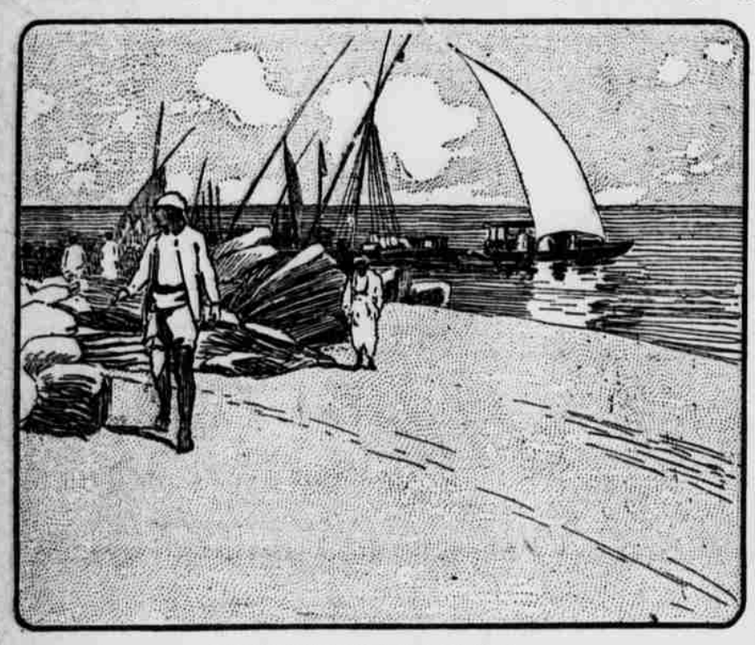
The Conditions of To-day Along the White Nile

OPENING OF THE RIVER TO FREIGHT AND PASSENGER TRAFFIC READS ALMOST LIKE A DREAM

THE opening of the White Nile to regular steamer, and even to tourist, traffic, reads almost like a dream to those who remember the difficulties and hardships narrated by Schweinfurth, Sir Samuel Baker and other explorers only some 30 years ago. During the latter years of the khalifa's rule, a long stretch of the river became so obstructed by sudd that navigation was altogether impossible, and it was only in the early part of 1903 that the energetic work undertaken by the Soudan government rendered its upper reaches once more accessible. On January 1, 1904, a regular service of luxurious paddle steamers was inaugurated, running from Khartoum to Gondokoro and back in about 26 days.

After leaving Omdurman, the river soon becomes some two miles or more in width, and for a day or two the country is still desert in character, with a few mimosa trees on the banks. The first stopping place of importance is El Dueim, the starting point of the caravan route to El Obeid, in Kordofan. Here for the first time the typical African round huts are seen, closely resembling haystacks or old-fashioned beehives. It is a busy town, with good bazaars and markets, the shore strewn with sacks of gum arabic, and covered with camels eager to drink after their long march from the west. By the third day the



ON THE SHORE AT EL DUEIM.

desert is left behind, the river is considerably narrower, and the reedy banks, park-like country, dotted with trees and copses, and general coloring strikingly remind us of England, when a hot August has parched and whitened the grass. Abba island, where the mahdi lived a holy life and received the first revelation of his mission, might be in the Thames, were it not for its 30 miles of length and the breadth of the stream on either side.

Fashoda, now officially called Kodok, is six days' voyage from Khartoum. All that is traceable of the French occupation is Col. Marchand's shadouf-watered garden of bananas and vegetables, and the mounds and trenches of his fort. A few nomadic Arabs of rather a low type are still seen as far south as this, but it is the center of the most important of the black tribes of the Nile, the

SUDD CUTTING ON THE UPPER NILE.

