

AMONG THE QUEER MASAI PEOPLE.

Frank Carpenter Writes of a Nation of Stock Raisers and Warriors Who Drink Blood



BY FRANK G. CARPENTER.

In the heart of the East African Highlands, as far south of the Mediterranean Sea as New York is distant from Denver, and as far west of the Indian Ocean as Pittsburgh is west of the Atlantic, I am writing for my American readers. I am in the Great Rift valley, a mighty trough, which runs almost north and south through this part of the continent. It begins at the Zambesi and traces of it are still to be found in Palestine. It is supposed to be formed by the earth half folding up after a mighty volcanic eruption, which left the craters of Kilimanjaro, Kenya and Elgon, mounding the clouds at altitudes of from 14,000 to 20,000 feet.

This great valley narrows and widens, it rises and falls, and it has many great lakes. Broadly speaking, all the great lakes of East Africa are in it or in its spurs. North of here are Lakes Baringa and Rudolf, and still further north in Abyssinia is Lake Tana, the source of the Blue Nile. As I write I am looking on Lake Naivasha, a beautiful sheet of blue water over which white cranes are flying. I can see zebras and antelopes feeding not far from the water; and with my glass can watch the ugly black heads of the three hippopotami bobbing up and down like giant fishing corks upon the surface. The shores here are swampy, and are lined with masses of reeds. Just back of them the ground rises into rich pastures, which are protected from sportsmen by the reservations allotted to the Uganda railway and fairly swarm with big game.

A Future Stock Country.

The weather here is delightful. We are so near the equator that one can almost straddle it, but the altitude is such that blankets are needed at night, and it is never excessively hot during the day. Naivasha is a little higher up in the air than the top of Mount Washington, and the climate of the whole Rift valley is said to be suited for white men. This matter is being tested by settlers. Large tracts of land have been taken up in different places, not far from the railroad, and there are many English who are going into stock-raising. Right near the lake the government of British East Africa has started an experimental farm, and there are large ranches in the immediate vicinity. There are no tsetse flies here, and the zebras, which one sees by the hundreds in the distance, ride over the valley, are an evidence that horses will thrive. There are also many ostriches, and in time we may have ostrich farming here as they have in South Africa. The average height of the valley is something like 6,000 feet, and the grass is said to be luxuriant everywhere.

The Land of the Masai.

This is one of the strongholds of the Masai race, who have always been noted as warriors and stock raisers. I see them about Naivasha, and they are still carry spears and shields. They have many little towns nearby, and their settlements are scattered throughout the Rift valley. They live in huts about four feet high, six feet wide and nine feet long. The huts look like great bako ovens. They are made of branches, woven together and plastered with mud. Some times they are smeared over with cow dung, and that material often forms the floor. When it rains, skins are laid over the roofs to protect them. The houses are usually built in a circle about an enclosure, in which the cattle are kept at night. The sheep and goats are allowed to run to the hills. Some of the towns have fences of thorns around them to keep out the wild beasts. These Masai are a fierce-looking people. The men are tall and straight, and they walk as though they owned the earth. When they have their war paint on they use a decoration of ostrich feathers which surrounds their faces, and is supposed to frighten the enemies of their enemies. The men are usually bare to the waist, and not infrequently have a bullock hide wrapped around them.

Masai Women.

I wish I could show you some of the Masai women. They are as vain as peacocks and are loaded with jewelry. Some of them have great rings of brass wire coiled around the neck in concentric circles, wire after wire being used until they extend out as far as the shoulders. They have brass wire woven about their arms from the wrists to the elbows, and from the elbows to the shoulders, and also great coils of similar wire fastened by strings to the lobes of their ears. Aside from this they wear but little. A cloth is wrapped around the body and falling to the knees or below them is about their only clothing. Sometimes this cloth is fastened over the shoulders, sometimes under the arms, and sometimes about the waist, leaving the breasts bare.

These Masai are by no means pure negroes. They belong to the Bantu race, and their skins are dark brown. Their noses are often straight and their lips not very thick. As to their hair, I can't tell you whether it is woolly or not. The women shave it close to the scalp, using razors of iron or glass, and they polish their heads with grease so that they fairly shine in the sun. I understand they pull out the hair from all parts of their bodies and that even the babies are shaved. Many of the men carry about trowsers of iron to pull the hairs from their chests, backs and nostrils, and they keep themselves shaved until they are old enough

to be warriors. This comes along about the time they reach manhood. They then cut their hair, and their heads grow and plait it into pigtails. A common way of wearing these pigtails is down over the forehead. It is often soaked with red ochre clay in connection with a similar anointing of the rest of the body. The warrior often wears a lion's head and mane in addition to the pigtail, and he carries a sword and club. He has a spear, with a very long blade, and an oval shield bearing figures which indicate his clan.

