

ALASKA AND THE PANAMA CANAL

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Alaska and the Panama Canal by William D. Boyce

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WILLIAM D. BOYCE

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ALASKA
AND
THE PANAMA
CANAL
ILLUSTRATED

By

WILLIAM D. BOYCE

Publisher of "The Saturday Blade," "Chicago Ledger,"
"The Farming Business," and the "Indiana
Daily Times."

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W. D. BOYCE

INTRODUCTION

ALASKA and the Panama Canal Zone, one lying against the Arctic Ocean and the other in the tropics, one overlaid with perpetual ice and frost, and the other overlaid with perpetual verdure. These are among our most valuable outlying possessions. With these registering the present limits of our country north and south, and with the Philippines in the Orient and Porto Rico in the Atlantic marking our boundaries east and west, the commanding magnitude of our nation is made plain.

For Alaska we paid Russia \$7,200,000, for the Panama Canal Zone we paid the Panama Republic \$10,000,000. These were bargain prices, the sums paid being insignificant as compared to the value of the lands, the one being small, but as important as any piece of ground of equal size upon the globe, the other magnificent in area and containing wealth many times greater in amount than the price we paid for it. For years Alaska has been a particularly interesting country to me, but after 8,000 miles of travel in this vast Northern Territory of ours, I was more than ever impressed with its great resources, and the further fact that our governmental policy was crippling and restricting its proper and natural development. I fully believe that Alaska should be made into a colonial possession and not remain a Territory. I also believe that our Government should not engage in railway construction in Alaska, where failure can be the only result. It has seemed to me that not only was Alaska in itself worth writing about, but that political obstructions that have been placed in the path of its progress ought to be removed. My reasons, I believe, will be found "good and sufficient" by readers of the chapters on Alaska that follow.

As for the Panama Canal Zone and the great Canal itself, few things on earth so entirely justify description. But my object has been something more, that is to present to the public my plan for making the Canal Zone yield the American peo-

ple profitable returns upon their enormous investment. It is my opinion that this can be done by making the Canal Zone a great Free Port of Exchange for the products of all nations; that is, a zone free of all custom duties, thus encouraging the nations of the world to trade with us. How this can be done at the Canal, and how other nations have made profitable use of this principle for the stimulation of trade, the reader will find fully stated in that portion of this book dealing with the Canal Zone.

The wide interest created by my book, *Illustrated South America*, published two years ago, suggested to me that there was public need of a companion volume that would give readers and investigators a comprehensive view of the United States Colonial System and our Dependencies. Few among us thoroughly appreciate that we have become a great colonizing power, owning thousands of islands in adjoining seas, possessing other bodies of land lying outside of the immediate boundaries of the United States, and with several Republics not owned by us depending upon us for protection. This fact is of importance to citizens of the United States; they and their children ought to be fully posted about it so as to act intelligently on questions of policy that are now pending, and other questions that are bound in the future to arise. Hence I am issuing simultaneously with this book a volume of 658 pages, highly illustrated, entitled *United States Colonies and Dependencies*, which deals fully with all our possessions and spheres of influence. The contents of this smaller book are reprinted from a portion of the larger one, as there may be readers who are especially interested only in Alaska and the Panama Canal. The matter contained in this book was first printed in *The Saturday Blade*, one of our papers, and, as in the case of my South American letters, there were a number of requests for its reproduction in a more permanent form.

Very truly,

W. D. Boyer

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