Shilluks. Formerly a fine and fighting race, they were terribly reduced in numbers and vigor by the depredations of slave dealers and the misrule of the khalifa. In many respects they resemble their neighbors of the west and south, the Dinkas, the Nuers and the Bari. All alike are very tall and thin, often appearing painfully underfed, and from living in marshes they seem to have caught the customs of the birds, walking with a peculiar crane-like stride, and habitually standing on one leg. At military stations a little clothing is usual, but the only essential of native dress is for men the spear and for women two small aprons of untanned and uncut hide. To prevent the attacks of mosquitoes, many men smear their bodies with grease and ashes with most uncanny effect, which becomes quite devilish when daubs of red paint are added and the hair stuck on end and dyed red. In hair dressing the Shilluks are completely distinguished from the other tribes. It is said to take some eight years for a Shilluk dandy to dress his hair to his satisfaction. He has to sleep with his head resting upon a wooden pillow specially designed to do no harm to the structure, the commonest forms of which are a ridge like that of an ancient helmet down the middle of a shaven head, or a halo of felt-like substance standing out from the back. Necklaces of beads and of certain small crocodile bones, and massive ivory bracelets weighing as much as 26 ounces are also worn by men. A war dance is a most impressive sight, when, with long hide-covered shields and brandished clubs and spears, with feathers and erect fringes of hyena hair added to their coiffure, and leopard skins draped on their slim bodies, they bound over the plain with wild yells, raising a cloud of dust behind them. This demonstration is the preliminary to an attack on a rival village, or is held in honor of some great event, such as the accession or investiture of a new "mek" or king.

At Lake No, seven days' steam from Khartoum, the Bahr-el-Ghazal joins the Nile, and the sudd begins. For nearly 300 miles the narrow channel winds through a limitless expanse of papyrus, partly rooted, partly floating, and at times completely blocking the river. Sir S. Baker was obliged to go round by the Bahr Giraffe owing to such a block, and in 1880 Gessi, an Italian official, failing to find the current, had to cut his way through, lost many of his men, and suffered so terribly that he died shortly after rescue. The monotony of the winding channel is frequently relieved by lagoons, and it is in these that the larger crocodiles and the hippopotami with their jovial rosy faces, best loved to sport, 20 or more of the latter being sometimes seen in a shoal. The wild hippopotamus differs as widely from our grimy, torpid, bun-eating acquaintance at the Zoo as a Scotch mountain sheep does from his cousin at London park. About half way through the sudd, a few miles of solid ground, covered with bush and fine euphorbia trees, occur on the west bank. Here a field hospital has been established for the sudd cutters, two steamers, several boats and about 300 men being still engaged in clearing the last "block," which is meanwhile circumvented by a false channel, i. e., a channel lacking current. The floating masses of vegetation frequently close up again like arctic pack-ice where a clearing has been effected, and so render vain the laborious days of work. At the Shambe lagoon the sudd practically ends, though marshy ground continues for some distance further south. The river becomes narrower and still more winding, and trees increase in number till they form dense forests.

The Lado Enclave on the west bank, leased by the Soudan government to the Congo Free State, is the prettiest part of the journey. The bank is high and clothed with thoroughly tropical forests with beautiful glades, and mountains come into view in the southwest. The troops and their families form the only population, and all come from the interior of the Congo territories; they are of various tribes—Bongo-Bongo, cannibal Niam-Niam, and others. In physique they offer a marked contrast to the Nile races, being short, sturdy, thick set and stolid-faced. The officers are mostly Italians and vie with the British in their courtesy and hospitality. A few hours' steam from Lado brings us to Gondokoro, the northernmost station of the Uganda protectorate. Here for the first time we find the British flag flying alone. The natives of the district are of the Bari tribe, distinguished some 30 or 40 years ago for its unfriendly attitude to the few Europeans who came in contact with it. With slave-raiding a thing of the past, and security assured by a good government, they now give little trouble. Many of them are now serving in the Uganda rifles, two companies of which are quartered at Gondokoro. Perhaps nothing gives a stronger impression of the enormous length of the Nile than the reflection that, although this pot lies over 1,600 feet above sea level, steamers from the Mediterranean have reached it without the aid of locks. But even when the river is in flood it is only navigable as far as Rejaf, a few miles further, and so, with regretful longing for the great lakes that are so near, we turn northward again.

Tailor-Made and Other Modes of the Present Summer Season

TWO ATTRACTIVE SUMMER GOWNS.

One is made of dead-rose moire and lace, motifs on the skirt, and sleeves of painted silk and lace, and finished with some beautiful antique buttons. The other is of blue taffetas souple, and velvet, finished with Irish lace.

EVEN in the hottest months of the year, we ought to possess at least one really smart tailor-made. Coats and skirts will never go out of fashion on account of their general utility and comfort. Our tailors are really clever, and have grasped the parisian knack of making a tailor-made frock look just as smart in its way as a silk toilette, and, of couse, there are so many occasions on which which a smart tailor frock is more de rigueur than an elaborate confection in silk or muslin.

