

# Where the Great Cape to Cairo Road Crosses Africa

## Frank G. Carpenter Writes of the Cape-to-Cairo Rail- road, The Great Trunk Line Across Africa



BY FRANK G. CARPENTER.

I AM at the Broken Hill mines, 350 miles north of the Zambesi River, and at the northern end of the railroad system of South Africa. This is the rail head of the Cape to Cairo trunk line, which now reaches from here to Cape Town, a distance of more than 2000 miles. I am quite as far from the borders of the Congo Free State, and within 450 miles of Tanganyika. Some of the building between here and Victoria Falls was done at the rate of a mile a day, and a year ago, if the work is pushed, will easily suffice to complete the steam route from here to the Mediterranean Sea. A flying survey has been made of the extension of the Cape to Cairo system, and this is to be employed toward pushing the road to Lake Tanganyika. As it is now, it is only about 200 miles from the borders of the Congo Free State, and within 450 miles of Tanganyika. Some of the building between here and Victoria Falls was done at the rate of a mile a day, and a year ago, if the work is pushed, will easily suffice to complete the steam route from here to the Mediterranean Sea. A flying survey has been made of the extension of the Cape to Cairo system, and this is to be employed toward pushing the road to Lake Tanganyika.

**By Steam Through Africa.**

I refer to the Cape to Cairo line as a steam route, including in that term transportation by boat and cart. There will never be one continuous iron track north and south across this continent. The traffic will not warrant it, and besides there are deep waterways which can be used to advantage one-third of the construction. The longest stretch of rail will be from Cape Town north to Lake Tanganyika. This is just about as far as from New York to the Great Salt Lake, and it comprises almost one-half of the route from the Cape of Good Hope to the Mediterranean Sea.

Lake Tanganyika is a narrow trough in the mountains running almost north and south for a distance of 400 miles. It is right along the railway, the trunk line, and the cars can be run on to steamboats and ferried across it.

From the upper end of Tanganyika to Khartoum 410 miles of railway are needed. The distance between the two points is 1670 miles, but 1550 miles of it can be made by water. From Khartoum the steamboats on the Nile are already running for more than 1000 miles, and with 100 miles more railroad passengers can reach Lake Albert. It is but a short stretch from there to Lake Albert Edward and Lake Kioga, so you see the Cape to Cairo system is approaching completion. The roads yet to be built are not as long as from Philadelphia to Chicago, and more than one-half of the work will be finished when this line has reached Tanganyika.

**Rhodesian Railways.**

For the past month or more I have been traveling over the railroads of Rhodesia. Those already constructed measure something like 2500 miles, and they have all been built within the last fifteen years. The roads were laid out by Cecil Rhodes, but he died before they had reached the Zambesi and the greater part of his traveling through the country was done in ox-wagons. The roads are well built and traveling over them is comfortable. The gauge is one meter, or three feet six inches. The rails are comparatively light, most of them being from forty pounds to sixty pounds per yard. Some of the cars are magnificent. The trains de luxe carry cooking and dining arrangements, and the Victoria Falls hotel has a shower bath with a coil of pipe which runs round and round, furnishing a needle spray.

One can now get on a train that kind at Cape Town and ride to Victoria Falls without change. The distance is 1600 or 1700 miles, and the first-class fare is just about \$80. The meals are good and the prices cheaper than at home. Breakfast costs 50 cents, luncheon 25 cents, and dinner 75 cents. On the Rhodesian roads, the dining-car rates are a trifle higher, but nowhere are the meals as much as \$1. The rate from Cape Town to Broken Hill is over \$100, but the second-class tickets cost about one-third less, and the third-class are not half as much as the first. For those who wish to travel without regard to cost, private cars may be had. These have cooking and dining compartments attached to them, and a single car has every arrangement to accommodate six persons. It has a dining-room, kitchen, bathroom and bedrooms. The railroad company furnishes a cook and all the provisions. The terms are \$1800 a month, which includes board, lodging and travel. This is an average of \$10 per person per day, and it seems to me comparatively cheap.

