classes in the capital. You cannot know any people until you have entered their homes and eaten with them. Moreover, the Panamanians, while always courteous and genial, have the dignified reserve that characterizes races of Latin extraction. The well-to-do families are educated and refined. The children are sent to the best colleges of Europe and America and usually speak English fluently and correctly. In many respects the habits and customs of the natives differ from ours, of course, and in not a few we might defer to their example with advantage to ourselves. For instance, Americans on the Isthmus would do better to adopt the practice of taking breakfast at about the middle of the day, instead of eating a heavy meal immediately after rising. Then we might take lessons from the Panamanians in politeness and self-possession. A Panama gentleman maintains his equanimity under the most trying circumstances and he cannot be made to understand our word "hustle." There does not appear to be any good reason why he should. He gets through his day's business quite as expeditiously in his own calm and deliberate way as he could by following our fussy fashion.

Thanks to hard efforts, Panama is today as clean and orderly a city as one may find on the continent. Although, as to the latter condition, the people are naturally disposed to be quiet and lawabiding. Any disturbance that may occur is occasioned by foreigners. The natives are exceedingly abstemious in the matter of liquor and, although they are numerous and everyone drinks to some extent, excess is extremely rare. During the two weeks of my recent visit I was on the streets of the city at all hours of the day and night, and

upon the occasion of a festivity, but I failed to see a single man showing signs of being affected by strong drink.

(By Forbes Lindsay, Author of "Panama; The Isthmus and the Canal.")

BULGARIAN TROUBLE NOT NEAR SETTLEMENT

St. Petersburg, April 14.—Negotiations looking to a settlement of the Turkish-Bulgarian dispute arising from the Bulgarian declaration of independence last year, are taking an unsatisfactory course. Both here and in Constantinople they have come practically to a deadlock. M. Popriko, the Bulgarian minister of foreign affairs, who has been here since March 2, is preparing to return to Sofia tomorrow or next day unless the negotiations take a turn for the better. The mobilization of the Bulgarian army is regarded as a possibility unless Turkey speedily comes to terms.

People past middle life usually have some kidney or bladder disorder that saps the vitality, which is naturally lower in old age. Foley's Kidney Remedy corrects urinary troubles, stimulates the kidneys, and restores strength and vigor. It cures uric acid troubles by strengthening the kidneys so they will strain out the uric acid that settles in the muscles and joints causing rheumatism. Garden City Drug Co., Geo. Freishelmer, Prop.

MAKES SUCCESSFUL TRIP.

Port Clinton, Ohio, April 14.—The new government power boat Lieutenant W. C. Neary, the first gasoline equipped vessel, other than launches, built by the war department, made a successful trial trip on Lake Erie today. The boat will be used by the quartermaster's department of the United States army. Three other such craft are being constructed here.

If you have backache and urinary troubles you should take Foley's Kidney Remedy to strengthen and build up the kidneys so they will act properly, as a serious kidney trouble may develop. Garden City Drug Co., Geo. Freishelmer, Prop.

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