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Mr. Merry has had such an extended personal experience in the commercial affairs of the isthmian republics, and with their trade relations with the United States, that his present monograph on the Nicaragua Canal, published by the boards of trade and chambers of commerce of our Western seaboard cities, should receive careful attention by all those interested in the future industrial development of our country.

The Nicaragua Canal is indeed, as the author says, a "commercial necessity" to the United States, and in presenting the demands of the Pacific slope Mr. Merry does much to pierce the enveloping veil of past and present trade relations which still continues to obscure our commercial future. The construction of an isthmus waterway will, according to the author, be of immense benefit to the West, and, he adds, the canal itself "will rapidly develop the resources and increase the population of all Central America." The predictions thus offered are supported by an array of facts and figures, and the author's personal experience with the countries he describes lends especial weight to his prophecies.

A bird's-eye description of Nicaragua is given in the pamphlet, and this is followed by a brief outline of the history of isthmus transit. Owing to the date of publication, Mr. Merry was obliged to rely on the data of the present canal company in his description of the construction plans of the canal. The report of the Canal Board, which has since been published, shows us, however, that these earlier data are insufficient; and until further technical investigations are undertaken no accurate and detailed description of the canal route can be

given, though the general possibility of construction is now placed beyond reasonable doubt.

The importance of the canal to the United States from a political and strategic point of view has always been undisputed, and Mr. Merry, rightly, I think, links the question of the American control of the transit-way with the Monroe Doctrine policy of the United States.

"It is well known," Mr. Merry says, "that the only active opponents of the Nicaragua Canal are the railroad systems running East and West." To overcome this antagonism it is necessary to demonstrate the national demand for cheaper transportation between our Eastern and Western seaboard, and to show that the transcontinental railroads would not be the losers if this demand were to be met by the canal. As between the East and the Middle West a like demand has already been fulfilled by the developed system of lake transportation, and the beneficent results are now recognized even by the railroads themselves. Furthermore, the Chicago drainage canal is now about to complete the system of inland waterways connecting the Middle West with the Gulf, and here again there are no doubts of the benefits that will thereby accrue to the Mississippi Valley. But the Far West and the Pacific slope must still remain isolated until the isthmus waterway is completed. Still greater advantages will, however, accrue from the construction of this canal, and from the logic of events, Mr. Merry is of the opinion that the Pacific railroads will be no losers in the end. The products of the West are, he says, too bulky and too cheap to be profitably shipped to the East by rail; but when a sea-route is finally established the export trade from the Pacific coast will develop very rapidly and the railroads will then fulfill their proper function of tributary lines to the several coasts.

Thus, though written from the standpoint of the Pacific coast, the considerations set forth in Mr. Merry's monograph are of national interest, and it is to be hoped they will be taken to heart by the other sections of the country. On matters of internal politics our sections are rarely in accord, but we are nevertheless politically one, and no better way could well be devised of cementing our political unity than by developing our internal trade lines and so make ourselves economically one—and this I take to be one of the main functions of an interoceanic canal.

The book edited and in part written by Judge Lucas contains a *pot-pourri* of subjects connected with Nicaragua and the proposed interoceanic canal.

In an introductory chapter the Hon. Lewis Baker, United States Minister to Central America, describes the country, recalls the memory of the now all but-forgotten filibustering expedition to the isthmus

under the reckless William Walker, and tells us of the eager desire of the people for the construction of the Nicaragua Canal by the United States.

Judge Daniel B. Lucas follows with a concise and interesting account of the war of the filibusters, of their surrender to the United States Government, and of Walker's final capture by a British officer and his tragic death at the hands of the Honduras authorities. The writer appears to have drawn his material almost exclusively from Walker's own book, "The War in Nicaragua." Not being in the United States, Walker was, however, unable to note the effects of his vagaries on the government in Washington. The perplexities of the Pierce administration and the attitude of the Democrats under Buchanan during this confusing time when national and sectional interests were so at variance, form part and parcel of the war of the filibusters and should be taken account of before the history of the movement is fairly presented. W. V. Wells' "Walker's Expedition," and J. J. Roche's "The Story of the Filibusters," might be mentioned in this connection as throwing a more general light upon the movement described by Judge Lucas from a particular standpoint.

Governor MacCorkle, in describing the Nicaragua Canal project, was, like Mr. Merry, compelled for lack of better material to rely on the technical data furnished by the canal company, and his statements accordingly require some revision, now that the Canal Board has handed in its report. The commercial aspects of the canal are, however, admirably set forth in this chapter, and it is this time the interests of the Mississippi Valley which receive particular attention. The people of this section are at last coming to realize the immense commercial opportunities which lie before them upon the construction of the Nicaragua Canal, and Governor MacCorkle should be accorded high praise for his lucid presentation of the subject. In Central and South America and along our own Western seaboard there are markets for the coal of the Mississippi Valley, which may readily be supplied upon the opening of the canal; and in the same way the author shows how the cotton growers and manufacturers of this section may compete in the rapidly extending Eastern markets as soon as an adequate trade route to the Pacific be provided. The future is, indeed, evident, and yet is ill-perceived by most of us, as our habit is to keep our gaze fixed on the Atlantic.

Mr. Merry's and Governor MacCorkle's predictions complement each other and should be taken together. The one is speaking for the Pacific Slope and the other for the Mississippi Valley, and these are the two sections of our country which now require free scope to develop. But the Nicaragua Canal is a condition precedent to this

development, and every voice in favor of its immediate construction should therefore be listened to with attention.

In a final chapter on the Monroe Doctrine, Dr. J. Fairfax McLaughlin gives us again the familiar history of its enunciation, and adds a number of American precedents in its favor. In the course of this chapter Mr. Calhoun is allowed by a quoted speech to defend himself against Senator Lodge's arraignment of him "as the only American statesmen of any standing who has tried to limit the scope of the Monroe Doctrine;" and an interesting quotation is given from a memoir of Pozzo de Borgo, the Russian diplomatist, who in 1817 suggested the advisability of subjugating the United States in the interests of the Holy Allies. Dr. McLaughlin has indeed collected valuable material bearing on the history of the Monroe Doctrine, whose further elaboration would no doubt prove interesting. It is a pity the present article is so disjointed and ill-digested.

Taken together these two little volumes constitute a hopeful sign of the renewed interest we are beginning to take in the countries to the south and west of us, and their circulation should therefore be encouraged; for there can be little doubt that our future commercial interests lie in these directions.

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Finanztheoretische Untersuchungen nebst Darstellung und Kritik des Steuerwesens Schwedens. By Dr. KNUT WICKSELL. Pp. xii, 352. Price, 8 marks. Jena: Gustav Fischer, 1896.

This book contains three monographs which treat respectively of the incidence of taxation, the theory of justice in taxation and the history of taxation in Sweden.

Dr. Wicksell is a disciple of the Austrian Economists, and he bases his reasoning in this volume on the marginal utility theory of value, and on Böhm-Bawerk's well-known propositions regarding capital. His purpose in the first monograph is to explain the incidence of taxation in the light of these theories. His broad conception of this subject includes not simply a consideration of the way in which a particular tax is shifted and a determination of the person or persons upon whom it ultimately falls, but a discussion of the economic effects of an entire system of taxation or of a particular tax as part of a system.

As a basis for his reasoning he describes a theory of distribution, which he has developed in a previously published work entitled, "*Über Wert, Kapital und Rente nach den neuiren nationalökonomischen Theorien,*" and to which the following propositions are fundamental: (a) Both rent and wages are advanced out of capital; (b)