Queer Customs of Marriage.

These people buy their wives. Girls are looked upon as merchantable commodities and are paid for in goats and cattle. After the cattle are handed over the girl goes to her husband, and she may not come back to her father's house alone thereafter, but must always have her husband with her. A Masai can have many wives as he can pay for, and if he is rich he has a hut for each one. If not, he may keep two or three in one hut. The first wife is always considered the chief wife, and is supposed to boss the establishment, although the favorite sometimes supersedes her.

Such marriages, however, are not supposed to take place until the Masai becomes an elder—that is, until he reaches the age of about 27 or 30. The wife of his warrior days are over and he is ready to settle down, as it were. The warriors and the young girls of the tribe live together up to that time in a separate establishment apart from the rest of the people.

In order to marry a warrior had to ask permission of the elders of the tribe. This is given he straightway buys his wife, and if she is a fine-looking girl she will cost him two cows, two bullocks, two sheep and some goats. The bride goes to the nearest relative of the woman he has selected, who may lower the price if he will. Divorces may be had for laziness and bad temper on the part of the wife, and in such cases a part of the marriage fee is sometimes returned. Widows cannot marry again. If her husband dies the woman goes back to her mother or to her brother, if her mother is dead.

The Old Women Do the Work.

As far as I can learn these Masai girls have a soft snap. They are regarded as doing nothing until they are married. Before that they play with the warriors, spending their time in dancing and singing and laughing about. The unmarried girl often does not do her own cooking. This condition continues for a long time after marriage and up until all the babies of the family are fairly well grown. As soon as that is accomplished, however, the hard-working period begins. Almost all of the hard labor of the tribe is done by the older women. They collect the firewood, they build the mud houses and gather the cow manure with which their walls are smeared. When the villages are moved from place to place these withered dames take the milk of the donkeys and bullocks in carrying the burdens. They erect the new huts and they are, as a rule, mere hewers of wood and drawers of water.

A Nation of Stockraisers.

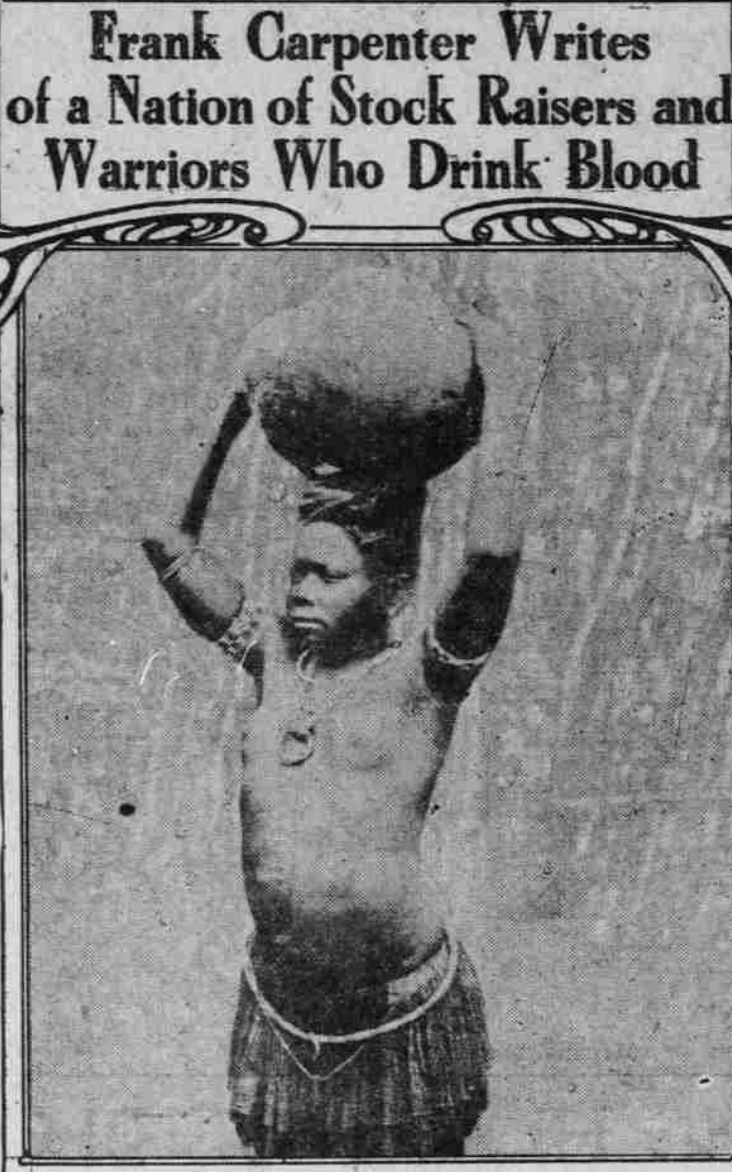
These Masai do no farming. They are a nation of stock raisers and own herds of cattle, sheep and goats, which they drive about with sticks and whips. The cattle are of the humped variety like the sacred cows of India, many of them being fat, sleek and fine looking. A usual done in pots of burnt clay, varying from eight to 20 inches in height. The larger pots are not placed over the fire, but at the side of it, and are turned around, now and then, in order that they may be evenly heated.

