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, by W. F. Waugh**

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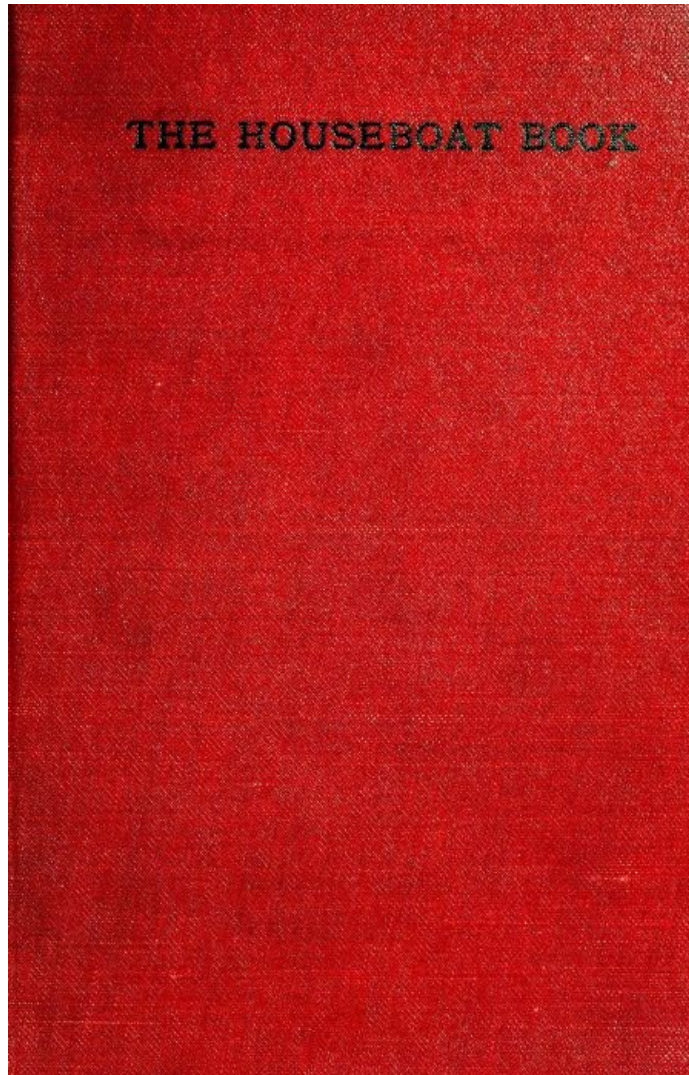
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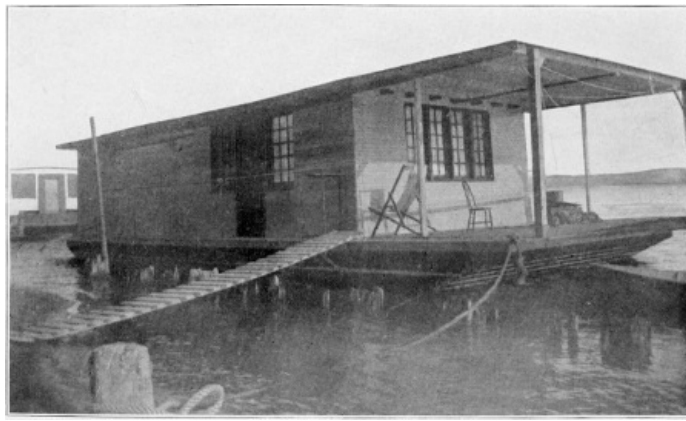
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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE HOUSEBOAT BOOK: THE LOG OF A
CRUISE FROM CHICAGO TO NEW ORLEANS ***





THE HELEN W. OF CHICAGO.

THE HOUSEBOAT BOOK

**The Log of a Cruise from
Chicago to New Orleans**

BY

WILLIAM F. WAUGH

Y

**THE CLINIC PUBLISHING COMPANY
CHICAGO
1904**

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CHAPTER I.

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PRELUDE.

Once upon a time there was a doctor who, after many years spent in that pursuit concluded to reform. But strong is the influence of evil associates, and those who had abetted him in his old ways still endeavored to lead him therein.

One day his good angel whispered in his ear the magic words, "House boat;" and straightway there arose in his mental vision the picture of a broad river, the boat lazily floating, children fishing, wife's cheery call to view bits of scenery too lovely for solitary enjoyment, and a long year of blissful seclusion where no tale of woe could penetrate, no printer's devil cry for copy. Incidentally the tired eyes could rest, and the long stretches of uninterrupted time be transmuted into creative work; with no banging telephone or boring visitor to scatter the faculties into hopeless desuetude. Sandwich with hours busy with those recuperative implements, the rod and gun, the adventures and explorations incident to the trip, and here was a scheme to make the heart of a city-tired man leap.

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So he went to the friend whose kindly appreciation had put a monetary value upon the emanations from his brain, and suggested that now was the time for the besom of reform to get in its work, and by discharging him to clear the way for new and improved editorial talent. But the friend received the suggestion with contumely, threatening to do the editor bodily harm if he so much as mentioned or even contemplated any attempt to escape. The scheme was perforce postponed for a year, and in the meantime attempts were made to gather useful information upon the subject.

