

cedar, tall canes, and other plants abound. Many climbers, called here wild vines, encircle the trunks of the trees, and on the banks of the Roanoke, near Weldon, I saw numerous missletoes with their white berries. The Pine Barrens retain much of their verdure in winter, and were interesting to me from the uniformity and monotony of their general aspect, for they constitute, from their vast extent, one of the marked features in the geography of the globe, like the Pampas of South America.

There are many swamps or morasses in this low flat region, and one of the largest of these occurs between the towns of Norfolk and Weldon. We traversed several miles of its northern extremity on the railway, which is supported on piles. It bears the appropriate and very expressive name of the "Great Dismal," and is no less than forty miles in length from north to south, and twenty-five miles in its greatest width from east to west, the northern half being situated in Virginia, the southern in North Carolina. I observed that the water was obviously in motion in several places, and the morass has somewhat the appearance of a broad inundated river-plain, covered with all kinds of aquatic trees and shrubs, the soil being as black as in a peat-bog. The accumulation of vegetable matter going on here in a hot climate, over so vast an area, is a subject of such high geological interest, that I shall relate what I learnt of this singular morass. The best account yet published of it is given by Mr. Edmund Ruffin, the able editor of the *Farmer's Register* (see vol iv., No. 9. January 7. 1837).

It is one enormous quagmire, soft and muddy, except where the surface is rendered partially firm by a cover-