THE PANAMA CANAL.

ITS ESTIMATED COST LARGELY A MATTER OF GUESS WORK.

If Congress Investigates, It is Recalled That Senator Mitchell, Convicted of Land Frauds, is Chairman of Committee.—Senator Morgan Still Believes in Nicaragua Route.

During the dull season at Washington the newspaper writers had difficulty in furnishing their papers with any political news of sufficient interest to print. The most possible has been made of the department scandals, which have been served up in various forms and dilated upon to the full extent which it was believed the reading public would stand; some little interest has attached to the Washington phases of the Peace Conference, while here and there political rumors, presidential booms and other stories have come to light in an almost vain endeavor to remind the people that when Congress is out of session and the President is away, there is a National Capital.

The Panama Canal work has come in for considerable share of newspaper talk and it is of some interest to speculate as to what will happen in this connection when Congress meets. There are dark threats of searching and sweeping investigations, even to the extent of going back over the whole Isthmian Canal problem and re-opening the question as to whether Congress was right in throwing over the Nicaragua route and adopting the Panama project.

Cost of Undertaking Unknown.

While figures have been floating around as to the possible cost of the Panama route those who have been on the Isthmus and assume to know even ever so little say that the estimated cost of $135,000,000 for the construction of the canal might as well be $135,000 so far as being anywhere accurate is concerned. It is a fact that one of the highest officials until recently connected with the Panama Commission admitted that neither he nor anybody else knew anything whatever about the ultimate cost of the completed Panama Canal. All the figures have been based on the French estimates which are declared to be entirely unreliable and the American engineers have not nearly completed even the surveys. This talk of insurmountable obstacles, impossible conditions and ultimate cost of a billion dollars for a canal is said to be peaches and cream and like soothing balm and honey to old Senator Morgan of Alabama, Colonel "Pete" Hepburn of Iowa, and others who have always favored the Nicaragua route, prognosticating the failure of the Panama scheme, and

Two Statesmen in Chorus:
"I Told You So."

From the Washington Post.
MORGAN AND HEPBURN ON THE CANAL.

who are now apparently getting ready for some vehement "I-told-you-sos."

Committee Chairman Convicted of Land Grafting.

Right at the threshold of the proposed congressional action this winter over Isthmian Canal affairs is the embarrassment in the Senate because of the Chairmanship of the Oceanic Canal Committee which is held by Senator John H. Mitchell, of Oregon, convicted and under sentence for complicity in land frauds. The question of the chairmanship of that important committee last year developed strong opposition to Senator Mitchell. Senators said that he was not the right man for the place, but following a long line of senatorial precedents, he was given the coveted honor. He has, however, never been able to enjoy it. It is now a question whether the Senate will think it has sufficient provocation to summarily deprive him of the place, while his case is on appeal, and name another chairman. Senator Mitchell was originally a Nicaragua route man, but he, with others, came over to the Panama plan until only Senator Morgan was left, a venerable and solitary figure, fighting earnestly against the project and predicting, time and again, that the route was impracticable. Some of the younger Senators who were wont to shake their heads and remark that the "old man was getting daffy," during some of his wonderful and never-ending speeches, are not so sure now. Probably Senator Morgan will have some ten or twelve more long speeches, requiring from a day to three or four days each, to deliver when he returns here in December. It is predicted that he will be certain to be replete with information about the Isthmian situation which no other mortal has been able to collect.

