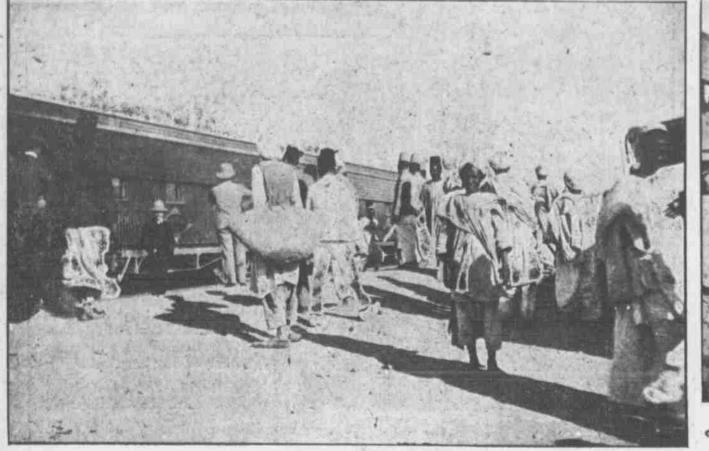
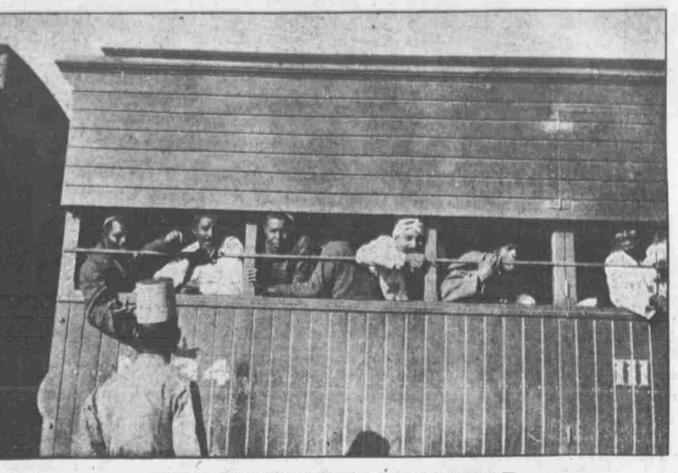
THE OMAHA SUNDAY BEE: DECEMBER 15, 1907.

# New Railway Across the Nubian Desert from Atbara to the Red Sea







#### SCENE AT A NUBIAN DESERT STATION.

(Copyright, 1907, by Frank G. Carpenter.) had a part in building the line and is now could lay my three fingers in it, "is an

of Khartum, in the heart of the Nublan desert, and goes over the mand and rock, blenkest deserts on earth. There is no vegetation at all between here and the Red sea, until within about nine miles of the coast where there is a scanty growth of thorn bush and scrub, which feeds small flocks of camels and sheep. The only inhabitants of the desert are some Nublan tribes who go about from place to place, living in tents of matting, seeking pasture for their flocks and camping down by the occasional wells.

The Red sea road was opened a little more than a year ago; it began doing business as soon as it was finished. All the trade of the Sudan will probably go over it, and, it is believed, much of the tourist travel as well. Already the Mohammedan pilgrims, from central Africa and the whole upper Nile valley are taking this railroad on their way to and from Mecca; some of the tourists who go up the Nile are returning by the Red sea and ships are now salling regularly from Port Sudan to Buez.

### Great Freight Route.

This road is bound to make a great change in the freight rates to the Sudan. 'All the goods of the past have been landed at Alexandria and carried by rail or boat up the Nile to Shellal, a distance almost as great as from New York to Chicago. There it has been taken on steamers to Wady Halfa, and thence on trains to Khartum. The railroad freight had to be transferred on its way to Shellal, being taken from the broad-guage cars at Luxor and placed on the narrow gauge from Luxor