Of course, the tailor-made admits of many phases; for instance, there is the simple tweed or serge, with a short skirt and stitched, strapped coat, as well as the more elaborate tailor made, beautifully braided and embroidered.

Both in New York and in Paris all have gone mad over checks. The leading Parisian houses started by introducing very small and neat checks in batiste and taffeta, and the giant shepherd's plaid. But I fear they will soon be spoilt; not that the large checks made by a really good tailor are not the very smartest possible wear, especially for race meetings and similar occasions, but from a general survey of badly-cut check boleros and skirts, I have come to the conclusion that it behoves us to be very careful in the selection of a check costume.

Perhaps the best way of treating these rather manly checks is to tone them down with black braiding, dull oriental embroideries, or clever introductions of suede in subdued shades; this latter form of trimming is very effective.

A good many tailor-made, short basque coats are showing waistcoats of embroidered suede, while for wear on hotter days we see embroidered muslin vests. I have seen a dear, little black and white check frock with the new umbrella skirt just touching the ground with five rows of very fine black cloth, on which is laid some subdued oriental embroidery. The coat reaches just below the waist, coming over the skirt, and showing a waistcoat of fine black cloth, with insertions of old world lawn, outlined with oriental embroidery, finished with the neatest little hand-worked muslin collar over a black satin stock. The coat is cut with the long shoulder, outlined with embroidery and a suggestion of black cloth trimming. The sleeves are very simple, finished with a deep gauntlet cuff with a touch of the embroidery and some oxidised silver buttons, which latter also adorn the coat. With this is worn a white chip hat of the simplest description, turned up slightly at the side, the only trimming consisting of a swathing of black oriental satin ribbon tying in a bow at the back, with fringed ends. Both on Tussan and white straws are plain black satin and silk ribbons the favorite trimming for mourning wear.

A real old-fashioned gingham in blue and white, also of the tailor-made order, has a full bolero held in place by a bright rose-colored suede band, showing a waistcoat of rose-colored lawn edged with narrow Valenciennes lace. The skirt of this is gauged round the hips and finished with a simple hemstitched hem and rose-colored stitching. This is a most simple, but very effective little frock.

Of course there are linens and linens. The embroidered linen as seen in Paris, made with a long, full skirt, is quite smart enough for most festive occasions in the country, and even for garden parties, but for the country we also require a simplier kind of linen frock. First of all, the skirt must be fairly short—only a little longer than the genuine trotteuse—and show neat boots or shoes. On no account should a linen skirt be allowed to drag in a punt or boat. And further, I do implore all women who make the simple linen frock at home to cut the skirt slightly shorter at the back than in front and so avoid that hopelessly bedraggled appearance which has not yet died out. Nowadays, when such good patterns can be obtained it is quite inexcusable to wear a skirt which is short in front and dips at the back.

Recollect that there should be no compromise in the matter of skirts; they should just clear the ground in the front and take an upward turn at the back (these are the short, practical skirts of to-day), or else should be full and lie on the ground all round; these latter do equally well for afternoon and evening ewar.

Delaine is a material which can be charmingly treated in both ways. For morning wear the short, full skirt and blouse bodice unlined, worn with a neat leather or suede belt, is delightful.

Very few women ever have really enough to dress on, but the girl who goes about a great deal has certainly a hard struggle to make both ends meet. If, however, she wears well-cut corsets, which to-day are quite inexpensive items, and pretty blouse bodices and full skirts, and, above all, is simple in her style of headgear, she will achieve success where an over-dressed woman will fail.

Simplicity is the keynote of good fashion, more especially in the case of girls, who are wise if they take advantage of being able to wear the bright clear colors which in later years they are rightly a little nervous about wearing.

A neat and pleasing frock for a day on the river is composed of scarlet linen and white embroidery, worn with a white kid band and neat turn-over muslin collar, with a fancy bow of worked muslin at the neck; if it happens to suit the individual wearer a scarlet muslin hat is a most effective frame for the face.

Then a dead-white linen with a burnt straw-hat, relieved with a touch of black or a wreath of scarlet poppies, and a bright scarlet band and foulard tie, can also produce a good effect.

White serge and navy blue serges of the tailor-made order are mostly trimmed with flat silk braid. A delightful costume for dull days consists of a blue serge bolero and skirt, a fine white muslin skirt, and a blue straw French sailor hat, with its wreath of corn flowers.

