

The night falls rapidly in the tropics, and when, a few minutes later, we reached Panama, it was too dark to see anything of the quaint old city, so we drove at once to Ancon, the American suburb, and put up at the Government hotel.

It was rather a shock, when I went to my room and looked out of the window, to find the moon rising out of the Pacific Ocean. There are not many places on the American Continent where this phenomenon is to be seen. Of course, by looking at the map, you can see that the Isthmus is like a letter S, with Colon, the Atlantic terminus of the Canal, west of Panama on the Pacific; but somehow it did not reconcile me to the confusion of directions. It took some time to accustom myself to looking eastward to see the Western Ocean.

I turned in with an unusual sense of satisfaction. The two big impressions that first day on the Isthmus had given me were: First, the sublime confidence of the men—the absence of any doubt as to eventual achievement. “Of course, we’ll dig the ditch.” And, second, the *esprit de corps* implied in the “we” of that expression. I did not hear any one talk of what he as an individual was doing. Nor did I hear any one tell of what “they” were doing—it is always “we.”

For a people with such undaunted confidence and this trick of pulling together there is no limit to achievement.

From *Panama* by ALBERT EDWARDS.

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY ROBERT MACLEHOSE AND CO. LTD.
THE UNIVERSITY PRESS, GLASGOW.

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