The plan seemed simple enough—to leave Chicago by the Drainage Canal, float down to the Illinois River, then down it to the Mississippi, by it to New Orleans, then to strike off through the bayous or canals into the watery wastes southwest, and spend there the time until the approach of the Carnival called us back to the southern metropolis. By starting about September 1st we could accompany the ducks on their southern journey, and have plenty of time to dawdle along, stopping wherever it seemed good to us.

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So we went to work to gather information. The great bookstores were ransacked for books descriptive of houseboat trips down the Mississippi. There were none. Then we asked for charts of the Illinois and Mississippi. There were none of the former in existence; of the latter the Government was said to have published charts of the river from St. Louis to the Gulf; and these were ordered, though they were somewhat old, and the river changes constantly. Then a search was made for books on American houseboats and trips made upon them; books giving some rational information as to what such things are, how they are procured, furnished, managed, what is to be had and what avoided; but without avail. Even logs of canoe trips on the great river, and accounts of recent steamer trips, are singularly scarce. People insisted on forcing upon our notice Bangs' "Houseboat on the Styx," despite our reiterated asseverations that we did not care to travel over that route just now. Black's "Strange Adventures of a Houseboat" is principally remarkable for the practical information it does not give.

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Scarcely a juvenile was to be found treating of the subjects; nor have the novelists paid any attention to the rivers for a third of a century. Books of travel on the great system of inland American waters are similarly rare.

It has finally come home to us that this is a virgin field; that the great American people reside in

the valley of the greatest river in the world, and pay no attention to it; write nothing of it, know nothing, and we fear care nothing. And while many persons utilize houseboats, and many more would do so if they knew what they are, and how much pleasure is to be derived therefrom, no one has seen fit to print a book that would make some amends to an intending purchaser for his lack of experience. Possibly the experiences detailed in the following pages may in some degree fulfill this need, and aid some one to avoid the mistakes we made.

CHAPTER II.

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GATHERING INFORMATION.

From magazine articles we gathered that a new boat would cost about \$1,000. We were assured, however, that we could buy an old one that would answer all needs for about \$100. We were told that if the boat measures 15 tons or more our rapidly-becoming-paternal government requires the services of a licensed pilot. All steamers are required to have licensed engineers, though the requirements for an owner's license are not very rigid. Gasoline boats as yet do not come under any laws, though there is talk of legislation upon them, and there may be, by the time this book reaches its readers.

Houseboats usually have no direct power, but are gently propelled by long sweeps. If the boat is small this is all right; but as large a boat as ours would require about four strong men to hold her steady in dangerous places. It takes a much smaller investment if power is excluded; and if the boat goes only down stream, with force enough to manage her in currents and blows it is cheaper to hire towage when requisite. But if possible have power, and enough. Many boats we saw in the Mississippi are fitted with stern wheels and gasoline engines, and these have great advantages. In cold weather the engineer is protected, and can run in and get warm, while if in a towing boat he may suffer. The expense is less, as there is the hull of the towboat to buy when separate. The motion communicated to the cabin by an attached engine is soon forgotten. You should not calculate in selling either cabin, engine or towboat when ready to leave for the north, as prices in the south are uncertain; and if you have not invested in power you lose that much less if you desert your outfit.

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Between steam and gasoline as power there is much to be said. With steam you require a license, it is dirty, more dangerous, takes time to get up steam, and care to keep it up. But you can always pick up wood along shore, though an engine of any size burns up a whole lot, and it takes so much time to collect, cut and saw the wood, and to dry it, that if you are paying a crew their time makes it costly. Low down the river, in times of low water, coal is to be gathered from the sand bars; but this cannot be counted upon as a regular supply. But you can always get fuel for a wood-burning engine, and if you contemplate trips beyond civilization it may be impossible to obtain gasoline.

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Gasoline boats are cleaner, safer, always ready to start by turning a few buttons, and cheaper, if you have to buy your fuel. If you are going beyond the reach of ordinary supplies you may run out, and then your power is useless; but in such cases you must use foresight and lay in a supply enough for emergencies.

Both varieties of engines are liable to get out of order, and require that there shall be someone in charge who understands their mechanism and can find and remedy the difficulty. Our own preference in Mississippi navigation is unquestionably for the gasoline. If we go to the West Indies or the Amazon we will employ steam. Were we contemplating a prolonged life on a boat, or a trading trip, we would have the power attached to the cabin boat; and the saved cost of the hull of a towboat would buy a small gasoline cutter—perhaps \$150—which could be used as a tender. But when you get power, get enough. It saves more in tow bills than the cost of the engine; and if it is advisable to bring the outfit back to the north full power saves a great loss. *Quod est demonstrandum* in the course of this narrative.

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CHAPTER III.

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PREPARATIONS.

Our search for a second-hand houseboat was not very productive. At Chicago the choice lay between three, and of these we naturally chose the worst. It was the old Jackson Park boat, that after long service had finally become so completely watersoaked that she sank at her moorings; but this we learned later. In fact, as in many instances, our foresight was far inferior to our hindsight—and that is why we are giving our experiences exactly as they occurred, so that readers may avoid our mistakes.