They Drink Blood.

The Masai are blood drinkers. Their cooking is usually done in pots of burnt clay, varying from eight to 20 inches in height. The larger pots are not placed over the fire, but at the side of it, and are turned around, now and then, in order that they may be evenly heated.

Talk With Sidney L. Hinde.

The most of my information about these Masai comes from Captain Sidney Langford Hinde, the famous explorer and lion hunter. He is now commissioner of this colony and I met him at Mombasa on my way here. Captain Hinde was born in Canada and far from Niagara Falls. He received an excellent medical education in Germany and England, but began his life as a captain in the Belgian colonial service. During his stay there he explored the upper Nile, and other rivers, and wrote a book entitled "The Fall of the Congo Arabs." About ten years or so ago he came over into British East Africa and took part in the subjugation of this country for the English. He lived with the Masai and other natives and made a study of the country, and his home was one of the official residences, a beautiful cottage outside Mombasa, on the rocks overlooking the Indian Ocean. The house is decorated with the trophies of his stay in Africa. Upon the floors are the skins of lions and leopards, and on the walls are the heads of giraffes, antelope, and of other big game, and there are native spears and weapons of every kind standing about. A large number of the skins are from animals shot by Hinde. She has herself killed several lions, no end of antelopes and zebras, and one huge rhinoceros.



A CUSTOMER FOR AMERICAN COTTONS, THE WAIST CLOTH IS OF AMERICAN SHEETING.



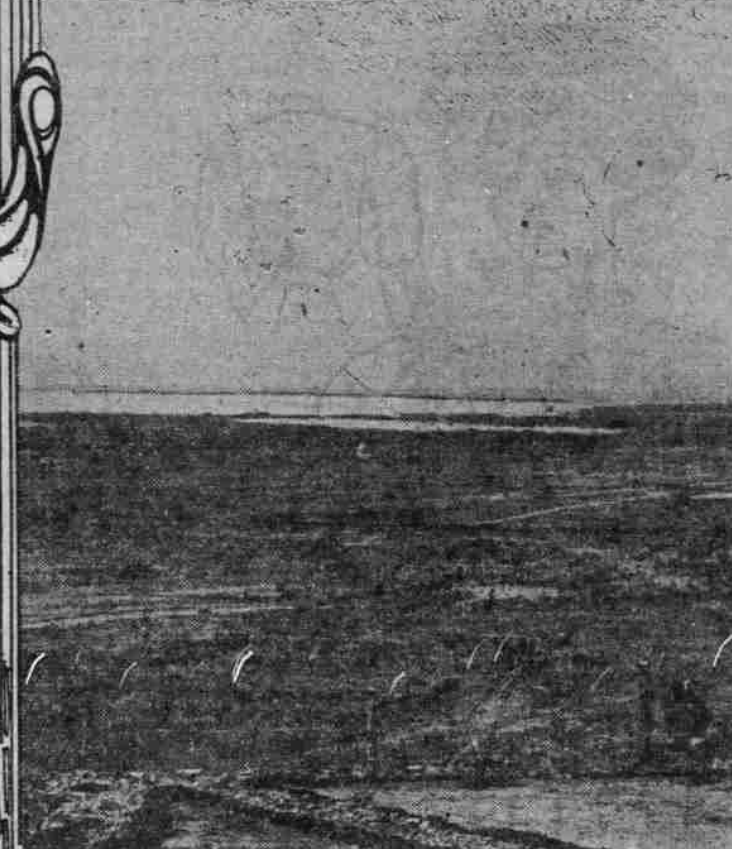
THESE MASAI ARE FIERCE LOOKING.

was now quiet and are becoming semi-civilized. They are paying the annual hut taxes of about three rupees each to the government. Three rupees means \$1 American. It seems but little until one remembers that it takes a native about a month to earn much, when it will be a great deal.

