

dear; and you play poker in the saloon just as on any big self-respecting steamer.

book which presents it deserves readers and should find them in multitudes.

And then the Niger, which

with its vast and misty horizons is more like an inland ocean than a river. Borne along upon it, scarcely seeing land, the traveller is carried away by those endless dreams which haunt the infinitudes of the sea. Its waters break upon its banks in the monotonously cadenced waves of the Mediterranean shores; and when winds, grown to violence in the desert, swell its waves into a great race, seasickness will convince the most rebellious that the river Niger is of kin to oceans.

After the Niger the town of Jenne, and after Jenne, Timbuctoo, the goal of our adventurer's ambition:

An immense and brilliant sky, and an immense and brilliant stretch of land, with the grand outlines of a town uniting the two. A dark silhouette, large and long, an image of grandeur in immensity,—thus appeared the Queen of the Sudan.... Truly she is enthroned upon the horizon with the majesty of a queen. She is indeed the city of imagination, the Timbuctoo of European legend. Her sandy approaches are strewn with bones and carcases that have been disinterred by wild beasts, the remains of the camels, horses, and donkeys that have fallen down and died in the last stages of the journey.... The details of the distant shape grow clearer by degrees.... fine, long, and deep, and evoking the same impression of grandeur in immensity.... We have entered the town, and, as behind the scenes of a theatre, behold! all the grandeur has suddenly disappeared.... a town that seems to have recently passed through the successive dramas of siege, capture, and destruction.

TIMBUCTOO.*

A BRILLIANT book, brilliantly written, brilliantly illustrated, and brilliantly printed, with rubricated title-page, eleven maps and plans, and over a hundred and fifty illustrations from photographs and drawings made on the spot. The brilliancy bursts on us in the very first page:

Having fallen asleep in a railway carriage on your departure from Paris, you awake six weeks later on a canoe-barge upon the Niger.

Who but a Frenchman could cover space and time so effectively with so few words?

The genius of the typical Frenchman shines on every page of this sparkling narrative of a journey to a corner of the Dark Continent seldom visited by Europeans. To say that it is readable is needless, but it is as instructive as it is readable. Its pictures both by pen and pencil are graphic and striking. It wastes no words. It is dramatic, artistic, pictorial, witty, earnest, expository, scientific, statistical, and poetic all in one.

There are railways now in Africa.

From Dakar (the port of Senegal, and the finest harbor on the west coast of Africa) you go by train to St. Louis, the capital of the colony.... In St. Louis and at Rufisk (an important commercial town in Dakar Bay) you find the streets lighted by electricity.... A small service of steamers starts regularly twice a week from the quays of St. Louis for the Sudan. The management on board is comfortable and

But there is history in this book, as well as description, the history of the Songhois, the Moors, and the French, and of their several conquests, and of the fortunes and misfortunes of the Saharan city of the sands along the course of centuries. And there is prophecy as well as history:

The town begins to show signs of European occupation. A great, herculean negro plays the part of policeman, and promenades the streets with a sabre at his side. An enterprising merchant, Gaston Mery, has established a counting-house.... Cardinal Lavigerie's white fathers have arrived.... and, thanks to them, the town is already endowed with a church (Our Lady of Timbuctoo) and a school. Such are the first days of the new era upon which Timbuctoo has entered, and from which she will emerge more famous than ever; for she possesses one thing which can never be destroyed, and which ensures her perpetual greatness—her unique geographical position on the threshold of the Sudan between the eastern and western Niger, two arms which embrace the whole of Western Africa. I see Timbuctoo throwing aside her rags in the distant future, and raising the form bent by misfortunes. The sandy pool of Sahara will have been cleared and deepened, and the Niger will have brought its abundant waters to the gates of the town.... The town will be embraced by a girdle of civilization. Her gardens, her wealth of verdure, and her palm-trees will be restored to her and, threaded by shady walks, she will become a pleasant and active cosmopolitan city, a point of union between the black and white worlds. The Sahara will be conquered and an iron chain will be put about its sands, the links of which will be railways, and the fleets of the Mediterranean will unite with those of the Niger.

It is a bright and glowing picture which M. Dubois draws as the consummation of his vision, and stranger things have happened than that it should prove true. The

*Timbuctoo the Mysterious. By Felix Dubois. Translated from the French by Diana White. Illustrated. Longmans, Green & Co. \$3.50.