

CHAPTER XIX.

Rivers made turbid by the Clearing of Forests.—Land rising in successive Terraces.—Origin of these.—Bones of extinct Quadrupeds in Lower Terrace.—Associated Marine Shells.—Digging of Brunswick Canal.—Extinction of Megatherium and its Contemporaries.—Dying out of rare Species.—*Gordonia Pubescens*.—Life of Southern Planters.—Negroes on a Rice Plantation.—Black Children.—Separate Negro Houses.—Work exacted.—Hospital for Negroes.—Food and Dress.—Black Driver.—Prevention of Crimes.—African Tom.—Progress of Negroes in Civilization.—Conversions to Christianity.—Episcopalian, Baptist, and Methodist Missionaries.—Amalgamation and Mixture of Races.

WE returned from St. Simon's to Hopeton, much pleased with our expedition. As our canoe was scudding through the clear waters of the Altamaha, Mr. Couper mentioned a fact which shows the effect of herbage, shrubs, and trees in protecting the soil from the wasting action of rain and torrents. Formerly, even during floods, the Altamaha was transparent, or only stained of a darker color by decayed vegetable matter, like some streams in Europe which flow out of peat mosses. So late as 1841, a resident here could distinguish on which of the two branches of the Altamaha, the Oconee or Ocmulgee, a freshet had occurred, for the lands in the upper country, drained by one of these (the Oconee) had already been partially cleared and cultivated, so that that tributary sent down a copious supply of red mud, while the other (the Ocmulgee) remained clear, though swollen. But no sooner had the Indians been driven out, and the woods of their old hunting-grounds begun to give way before the ax of the new settler, than the Ocmulgee also became turbid. I shall have occasion, in the sequel, to recur to this subject, when speaking of some recently-formed ravines of great depth and width in the red mud of the upland country near Milledgeville in Georgia.

The low region bordering the Atlantic, comprising the sea-islands, such as St. Simon's, and the flat or nearly level plains