TBARA-(Special Correspondence its manager. We first visited the railroad example of how the sands ruin our car of The Bee.)-I have come to shops, which lie here in the sands of the wheels. The desert is covered with grains Atbara to describe the new desert, covering two or three acres of the as hard as fint. They blow over the ralls, railroad which the British have bleakest part of the earth. They are great and as the cars move they grind out the built from here to the Red sea, sheds, with walls of galvanized iron and steel as though they were emery powder. The road begins 200 miles north roofs of iron and plate glass. There are As a result a wheel's life is short, and we locomotives, cars and steel ties and tele- have to cut down its tire every few months. graph poles lying outside, and going in Moreover, the sand gets into the bearings, up hill and down, for a distance of 132 I found all sorts of railway repair and and there is a continuous wearing which that a tie or pole may look sound, but all miles to Port Sudan. It crosses one of the construction work were going on. The necessitates almost constant repair. machinists were a mixture of whites, blacks and yellows, representing a half serious obstacles to traffic?" dozen different nations and tribes. There "At times, yes. They come with such were British overseers, Greek and Italian violence that they cover the tracks; they They do not make so smooth a road as mechanics, Nubian blacksmiths and many darken the sun so that when you are in the wooden ties, but the ants cannot eat Nublan boys, who were taking a sort of one you cannot see your hand before your them. We are using steel telegraph poles." manual training course in order that they face. They often spring up afar off, and

## Desert Ruins Railroads.

was cut a groove so deep and wide that I is so as to all sorts of woodwork.

"How about your sandstorms? Are they

machinists and trackmen. The machinery times the sand gets into everything and with those from Great Britain." is of modern make and the shops are about grinds its way through all parts of tha as well equipped as our shops at Panama, machinery.

"Another trouble is the white ant," Captain Midwinter continued. "That little termite eats anything wooden. It chews up the insides of our coaches and even attacks the furniture. Where there is the least moisture the ants will go for the railroad ties, and they will also chew out the insides of the wood telegraph poles. They always work in the dark, leaving a thin shell of wood outside. The result is at once it crumbles to pieces. We have to inspect the road very carefully at regular

intervals and watch out for weak points. We are now using steel shells as ties, "I understand that you have some Amer-

from planing machine to planing machine shrinks everything connected with the locomotives, expecting to run them to their salt in it, and another in which the water Captain Midwinter pointed out some of the road. Our rolling stock has to be tight- full capacity for four or five years and was one per cent salt. Of course such pecultarities of the wear and tear which ened up again and again. One of our pas- then throw them on the scrap heap. This water is useless for our locomotives. the desert has upon railway materials. senger cars will shrink as much as eigh- is not advisable out here in the desert, "We are having trouble also in getting a "Here," said he, as he pointed to the teen inches in one wall alone, and we where freight costs so much and the good water supply at Port Sudan. We I asked him several questions as to their wheel of an American locomotive, in which have to put in extra boards to fill up. This trouble of getting our rolling stock is so sank one well to a depth of 800 feet and possible future. He said: great. We want machinery that will stand struck a good flow of fresh water. We

all sorts of trials, including the climate, had hardly completed IL, however, before pends largely upon railmad building. The water. The latter ruins our boilers, and For this we have tanks of galvanized iron, which will carry the road into Khartum, more so in some respects, than the sand, each of which will hold about 15,000 gal-Take a look at this English locomotive lons." which has just been sent in for repairs. Its boiler is full of holes. That comes from the alkali water."

#### Desert Water Stations.

"I suppose the lack of water is one of your chief difficulties, is it not?"

"Yes. This railroad is over three hun- region. The country is vast, and it is just dred miles long and the track is laid now on the edge of its development. Goods may serve as locomotive engineers, under you can watch them coming. At such ican locomotives. How do they compare the distance inland from the Red sea the Khartum and thence sent up the White and through the sand. For about one-third of will be brought over the Red sea road to country is mountainous, but the rest is flat., Blue Niles. We shall have new roads go-"Not well," replied the railroad director. There are no streams, and we have to rely ing out from Khartum connecting the Nile "We have some of your engines which we on artesian wells for our water supply, with all parts of the country, and bath the "Another thing we have to contend bought seven years ago. We are still us- We have bored a number, but we find that rivers and the road will be feeders for this the Sudan to Khartum. There are no with," continued the railway manager, "is ing them, but most of them have been re- the water in many places is salt. We line of ours." As we walked from lathe to lathe and the extraordinary dryness of the air. This paired and made over. You people make struck one which had three per cent of

#### THIRD-CLASS CAR ON THE NILE & RED SEA RAILROAD.

Travel on the Red Sea Railroad.

you make your road pay?" Sudan and Central Africa, and it will have into Kordofan.

the most of the carrying trade of that / "How about railroads from the Sudan to

#### Sirdar on Railroad Building.

Speaking of the railroads of the Sudan, during a conversation with Sir Reginald Wingate the governor general at Khartum,

"The development of the country de-

We want it rustproof and rotproof and the salt water from the Red sea began to road from the Nile to the Red sea is heavily made all around. We have here seep in, and we are now drilling again. already increasing our trade, and it will not only the dry air and the sand to con- There are some stretches along the route do more as soon as we can bring the cars tend with, but in the neighborhood of the where there is no water whatever. In such right into Khartum and Omdurman. We Red sea, also the sait air and the alkall place we have to carry our supply with us. are building a bridge across the Blue Nile, and in the near future, I hope, we shall have a bridge across the White Nile, which will take it down to Omdurman. The road will probably be soon extended "With all this, Captain Midwinter, can into the Gezirch, the plain which lies between the White and Blue Niles, and we "I think so. It is the short cut to the shall have another extension running off

D

Abyssinia?"

