

in case of the State's failure to accomplish these ends, the entire power of the Federal Government, within the limits of the Constitution, will be used promptly and vigorously.



*The President  
on Panama*

President Roosevelt's special message on the Panama Canal was in physical form a novelty in that it contained many reproductions of photographs. These added graphic reality to the animated narrative of his inspection trip, which was in itself a novel form of Presidential activity—and a novelty much to be lauded, because it was inspiring to the Panama workers, informative to the President and thence to the people, and in all ways conducive to a better understanding of the tremendous task the United States is solving at Panama. The substance of the Message amply justifies Mr. Roosevelt's claim that his three days ashore, while "not a sufficient length of time to allow of an exhaustive investigation of the minutiae of the work of any single department, still less to pass judgment on the engineering problems," was "enough to enable me to get a clear idea of the salient features of the great work and of the progress that has been made as regards the sanitation of the Zone, Colon, and Panama, the caring for and housing of the employees, and the actual digging of the canal." Indeed, the average man will wonder at the number of individual things crowded into those three days by the extraordinary energy and rapidity of the President. Here is his enumeration of part of the things done in part of one day—at the Culebra cut:

We watched the different steam shovels working; we saw the drilling and blasting; we saw many of the dirt trains (of the two different types used), both carrying the earth away from the steam shovels and depositing it on the dumps—some of the dumps being run out in the jungle merely to get rid of the earth, while in other cases they are being used for double-tracking the railway and in preparing to build the great dams. I visited many of the different villages, inspecting thoroughly many different buildings—the local receiving hospitals, the houses in which the unmarried white workmen live, those in which the unmarried colored workmen live, also the quarters of the white married employees

and of the married colored employees, as well as the commissary stores, the bath-houses, the water-closets, the cook sheds for the colored laborers, and the Government canteens, or hotels, at which most of the white employees take their meals. I went through the machine shops. During the day I talked with scores of different men—superintendents and heads of departments, divisions, and bureaus; steam shovel men, machinists, conductors, engineers, clerks, wives of the American employees, health officers, colored laborers, colored attendants, and managers of the commissary stores where food is sold to the colored laborers; wives of the colored employees who are married.

We cannot here summarize the narrative, and we earnestly urge a full reading of it by all who wish to be able to discuss Panama problems intelligently. But we may note a few of the larger conclusions drawn by the President as a result of his observation.



*What the President  
Found*

The President finds that Congress was wise in preferring the Panama route to any other; that the money paid to the French Canal Company for work and betterments was a good investment; that the preliminary work done in sanitation and preparation was absolutely essential, and that now conditions are such that when contracts are let there will be a constantly increasing amount of performance. The results of the sanitation work under Dr. Gorgas are "astounding," and "the conditions as to sickness and death rate compare favorably with reasonably healthy localities in the United States." Indeed, it is hardly possible that the health showing can continue at its present average. The hospitals are as good as those at home, and black men and white men are treated exactly alike. The breeding-places of the dangerous mosquitoes have been largely destroyed; the town of Panama has been paved, and has modern hygienic sewer and water service; the town of Colon offers extremely difficult problems, but much has been done and constant effort and engineering skill are being applied to those problems. An amusing instance of reckless and dishonest criticism was cited in regard to the Colon water reservoir, a photograph of which is printed. The critic in

question specifically stated that there was no fit water in the vicinity, and that the reservoir would not hold water, anyway. Now it is filled with excellent drinking-water, and, with typical American humor, the engineering corps have christened a large boat used on the reservoir with the name of the critic. Colon's streets are bad, "as bad as Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington before Grant's administration," but they are a hundred per cent. better than a year ago, and progress is rapid. Complaints on this and other topics made to the President were often honest, though sometimes wanton or malicious; but when honest they usually proved due to failure to appreciate the fact that time is necessary in the creation and completion of a titanic work in a tropic wilderness. Throughout the Canal Zone Mr. Roosevelt found a splendid police force, fine schools, excellent provision for the six thousand white and nineteen thousand colored employees on the Isthmus, but too many saloons—a fault to be remedied by a new high-license law. In some cases the quarters did not seem adequate, and there was some complaint that prices of supplies were too high; but no large undertaking can be carried on without individual complaints, and the President, after testing these complaints in various ways, is sure that the laborers, engineers, and officials are well fed, well housed, and well paid. The West Indian negro laborers are fairly, but only fairly, satisfactory; a few hundred Spaniards employed do excellent work; more Spaniards and some Italians are to be sought for; but in the main, for unskilled work, we shall have to rely partly upon negroes of the West Indies and partly upon Chinese labor—"the American workingman in the United States has no concern whatever in the question as to whether the rough work on the Isthmus, which is performed by aliens in any event, is done by aliens from one country with a black skin or by aliens from another country with a yellow skin." The actual work of construction has been pushed in good earnest since the type of canal was decided, and in October the record-breaking amount of three hundred and twenty-five thousand cubic

yards was excavated. The work may best be done by general contractors, if fair terms and proper checks upon the work can be agreed upon; the proposals now offered are tentative only. The President believes that a seven-headed commission is a clumsy executive instrument; that we should have but one Commissioner, with such heads of departments and other officers under him as we may find necessary, and that the best men in the country should be employed as consulting engineers. Of the success of this stupendous enterprise, which will redound immeasurably to the credit of America, will benefit all the world, and last for ages to come, the President is fully convinced. He deprecates the pessimism of doubting Thomases, and scores the malicious attacks of sensation-mongers, while he expresses the heartiest contempt and indignation for the outrageous accusations of a few slanderers who have been guilty of gross libel "upon a body of public servants who, for trained intelligence, expert ability, high character, and devotion to duty, have never been excelled anywhere."



#### *Wages and Living*

The Pennsylvania Railroad Company, in assigning the rising cost of living as the reason of its \$12,000,000 increase in the yearly wages of its employees, already noted in *The Outlook*, requires no labored argument to convince the public of the truth and common sense underlying its action. The advancing price of food products and other necessities of modern life are facts that obtrude themselves unpleasantly in the daily lives of all. Commodity prices in 1906, as recorded by Dun's Index Number, broke the record of twenty years. The investigation of retail prices of food conducted by the United States Bureau of Labor has made it clear that in 1905 the highest point was reached in the sixteen-year period thus far covered by the investigation. The advance in food when each article is given a weight according to its consumption in the family of the workingman was 17.7 per cent. between 1896 and 1905. The average cost of food per family in 1896, the year