

CHAPTER XXIII.

Voyage from Montgomery to Mobile.—Description of a large River Steamer.—Shipping of Cotton at Bluffs.—Fossils collected at Landings.—Collision of Steamer with the Boughs of Trees.—Story of a German Stewardess.—Emigration of Stephanists from Saxony.—Perpetuation of Stephanist and Mormon Doctrines.—Distinct Table for Colored and White Passengers.—Landing at Claiborne by Torchlight.—Fossil Shells.

Wednesday, Jan. 28, 1846.—THE steamer *Amaranth* was lying at the bluff at Montgomery on the Alabama River, and was advertised to sail for Mobile, a navigation of more than 300 miles, at ten o'clock in the morning. From information obtained here, I had determined to follow up my geological inquiries by going next to Tuscaloosa, on the Black Warrior River, about 100 miles distant by land, in a northwesterly direction. Every one agreed, however, that it was better for me to go 800 miles by water, half of it against the stream, instead of taking the direct road; so I determined to go first to Mobile, due south, and then up the Tombeckbee to the capital of Alabama, being assured that I should gain, both in time and money, by this great detour. Should I attempt the straight road at this season, no one could insure my making two miles an hour, so tenaciously does the marlite of the cretaceous formation, when it is wet, hold the carriage wheels which sink into it.

Accustomed to the punctuality of northern steamers, we got down with our luggage to the landing at the hour appointed, but were told they were not ready. I re-examined a good geological section in the bluff, till a friend came to me, and regretted I had come down to the boat so early, for perhaps she might not sail till the next day. I was much annoyed at this intelligence, although I had been forewarned that much less value was set on time in the southern states than in the north. At length we went on board, and, having engaged a good private cabin, made up our minds to read and write there, and consider it as our inn.