"They will come some time, but whether their building will start from the Sudan or from Abyssinia remains to be seen. There is talk now of extending the railroad which runs from Djibouti to near natural difficulties in the Sudan to prevent such a construction and the same is probably true of Abyssinia. It is also a possibillity of the far future that the railroads of the French Congo and those of the Sudan may be joined."

#### Cape to Cairo Line.

"How about the Cape to Cairo road?" "I doubt whether there will be an allcontinuous rail route from Cairo to the cape. We shall probably have a steam route, and that at no distant time. The navigation of the White Nile can be so improved that, by the ald of short lines

also steamers going up the Blue Nile and

Christendom's Most Gigantic Santa Claus Busy EW YORK, Dec. 14 .- Three hun- will be developed the men and women of only a minor offense, but still one that find themselves in one of the institutions as that in any home in the land. The of railroads around one or two places, we dred and sixty-four days of the tomorrow, and sociologists agree that in society cannot overlook for its good or which have adopted modern reformative citizens of this model village range in age could send steamers from here to the dred and sixty-four days of the year New York is "the most "exclusive city in the work of bettering mankind an ounce "exclusive city in the work." But on the three hundred and sixty-fifth, which is Christmas, the barriers are down and rich and poor, high and lowly, units in the work of mak-in an slight improvement.

ing real for the children of the metropolis than slight improvement.

the demoralizing influences of bad family little feet from straying on the pavements, can be cared for,

ing real for the children of the metropolis the most polygiot and gigantic Santa Claus in Christendom. Tet in a city where so much is to be done as here complete success cannot be Curiously enough, however, the human this sort in the country is the children's is new to these children of the streets and Curiously enough, however, the human this sort in the country is the children's la new to these children of the streets and curiously enough, however, the human this sort in the country is the children's la new to these children of the streets and curiously enough, however, the human this sort in the country is the children's la new to these children of the streets and curiously enough the streets and hoped for from prevention alone. Many mites who have come into this estate of village of the New York juvenile asylum slums. Last year some of them were sellof the children of the slums assimilate evil restraint through the juvenile court are at Dobbs Ferry. Here there are sixteen ing papers late into the night, eating a on the main stream of the White Nile are from their surroundings in spite of all that among the happlest of New York's tene- cottages in a tract of 200 arres of fields scanty meal bought from a push cart can be done to help them against them- ment children at Christmas time, and for and woodland, and in each cottage twenty peddler and sleeping in a dirty tenement which leave on January 15 and February selves. Booner or later they commit an that matter, during all the rest of the year, children await the coming of Santa Claus room or on the sidewalk where a little 15 of especially adapted to tourist travel. offense against law and order-many times At least, this surely is true of those who with an interest as keen and wholesome

is made in comfortable steamers. We have

the several

to Assouan. All of these transfers were in Christendom.

from Chicago to Liverpool at a lower freight than that which formerly prevailed cause for this was the high price of coal, as it all had to be brought up the Nile from Alexandria and onward by ship and road. The coal is now coming in from the Red sea and the English are crecting shipping facilities to accommodate the traffic.

#### Atbara River.

But first let me give you some idea of the station which forms the terminus of the Red Sea railroad. Atbara is right in the heart of the Libyan desert. It is about 200 miles north of Khartum at the junction of the Atbara river and the Nile. It is also at the junction of the Red Sea road with the great trunk line which is to go from Calro to the Cape. The northern section of the latter starts at Alexandria. and runs northward through here to Khartum, where the Blue and White Niles come together and form the main stream.

