

Building Foot Africa

NEW MINES, RAILROADS AND COTTON PLANTATIONS THAT CAN BE MADE PROFITABLE TO THE UNITED STATES



A PASSENGER OF THE SAHARA



SENEGAL RAILWAYS FRENCH OFFICERS

UNLOADING GOODS, LOBLOBO BAY RAILWAY

BY FRANK G. CARPENTER.

UNCLE SAM should keep his eyes skinned as to the developments going on in West Africa. That part of the world is practically unknown to us, and still its trade is growing like a green bay tree. All along the coast from Senegambia to German Southwest Africa, railroads are building, experimental plantations are being set out, and here and there mines of various kinds have been discovered. Away down near the Cape, in the German possessions, there is a place called Otavi, where valuable deposits of copper are now being mined. The ore in sight is said to be 300,000 tons, and it is claimed that it can be produced as to net \$15,000,000 clear profit. Portuguese West Africa has copper, iron, petroleum and salt, and its oils and asphalt beds are now being worked by a British syndicate. I have already written of the great Katanga concession, which King Leopold of Belgium is working in connection with the Congo and the watershed between the Zambesi and the Congo. This is to be reached by a railroad 1200 miles long through Portuguese West Africa to the Congo Free State. It will open up larger copper deposits than any ever discovered, and will flood the world with that metal and with tin. The tin mines run through a range of hills 150 miles long, and the copper mountains are something like 200 miles in length. An extension of the road to Cairo, which has just been projected to this great mining region, and within a short time it will probably be a beehive of industry.

There are valuable minerals in the northern part of the Congo Free State, and the French Congo contains gold, copper and iron. Gold has been recently secured in the Kamerun, belonging to the Germans, which lies just to the north, and a little beyond that is the famous Gold Coast, on the Gulf of Guinea, from which the English got the name of their \$5 gold piece. The mines there have been worked for generations, and they are still turning out considerable. The output is now something like \$4,000,000 a year, which is 40 times the product of 1801. In 1906 217,000 ounces of gold were taken out, and there has been a steady increase in the product for more than five years. At present both quartz and placer mining are going on, and large crushing mills have been installed.

West Africa's New Railroads.

As to the railroad development, it embraces the whole coast of the continent. The Germans have several large projects in the southwest of Africa. They have already built a line 237 miles long from Swakopmund, their port, near Wal-fish Bay, to Great Windhoek, the capital, and they have just arranged for a railroad 500 miles long to go from Swakopmund to Otavi and the copper mines. This road will probably some day be connected with the Cairo-Congo line running northward from Cape Town to the Zambesi; and, in that case, it will shorten the distance between England and Bulawayo by 1200 miles.

The Loblobo Bay railroad has already been constructed for a hundred miles or

so inland from the Atlantic and there now several thousand laborers working upon it. This road will be over 1000 miles long, and it will be made after the usual South African fashion. Its gauge is three feet six inches, and the rails weigh 60 pounds to the yard. The ties are to be of steel, on account of the white ants which eat everything wooden; they will weigh 75 pounds each. All the bridges are standardized, and the rolling stock is the same as that used in Rhodesia. Some of the engines are being built in England, but the best ones are to be supplied by the Swiss and the Germans.

By the time this road reaches the copper mines the Cape to Cairo extensions will be there, and the route to South Africa will probably change, as far as fast travel is concerned. Passengers will be taken to Loblobo Bay, and will thence go by rail to the Transvaal, and especially to all parts of Rhodesia. There will probably be an extension to Lake Tanganyika, and we shall have a line across the southern part of the continent. There is no doubt of the completion of the Loblobo Bay road. The company which it is financed in is the one which owns the copper mines; and there are tens of millions of dollars—I might say billions of dollars—of minerals awaiting its traffic possibilities.

The Railroads of the Congo.

The Loblobo Bay railroad will be largely controlled by the Congo Free State. The King of Belgium and his associates own a majority of the stock in the great project, and they will see that it is operated in the interests of Belgium's colony. It will probably be connected with the navigable tributaries of the Upper Congo, and will form a part of the extensive railway system which has been projected for that country.