This houseboat was purchased for \$200, the vendor warranting her as sound and safe, in every way fit and suitable for the trip contemplated. He even said she had been through the canal as far as the Illinois river, so there was no danger but that she could pass the locks. The cabin measured 24 x 14.3 x 7 feet; and there was a six-foot open deck in front, three feet behind, and two feet on either side, making her width 18 feet 3 inches. One end of the cabin was partitioned off, making two staterooms and a kitchen, each 7 feet in depth. The rest formed one large room. It was well lighted, with 14 windows; and had doors in each side and two at the front opening into the kitchen and one stateroom. The roof was formed of two thicknesses of wood and over this a canvas cover, thickly painted.

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The staterooms were fitted with wire mattress frames, arranged to be folded against the sides when not in use for beds. In the large room we placed an iron double bed and two single ones, shielded from view by a curtain. There was a stove capable of burning any sort of fuel; two bookcases, dining table, work table, dresser, chairs, sewing machine, sewing table, etc. We had a canvas awning made with stanchions to go on the top, but this we never used, finding it pleasanter to sit on the front deck.

Among the equipment were the following: A canoe with oars and paddle, 50-lb. anchor, 75 feet $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch rope, 75 feet 1-inch rope, 100 feet $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch rope, boat pump, dinner horn, 6 life preservers, 2 boathooks, 2 hammocks, 4 cots, Puritan water still, small tripoli filter, a tube of chemical powder fire extinguisher, large and small axes, hatchet, brace and bits, saws, sawbuck, tool-box well furnished, soldering set, repair kit, paper napkins, mattresses, bedding, towels, and a liberal supply of old clothes, over and under. We had an Edison Home phonograph and about 50 records; and this was a useful addition. But many articles we took were only in the way, and we shall not mention them.

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We had a full supply of fishing material, frog spears, minnow seine, minnow trap, railroad lantern, tubular searchlight with bull's-eye reflector, electric flashlight with extra batteries, twine, trotline, revolver and cartridges, 50-gauge Spencer for big game, and as a second gun, with 150 cartridges; 32-H. P. S. Marlin rifle, with 400 cartridges; Winchester 12-gauge pump, with 2,000 shells; Browning automatic shotgun; folding decoys, 4 shell bags, McMillan shell extractor, U. S. Gov't rifle cleaner, Marlin gun grease, grass suit, shooting clothes heavy and light, hip boots, leggings, sweaters, chamois vest, mosquito hats, two cameras with supplies, including developers, compass (pocket), copper wire, whetstone, can opener and corkscrew, coffee pot to screw to wall, matches in waterproof box, a Lehman footwarmer and two Japanese muff stoves, with fuel. For the kitchen we got a gasoline stove with an oven. There was a good kerosene lamp, giving sufficient light to allow all hands to read about the table; also three lamps with brackets for the small rooms.

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In preparing our lists of supplies we derived great assistance from Buzzacott's "Complete Camper's Manual." It was a mistake to buy so many shot-gun shells. All along the river we found it easy to get 12-gauge shells, better than those we had.

The boy rejoiced in a 20-gauge single barrel. We had so much trouble in getting ammunition for it that we purchased a reloading outfit and materials at Antoine's. This little gun was very useful, especially when we wanted little birds.

A full supply of medicines went along, mainly in alkaloidal granules, which economize space and give extra efficiency and many other advantages. A pocket surgical case, a few of the instruments most likely to be needed, surgical dressings, quinidine (which is the best preventive of malaria among the cinchona derivatives), insect powder, sulphur for fumigation, potassium permanganate for the water, petrolatum, absorbent cotton, a magnifying glass to facilitate removal of splinters, extra glasses for those wearing them; and a little whisky, which was, I believe, never opened on the entire trip.

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The boy was presented with a shell belt; and a week before starting we found he was sleeping with the belt on, filled with loaded shells. Say, tired and listless brethren, don't you envy him? Wouldn't you like to enjoy the anticipation of such a pleasure that much?

Among the things that were useful we may add a game and shell carrier, a Marble axe with sheath, and a Val de Weese hunter's knife. After serving their time these made acceptable presents to some kindly folk who had done much to make our stay at Melville pleasant.

We fitted out our table and kitchen from the cast offs of our home, taking things we would not miss were we to leave them with the boat when through with her. It matters little that you will find the most complete lists wanting in important particulars, for ample opportunity is given to add necessaries at the first town. But the Missis insisted on taking a full supply of provisions, and we were very glad she did. Buzzacott gives a list of necessaries for a party of five men camping five days. It seems liberal, when added to the produce of rod and gun.

[Pg 18]

20 lbs. self-raising flour.
6 lbs. fresh biscuit.
6 lbs. corn meal.
6 lbs. navy beans.
3 lbs. rice.
5 lbs. salt pork.
5 lbs. bacon.
10 lbs. ham.

15 lbs. potatoes.
6 lbs. onions.
3 lbs. can butter.
3 lbs. dried fruits.
½ gallon vinegar pickles.
½ gallon preserves.
1 qt. syrup.
1 box pepper.
1 box mustard.
6 lbs. coffee.
6 lbs. sugar.
½ lb. tea.
½ lb. baking powder.
4 cans milk and cream.
1 sack salt.
6 boxes matches (tin case).
1 lb. soap.
1 lb. corn starch.
1 lb. candles.
1 jar cheese.
1 box ginger.
1 box allspice.
1 lb. currants.
1 lb. raisins.
6 boxes sardines.
1 screwtop flask.