The Atbara river, which can be plainly seen from this station, is the last branch that the Nile has between this point and the sea. The Atbara rises in the Abyasintan mountains and it carries down to the Nile every year millions of tons of the rich Abyssinian mud which makes so fertile the lower Nile valley. During a part of the year this river has a volume which compares with that of the greatest rivers of the world and at other times much of it is as dry as a bone. From March ustil June you can walk across it in most places without wetting your feet and there is only water here and there collected in the depressions and pools. These contain hippopotami, crocediles, turtles and fish. This is the case for about 150 miles above Atbara.

The great floods begin in July and last until October. Then the waters are about thirty feet deep and they roll down in a great river from a quarter to a half a mile wide. They are of a reddish color and are loaded with the volcanic dust of which the Abyssinian highlands are made. When the floods come they bring down masses of driftwood, upon which are sometimes to be seen the dead bodies of elephants and buffaloes. The waters come with great force, and the Atbara bridge. over which the railroad crosses the river, has to be strong to withstand them.

#### Made by Yankees.

It seems strange to me when I flok at the mighty steel spans which cross the Atbara and reflect that John Hull had to hire Uncle Sam to make them for him. The Atbara bridge was constructed by one of our bridge-building companies and was sent here in sections. It consists of six great steal spans of 200 feet each, built upon plers which extend about thirty fest down under the river to the bed rock. The bridge is well built and I am told that it easily withstands the great floods.

#### Desart Bailway Center.

Atbara might be called one of the railprincipal offices and shops, and is the home of the director, Captain E. C. Midwinter Bey. It was through a letter from Midwinter, and had a long talk with him about this new read to the Red see. He Hall, '10, Colfax; Frank Montross, '11,

costly, and the freight rates were high That the spirit of Yuletide may not go and the traffic slow. Now ships go right to waste, but that out of all the good through the Suez canal to Port Sudan, on cheer and generous heartedness the most the Red sea, and there land their goods for benefit may come, there have been estabthe Sudan. There are excellent shipping lished all sorts of undertakings to care for facilities, and the freight is transferred the unfortunate-"contact points." as the almost direct to the cars, which by one social worker calls them. A directory pubcontinuous 500 mile haul land them in lished by the Charity Organization society Khartum. In the past wheat could be sent gives the number which may properly be included in the list as 3,700; but as a matter of fact, the "contact points" in greater between Khartum and Wady Halfa. The New York are nearer 10,000. Each has its special mission with which it busies itself fifty-two weeks in the year; but on the odd day of the 365 all energies are devoted to the same end. Whether it be a prison association or a free kindergarten, a hospital or a fresh air charity, a day nursery,

a juvenile asylum, a legal aid society or one of the variety of educational centers, clubs and schools, each enterprise for the betterment of mankind becomes on Christmas a distributing station for the immense otherwise amount to little better than directing the Christian spirit of Gotham. Christmas, of course, is primarily the children's day. But entirely spart from

very serious reason for the constant work mobile horns are heard now on Christmas a day's rest after the hustling days of the products for the holiday trade, and this through the various "contact points" for day than sleigh bells. Steam hext and holiday trade.

the desire to give holiday cheer to a host

.1. evening December 20 under the auspices of the Christian Endeavor society of that church. The club is unique and different from other

glee and banjo clubs in that it retains the same leader from year to year and in this manner has been able to perfect an organization of which the college is justly proud. Since its organization some fourteen years ago it has had but two leaders and these have worked along similar lines until Grinnell has a glee club system peculiar to that college. The training of the club is most rigid and rehearsals are held three times a week during the fall and winter terms.

Soloists of the club are David R. Peck, violinist, and Richard J. Davis, baritone. In former years the club has confined its trips to the borders of the state of Iowa, but this year a wider range of country will be covered and the following are the dates for the holiday trip: December 6, Van

Cleve; December 17, Des Moines; December 18, Dallas Center; December 19, University Place, Lincoln, Neb.; December 30, Omahai December 21 and 22, Dunlap, Ia.; December 23, Denison; December 24 and 25, Rockwell City; December 25, Iowa Falls; December 27. Webster City; December 28, Clarion; December 20 and 30, Mason City; December 31. New Hampton. A short trip will also be made during the spring recose.

The personnel of the lows College Gies club for the season 1307-8 is as folows: George L. Pierne, director; M. H. Dougway centers of the Sudan. Lying at the lass, manager; Orville L. Routt, president junction of its two chief lines, it has the and traveling manager: First tenore A. L. Risser, '08, 'Danville; E. A. Kibby, '08, Grinnell; J. M. Flanagan, '09, Clinton; D. W. Wilson, '10, Knoxville; F. B. Westiaks, S. the governor general that I met Captain of M., Grinnell, Second tenor: W. S. Wells, '69, Nashua: C. C. Mason, '69, Boons; J. N.

