

out the whole North-West; the lumber from them furnishing materials for improving and rendering habitable the immense prairie worlds of Illinois, Iowa and Missouri.

There are some peculiarities in the mode of lumbering on this river, especially in regard to the measurement of the boards, and in getting the product to market. As a general thing, logs are cut in the forest to three lengths, 12 feet, 14 feet, and 16 feet in length. All common boards are sawed  $1\frac{1}{8}$  inch in thickness, thinner stuff than this (except siding) being held at a reduced price in the markets below. Measurements are by line, and no stuff is marked at the mills.

The Wisconsin, above Point Bas, is a succession of rapids and eddies; most of the former surge over rocky bottoms, with a wild current of ten to twenty miles an hour, the channel broken and divided, offering almost insurmountable obstacles to anything like navigation; yet over all these the lumber has to pass. The piloting of rafts over these interminable falls, from Jenny Bull to and below the Dells, requires great skill, practice, courage, and extreme peril and hard labor. This branch of the business has produced a class of men, known as Pilots, who have become masters both of the rapids and the capitalists in the lumber trade; as nothing can be done without them, at least in getting the product to market after it is cut out at the mills. When engaging by the day, they make their own terms, at from five to fifteen dollars. Those of the better character, with a little means ahead, are accustomed to job the business, entering into contract with the producer to take the boards in pile at the mills, and furnishing all necessary men and outlays at their own cost and charges, to deliver the lumber at Dubuque or St. Louis, at a stipulated price per thousand feet. Partaking somewhat of the wild, rigorous character of the river and its whirlpools, they are nevertheless, for the most part, men of generous impulses, energetic, honest and trustworthy,—being frequently entrusted, not only with the custody of a year's earnings of a