Few people realize what is going on as to railroad building in the Congo Free State. The Congo River is as long as the distance from New York to San Francisco, and two of its tributaries are each almost as long as from the mouth of the Hudson to the Great Salt Lake. The navigable waterways of the system are 12,000 miles long, and they are so many that there is not a spot in the whole Congo basin where 50 miles distance from navigable waterways.

The biggest European steamers now go up the Congo 100 miles from its mouth to Matadi, and a second line is being projected as far as Stanley Pool, or half way around the globe, and they are so many that there is not a spot in the whole Congo basin where 50 miles distance from navigable waterways.

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The Guinea Coast Roads.

Going northward along the Gulf of Guinea, a number of other important railroads have been projected, and some are already under construction. In the Kamerun the Victoria Niamako road has been extended as far as Soppo, a distance of 20 miles, and another railway is building. In Togoland, also belonging to the Germans, there is one railway 28 miles long, extending from Lome to Little Popo, and in French Guinea a railway which goes from Konakry on the Niger has been opened as far as Kindia. This is about 80 miles inland. The road will meet the Niger at Koukou, and will have a big traffic. The French have also built two important railways in Dahomey, one of which is 130 miles long. Another goes from the Niger to the coast, and is extending both lines. They also propose to construct a track inland from the Ivory coast, and they have important railways in operation in Senegal.

To Open Up Nigeria.

The English have some railroads in their colonies upon the Gulf of Guinea. There is one 124 miles long, which goes from Lagos to Ibadan. This has just been extended to Oshogbo, which is 62

A Big Trans-African Line.

These rich lands of Nigeria form an important link in another big scheme which is to join the Mediterranean countries with both East and West Africa. This is to be a combine a railroad across the Sahara, to be built by the French, with one

to be made by the Germans, going through the Kameruns to the Gulf of Guinea, and branch lines extending east and west from these two. The French part of the road may be built southward to Timbuctoo, or, what is more probable, go to the southeast and strike Kano.

This road, which is now building, will make it possible to take goods to Kano by steam. It is to begin at the town of Bahr, the highest navigable point on the Niger, and to extend from there 400 miles eastward to Kano.

When this road is built all the supplies for Northern Nigeria will be sent to the Gulf of Guinea up the Niger and inland by rail, and this caravan trade will be destroyed, as far as crossing the Sahara is concerned. This will be a great blow to the countries along the Mediterranean.

A loan for this Nigerian railway has already been authorized by the British government, and it is guaranteed by the loan is to be pushed with all possible speed. The track is to be of a 40-inch gauge, and is to be completed within four years. The cost is estimated at about \$7,000,000 or \$8,000,000, and it will be met by bonds rated on Southern Nigeria, the interest of which will be guaranteed by the government. As to dividends, the road will hardly pay much for some time to come. It will greatly develop the country, however, and is a military necessity.

Timbuctoo has always seemed one of the most inaccessible parts of the world. It will surprise many to know that it can now be reached by steam. The French have built a railway from Kayes to the Niger, a distance of 343 miles, and they have also a road connecting St. Louis and Dakar. One can go by steamer from St. Louis to Kayes, and on the vessels of the Niger from there to within a few miles of Timbuctoo. The time is con-

Some Big Possibilities.

All of these West African colonies have big possibilities, and the European nations to whom they belong are investigating them. In nearly every one cotton is being planted, and in some the experiments are successful. Nigeria, for instance, expects to be shipping 100,000 bales to Europe by 1910, and so far, the growth of the cotton crop has been as rapid there as it was at the start in the United States. I understand that it took our cotton belt ten years after the first crop was planted to reach a product of 100,000 bales, and that 1,000,000 bales was only attained at the end of 35 years. Cotton was first planted in Nigeria in 1901 and the crop has doubled each year since then. It is only recently that any attempt has been made to raise it in Northern Nigeria, but experimental stations have now been started there, and steam ginneries are to be introduced. This movement is backed by the British Cotton-Growing Association, which has a capital of a million and a quarter dollars, and which is pushing cotton planting on both sides of the black continent. The Germans have established cotton plantations in their eastern and western African possessions. I understand they are doing well in Togoland and the Kameruns, and know that they are raising some cotton on the highlands about Victoria, for I saw the bales loaded on the ships when I navigated that lake.