# Electricity a Factor in Modern Christmas Celebration

for hundreds of year the holl- nook and cranny of life today, has assisted naught save its ancient lore and customs cars hurry Christmas callers from house be. Here again electricity finds a useful remain. In this day the old form of cele- to house. On Christmas eve the buildings field. The development of the electric heatbrating the day is seldom seen. As the and streets are ablaze with countless elec- ing and cooking devices has added a host yule log vanished with the advent of the tric lights. Electric telephones and tele- of valuable and useful things which are stove so the simple toys which amused the graph are wishing everyone many happy always acceptable Christmas gifts. The youngsters of yesterday have disappeared returns of the day. The wireless carries electric chafing dish, electric shaving mug dynamic force of happiness that might and in their stead comes today an endless "Merry Christmas" from ship to ship and and electric coffee percolator will be numline of mechanical devices. The dolls of the electric cable flashes the good will bered among the most conspicuous of useblundering good will. Allowing an average today open and close their eyes and even of governments around the earth. of five workers for each of the "contact speak; the toy steam train runs by real The new electric ovens sizale with the also contains electric flatirons, electric points"-and this is a low estimate-there steam power; the miniature electric, car roasting turkey and the electric stove is cookers, luminous radiators, massage maare 50,000 individuals employed in specially is driven by real electricity; the toy ani- rushed to prepare the many appetizing chines, hair dryers, curling iron heaters, mais and insects move about like real life, vlands for which the day of feasting calls, water heaters, tea kettles, baby milk Now Christmas trees are purchased at the Electric doorbells are fingling, electrical warmer and a number of other useful grocery store and are illuminated at night musical instruments furnish the music for things not to mention the electric toys. with tiny electric lights instead of cand: the Christmas carols, the electric motors. With the idea that Christmas presents Instead of pop-corn balls and cornucopias which have worked so faithfully in pre- should consist of useful things as far as of boys and girls to many of whom little of candy the tree is decorated with gilt paring the many valuable presents of a possible nearly all of the larger manufacother happiness ever comes, fhere is a and tinsel ropes and stars. More auto- thousand different varieties, are enjoying turing concerns are pushing their smaller

HILE the ancient traditions of fires and plenty of money makes the day to make Christmas presents just as useful Christmas time have been even more enjoyable than ever before. as possible. While expense is not considhanded down from generation Electricity, which has invaded every ered so material as it used to be it is imday has been so modernized more than any one thing in modernizing portant that the gifts should be useful as and hoproved of late that the Christmas celebration. The electric well as ornamental. This is as it should ful Christmas presents. The electrical list

juveniles. From the youngsters of today electric radiators take the place of open Year by year it grows more the custom less trinkets than ever before.

year will see less money wasted for use-

Iowa College Glee Club on Annual Its Holiday Tour

HE Iowa College Glee club of Sloan; F. F. Allinder, '11, Ottumwa, Bari- Waterloo; H. B. Gardner, '10, New Hamp- Dallas Center; H. L. Brereton, '00, Wav-Grinnell will sing at the St. tone: R. H. Garner, '00, Grinnell; L. A. ton; R. J. Davis, Chicago., Bass: L. D. erly; N. R. Blatherwick, '00, Grinnell; D. Mary's Avenue church Friday Hopkins, '08, Grinnell; H. M. Rowell, '10, Hartson, '08, Ottumwa; O. L. Routt, '08, E. Peck, '07, Franklin, Nels.



IOWA COLLEGE GLEE CLUB.

are gradually exploring comfort was to be found by one who curled They are fitted throughout with electric his weary body on the grating over some lights, have hot and cold baths and some warm cellarway. At the village Christmas good double berth cabins. They carry a eve will be spent before big open fires in sufficient number of stewards and servants the living rooms of the cottages, with to supply comfortable accommodations." games, corn popping, laughter and excited anticipation of the morrow. Dawn will find

each villager snugly tucked in a small white bed which he has come to call his own, and the rising hour will mark the beginning of a round of fun. An entertainment, in which the boys take part, and the distribution of presents is scheduled for the forencon. After that there is to be a genuine, old-fashioned Christmas dinner with "turkey and fixins;" and in the afternoon there will be more presents for some, since friends and relatives have been invited to share the festivities, coming on a special train from the city, twenty miles away.

