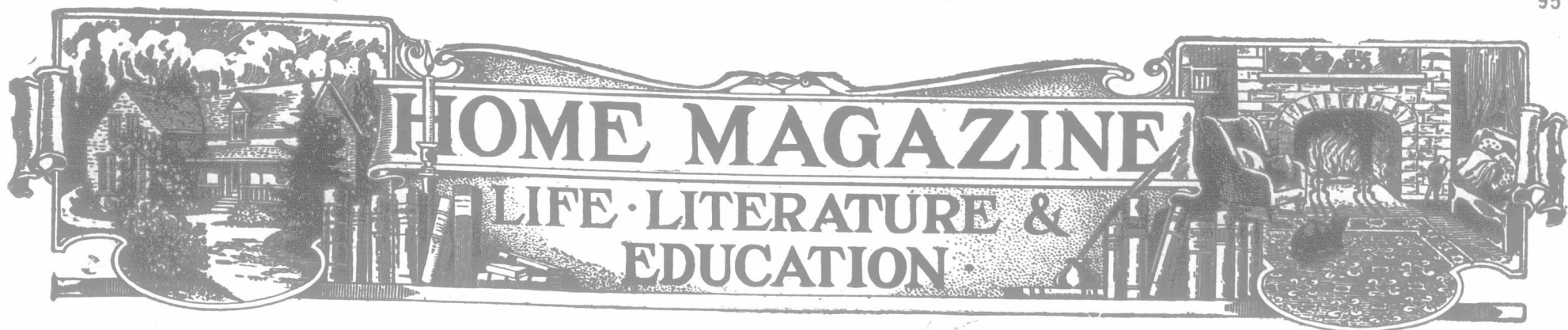




The Panama Canal.

A TRIUMPH OF ENGINEERING.

(Continued from issue of January 9th.)

A paragraph taken from the Independent (N. Y.), for December 12th, runs as follows: "Secretary Stimson returned from Panama last week. He saw the great gates of the Gatun locks, which are 'like the sides of a ten-story office building,' swung open for the first time. It was done in a little less than two minutes, by machinery set in motion when Miss Helen Taft pressed an electric button."

This rather graphic bit of description will give some idea of the magnitude of these great gates of the Gatun locks.

As was remarked in the first of this series, some day in July next will witness the pouring of the water through the great channel, almost sixteen months before the time estimated when the plans were first drawn out for the Panama Canal. And now the question is becoming pertinent: How will the opening of the waterway affect the fortunes and the relations of the nations?

To Britain, as may be surmised, the event is one of some importance. She has, it will be remembered, possessions within a short distance of the Canal, among them Jamaica, which, situated upon one of the chief highways leading to the Isthmus, will in future occupy a position of first-class importance. Moreover, the Panama Canal will open a route, more direct than any she has previously had, between Britain and her over-seas possessions, Australia and New Zealand.

To the United States, eventually, the canal is expected to be a veritable goldmine. She is to establish coaling and food-supply stations there, thus killing the proverbial two birds with one stone,—the securing of a large market for her coal and produce, and the effectual prevention of other nations from establishing coaling and other stations with a possible danger of infringement of the Monroe doctrine. Repair stations will also be established by the United States at the canal, while work on the fortifications has been going on for over a year, on Flamenco Island, near the Pacific entrance, and on Toro Point on the Atlantic side. The estimated cost of these fortifications is \$12,475,328. . . . Incidentally, the opening of the canal is expected to give a very appreciable impetus to American sea-traffic and ship-building.

Already one question of difference, which, it is to be hoped, will be amicably settled, has arisen between Great Britain and the United States in regard to the canal. On the 24th of August, 1912, President Taft signed a bill for permanent government and operation, following almost to the letter, the suggestions of Col. Goethals, the Chief Engineer, in regard to the matter. By this bill, it was decided that the canal zone shall be open to only such persons as the Governor may admit; that American coastwise vessels shall be exempted from paying tolls; that foreign-built ships owned by Americans may register under the American flag; and that ships owned by railroads shall not be permitted to pass through the canal.

To the clause exempting American coastwise vessels from paying tolls, Great Britain has taken exception, regarding that provision as a direct violation of the Hay-Pauncefote treaty, and, on the 9th of December last, she addressed a formal protest to the United States Government, pointing out this view of the case, and proposing that, in case the difference cannot be adjusted by mutual agreement, it be submitted for settlement by arbitration.