Serges and linens this year require a certain amount of strapping, embroidery or trimming of some kind to look their best, and the muslins, too, for smarter occasions are somewhat elaborate, boasting, very often, insertions and friils of Valenciennes and many ruchings. ELLEN OSMONDE.

Salt Water and the Skin.

Sea bathing is a curative agent in almost all diseases of the skin. Pityriasis versicolor or "blotches," pruritus senilis or the "itch of the aged," chronic, stubborn cases of eczema and "ring-worms" yield to the healing effects of salt water.

Cheese Salad.

Moisten one neufchatel cheese with milk and form into balls the size of robins' eggs. Sprinkle with finely chopped parsley, arrange on lettuce leaves and garnish with olives or radishes. Serve with French dressing.—Washington Star.

Silk Culture Experiments in the United States

THEY HAVE BEEN TRIED WITH VARYING DEGREES OF SUCCESS SINCE COLONIAL TIMES

THE efforts that are being made by the agricultural department to stimulate interest in the silk industry in this country revives interest in the various previous efforts in this line.

Since early colonial days there have been spasmodic efforts made at establishing a silk industry in this country. As early as 1660 Mr. Aspinwall established nurseries of the mulberry at New Haven and Mansfield, Conn., and on Long Island, and imported eggs of the silkworm. These efforts were continued for more than 100 years without achieving other results than to keep the interest in the subject alive, and were finally arrested by the war of the revolution. About 1771 silk culture was attempted in both Pennsylvania and New Jersey, and was continued until the war put a stop to practically all industries, but it was partly revived after the treaty of peace with England had been signed.

A few people retained their interest in the industry during the early part of the nineteenth century, and in the late twenties a resolution was introduced into the house of representatives directing the compilation of a manual on the culture of silk. House document No. 226 of the Twentieth congress, first session (1828), is a treatise on the rearing of silkworms, by Mr. De Hazzi, of Munich, translated from the German, apparently by Mr. James Mease, of Washington, D. C. This seems to have been the first congressional action favoring silk culture.

Following the publication of the book mentioned there began a determined effort to establish silk culture on a firm basis in the United States. It was estimated that four tons of silk cocoons were produced in 1833 in the county of Windham, Conn. Individuals in Massachusetts were said to have cultivated it with success for 30 years. This interest in silk culture soon passed beyond bounds, and there originated what is known as the Morus multicaulis craze. Anticipating a most profitable investment, if not speedy riches, thousands of individuals purchased mulberry plants of the Multicaulis species and planted large areas of valuable land. The investments far exceeded possible returns; heavy frosts destroyed the plantations of trees, and in the course of a few years the many failures and great disappointments caused so complete a revulsion of feeling that not only was silk culture practically abandoned all through the states, but the very name became a byword.

Ten years or more after the discovery of gold in California had attracted many thousands of people to that state, and at a time when its extraordinary agricultural prospects were first beginning to be exploited, the silk industry began to raise its head there. Near San Jose, in 1861, a Frenchman named L. Prevost, having begun the propagation of the mulberry, succeeded in raising excellent cocoons. In the transactions of the State Agricultural society for 1864-65, Mr. Prevost published a short article on silk culture in California, in which he showed that his first plantings were made in 1853 or 1854, and that he had induced two ladies, named A. Packard and E. Goux, of Santa Barbara, to start a plantation of 3,000 trees, with the result that in 1864 they raised five pounds of silkworm eggs. Plantations had also been made in the San Joaquin valley, and 50,000 trees had been set out near central Utah.

When, in June ,1878, Prof. C. V. Riley was appointed entomologist of the United States department of agriculture, he brought with him from Missouri a strong interest in silk culture and a conviction that this industry could be established in the United States.

