

Tehuantepec, 135 miles in length, was alluded to as the favorite scheme; and the expediency of forcing Mexico to cede a right of way was spoken of as if the success of their campaign was certain.

It is the fashion for travelers in the New World to dwell so much on the chewing of tobacco, that I may naturally be expected to say something of this practice. There is enough of it to be very annoying in steamboats and railway-cars, but far less so as we journey northward; and I never saw, even in the south, any chewing of the weed in drawing-rooms, although we were told in South Carolina that some old gentlemen still indulged in this habit. That it is comparatively rare in the New England states, was attested by an anecdote related to me of a captain who commands one of the steamers on Lake Champlain, who prided himself on the whiteness of his deck, intended to be kept as a promenade. Observing a southerner occasionally polluting its clean floor, he ordered a boy to follow him up and down with a swab, to the infinite diversion of the passengers, and the no small indignation of the southerner, when at length he discovered how his footsteps had been dodged. The governor of a penitentiary told me, that to deprive prisoners of tobacco was found to be a very efficient punishment, and that its use was prohibited in the New England madhouses, as being too exciting.

From Boston we went to Ipswich, in Massachusetts, to visit Mr. Oakes, the botanist, with whom we had spent many pleasant days in the White Mountains.* He set out with us on an excursion to Wenham Lake, from which so much ice is annually exported to England and other parts of the world.

This lake lies about twenty miles to the northeast of Boston. It has a small island in the middle of it, is about a mile long and forty feet deep, and is surrounded by hills of sand and gravel, from forty to a hundred feet high. The water is always clear and pure, and the bottom covered with white quartzose sand. It is fed by springs, and receives no mud from any stream flowing into it; but at the lower extremity a small brook of transparent water flows out. In some parts, however, there must, I presume, be a soft and muddy bottom, as it is inhabited by eels, as well as by

* See vol. i. p. 64.