In regard to this matter, it may be interesting to read the words of Mr. Scott, himself an unprejudiced subject of the United States, given in the conclusion of his book, "The Americans in Panama." "Suez," he says, "may be expected to fight for its business by reduced rates. This will not be so formidable as our own (i. e., the United States) short-sighted management. Congress, by exempting American coastwise ships from tolls, deliberately affronted England, the largest prospective patron of the canal, because the greatest maritime nation; and England, it should be remembered, controls Suez. Misguided patriotism alone dictated the exemption of our coastwise ships. They already have a natural monopoly of coastwise trade. If the nation desires to give a special industry a gratuity, it should be done without antagonizing the best customer we are likely to have at Panama—

without reparation for the loss of what now, thanks to United States energy, promises to be a rich Province. The solving of these problems will be watched with interest.

The Roundabout Club

Study III.

Some time ago there appeared, in a very popular English magazine, a spirited discussion on the subject, "If you were compelled to spend a year alone on an island, and permitted but one book (exclusive of the Bible), what book would you choose, and why?"

The interest with which the various opinions on this subject were followed, has recommended it as a topic for con-

silent, intimate friends that have shared our childhood's joys and sorrows, under whose friendly branches we played, whose gnarled boughs, foliage, and lacy network of twigs endeared themselves through the changing seasons as the familiar lineaments of one beloved. Who has not indignantly protested against the strokes of the woodman's axe, or shed tears at sight of a windstorm's havoc?

It is not idle, the attribution of almost personal characteristics to trees. The splendid elms have a majesty all their own. Oak is only another word for strength, and the tall and stately maples are typical of a sturdy young nation. One has known old apple trees (with very little aid of the imagination) to resemble persons in their gnarled conformity of shape, while in semi-darkness, blackened stubs and stumps will assume all the startling likenesses of a menagerie of animals.

But possibly in this northern land of ours it is more particularly the evergreens that hold the larger share of affection. The cold were harder to endure without their friendly warmth or shelter, and the white snow expanse more monotonous without that relieving touch of dark green.

Only to-day I climbed to the summit of a wind-blown hill where, from the shelter of a giant fir that stretches knotted, brawny arms and upturned palms to the buffeting elements, I admired, for the hundredth time, the great timbered valley lying within the white, encircling mountain peaks.

This—within the precincts of the Rocky Mountain Reserve, that great area of timberland along the eastern slope of the Rockies, comprising some eleven millions of acres that by special Act of Parliament has been set aside as a natural reserve.

The progress of the forestry movement, the attention given it by the press, and, best of all, the awakening interest of the people, is a cause of great joy to the tree-lover. What is the aim of forestry, one asks? At the annual convention of the Canadian Forestry Association, held at Ottawa, that was ably explained by Dr. Gifford Pinchot, President of the American Conservation Association, when he said: "Forestry tries to make the best use of what we have, both for the present and for the future, taking the nation as a whole, and dealing with it, not merely for the present, but throughout its continuance, handling one of its greatest resources as belonging primarily to all the people, and to be used for their benefit." Or, in other words, according to the gifted speaker, the aim is—"the greatest good to the greatest number for the longest time."

Hitherto, man has been at enmity with the forests. Now, he has come to realize the necessity of making overtures of peace, or, a step better, to make amends for past mistakes by planting, where formerly he hewed. Once he thought the forests were inexhaustible, almost; now he realizes the necessity of their preservation, the greatness of the national asset they represent. Hitherto, our stress has been laid largely on agriculture, and true it is that one thousand acres under tillage will support a larger population than the same area covered with trees. But the question is: Will the agricultural land continue to be so productive if the forests are eliminated?

Take, for instance, the great prairie country that stretches away from the Rocky Mountain foothills—what would happen if by any possibility this great timber area were destroyed? A fabulous source of wealth would be wrested from a nation of to-day and to-morrow,



Portrait of Mr. D. R. Wilkie, Esq.

President of the Imperial Bank, Honorary President of the Canadian Art Club.
[From a painting by Mr. Wyly Grier, exhibited at Royal Canadian Academy Exhibition, Ottawa.]

England. The American people show an inconsistency in sanctioning this treaty violation, inasmuch as the whole cry for the last ten years has been against special interests and private monopolies fostered by the Government. To deliberately subsidize the shipping business, as much a private industry as Standard Oil, not only violates the spirit of the times, but inevitably will result in a great economic loss at Panama if the present method is continued."

There, at present, the matter stands—a magnificent work, of incalculable value, if well managed, to the shipping of the world, almost completed—England awaiting, on behalf of all nations, the verdict in regard to the tolls question; Colombia

sideration in connection with our F. A. and H. M. Literary Society, hence it has been selected for Study III.

Kindly send your essays so that they may arrive at this office not later than February 7th.

Prize Essays, Study I.

(Prizes Equal.)

"OUR FRIENDS—THE TREES."

By "Honor Bright," Alberta.

It was a happy thought that presented the first subject of our series of studies in a form so unusual—and happy the obvious text-word.

Trees! How we love them! Dear,