

receive its vast burden of water and mud; and if it went to Lake Pontchartrain, it would have to excavate a new valley like *a b c*, many times deeper than the bottom of that lagoon.

The levee raised to protect the low grounds from inundation, was at first, when we left New Orleans, only four feet high, so as not to impede our view of the country from the deck; but as we ascended, both the natural bank and the levee became higher and higher, and by the time we had sailed up sixty-five miles, I could only just see the tops of tall trees in the swamps. Even these were only discernible from the roof of the cabin, or what is called the hurricane deck, when we had gone 100 miles from New Orleans.

The large waves raised by the rapid movement of several hundred steamers, causes the undermining and waste of the banks to proceed at a more rapid rate than formerly. The roots also of trees growing at the edge of the stream, were very effective formerly in holding the soil together, before so much timber had been cleared away. Now the banks offer less resistance to the wasting action of the stream.

The quantity of drift wood floated down the current has not diminished sensibly within the last twenty years, but nearly all of it is now intercepted in the last forty miles above New Orleans, and split up into logs by the proprietors to supply the furnaces of steamboats, which are thus freeing the river of the heavy masses against which they used formerly to bump in the night, or round which they were forced to steer in the day. There has also been a marked decrease, of late years, in the number of snags. The trunks of uprooted trees, so called, get fixed in the mud, having sunk with their heavier end to the bottom, and remain slanting down the stream, so as to pierce through the bows of vessels sailing up. A government report just published, shows that two snag-boats, each having a crew of twenty men, one of them drawing four feet, and the other two feet water, have extracted 700 snags in four weeks out of the Missouri, and others have been at work on the Mississippi. When it is remembered that some of the most dangerous of these snags have been known to continue planted for twenty years in the same spot (so slowly does wood