

miles in southern steamboats, since leaving South Carolina, without a mischance, I might have looked on this adventure as very ominous.

The greater part of New Orleans would be annually overflowed by the river, but for the "levee," an artificial embankment, eight or nine feet high, which protects the city. This levee became less and less elevated as we descended the stream. We saw the buildings of several sugar plantations just behind it, at a short distance from the edge of the bank. When we had gone about twenty miles, below the bend called the English turn, I was struck with the resemblance of the Mississippi to the Savannah, Alabama, and Altamaha rivers, where they flow through a broad alluvial plain, with no bluffs in sight. The swamps on both sides, although several feet lower than the river banks, have the aspect, as before stated, of wooded eminences.

The distance from New Orleans to the great pilot-station at the mouth of the river, called the Balize, is about 80 miles by land, and 110 by water. We had been told we should reach our destination before night; but we were scarcely half way, when we cast anchor in a dense fog, followed in the course of the night, by much lightning and rain. We found the temperature of the water to be 46° Fahrenheit, while that of the air had varied, in the course of twenty-four hours, from 50° to 75°. This difference between the temperature of the water and air, often amounting to 30° Fahrenheit, gives rise to the fogs which prevail at this season. The river flowing from the north, where there is now much ice and snow, is always much colder, and I am informed by pilots, that as far as the Mississippi water can be traced, by its color, into the gulf, it is commonly covered, in the spring, with dense fog, while the atmosphere is clear on each side. These fogs are generated in the same manner as ordinary clouds, by the mixture of two currents of air of different degrees of temperature. The river cools the air in contact with its surface, and this colder layer of air mingling with the warmer layer immediately over it, causes the fog to begin to form close to the water. Hence it is frequently confined to the bed of the river, not spreading at all over the banks. The upper surface is often