

midst of a dense crop of tall reeds. This plant (*Arundo phragmitis*) is an annual, and inhabits fresh-water swamps, yet we found many dead barnacles attached to them, showing that, in the course of the year, when the river is low, the salt water prevails here, so that these marine cirripeda have time to be developed from the embryo state, and to flourish for some months, till they are killed by the returning fresh water. We could only detect one shell inhabiting these mud banks, a species of *Neritina*. But I am told that the *Gnathodon* is found in the brackish water, a short distance beyond. It was also stated, that about eighteen miles beyond the southwest and northwest passes, or extreme mouths of the river, there are banks of sea-shells of various species. With the arundo was intermixed a tall rush or reed-mace (*Typha*), somewhat resembling the bulrush. We got out and walked on these banks, on which fresh water was standing, so cold and benumbing to the hands, that we had no fear of mosquitoes. At almost any other season these insects would have swarmed here, and tormented us greatly. Even the alligators were invisible, though some of them had been out a few days before. Many paths, recently trodden by racoons, were seen to traverse the reeds, and there were foot-prints of the civet or mink, and of wild cats and water-rats in abundance. We put up several white herons, and many snipes and curlews, and the boat-tailed grackle (*Quisqualus*).

At length returning to the boat, we soon reached a channel blocked up with drift wood in every stage of decay, some fresh and sound, but most of it rotten and water-logged. We walked for hundreds of yards over natural rafts of this timber, the quantity of which, they say, has sensibly diminished since the steamers began to consume so much fuel, for it is now intercepted in large quantities before it gets to New Orleans, and cut into logs for the steamers.

We were desirous of obtaining accurate information from the pilots respecting the recent advance of land on the Gulf, hoping from such data to calculate the time when the mouths of the river were at New Orleans. But I soon found that materials for such a calculation are not to be procured.