About Mount Kenya.

A great part of Mr. Hinde's work has been near Mount Kenya, in a country which he says is phenomenally rich. He tells me that the Uganda railway goes through some of the poorest land in British East Africa and that the Kenya territory has great possibilities. He predicts that the railroad which is now to be built from Nairobi to Fort Hall, under the shadow of Mount Kenya, will pay for the start, and that Kenya will eventually be covered with rich farms. Said he:

"When Mrs. Hinde and I first came into the province the country was in the same condition it had been for ages. We found that it contained about a million people, who lived in little



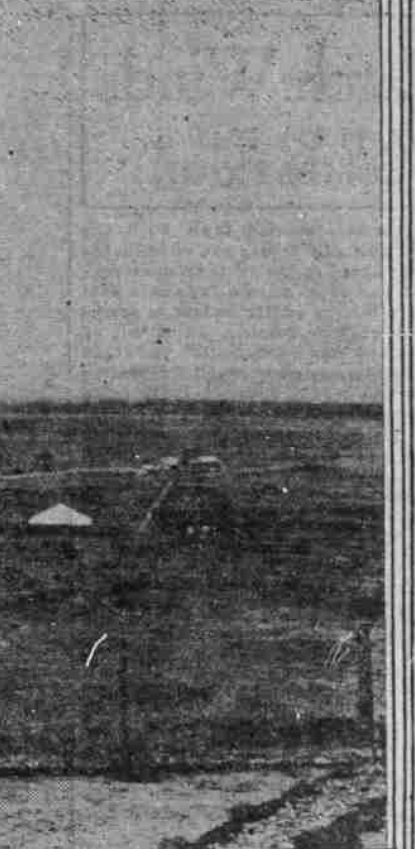
"I AM LOOKING OUT ON LAKE NAIVASHA"



"I WISH I COULD SHOW YOU THESE WOMEN"

villages, each containing about ten huts or so. There were no great chiefs. Each village was independent, and almost constantly at war with the neighboring villages. The citizens of one settlement know nothing of those of the other settlements about. A man dared not venture more than ten miles from his home, and he had little knowledge of the country outside that radius. There were no roads whatever excepting trails which wound this way and that over the land. The only meeting places were at the markets, which were held at certain fixed points on certain days of the week or month. It is a rule throughout Africa that warfare and fighting must be suspended on market days, and no one dares bring arms to a market or fight there. If he should engage in fighting and be killed his relatives cannot claim blood money.

"When we took possession of the Kenya province," Captain Hinde went on, "we had to fight our way in. As soon as we had subdued the people we made them work at making roads as



"I AM LOOKING OUT ON LAKE NAIVASHA"

a penalty for their insurrection. We connected all the villages by roadways and gave each town so much to take care of. As a result we now have in that province alone 400 miles of good wagon roads, each 10 feet in width. We have also made it the law that every road shall be considered as having all the rights of a market place. This means that no native can assault another while walking upon them and that all roads must be buried when traveling over the roads. Many of these roads connect villages which were formerly at war with each other, and the result is that they become peaceful and that the citizens can now travel safely from one town to another. They are really changing their nature and are going through the process of travel-education. As I have already said, five years ago they never left home. Now thousands of them travel over our roads down to the seacoast, and we have something like 1,800 natives of Kenya here at Mombasa."

Evolving a Civilization.

These remarks of Captain Hinde show how John Bull is gradually evolving a civilization in these African wilds. The Masai are about the most intelligent of the natives and here are talking about here who are much farther down on the scale of barbarism than they. As I shall show in other letters, some go absolutely mad and are going through the process of the stone and iron ages. It is only a few years since slavery was common and cannibalism was a common thing. Then justice was unknown and life of no account.