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Fresh bread, meat, sausage, eggs for first days.

The wife laid in her stock of provisions, costing about sixty dollars and including the articles we use generally.

Among the books we found that seemed likely to provide some useful information are:

Trapper Jim—Sandys.

Last of the Flatboats—Eggleston.

Houseboat series—Castlemon.

Bonaventure—Cable.

Down the Mississippi—Ellis.

Down the Great River—Glazier.

Four Months in a Sneak Box—Bishop.

The Wild-Fowlers—Bradford.

The Mississippi—Greene.

The Gulf and Inland Waters—Mahan.

The Blockade and the Cruisers—Soley.

The History of Our Navy—Spears.

In the Louisiana Lowlands—Mather.

Hitting and Missing with the Shotgun—Hammond.

Among the Waterfowl—Job.

Up the North Branch—Farrar.

Botanist and Florist—Wood.

The Mushroom Book—Marshall.

Wild Sports in the South—Whitehead.

Cooper's Novels.

Catalog from Montgomery Ward's mail order house.

And a good supply of other novels, besides the children's schoolbooks.

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By writing to the U. S. port office at St. Louis we secured a list of the lights on the Western rivers, a bit antique, but quite useful. From Rand & McNally we also obtained a chart of the Mississippi River from St. Louis to the Gulf, which was invaluable. The Desplaines had a lot of separate charts obtained from the St. Louis port officers, which were larger and easier to decipher.

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The question of motive power was one on which we received so much and such contradictory advice that we were bewildered. It seemed preferable to have the power in a tender, so that if we were moored anywhere and wished to send for mail, supplies or aid, the tender could be so dispatched without having to tow the heavy cabin boat. So we purchased a small gasoline boat with a two-horse-power engine. At the last moment, however, Jim persuaded us to exchange it for a larger one, a 20-footer, with three-horse-power Fay & Bowen engine. In getting a small boat see that it is a "water cooler," as an air-cooler will run a few minutes and stop, as the piston swells. Also see that she is fitted with reversing gear. Not all boats are. This was a fine sea boat, the engine very fast, and she was well worth the \$365 paid for her.

The crew of the "Helen W. of Chicago," consisted of the Doctor, the Missis, the Boy (aged 11), Miss Miggles (aged 10), Millie the house-keeper, Jim and J. J. We should have had two dogs, little and big; and next time they go in as an essential part of the crew.

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We carried far too many things, especially clothes. The most comfortable proved to be flannel shirt or sweater, blue cloth cap, tennis shoes, knickerbockers, long wool stockings, and a cheap canvas hunting suit that would bear dirt and wet. Knicks attract too much attention outside the city. One good suit will do for visiting in the cities.

CHAPTER IV.

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THE FIRST SHIPWRECK.

Our first experience in shipwrecks came early. We were all ready to start; the home had been rented, furniture disposed of, the outfit ordered, and the boat lay ready for occupancy, fresh and clean in new paint—when we discovered that we had to go through the old canal—the Illinois and Michigan—to La Salle, instead of the drainage ditch, on which we were aware that Chicago had spent many millions more than drainage demanded, with the ulterior object of making a deep waterway between the great city and the Gulf! Here was an anxious thought—would the old canal admit our boat? We visited headquarters, but naturally no one there knew anything about so essential a matter. We went down to the first lock at Bridgeport, and the lockmaster telephoned to Lockport, but the Chief Engineer was out and no one else knew the width of the locks. But finally we met an old seafarer who carried in his pocket a list of all the locks of all the canals in the U. S., including Canada; and from him we got the decisive information that the narrowest lock admitted boats with a maximum width of 17 feet. Ours measured 18 feet 3 inches!

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After prolonged consultation it was determined that the only way out was to cut off enough of the side to admit her. So the purveyor, who had guaranteed the boat as fit in every way for the trip, began to cut, first building an inner wall or side with two-by-fours. Getting this up to a convenient height he concluded to try for leaks, and slid the scow back into the water with the side half up. It was just an inch too low; and when he rose next morning the scow reposed peacefully on the bottom of the river, the water having, in the night, come in at the low side. The following week was consumed in endeavors to raise the boat and get the water out. Meanwhile we were camping out in an empty house, eating off the kitchen table, sleeping anywhere, and putting in spare time hurrying the very deliberate boatmen.

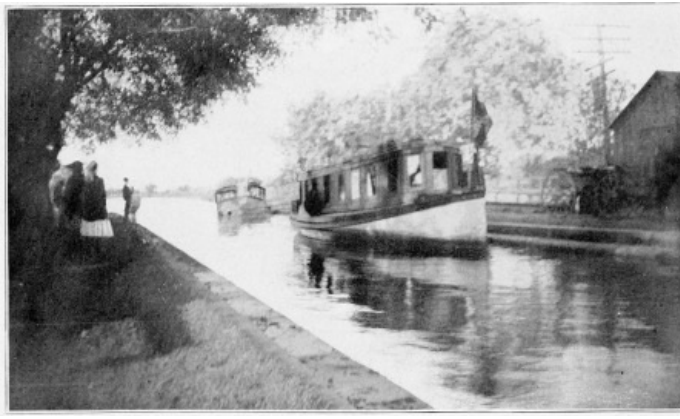
Just then we received from the Sanitary District folks the belated information that the locks are 18 feet wide, and 110 feet long, and that the height of the boat from the water line must not exceed 17 feet to enable it to pass under bridges.