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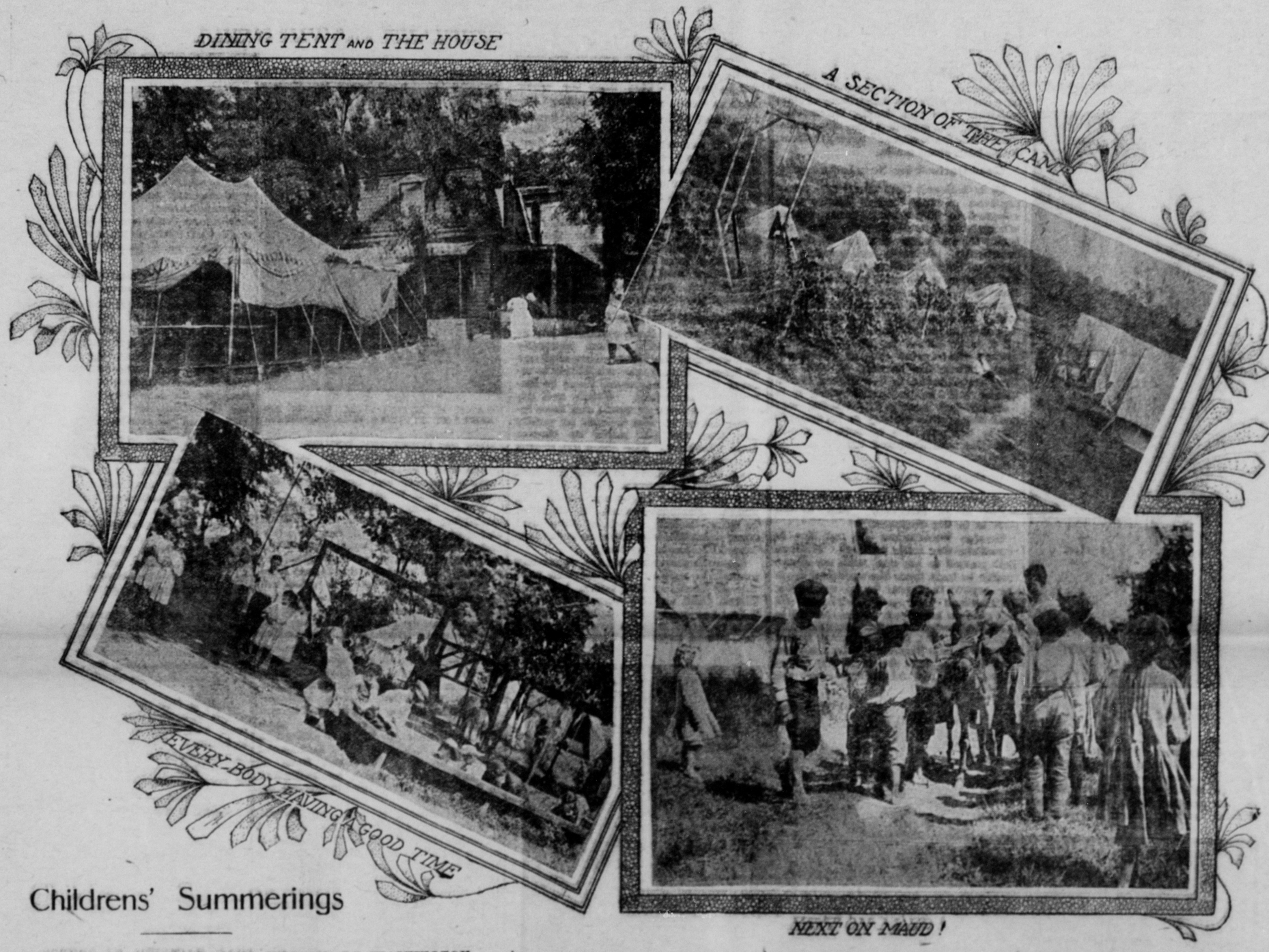

Childrens' Summerings

SCENES AT JUVENILE CAMP OUTSIDE OF WASHINGTON

By DOROTHY DUNNE.

A kind of philanthropy which does good, beyond any doubt or question, is that which takes thousands of children every year out of the heated and crowded cities into the country where the air is pure and nature is clothed in beauty. Every year, as the hot weather approaches, camps are established short distances outside of most of the large cities. Some of these are sustained by popular subscriptions, some assisted by municipal appropriations, some are the projects of enterprising newspapers which early in the season start them going, and then ask through their columns for individual donations, and some are supported on a semi-medical popular basis. To those who have always lived in the country, or in small cities or towns, the significance of this annual provisi n for tens of thousands of little citizens may not be apparent. It is a painful fact, however, that a number of our large centers of population contain thousands of children who have never seen a green field, and who have only the sidewalk and the gutter for play grounds. To such even a short sojourn in the country is the opening of a new page in their book of life.

Washington is Hot in Summer.

While in Washington there is no such condition among the children, for the city is comparatively clean and well-kept, with a splendid arrangement of public parks and the most wonderful collection of trees in its streets of any large city in the country, still it is on the border of the Southland, its pavements are of asphalt and the almost torrid sun of mid-summer sometimes makes existence terribly trying to the poor, so that the establishment of a Country Camp a few miles beyond the city limits has partaken of the most common sense kind of charity possible. There the little ones of the local byways and congested tenement districts of the city are taken for healthful recreation in God's great out-of-doors. There, away from the noises of the town and the squalid surroundings, they find, for the time being, the stimulation of nature, the songs of birds, the perfume of flowers, green grass and refreshing breezes. In a word, this camp, like many others throughout the country, is a children's paradise.