The British are now gradually changing all these customs. The Masai now knows that he dares not assault his neighbor and he is gradually becoming a decent citizen. Both he and his fellows of other tribes are beginning to understand the value of labor. The Masai will not dig, but they are paid for herding stock, and some of the other tribes are doing actual work on the farms and on the railroad. They are beginning to have wants, and as these increase they will work to supply them. Many of those who formerly went naked now want more or less clothing. Cotton goods are becoming popular, and, strange to say, the American white cotton sheeting brings the highest prices among the natives. It outsells the British goods and in some places it even passes for money. Another article from America that is in great demand here is coal oil. The natives buy it to use in their lamps. The big chiefs almost universally own one or more kerosene lamps. Other foreign articles much desired are umbrellas, knives and hardware. A system of East Indian stores is going up throughout the country to supply the natives. The Hindoo traders carry their goods everywhere. The Masai is a hardy people who will take the places of the savages of the past.

As it is now the missionaries are doing considerable good. They are converting the natives about the great lakes. The most of such work is now in the hands of the English, but at Kilishi, within a few miles of Lake Naivasha, there is an industrial mission school run by American Quakers, and that same denomination has another industrial settlement in the Kavirondo country, near Lake Victoria. At Naivasha, British East Africa,

EARLIEST STEAMBOATING ON HUDSON

Rise and Development of the Great Agency in Our Industrial and Commercial Development.

A RECENT addition to the Grafton Historical Series is entitled "Old Steamboat Days on the Hudson River," and is by David Larr Buckman. Mr. Buckman has gathered his material from many sources, and from it has compiled a historical monograph of exceptional interest and value, says the Brooklyn Eagle. The story of Fulton's early ventures and the success which attended them, of course, has been told more than once or twice; it is an event of major importance in the history of the industrial and commercial development of the world. The employment of steam as a motive power, as demonstrated by Fulton, marked a new epoch in the history of the modern world. Naturally, such a momentous event has been fully chronicled by historians and Mr. Buckman, while giving due prominence to the event, has not undertaken to add anything new to the narrative of the Clermont's first voyage. He recounts it as the beginning of the history he chronicles, but the principal interest and importance of his book is due to his account of the subsequent development of steam navigation, which followed Fulton's successful experiment. This is a branch of the subject that has been overlooked by historians, who have given a very brief account of the subsequent evolution of traffic on the Hudson.

While everyone is familiar with the facts of Fulton's experiment and success, we fancy not many people know about the long fight that was made to break the monopoly which was granted to Fulton, and his principal backers, Robert R. Livingston, Chancellor of the State of New York. Fulton's wife

was Harriet Livingston, a relative of the Chancellor, and it was the latter's belief in Fulton and his invention which induced him to become Fulton's financial backer. The name Clermont, given to the first steamboat, was the name of Livingston's country seat on the Hudson, in Columbia County. Fulton died in 1815, and his relationship with the Livingston family led to his interment in the Livingston family vault in Trinity chanderyard, New York City, where his dust now reposes. Fulton and the Chancellor obtained an enactment from the State Legislature, giving them the exclusive right to the navigation of all boats by steam, on the waters of the state, for 20 years, on condition that they should produce a boat of not less than 20 tons burden, which would move with and against the current of the Hudson at a rate of not less than four miles an hour. In his report of the Clermont's first voyage, Fulton lays emphasis on the fact that the Clermont traveled at a rate of nearly five miles an hour. That fact meant much to him and to the Chancellor; it secured to them the monopoly granted by the State Legislature.

Of course, as soon as the feasibility of steam as a motive power was fully demonstrated, there were numbers of people ready to put money into such enterprises, but the monopoly stood in the way. It was not until 1829 that the fight which the monopoly had provoked, and in which the state of New Jersey had taken a prominent part, was finally joined in the courts. The attack upon this vested privilege was led by Daniel Webster, who appeared as the leading counsel for the interests attacking the monopoly, an attack in which Commodore Vanderbilt, then in his prime, and deeply interested in steamboating, was largely interested. The Fulton-Livingston monopoly had employed their