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For nearly a week various means of raising the craft were tried, without success. Finally the wind shifted during the night, and in the morning we found the upper margin of the hull out of water. The pumps were put in operation and by noon the boat was free from water. It was found to be reasonably watertight, despite the straining by jacks, levers, windlasses, and other means employed to raise first one corner and then another, the breaking of ropes and planks by which the corners had been violently dropped, etc. But the absence of flotation, as evidenced by the difficulty of raising an unloaded boat, wholly constructed of wood, should have opened our eyes to her character.

The side was rapidly completed, the furniture and stores brought aboard, and the boats started down the canal, while the Doctor and Missis went to Joliet to meet the outfit and avoid the odors of the drainage. The men ran all night and reached Lock No. 5, at Joliet, about 5 p. m., Wednesday, Sept. 30, 1903. This was altogether unnecessary, and we might as well have come down on the boat. Meanwhile we found a shelter in a little bakery near the Joliet bridge, where the kindly folk took care of the little invalid while we watched for the arrival of the boats.

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THE OLD CANAL.

CHAPTER V.

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THE CANAL.

That night was our first on board. We found the boat piled high with the "necessaries" deemed imperative by the Missis. Days were spent in the arrangement of these, and in heaving overboard articles whose value was more than counterbalanced by the space they occupied. Hooks were inserted, trunks unpacked, curtains hung, and it is safe to say that our first week was thus occupied. The single beds were taken down and the children put to sleep on cots consisting of strips of canvas with eye-holes at the corners. These were fastened to stout hooks, screwed into the walls. Difficulty supervened in finding a place to fasten the outer ends, and we had to run ropes across the cabin, to our great annoyance when rising during the night. Otherwise these are the best of cots, as they can be taken down and rolled away during the day.

The delight of those days, drifting lazily down the old canal, the lovely vistas with long rows of elms along the deserted towpath, the quiet farms. Sometimes it was showery, at others shiny, but we scarcely noticed the difference. It is surely a lazy man's paradise. There is no current in the canal, and the launch could only drag the heavy scow along at about a mile and a half an hour; while but little wind sufficed to seriously retard all progress. Even with our reduced width it was all we could do to squeeze through the locks, which are smaller toward the bottom. At No. 5 we only got through after repeated trials, when the lock-keeper opened the upper gates and let in a flood of water, after the lower had been opened, and the boat worked down as close as possible to the lower gate. And here let us say a word as to the uniform courtesy we received from these canal officials; something we were scarcely prepared to expect after our experience with the minor official of the city. Without an exception we found the canal officials at their posts, ready to do their duty in a courteous, obliging manner.

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Friday, Oct. 2, we reached Lock 8 just at dusk, passing down as a string of three canal boats passed up for Chicago, laden with corn. We are surprised at the number of boats engaged in this traffic; as we had thought the canal obsolete, judging from the caricatures in the daily papers. Coal was passing down and corn and wood up. During this day 12 laden boats went by us.

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Saturday, Oct. 3.—Head winds blew the boat about, to the distraction of the crew. We tried towing, with a line along the towpath, and the boat banged against the bank constantly. But the weather was lovely and clear, everyone happy and the interior economy getting in order. It was well the wise little Missis insisted on bringing a full supply of provisions, for we have not passed a town or a store since leaving Joliet, and we would have fared poorly but for her forethought. We stopped at a farm, where we secured some milk for which we, with difficulty, persuaded the farmer to accept a nickel—for a gallon. He said milk was not so precious as in the city. But at Lock 8 the keeper's wife was alive to her opportunities and charged us city prices.

We were well pleased with our crew. Jim is a guide from Swan Lake, aged 24; fisher, hunter, trapper and boatman all his life. J. J. is a baseball player and athlete about the same age. Both volunteered for the trip, for the pleasure of it. They asked to go for nothing, but we do not care to make such an arrangement, which never works well and leads to disagreements and desertions when the novelty has worn off; so we paid them wages. During the months they were with us we never asked them to do a thing they did not willingly do, nor was there ever a complaint of them in the score of behavior, lack of respect for the ladies, language before the children, or any of those things that might have led to unpleasantness had they not been gentlemen by instinct and training. They are built of muscle and steel springs, never shirk work, have good, healthy appetites and are always ready to meet any of the various requirements of the trip. Everything comes handy to them. They put the boat in shape, run the engine, do carpentry and any other trade that is needed. It was hard to guide the unwieldy boat so they designed a rudder, went to town for material, hunted up a blacksmith and showed him what they wanted, and put the rudder

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together and hung it in good shape. It has a tiller up on the roof, whence the steersman can see ahead. [Pg 31]

We secured some food at Morris, with difficulty. By noon the rudder was hung and we were off for Seneca, the boy happy in charge of the tiller. We wish we were a word painter, to describe the beauty of the scenery along the canal. The water has lost all reminiscence of Chicago's drainage. At 3 p. m. we stopped at a farm and obtained milk, eggs and chickens, with half a bushel of apples for good measure. The boat excites much interest among the farmers. At Morris we had our first call upon the drugs, the boys finding a friend whose horse had a suppurating wound. Dressed it with antiseptics and left a supply. We each took two grains of quinine, to ward off possible malaria. Millie suffered serious discomfort, her whole body breaking out, with itching and flushing, lasting some hours. And this was about the only time we took quinine during the trip, except when wet, to prevent a cold. We never saw anything like malaria.