**From Victoria Falls Northward.**

Good traveling arrangements stop with Victoria Falls, although private cars may be brought northward to Broken Hill. I came on the ordinary train and had a first-class compartment all the way. I had to carry my



LOADING FREIGHT ON THE CAPE TO CAIRO ROAD NORTHERN RHODESIA

**I HAD A NATIVE STAND A TIE ON END**

own food and bedding, however. The travel through the wilds is light and the road has not been completed long enough to make the demand for comforts warrant the expense of furnishing them. It takes two nights to make the trip to this point, and a few thick blankets enable one to sleep well on the ordinary cushions of the car. I have rolled up my overcoat and used it for a pillow, and notwithstanding the jolting have slept like a top.

The eating is a more difficult matter. I had a tin cracker box filled with such things as canned tongue and ham, with several varieties of pickles, which serve as a relish and aid in cutting the grease. I started out with some canned butter, but I will say nothing about that; it was amply strong enough to speak for itself. I had also some jam, made in London, which I spread on top of my ham sandwiches, and that took its place. As to bread, I carried three loaves with me from Victoria Falls hotel, and I will get another supply here when I go back.

**Tea From Pills.**

I have had excellent tea, which I brewed with hot water from the locomotive. At meal times the black boy who is in charge of the car brought me a kettle and I made my tea with tea pills. I wonder if you have ever heard of the little tablets of compressed tea, invented by Burroughs, Weston & Co. of London, which are as big around as the end of your little finger and one will make a full cup of tea, compressed by an enormous force into pills. Each tablet is as hard as a stone until the water touches it, when it dissolves to a powder and gives forth a delicious aroma. The pills are put up in tin boxes, and they are so small that you can carry enough for a hundred cups in your pocket. A little box of short sweetening goes with them. This is composed of saccharin, a material which is 600 times sweeter than sugar. It is compressed into pills as big as the head of a pin and a single pinhead will sweeten a cup.

**Fighting the White Ants.**

All the way from here to the Zambesi River the telegraph poles and the railroad ties are of steel. The ties are a hollow steel shell about seven feet long with clamps into which the rails are fitted. In order to show just how they looked I had some made of galvanized iron, and photographed it. The man is fully six feet in height and the tie reaches more than a foot above him. All of the railroad stations are made of galvanized iron, and in the huts here at Broken Hill almost no wood is used. This is necessary on account of the white ants which infest the regions north of the Zambesi. They live upon wood and they burrow into the railroad ties and eat away until nothing but a shell is left. When wooden telegraph poles are erected they chew them to pieces so that the wires fall to the ground. White ants are to be found all over Central Africa. I have seen tens of thousands of their hills during this trip. Sometimes their mounds will be 20 feet high and at others they do not reach the height of your waist. They go about as far below the ground as above it, and each hill is divided up into little rooms much like a flat building. The ants have their soldiers and guards. They have their workers and drones, and there is a big queen who looks for all the world like a white worm of the size and shape of a small Frankfurter sausage, and who lays all the eggs. I was offered one of these queens as a present during my stay in

**Insects Which Make Cement.**

Speaking of the white ants, they are of great value to Africa. Their homes form a natural cement. The ant hills are built brick by brick by these little insects, which, as they build, moisten the clay with a juice from their mouths. This spittle contains formic acid and it is of such a nature that it changes the clay into a paste or glue which afterward turns to stone. It may be mixed with water and softened, but as a rule it is as hard as cement and has the same properties. All over Africa the natives take this ant-clay for their building material. They start their huts by making a framework of sticks which they weave in and out much like a basket. Over this they spread the wet clay from the white ant hills, using it as a plaster. After a time the walls become as solid as stone, and they form a perfect protection from the weather. In some places the huts are composed entirely of this material and in others they are in cones of thatch. Many of the pioneers of Rhodesia live in huts which are the head of the mission church here, which is plastered with red clay from the abandoned homes of the white ants. The church is covered with such clay, but its overhanging roof is of galvanized iron. It was put up by the Rev. John M. Springer, who for a long time was the head of the Methodist Episcopal missions at Umali. Mr. Springer stopped at Broken Hill on a trip across Africa and built this church during his stay.