Rubber and Mahogany.

An equally great interest is exhibited in the timber products of the several colonies. The rubber industry is being pushed everywhere, and nearly every nation is setting out rubber plantations. The French have planted 10,000,000 rubber vines in Lower Guinea and Dahomey, and they plan to set out a half million more trees every year. The Germans are planting rubber and so are the English.

I have been much interested in the mahogany resources. A great deal of this wood is now being exported from Nigeria. Something like 100 logs were shipped from Lagos last year, and altogether about 200 logs, containing over 400,000 feet, were sent away to the English. Considerable is shipped from the Ivory coast and from other localities.

Washington, D. C., December 12.

THE BATTLE BY SEWELL FORD. FINANCIAL TRANSACTION IN WHICH PROFESSOR SHORTY Mc CABE FIGURED AS INTERMEDIATOR

SAY, next time I see signs of another bank panic coming on, I'm going to beat the 35th floor of the Signor buildin', knock the Physical Culture Studio down there, and prepare to save the country at 100 per cent advance on usual rates. Phew! I'm gettin' rested up a little now, but for two or three weeks there, while our friend Piamp, was dead in the southin' gym with one hand and shakin' things down with the other, I was workin' overtime.

How was that? Why, it's like this: The Bickener Trust Company has a directors' meetin' that lasts until 3 A. M., and they've got through accusin' each other, and layin' the whole blame on the janitor, and voted that be ought to be sent up for life, there's a lot of nice, pretty, fur lined old gents that looks as if they'd been doin' duty on the poison squad. Besides dancin' the slack wire all night, they've been stokin' on black coffee and Carolina perfectos, and it naturally leaves 'em in bad shape. Some goes to their specialists, others tries a Russian stein, and the rest of 'em picks for Shorty McCabe's.

And, say, they've got to be a peevish lot about this. Why, once I had a dozen here at a time, and no one of 'em would speak to more'n three of the others. Lively! Say, inside of three minutes I was up of directors the night before, two or three presidents had resigned by request, and there'd been a lot of talk about John Broodwin's resignation.

"You, sir," says one, glarin' at another, "would hypothecate your immortal soul, if you had a chance?"

"I would," says the other; "but it would be my own soul, and I can name persons who—"

"Ah, ring off!" says I. "This ain't the grand jury room. Cut all that out and get busy peelin' off for a game of stock ball!"

Ever watch that kind of sport? It's a little warm'n' up stunt we used to practice in trainin' quarters. I gives 'em each a number and throws a basket ball into the middle of the gym floor. Then when I calls out "No. 7," the gent who answers to that has to grab the ball and try to soak some one with it. If he misses, he scrambles after it and has another try. The feller he hits is it. Lively! Say, inside of three minutes I has that whole grouchy bunch hoppin' and dodgin' around, laughin' and puttin' gettin' behind each other, rollin' on the

floor, and enjoyin' themselves like 10-year-olds. "Ligh!" grunts old Fatwad, as the ball takes him in the middle of his meaty face. Haul! goes Mr. Temperent, makin' a sharp turn and, like a bullet, he's off. "Shake it up there!" says I. "Keep the ball movin'! Slam him, now! Slam him, old Sidewinder!"

"Say, I don't stop to ask who they are down on Broad street, or how much call money they can put on the market, or whether they've bursted a bank or a bank's busted them. When I stinks 'em, they're in the studio it's only by the baggy eyes and the extra weight around the belt line. To me they're just so many specimens of high livin' and hard workin', and I puts each one through the course of sports that I think will do him the most good."

But the toughest proposition I had to tackle was my old reglar Pyramid Gordon. Maybe you've been keepin' posted on some of the stunts he's been doin' lately. That's more'n I have. I've been to and I puts each one through the course of sports that I think will do him the most good."

Well, Shorty, says he, as Swifty helps him to a leopard skin slater, "I'm a little out of condition again, you see."