After tea we had a delightful run by moonlight, stopping several miles from Seneca. It is a good rule to stop before coming to a town, as the loafers do not get sight of the boat until it comes in next morning. [Pg 32]

On Monday we ran into Seneca, and stopped for supplies. We always needed something, ample as we thought our outfit. It is always ice, milk, eggs, butter, or fruit. Here it is gasoline, on which we depend for our motive power.

It is useless to look for the picturesque in the Illinois farmer. He speaks the language of the schools, with the accent of culture, and wears his hair and whiskers in modern style. Probably he hears more lectures, sees more operatic and histrionic stars, reads more books and gets more out of his newspapers than does the city man. In fact, there is no country now; the whole State is merely a series of suburbs.

During the afternoon we reached Marseilles, where we tied up for the night. We obtained a gallon of milk here, and a can of gasoline. A neighboring well supplied artesian water, which tasted too much of sulphur for palates accustomed to Chicago water. In fact, we now hear that there is no such water as that of the great lake metropolis.

Tuesday, Oct. 6, we left Marseilles with a favoring breeze. Our craft sails best with the wind about two points abaft the beam. When it shifts to two points forward we are driven against the shore. We had hard work to reach the viaduct over the Fox river. At 2 p. m. we reached Ottawa, and there replenished our gasoline barrel. *Hinc illae lachrymae*. At Seneca and Marseilles we had been able to obtain only five gallons each, and that of the grade used for stoves. We also learned that we might have saved three dollars in lock fees, as below La Salle the water is so high that the dams are out of sight and steamers pass over them. The registry and lock fees from Chicago to St. Louis are \$6.88. [Pg 33]

We had now passed ten locks with safety, but the captain of the Lulu tells us the next is the worst of all.

It is evident that our boat is not fit for this expedition, and we must take the first opportunity to exchange her for one with a larger and stronger scow, to cope with the dangers of the great river. The scow should stand well up from the water so that the waves will not come over the deck. Every morning and night there is over a barrel of water to be pumped out, but that might be remedied by calking. [Pg 34]

Near Marseilles we passed a number of houseboats, and hear that many are being prepared for the trip to St. Louis next summer. Berths along the river front there are now being secured.

Among our useful supplies is a portable rubber folding bath tub. It works well now, but I am doubtful as to its wearing qualities. The water-still is all right when we have a wood or coal fire going, but when run by a gasoline stove it distils nearly as much water as it burns gasoline.

Wednesday.—We came in sight of the lock below Ottawa about 5 p. m. last night, and tied up. All night the wind blew hard and rattled the stores on the roof. Rain comes is around the stovepipe, in spite of cement. This morning it is still raining but the wind has fallen. A rain-coat comes in handy. We must add oilskins to our outfit. A little fire goes well these damp mornings, taking off the chill and drying out the cabin. Fuel is the cheapest thing yet. We pick up a few sticks every day, enough for the morning fire, and could load the boat with wood, if worth while. And there is no better exercise for the chest than sawing wood. We keep a small pile behind the stove to have it dry. [Pg 35]

The gasoline launch is a jewel—exactly what we need; and works in a way to win the respect of all. The boys got wire rope for steering, as the hemp stretched; but the wire soon wore through.

Thirty cents a pound for creamery butter at Ottawa. We must rely on the farms.

Whence come the flies? The ceiling is black with them. We talk of fumigating with sulphur. The cabin is screened, but whenever the door is opened they come streaming in. The little wire fly-killer is a prime necessity. It is a wire broom six inches long and as wide, with a handle; and gets the fly every time. Burning insect powder gets rid of mosquitoes, but has no effect on flies.

A string of canal boats passed up this morning, the first we have seen since leaving Seneca. The traffic seems to be much lighter in the lower part of the canal.

The canal official at Ottawa seems to be something of a joker. A dog boarded our craft there and this man informed us it had no owner, so we allowed the animal to accompany us. But further down the line the dog's owner telephoned dire threats after us, and we sent him back from La Salle.

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After lunch we tackled Lock No. 11, and a terror it was. The walls were so dilapidated that care had to be exercised to keep the edges of the scow and roof from catching. Then the roof caught on the left front and the bottom on the right rear, and it was only at the fourth trial, when we had worked the boat as far forward as possible, that we managed to scrape through. The wind was still very brisk and dead ahead, so we tied up just below the lock. A steam launch, the Lorain, passed through bound down. She filled the lock with smoke, and we realized how much gasoline excels steam in cleanliness. A foraging expedition secured a quart of milk and four dozen eggs, with the promise of spring chickens when their supper afforded a chance to catch them.

