THE PENOBSCOT MAN. By Fannie Hardy Eckstrom. (Houghton, Mifflin & Company. $1.25.)

IN these ten short tales, or sketches, dealing with log-driving and the log-drivers of the Penobscot River, Mrs. Eckstrom has given us something fresh, one might almost say new, in the way of New England life. All the men in these tales have appeared here and there in our New England story-books, but it has been left to this author, so far as the present writer knows (and he is a pretty good New Englander), to devote an entire volume to this class of men, which has been, until very recently, an important factor in the under commercial world of New England, or more strictly, of Maine.

Mrs. Eckstrom has admirably phoneticized the dialect of these lumbermen, part Yankee, part French-Canadian, and part Indian. She has found curious and interesting traits in them, surviving for generations, and she has seen them as a brave, fearless, courageous set, who, as she says, may not be conventionally moral, or virtuous, or ideal, but who do what they make up their minds to do, in other words, their duty, despite everything. The foundations of most of the tales are the singularly brave actions of singularly courageous men, under singularly romantic circumstances. The stories are all interesting and worth reading; but it is as pictures of a life fast disappearing under the régime of machinery and steamboats that the main value and interest of the book lies. In this respect it seems to us that "The Penobscot Man" should, in twenty-five years, be a valuable "human document;" for, despite the form of fiction, the life, the men, the deeds, ring true. To those who would know a strong and fine side of New England manhood this book is to be heartily recommended for present reading — and, what is more, for preservation.