"I'd be blind if I couldn't. His eyes look as if he'd been burnin' 'em for a week; his cheeks might have been dusted with flour, for all the color there was in 'em; and when he opens his mouth to talk that Belgian block jaw of his has a quiver to it that tells of nerves worn down to a wire edge. But I don't let on."

"Oh, you ain't quite ready for the scrap heap yet."

"Come in for a little emergency repairs, eh?"

"That's it, Shorty," says he. "And for heaven's sake do what you can for me between now and 10 o'clock tonight."

"Likely to have a hard day tomorrow, you say?"

"Tomorrow?" says he, shuttin' his teeth

hard. "Let's forget tomorrow. Put me in shape for tonight."

Well, I looks him over, pokes him some with my finger in the soft places, and then gets my ear down over his left-hand best pocket. "First off I want to hear how the blood pump's workin'," says I.

"Oh, hang the heart!" says he. "I don't want 'bout to know anything about that—don't dare."

"All right," says I. "I countin' the thumps. It's doin' rattatin', all right, but I guess it ain't goin' to run down right away. Come on."

One good thing about Pyramid Gordon is that whatever he does, he goes in neck or nothing. If I toss him a tennis ball and tell him he's got to bounce it 50 times without missin', he'll give that job just as much attention as if he was tryin' to bunko some one out of a railroad. You can handle a man like that, and do him some good.

Well, Swifty and I had been workin' him along easy, until he was breathin' deep and his mind was havin' a rest, when I'm called out into the front office to answer for the door. "What I finds waitin' for me is one of these big well-fed, chuckle-jawed young chaps, same's you see pictured in the magazines and clothin' ads—righter open stock pattern. He's wearin' a frock coat of the latest mode, chambray skin gloves, and smokin' a gold tipped cigar, and he gazes at him-self approv'n' in the mirror."

"For correct afternoon wear, see Plate No. 17," thinks I, half out loud.

"Oh? Beg pardon," he says.

"Oh, it's all right," says I. "Well, what back draft blew you in here, and what's it all about? Hurry up, son; this is my busy hour."

"There's no rushin' that kind. He gives me one of them 'How dare you, sir?' looks, screws the jaws stick into his mouth, fishes a card out of a pocket case, and settles back to see what'll happen."

"Mr. Friable Otis Beak, representing the Gold Brick National Bank," is something to trade, are you?"

"I was told I could find Mr. Gordon here," says he, real chilly.

"Well, go out, and forget about it for a while, or you'll get that bit for

the room, his fists bunched in the bath tub, and his eyes startin' straight ahead at nothin'. Ever see that side of a money squeeze? Well, it ain't cheer-ful to watch. There was Pyramid Gordon, who'd been jumpin' around frisky for an hour without leavin' much of any; and now the round drops was pushin' out on his noble brow like he was tryin' to hit a ten dead weight."

"For four or five minutes he wanders around aimless. He picks up a wooden dumb bell and puts it down. He pulls long look at yourself in the glass while I put it up to Pyramid."

Mr. Gordon, he's costumed in a striped swimmin' jersey, cotton runnin' breeches, and a pair of tennis shoes; and him and Swifty Joe is bangin' the handball at the rate of 30 strokes a minute.

"Time out," says I. "There's a vice-president of a bank out front there, Mr. Gordon. Shall I run him down the stairs?"

"What bank?" says he, grabbin' a towel. I hands him the card. He takes one peek at it, and then he laughs. But it wasn't a real hearty laugh. It's one of the kind that don't get past the front teeth—you know—like a bulldog laughs when you try to get a bone away from him.

"I'll have to see what he wants," says Gordon, so I chucks a bath robe on him and he steps to the door.

"That you, Friable," says he. "Is it about those securities?"

"Friable says it is."

"What's the ultimatum?" says Pyramid.

"Before closing time today, sir," says Friable.

"Today?" snarls Gordon. "Why, the blasted hyenas, they said—Never mind. Wait a minute, Friable."

He shuts the gym door and puts his back against it, holdin' his chin in one hand and workin' up a washboard brow in no time at all.

"If this is a case where I can throw you a life-line, Mr. Gordon," says I, "why, just—"

"I ain't," says he, "unless you happen to have \$100,000 worth of negotiable paper handy."