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Thursday, Oct. 8, 1903.—All night we were held by the fierce wind against which we were powerless. The squeeze in the lock increased the leakage and this morning it took quite a lot of pumping to free the hull of water. After breakfast we set out, and found Lock 12 much better than its predecessor. All afternoon the wind continued dead ahead, and the towing rope and poles were required to make even slight headway. Then we passed under a low bridge, and the stovepipe fell down. If we do not reach a town we will be cold tonight. Two small launches passed us, going to La Salle, where there is some sort of function on.

The children's lessons go on daily; with the girl because she is a girl and therefore tractable, with the boy because he can not get out till they are learned.

Friday, Oct. 9.—We lay in the canal all day yesterday, the folks fishing for catfish. Our foraging was unsuccessful, the nearest house containing a delegation of Chicago boys—17 of them—sent out by a West Side church, who took all the milk of the place. The boy fell in the canal and was promptly rescued by J. J., who is an expert swimmer. His mother was excited, but not frightened. After tea, as the wind had fallen, we used the launch for two hours to get through the most of the "wide water," so as to have the protection of the high banks next day. The lights of a large town—electric—are visible below. Very little water that evening, not a fourth what we pumped in the morning.

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On Friday morning the water is smooth and we hope to make La Salle today.

And then the gasoline engine stopped!

It had done good service so far, but there was a defect in it: a cup for holding lubricating oil that had a hole in it. Curious for a new engine, and some of the crew were unkind enough to suggest that the seller had taken off the new cup and put on a broken one from his old boat. All day we worked with it, till at lunch time it consented to go; and then our old enemy, the west wind, came up, but less violent than before, so that we made several miles before the engine again quit. We were well through the wide water, and tied up in a lovely spot, where someone had been picnicking during the morning. The boys towed the launch to Utica with the canoe, while we secured some milk at a Swede's near by, and a jar of honey from another house.

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Saturday, Oct. 10, 1903.—At 7 p. m. the boys returned with a little steam launch they had hired for six dollars to tow us the eight miles to La Salle. Lock No. 13 was true to its hoodoo, and gave us some trouble. About midnight we tied up just above Lock 14, which looks dubious this morning. We missed some fine scenery during the night, but are tired of the canal and glad to be near its end. A Street Fair is going on here, and the streets are full of booths. Jim says J. J. will throw a few balls at the "nigger babies," and then write home how he "missed the children!" These things indicate that he is enjoying his meals.

Not much water today in the hold. Temp. 39 at 7 a. m.

CHAPTER VI.

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THE ILLINOIS RIVER.

Monday, Oct. 12, 1903.—We passed Locks 14 and 15 without difficulty and moored in the basin

with a number of other houseboats. We find them very polite and obliging, ready to give any information and assistance in their power. All hands took in the Street Fair, and aided in replenishing our constantly wasting stores. The boy drove a thriving trade in minnows which he captured with the seine. In the afternoon Dr. Abbott came down, to our great pleasure. A man from the shop came and tinkered with the gasoline engine a few hours' worth, to no purpose. Several others volunteered advice which did not pan out.

Sunday we lay quiet, until near noon, when the engineer of the government boat *Fox* most kindly pointed out the trouble, which was, as to be expected, a very simple one—the sparker was so arranged that the single explosion caught the piston at the wrong angle and there was no second explosion following. Then all hands went for a ride down into the Illinois river. Dr. Abbott got off at 8:15 and the boys took a run up to Tiskilwa—for what reason we do not hear, but have our suspicions. We still recollect the days when we would travel at night over a five-mile road, lined with farms, each fully and over-provided with the meanest of dogs—so we ask no questions.

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This morning the temperature is 48, foggy; all up for an early start.

One undesirable acquisition we made here was a numerous colony of mice, which must have boarded us from a boat that lay alongside. The animals did much damage, ruining a new dress and disturbing us at night with their scampering. Nor did we finally get rid of them until the boat sank—which is not a method to be recommended. Fumigation with sulphur, if liberally done, is about the best remedy for any living pests.

Tuesday, Oct. 13, finds us still tied up below La Salle. The fortune-teller kindly towed us to the mouth of the canal, where we spent the day trying to persuade the engine to work. After an expert from the shops here had put in the day over it, he announced that the fault lay with the gasoline bought at Ottawa. In truth our troubles date from that gasoline, and we hope he may be right. The engine he pronounces in perfect order. Nothing here to do, and the little Missis has a cold and is getting impatient to be going. So far we have met none but friendly and honest folks along the canal, all anxious to be neighborly and do what they can to aid us. All hands are discouraged with the delay and trouble with the engine—all, that is, except one old man, who has been buffeted about the world enough to realize that some share of bad luck must enter every human life, and who rather welcomes what comes because it might have been so much worse. Come to think of it, we usually expect from Fate a whole lot more than we deserve. What are we that we should look for an uninterrupted career of prosperity? Is it natural? Is it the usual lot of man? What are we that we should expect our own lot to be such an exceptional career of good fortune? Think of our deserts, and what some men suffer, and humbly thank the good Lord that we are let off so easily.