The visitors, moreover, will not return fashioned by the boys working spare moments in the trades shops, or have been The amount seems small-a cent for per- is a great swamp through which tele fect conduct and satisfactory progress in studies, but that it is given at all is charasylum. There are no harsh repressive healthy, in short, to be just normal chil- telephonic connections between that city dren. Punishment is the last resort to be and Omdurman. used after a denial of privileges incident

to good behavior, such as individual bed rooms and greater freedom in play time. Two things are ardently desired by every boy at the village for Christmas day. These ars fine snow on the hills about the cottages and ice on the several ponds. In the city these things were of little consequence since the opportunity to enjoy them was absent. Now, however, former street boys have become country lads with a keen love for outdoor sports which they are given every opportunity to enjoy. The best that the village does for its charges when they have been made over and fitted with healthy bodies and minds is to send them west, where upon farms they are freed once for all of the evils of the city environment. Some 7,000 children have thus far been assisted in this way. and the records for those who have been placed on farms since the asylum changed

over to the village type several years ago show that all but a fraction of 1 per cent are in a fair way to become valuable citisens. For these, as well as for the walfs still at the village, Christmas is but a red letter day along the road to a new existence. The spirit of the day symbelizes the work of the "contact points."

#### Heard His Own Funeral Sermon.

Truman Pattee, a man about 72 years of age, and a resident of Morrison, Ia., who had some doubts about his recovery from an operation to which he was about his funeral services held before the operation. He declared that if he did not get through all right they wouldn't have to hold services and he could hear what they few private buildings have been in Morrison held the services.

operation after the services were over, the principal place of import and export At the close, of the services he called the for lower Nubia and a large part of doctors and told them that he was ready, central Africa. Mr. Patte is recovering.

Central Africa's Telegraph Route. The sirdar tells me that telegraphic communication # being rapidly opened up along the Sudan part of the Cape to Cairo steam route. Khartum has direct connection with Egypt and through it with all the rest of the world. The wires have been strung from Khartum almost to the Belgian Congo, and by the time this letter is published this place will probably be in direct communication with Entebbe, on Lake Victoria, near the source of the Nile. There are now more than 4,000 miles of telegraph working wires in the Sudan; and last year more than 220,000 private teleempty handed, for many gifts have been grams were sent over them. There is one line which goes to Tewfikieh at the junction of the Sobat with the White Nile bought with the merit money it is possible and there are wires going some distance for a lad to earn by exemplary conduct. up the Blue Nile. Above Tewfikieh there grams are carrried weekly on small oil launches to another telegraphic station acteristic of the methods of the modern farther south. Moreover, I understand that South Africa has run its telegraph lines methods of forcing the boys into a certain almost to Lake Tanganyika, and that it mold, but all along the line they are stim. will be only a short time before those lines ulated toward excellence and encouraged will be connected with the Uganda system. to develop individuality, to be happy and Khartum has telephones and there are also

Port Sudan.

The rallway terminus on the Red sea is known as Port Sudan. The original intention was to end the road at Suskin, but the British surveyors found a much better port a little further north and located the terminus of the railway there. This is Fort Sudan. It lies about half way down the west coast of the Red sea and just opposite Jeddah, about 500 miles south of Suez. The harbor there is the mouth of a creek shaped like a leaf, with the point inland. The water is 200 feet deep in places, and there is deep water close to the shore. Just outside is a coral reef, which protects the harbor. The British are now dredging the edge of the harbor, and they will have it so that the biggest ocean steamers can come right up to the quays. They are building a quay wall of granite blocks nearly a mile long, with electric traction cranes running upon it. The rail read tracks will come out upon the wall and the freight will be loaded and unloaded by the cranes into the ships and the cars. The harbor will be lighted by electricity and the best of coaling arrangements sup plied. The government has already planned an expenditure of \$4,000,000, and most of the improvements are well under way.

A city on a grand scale has been surveyed about the harbor, a park is being planned and the streets are pegged out. The post and telegraph buildings are now going up, schoolhouses and government ofto submit, conceived the idea of having fices are being erected and a dockyard is building. The government owns all the land about the port, and I see that lots are advertised for lease and sale. So far but had to say about him. He, accordingly, structed, but the ships are already landing had the hour for services set for 11 a. m. freight for the Sudan., Six or seven lines recently, and one of the ministers located of steamers now make regular callings there, and the prospect is that Port Sudan Mr. Pattee was in hed ready for the will be the chief port of the Red Sea and

FRANK G. CARPENTER.