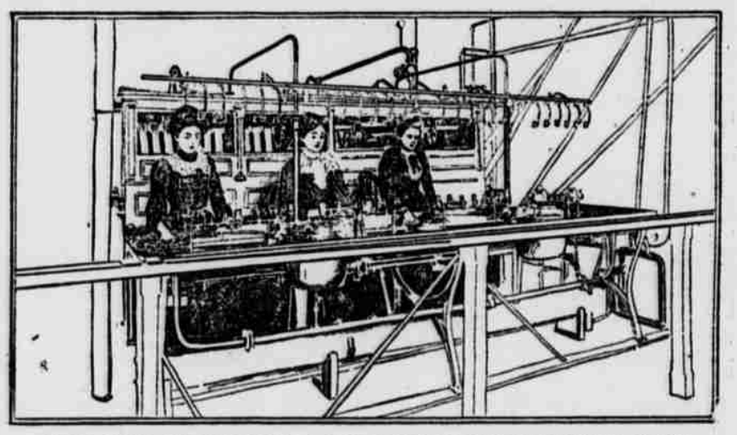
In 1882 trees were sent out to correspondents of the department and the report was made that among the Mennonites in one of the western states mulberry trees had been planted in thick hedges at the limits of the fields and both sides of the highways and byways. The trees were cut down one-third at a time every three years, furnishing an abundant supply of fuel and also serving as windbreaks. These people had almost 20,000 pounds of cocoons on hand for sale.

In the spring of 1885 some 8,000 mulberry trees were distributed, as well as a quantity of silkworm eggs. No cocoons were bought by the department, but examinations were made of home-raised eggs. Two stations had been established after the congressional appropriation became available—one at Philadelphia and the other at New Orleans. At Philadelphia 518 pounds of cocoons were reeled, producing 96 pounds of raw silk. The quality of the cocoons handled was thus shown to be very bad. They cost on the average 85 cents per pound, so that the raw material used in the production of a pound of raw silk cost $4.58. The raw silk produced was sold for $4.40 per pound, by which it was shown that the cost of the raw material was greater than the value of the manufactured product.

The California work during this year was reorganized, and there was reeled at San Francisco 44 pounds of silk. An effort was made during the winter of 1884-85 by Mr. Joseph Neumann and some others to launch the "California Silk Culture Development company," with a capital of $100,000, but the attempt was a failure.

The last appropriation made by congress was $20,000 for the fiscal year ending June 30, 1891. An estimate for a continuance of this appropriation was made by the then secretary of agriculture, but the appropriation was not made by congress, and the work of the department in silk culture ceased for the time, (June 30, 1891).

From that time on very little was done in the United States in the way of raising silkworms. The Utah people formed, during the nineties, a ladies' silk association. Five persons served as commissioners, and received pay from the state. In various parts of Utah, settled by the Mormons, an abundance of white mulberry trees had been planted. The new commission bought every year a supply of eggs, which were distributed in small lots among the Mormon settlers. In the course of time a number of women were selected from among the more skilled silk growers to go from place to place and teach the reeling of silk to children. They received no salary, and their only compensation was free board from the farmers. The reeled silk was for a time sold in New York, but later the market was closed. In the meantime a small silk factory sprang up in Salt Lake city, which, in time, bought a small proportion of the silk produced in Utah. The cocoons were reeled upon hand reels built according to Japanese models, and a part of the raw silk was woven by the people themselves. Silk dyeing was not attempted, but the silk was sent to New York for that purpose.



SILK REEL IN OPERATION AT DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTTURE.

In 1901 the present secretary of agriculture, who had been traveling extensively throughout the country, and particularly in the south, investigating the agricultural conditions and possibilities, came to the conclusion that every possible effort should be made to ameliorate the condition of the extremely poor people of the southern states, and particularly of the colored race. Among the many ideas which suggested themselves to him was that of silk culture, which he very well knew was a household industry in other countries and added materially, not only to the national wealth and prosperity of those countries in which it was carried on, but also to the family incomes of the extremely poor. He therefore, during the following session of congress, asked for an appropriation of $10,000 for investigations in silk culture, which was allowed.

Congress during its session of 1902-1903 repeated the appropriation of $10,000, adding to it the clause making appropriations for entomological investigations, and under this appropriation the division of entomology is working at the time of the present writing.

All of the correspondents to whom silkworm eggs were sent were notified that the department would buy their cocoon at European market prices, and several hundred pounds were purchased in this way and were reeled during the summer. The raw silk thus produced, while excellent in quality, has not been large in quantity, and of course the expense of production has been prohibitive from a commercial point of view. It is the object of the department in thus purchasing domestic cocoons to create what might be termed an artificial market for a time, in order to interest individuals throughout the country in learning the art of silk raising, to stimulate efforts in the production of the best possible cocoons (since the prices paid are graded), and to keep alive the interest so far as possible until the time comes when other and more natural markets shall be supplied.