"Oh, Lulu!" says I. "I pass. Can't you scare it up from some of your friends by trade, are you?"

"Telephone," he snorts. "You've got to have both knees on your man's chest and choke it out of his these days."

With that he starts pacin' up and down

be up to the Perzasser until late, when she breaks in and says she's just on the point to handin' me some news.

"It's Ethel, you know," says she. "That young man of her's has asked her to go to dinner with him, and as she's got all alone I'll have to be their chaperon."

"Good!" says I. "Give 'em a chance, though, Sadie. Don't forget that you was young once yourself."

I expect I should have known who Ethel was, and all about her young man; but Sadie's promises to stay in their enter-prises that I loses track of some. On the way over to dinner I touches up Mr. Gordon about Friable. He'd got me some chow, the cheap had, an old aunt who was young once yourself."

"Kind of young to be runnin' a bank, ain't he?" says I.

"Yes," said Pyramid, "but fully old enough to be runnin' for one. That's what he's doin'—messenger."

"Him?" says I. "Why, I judged from the get up and the side he carries, that—"

"He does that on it a week," says Pyramid. "I know because I put him into that bank—father an old friend of mine. Nice boy—Friable. Cost \$100,000 to buy him sunk in his first freshman year. He was half way through the second term when old man Beak petered out and left him without a white bean to his name. Now he has a working capital an old aunt who boards him for nothing, a set of tastes that go with a \$100,000 income, and the somes of a jack rabbit—that's Friable."

"I thought he was lined with it. But here we are. How does this strike you as a food parlor?" Don't it look like a place where they make the lobsters unbent?"

There was no mistakin' that, either—all marble, fresco and stucco glass, and mirrors, and electric light effects. It's one of the newest and giddiest joints around Whiskey Sign row, one of the kind where you don't want to carry a it, but it seems to suit Gordon's taste. He flips a ten-spot towards the floor manager, calls for a corner table under the palms, and orders things as reckless as if this was to be the last meal he'd ever have.

"Get!" says I, lookin' over the bunch of leadin' ladies that was floathin' in, "this is a congregation of hot ones, eh? I didn't know there was so many. Amak look at that one over there, that's a beauty next to that one with the Maiden Lane exhibit around her neck. Ain't that a string of Kohl-nors for you? Say, if I was her I'd take out some plate glass insurance. Yes? No?"

Say, it's worth lettin' some one else pay the price just to get a view of each thing once in a while. I guess Pyramid was gettin' as much fun out of it as I was at that, only he says less. And then, his mind is some occupied gossamin' the chicken washbone come to get into the terrapin stew."

We'd got the best of four fillere dishes that had cost enough to keep a long-shorn man's family in corned beef for a year, when I catches a glimpse of some familiar millinery on exhibition over behind a marble post.

"What—oh!" says I, stretchin' out my neck. "Blamed if that don't look like Sadie. Why, sure it is! And that must be—yes, that's dear little Ethel with her; and Giord's—Why, say, Mr. Gordon, isn't that our young friend Friable that we seen this afternoon?"

Pyramid he takes a peek. "That is Friable," says he.

"Technic!" says I. "Reckonin' from that I'll bet you was speakin' about it, I should guess that Friable was bein' let in for at least a month's wages tonight."

"Hm—hm!" says Mr. Gordon, clearin' his throat. "I wonder where that young—say, I'd like a word with him."

They was some surprised to see us, all around, specially Friable. He'd just been handed the bill and had his roll out. \$87. It was a nice, complacent lookin' roll, not green money, either, but yellow all the way through—and big boys—a bundle of centurys, Mr. Gordon eyes it a minute, and then he eyes Friable and Friable is took with such a sudden chill his teeth almost keeps time with the tump-tump-tump music that the hand was playin'. Sadie see right away that somethin' was up. She breaks off her chinin' to me and wants to know what's wrong.

"Little business deal that Mr. Gordon and Friable's maked up in, that's all," says I. "Maybe you could spare him a minute."

"Don't keep him long," says Sadie. "We didn't," Mr. Gordon don't say a word

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