

telescopes. From this elevation we saw, far to the south, the lighthouse, situated at what is now the principal entrance of the river. The pilots told us, that the old lighthouse, of solid brick-work, eighty-seven feet high, erected on "the south point," was destroyed by a hurricane in the winter of 1839. The keeper was saved, although he was in the building for forty-eight hours before it fell, and, during the whole time, it vibrated frightfully to and fro. Much of the low banks, then bounding the river, were swept away, but have since been restored.

To the eastward all was sea; turning to the north, or toward New Orleans and the delta, I could discover no more signs of the existence of a continent than when looking southward or toward the lighthouse. In the west, Bird Island, covered with trees, was more conspicuous. An old pilot told us it was inhabited by large deer, and was "very high land." "How high above the sea?" said I. "Three or four feet," he replied; and as if so startling an assertion required the confirmation of several witnesses, he appealed to the bystanders, who assented, saying, "It is all that, for it was only just covered during the great hurricane." And well may such an elevation command respect in a town where all the foundations of the houses are under water, and where the value of each site is measured by the number of inches or feet within which a shoal rises to the surface of the sea.

It was a curious sight to behold seventy or more dwellings, erected on piles, among reeds half as high as the houses, and which often grew close to them, most of the buildings communicating with an outhouse by a wooden bridge thrown over a swamp or pool of water, sometimes fresh and sometimes brackish. On one side of the main channel, which our steamer had entered, was built a long wooden platform, made of planks, resting on ailes, which served for a promenade. There we saw the pilots' wives and daughters, and among them the belles of the place, well dressed, and accompanied by their pet dogs, taking their evening walk.

*March 1.*—Having engaged a boat, Dr. Carpenter and I set out on an excursion to examine the bayous or channels between the mud banks. The first stroke of the oars carried us into the