**The Station Farthest North.**

But suppose we take a look at Broken Hill, the present terminus of the Cape to Cairo railroad. It is the South African station farthest north and is in the very heart of the black continent. It lies 350 miles above the Zambesi River, and more than a hundred miles from the Kafue River, which is one of the Zambesi's mighty branches. The land here is high and healthy. It is a great plain lying farther above the sea than the average altitude of the tops of the Allegheny Mountains. The plain is covered with grass which reaches far above one's head, and is spotted with patches of forest and clumps of brush. The woods are not dense here, and the trees are large, but they are the haunts of many wild animals. The country seems rich, and it will some day be taken up by farmers and stock raisers.

Broken Hill itself is a mining town supported by the several hills of zinc and lead, which I shall describe later on. It consists of two settlements, one of which is devoted to the white officers and overseers who manage the mines and to the native workmen who live in a kraal near by, and the other to the hotel and stores and the homes of those who have business outside the mines. There are no saloons in either settlement, and the selling of liquor is contrary to law.

I wish I could show you the hotel at Broken Hill. It is a collection of thatched huts made of red clay from the homes of the white ants. The largest hut is the dining-room and near it is the kitchen built so far away that no smell can offend. Every guest has his own individual hut as a bedroom. The bedroom huts are also made of red clay with grass roofs. All have holes in the walls for windows and mosquito nets that are made of glass. The dining-room is about 20 feet square and the waiters are half

naked negroes who trot about in their bare feet.

This hotel is almost in the jungle. The places between the huts are clear, but the grass behind is as high as your head, and it would be easily possible for a leopard or a lion to crawl up and sneak out a baby. Indeed, the mothers watch their children carefully, and the little ones never play out of doors after dark. And are there white children away up here in the heart of Africa? Yes, there

neither you nor I. Perhaps she was not prepared to give a definite answer yet. She was taken by surprise; she did not know her own heart. But when Wallace Ripley went away he had wrung from her a promise that he might come back after a while and try his fate again.

The winter wore away. Little Alice's love story had come to a satisfactory conclusion at Christmas. Wallace Ripley was in the city, writing eager letters to Jane Jane herself was writing constantly during the winter, but her writing did not seem to be letters; at least, few envelopes addressed in her clear cursive passed through the village postoffice.

In the Spring appeared a new book—a popular novel which bore Jane Darrow's name on the title page. "A charming idyl," the critics said. "A picture of life drawn by an artist's hand." Some compared it to "Cranford," in its faithful delineation of simple village life and character. The book made a veritable sensation.

It was in Jane's home village, whether its fame promptly penetrated, the sensation was not one of unmitigated pleasure. Jane's friends, reading, found themselves and their experiences laid bare to the public in a manner graceful and artistic, indeed, but trying to the temper of retiring persons who prefer to live in obscurity.

Alice and Bob's love story was neatly interwoven. Scenes and conversations

of dancers, came Bob, when the evening was half over.

"All alone, Miss Jane? I've been hunting for you."

"Have you?" That was nice of you—when Alice is here," said Jane, with soft meaning.

"Alice—oh, she looks pretty this evening, doesn't she?" said the boy, his eyes following the bewitching little figure in white with pink roses.

A sympathetic look, a few encouraging words and soon Jane was listening to the other side of Alice's story. It seemed to interest her deeply, wonderfully, and presently, before he knew it, the lad found himself telling her of the other side back at college. Jane would feel herself slighted if she knew about Alice.