privilege in the issuing of licenses to steamboats to navigate the waters of the state, and it was a fight between a New Jersey citizen named Gibbons, who was master of a steamboat on a line in which Commodore Vanderbilt was interested, plying between New York and New Jersey, and one Ogden, a former Governor of New Jersey, who held a Fulton-Livingston license for the same privilege. The suit went first before the Supreme Court of New Jersey, and was decided in Gibbons' favor, and was then carried to the United States Supreme Court, and it was before that tribunal that Daniel Webster appeared as counsel for the interests which Vanderbilt represented. It was the cause celebre of that day. Other states had granted similar monopolies as to their waters. Connecticut, New Hampshire and Tennessee among them, Webster attacked the grants on the broad ground of their unconstitutionality, and in his contention was supported by the famous William Wirt, of Virginia, Attorney General of the United States. The counsel for the monopoly were Oakley and Emmett, the latter having been Fulton's personal counsel and friend for many years. The United States Supreme Court decided against the monopoly, Chief Justice John Marshall writing the opinion. The breaking of the monopoly was followed by a great increase in the steamboat industry. Mr. Buckman devotes a chapter to this interesting industrial and legal battle. The decision of the court was of immense importance to the future business and development of the country.

Mr. Buckman traces the growth of the business on the Hudson closely, instance for instance the new craft that were rebuilt from time to time, and recalling names that are famous in the history of the river. The boiler of the Clermont was made of copper, and all the best boats built after her, followed this example, for iron boilers

were too liable to burst. The use of copper made the boilers very costly, the boilers of the Kent, one of the earlier boats weighing 60,000 pounds, and being worth nearly one-third the cost of the boat. It was not until 1830 that tubular boilers were introduced, the novelty being the first to use a boiler of that construction, and it was not until nearly ten years later that the use of anthracite coal as fuel was introduced. Before that cordwood was the fuel. The use of coal cut the fuel expense in half.

Mr. Buckman recalls the names of many of the old boats—names well known to those whose memories of Hudson River travel run back to the middle of the last century. He thinks the oldest boat now on the river is the Norwich, still in use on the upper river as a towboat, and employed often in breaking up the ice in the early season, by reason of the strength of her engine and hull. In construction she belongs to a vanished type, having what was called a "steppe" engine, operating a horizontal crossbeam up and down, instead of a walking beam. This was the type of the old Fulton boats. The Norwich was built in 1836.

Mr. Buckman also recalls the names of many of the men famous in the steamboating business 50 and 60 years ago, either as masters of craft or as owners and capitalists. One of the most famous of these owners and builders in the old days was Isaac Newton, a Seneca County man who was 19 years old when the first steamboat trip was made up the Hudson, and retained a vivid recollection of the event until his death. He established the towboat business on the Hudson, and constructed some of the famous boats of the early days, whose elegance secured for the Hudson River passenger larger craft the name of floating palaces. He caused to be built nearly 100 steamboats, ocean steamers and barges. Newton was over 63 when he died in New York. Then there were Daniel Drew, Dean Richmond, Chauncey Vibbard, Erasius Corning, Captain A. F. St. John and many others whose names are indissolubly connected with the history and development of steamboat navigation.

on the Hudson. A chapter is given to the old river captains, many of them men of rare individuality and force of character. He does not neglect the tragic side of the story, but recalls some of the famous disasters of the river, when boats have burned or sunk and lives lost. The burning of the Henry Clay on July 28, 1852, at Riverdale, when 60 lives were lost, was perhaps the most notable of the river tragedies. One of the lost was Miss Hawthorne, a sister of Nathaniel Hawthorne, the novelist. Our author also recalls the fact that when the Swallow, on her way from Albany to New York, on the evening of April 7, 1845, ran on the rocks nearly opposite Hudson (known to this day as the Swallow rocks) and became a total wreck, about 15 lives were lost. Mr. Buckman's father, Ira Buckman, purchased the wreck, broke it up and from the material constructed a fine two-story house, at Valatie, N. Y., on the old Post road. It is still standing, and is known as the Swallow house.

Racing between the boats of rival lines was a frequent occurrence in the old days, and was the cause of many accidents. The Swallow disaster was undoubtedly due to that cause. Finally, public opinion compelled legislation against the practice.

Mr. Buckman also describes the growth of barge travel, a popular method of transportation in the middle decades of the 19th century, and has something to say about "flat time" on the river. The present status of the business, together with some account of the magnificent body of the river lines of today are not forgotten.

Mr. Buckman tells his story with the directness and fullness of one who not only is complete master of his subject, but is deeply interested in it. He tells his story well and with an unflagging interest. He has given his readers a volume of unusual interest and value.

The shrinkage of wood from loss of moisture has been found by the United States forest service to range from 7 to 25 per cent of the dry volume in different species.