

from the river-water, it is done by a loud and protracted discharge of steam, which reminded us of the frightful noise made by the steam gun exhibited at the Adelaide Gallery in London. Were it not for the power derived from the high-pressure principle, of blowing out from the boilers the deposit collected in them, the muddiness of the American rivers would soon clog the machinery. Every stranger who has heard of fatal accidents by the bursting of boilers believes, the first time he hears this tremendous noise, that it is all over with him, and is surprised to see that his companions evince no alarm. Habit soon reconciled us to the sound ; and I was amused afterward to observe that the wild birds perched on the trees which overhung the river, looked on with indifference while the paddle-wheels were splashing in the water, and the steam-pipes puffing and gasping loud enough to be heard many miles off.

After we had been on board a great part of the day, we at length got under weigh in the afternoon ; but what was my surprise when I actually discovered that we were ascending the stream instead of sailing down toward Mobile. On asking the meaning of this proceeding, the mate told me, very coolly, that the captain had just heard of some cotton ready for exportation some miles above Montgomery. To this higher landing we repaired ; but news being sent that a rival steamboat was making her way up the river, the *Amaranth* set off down stream in good earnest, moving by aid of her powerful engines and the force of the mid-current with such velocity, that I could readily believe that 800 miles by river was shorter than 100 by land.

The pilot put into my hands a list of the landings on the Alabama River from Wetumpka to Mobile, no less than 200 of them in a distance of 434 miles. A small part only of these consisted of bluffs, or those points where the high land comes up to the river's edge—in other words, where there is no alluvial plain between the great stream and the higher country. These spots, being the only ones not liable to inundation, and which can therefore serve as inland ports when the river is full, or when the largest boats can sail up and down, are of great importance in the inland navigation of the country. A proprietor whose farm