"It's an awful complaint," he finished gloomily. "I can't give Alice up, and yet she—the other girl—thinks I am bound to her."

"It is a complication," agreed Jane softly. "And yet, Bob, I believe it will all come right at a while. It's the course of true love, you know. Alice's father objecting, and this other girl, are only the rapids in the current. It will flow smoothly by and by. If I were you I should tell the other girl about it, and ask her to give you back your promise—if she thinks you are bound to her. Oh, I am sure it will all come right. And you will tell me when it does, won't you? You know I shall be so interested."

"It's a mighty good of you," said the boy gratefully.

London Spectator.

THE Americans as a nation are optimists. It may be owing to the immense territory, the absence of dangerous neighbors on their frontiers, or to their enjoyment of acknowledged though not quite real equality, or possibly to the self-confidence born of 200 years of continuous and successful effort, or it may even be owing to some exhilarating quality of the atmosphere in which they live, but at any rate, Americans at heart are all contented and cheerful men.

Collectively and individually, they all believe that, however unpleasant may be the circumstances of the moment, they will in the end "muddle through" and come out the stronger for their trials. No one despaired when it seemed for a moment as if the union must be broken up, and no one quails now though every foreign observer believes the "Have-nots" and the "Have-nots" which is to mark this century will be fought out first of all upon American soil.

They see their numbers continually increasing; they see the Old World shrinking from any contest with their growing strength; they deny, or at least they do not recognize, that any moral change has passed over their millions, and they perceive, as they listen to their present President, that now, as in the great Civil War, they will throw up out of the depths of their elective system adequate and trustworthy leaders.

In 1859 they found Abraham Lincoln, and in 1908 they are listening—and was there ever so vast or so attentive an audience?—to Theodore Roosevelt. They wait, therefore, in the full confidence that, however dark the path may momentarily appear, the way will open.

A nation penetrated with that feeling cannot be broken, and we only wish that we saw more of it among the nations



I WISH I COULD SHOW YOU THE HOTEL

are 50 or more white men connected with the mines, and some have their families here with them. Altogether there are a half dozen white women and numerous children. As I walked through the hotel grounds I saw a baby carriage at the door of one of the huts and a rosy-cheeked little boy, as tagged at my heels. The town has its football and cricket grounds and there is a tennis court in which these ladies are among the players. Broken Hill has its afternoon teas and now and then public dinners.

**Business in Mid-Africa.**

There are perhaps a dozen business establishments. Some of them are in sheds of galvanized iron, but the others are made of white ant clay having roofs of grass thatch. Every shop sells a variety of goods. The shelves are full of canned stuffs from Europe and the United States. There are hams, tongues and canned beef from Chicago, Kansas City and Omaha, canned fruits from California and salmon from Oregon and Alaska. The most of the hardware and tinware comes from Europe, and this is so also of the jams and the jellies. The storekeepers are Englishmen and the native blacks act as clerks. Everything is sold at high prices. Bread costs 25 cents a loaf; a tin cup sells for a shilling and butter is 7½ cents a pound. A common case knife which would bring a dime in New York costs 50 cents at Broken Hill, and all other things are in like proportion.

I had many American goods used here and there over Africa. I have written about our cotton goods in Abyssinia and Uganda. They are far superior to any other, and it is their excellence only that makes them sell in competition with the German and English cottons which are everywhere pushed. It is the same with our meats. They form a large part of the food of South Africa, but the English sneer as they smack their lips over them, and they would keep them out if they could find any others as good.

### The Sympathy of Jane Darrow

(J. L. Glover in New Orleans Times-Democrat.)

SYMPATHY was Jane Darrow's strong point. From her youth up, her friends' affairs, whether love or otherwise, had a genuine and personal interest for her. Confidences were poured into her ears, and to do her justice, she did not pass them on. She talked little herself, but she had a way of leaning forward in her chair and fixing a pair of intelligent gray eyes on one's face with an intent gaze, as if nothing in the world interested her so much just then as the person she was looking at; and saying in soft tones: "Now tell me something about yourself."