All Kinds of Fun.

Nor have the children been left to derive all their pleasure and fun from communion with nature only. There were provided eight big swings, usually all moving with happy occupants, a dozen baby swings for the little tots, four or five teeter ladders, punching bags, see-saws, horizontal bars, rings, and other wholesome apparatuses. Two large boxes filled with sand have provided delightful occupation for tiny human ants. Ample open space in the vicinity has allowed for games of ball and other field sports, and a swimming hole in the adjacent Rock Creek has all summer brought joy and happiness to the boy members of the Camp.

One of the prime favorites at Camp Good Will has been Maud, a little donkey presented to the children by Colonel Biddle, one of the Commissioners of the District of Columbia.

Maud Not a Kicker.

"Maud ain't like that fightin' and kickin' mule in the picture paper," said one little fellow, whose former pallid cheeks were beginning to take on a tinge of healthful peach-blush red. "She is a nice donkey, she is, an' plays with us fellows just like she was another feller. She's got sense, too, an' she likes to play with the girls, an' she won't hurt them, either. I wish I could take Maud home with me when I go."

Other hangers-on at this camp are the bunnies, the chickens and the Moo cows. The barnyard at Camp Good Will is not its least interesting feature. One fine cow was donated through Colonel Biddle, while two cows, known as the "doctors' herd," were purchased from a fund raised by Washington physicians, who contributed $1 each. These, with two animals that have been loaned to the committee, give the poor children a liberal and plentiful supply of fresh milk. A number of hens were also donated, and from their eggs have been raised broods of chickens, giving the children employment and useful instruction. A horse was donated, and a coal merchant loaned a wagon for the summer. Farm utensils were donated by a church. If there is any scheme worthy of gifts or assistance, is it not such a one as this?

Smiling and Happy Little Faces.

The camp overlooks the picturesque gorge of Rock Creek Park, and the air is always pure and fresh. But best of all are the happy smiles of contentment of the little children who may have never before known such happiness.

"This is awful nice," said a little fellow who has been a cripple since infancy. "I wish I could always live out here with the birds and flowers and Maud."

For rainy days an old Maryland barn served as a splendid play house. In this, Sunday services were held and sometimes during the week amateur theatricals were given for the amusement of the little campers. An ample water supply reaches the camp through a pipe laid by the direction of the Washington city government.

Not Used to Nature.

It was related that some of the children are awed by "the big dark," as they term it, and the intense stillness during their first night or two in camp, when the silence is only broken by the occasional cry of a night bird and the chirping of crickets. The contrast between the noises of the night in town and the stillness of the after daylight hours in the country is so great that it is awesome at first, but soon wears away, and the children grow to appreciate the quietness and balm of nature in the suburban night.

The dining tent afforded room for all with its long tables and benches, spotlessly clean. With the ringing of the first bell for the frugal evening meal, they stopped play and washed their hands and faces. With the second bell, they formed in line and marched to their places at the table, where, standing, they repeated in unison this patriotic grace:

For peace and for plenty,
For freedom and for rest,
For joy in the land,
From the east to the west.

For the dear starry flag,
With its red, white, and blue,
We thank Thee from hearts
That are tender and true.

Then the little folk sat down and a great chattering followed as they did justice to the plentiful supper that was spread before them.

Plain Wholesome Food.

The bill of fare on a day when the camp was visited was as follows:

Breakfast—Real milk, oatmeal or hominy grits, fried potatoes, bread and butter and either hash, eggs or sausage.

Dinner—Corned or roast beef, variety of vegetables, principally from the camp garden, milk, bread and butter.

Supper—Milk, bread, butter, cold meat, cake and cooked fruit.

Several special treats of ice cream and other goodies have been sent by merchants and others in Washington.

An instructive feature of the camp life consisted in tri-weekly rambles over meadows and through woods under a kind naturalist who explained to the children in simple language the wonders and mysteries of nature.

A Washington lady had a class of 15 girls at the camp who were instructed in kitchen garden lessons.

One Washington physician, who is a subscriber to the camp fund, says of this work for the poor children of Washington:

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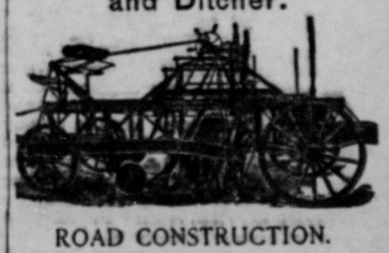

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