The one to whom she spoke would invariably yield to the charm of those earnest eyes, and in response to the invitation would find himself or herself pouring out personal history, thoughts or experiences. And whether the speaker were a middle-aged scientist explaining his latest theory of the universe, or a dry-as-dust professor riding his hobby, or a young girl with first love affair, Jane listened with the same expression of vivid interest in her eyes, putting in a sympathetic word here and there, which lured one on to further and deeper confidences.

"How is it that everybody tells you everything?" little Alice Fenwick asked her wistfully once.

"Oh, because I like to hear them, I suppose," Jane answered, smiling into the little flower-like face.

"And you never tell, do you, Jane?"

"I should think you knew me better than that, Alice."

"Little Alice only sighed and went away; but a few days later she came to Jane with a piteous face.

"Tell me all about it, dear," encouraged Jane.

They were alone in her room, which looked out on a green orchard, with rows of peach trees whose fruit was just blushing rosy among the setting of glossy leaves. A pear tree grew so near the window that they could almost reach out and gather its golden fruit. Jane sat down in a chair by the window and pointed to its golden, lower and more comfortable still.

"Just sit down here and tell me all about it," she said again in her sympathetic voice. And Alice resisted no longer, but poured out to her her burdened heart, sitting there with her face hidden on Jane's lap.

It was a foolish little story enough. Just a girlish love affair, and how she and Bob were sure they would never care for anybody else, and papa said it was all nonsense, and she was much too young even to think of such a thing. And she was 19, and Bob was old enough to be at college, and she thought it was meant, and here the tears choked Alice's speech.

Jane patted her hair and sympathized and counseled patience, and after a while Alice cheered up and again home promising to tell her of further developments.

The next evening there was a dance; a so-called village affair, to which all were invited. Jane rarely danced. She disliked getting warm and disheveled. It was her specialty to "sit out" in shady corners and listen to confidences; respectful, cool and unexcited. When the dance was ended, for a brief promenade on her partner's arm.

To her retired moonlit corner of the piazza, whence she could see the roofful

### Say Americans Are Oytimists

of Europe, and more especially in our own despondent land.

**Broiled Bananas.**

New York Times.

Another hoetess has a way of broiling bananas. The bananas are slit lengthwise twice and a half inch of peel is stripped off, leaving the fruit in the large part; the body of the fruit should then be opened a bit and a pinch of salt, another of pepper and a bit of lemon juice be put on the exposed fruit, and the whole left for half an hour, so that the seasoning may soak in. The butter should be spread over the opened part. The bananas must then be laid in a not too hot broiler, with skins down, and broiled very gently until lightly browned. They should be served in the skins, which, if properly handled, will retain the juices formed while cooking, and a truly delicious morsel will be the result.

"Walkin' Home With You."

I have had my days of glory  
And my days of pure delight,  
I have gushed in the valley  
I have sorrowed in the night,  
I have drunk the cup of gladness  
And have sorrowed in the night,  
But 'th' time I went 't' heaven  
Was a walkin' home with you!

I have felt my pulses tingle  
Over the triumphs I have won,  
I have known the deep dejection  
Of a feeling crushed an' done,  
But I ever, ever knew  
I enjoyed it when, one ev'n'g,  
I went walkin' home with you!

I have heard about the Hebe  
Who was fairest o' 'er fair,  
But I bet she wasn't in it  
With the glimmer of your hair!  
An' her eyes wasn't nothin' starry,  
'Till you told me yes, my sweetheart,  
When you told me I could, maybe,  
Be a walkin' home with you!

So we left 't' church together  
You and I, my dear, and I—  
To go walkin' through Arcady  
Down the apple-blossomed way,  
An' you told me yes, my sweetheart,  
Told me always you'd be true  
When I reached the cross of glory  
An' went walkin' home with you!

—Byron Williams.