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If that is not good philosophy we can answer for its helping us a whole lot to bear what ills come our way.

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We got off early and began our first day's floating. It was quite pleasant, much more so than lying idle. The *Fox* came along and rocked us a bit, but not unpleasantly. We tied up below the bridge at Spring Valley, and the boys went up to town, where they succeeded in getting five gallons of gasoline, grade 88. After lunch we pumped out the old stuff and put in the new and the little engine started off as if there had never been a disagreement. At 4 p. m. we are still going beautifully, passed Marquette, and all happy. But if the man who sold us low-grade gasoline at Ottawa, for high, were in reach he might hear something he would not like.

At night we tied up a mile above Hennepin, where we obtained some milk and a few eggs at a farm house.

Wednesday, Oct. 14, 1903.—Yesterday we passed the opening of the Hennepin canal, that monument of official corruption, which after the expenditure of fifty millions is not yet ready for use—the locks not even built. Compare with the work done on the Drainage Canal, and we conclude Chicago is not so very bad. At Hennepin this morning we secured three gallons of gasoline at 74, the best available; also fresh beef, for which we are all hungry. Left at 9 a. m. for Henry.

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During the preceding night the *Fred Swain* passed down and bumped us against the rocky shore harder than at any time previously. Next morning there was less water in the hull than ever before, so it seems to have tightened her seams. We ran into the creek above Henry and moored at the landing of the Swan River Club, where Jim's father resides. Here we lay for several weeks, for reasons that will appear. Millie kindly varied the monotony and added to the general gaiety by tumbling into the creek; but as the water was only about three feet deep no serious danger resulted. The boys usually disappeared at bedtime and talked mysteriously of Tiskilwa next morning, and appeared sleepy. We examined several boats that were for sale, but did not find any that suited us. We wished to feel perfectly safe, no matter what we might encounter on the great river. Some one has been trying to scare the boys with tales of the whirlpools to be encountered there; and of the waves that will wash over the deck. These we afterward found to be unfounded. No whirlpool we saw would endanger anything larger than a canoe, and our two-strake gunwales

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were high enough for any waves on the river.

We found few ducks; not enough to repay one for the trouble of going out after them. Until we left Henry we caught a few fish, but not enough to satisfy our needs.

CHAPTER VII.

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BUILDING THE BOAT.

November 1, 1903.—We had settled that the scow was not strong enough for the river voyage, and she kindly confirmed this view by quietly sinking as she was moored in the creek. There was no accident—the timbers separated from decay. We were awaked by the sound of water running as if poured from a very large pitcher; jumped up, ran to the stern of the boat, and saw that the rudder, which was usually six inches above water, was then below it. We awoke the family and hastily removed the articles in the outer end of the boat to the end resting on shore, and summoned the boys. It was just getting towards dawn. By the time this was done the lower end of the cabin floor was covered with water. Had this happened while we were in the river the consequences would have been serious.

Jim's father, Frank Wood, went to Peoria and selected materials for the new scow. The sides are technically termed gunwales—"gunnels"—and should be of solid three-inch plank. But we found it might take six months to get three-inch plank forty feet long, so we had to splice. He got eight plank, 22 to 24 feet long. Two of these were spliced in the center for the lower strake, and one long one placed in the center above, with half a length at each end. This prevented both splices coming together. The plank were sawed in a Z shape. Holes were then bored through both plank at intervals of four feet, and half-inch iron braces driven through and screwed firmly together. The ends were then sawn for the sloping projections.

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Through the middle, from end to end, was set a six-by-six timber, and on each side midway between this and the gunwales ran a three-by-six. Then the two-inch plank were nailed firmly to the gunwales and intermediate braces, each with twenty-three 60- and 40-penny nails. We find a strong prejudice against wire nails, these fishers and boatbuilders preferring the old-fashioned square nails when they can get them. They say the wire is more apt to rust; but this may be simply the conservatism that always meets an innovation. The cheapness of the wire is an item.

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The plank were placed as closely together as possible. Here a difficulty arose, as they were warped, so that when one end was laid close, the other was an inch from its fellow. But this did not bother our men. They put a triangular block up to the refractory end, nailed it firmly to the beam underneath, and drove wedges between till the crooked plank was forced as nearly straight as possible—or as prudent, for too great a strain would be followed by warping.

When all the planks were nailed on, two coats of tar and rosin were applied, and next day the boat was turned over. It was brought down till one side was in two feet of water, then the upper side was hoisted by blocks and tackles applied on upright timbers, till nearly upright, when the men pushed it over with big poles. She had first been braced carefully with an eight-by-eight across the middle, and by a number of other timbers. The eight-by-eight was broken and the middle of the boat forced up six inches by the shock, requiring the services of a jack to press it down to its place.

What fine workers these men are, and how silently they work, keeping at the big spikes hour after hour, driving every one with thought and care, and yet wasting no time. What use they make of a few simple mechanical aids—the lever, the wheel and screw, the jack, buck, etc.; and they constantly use the square before sawing. Americans, every one of them; and not a drop of beer or whisky seen about the work, from first to last.

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The seams in the gunwales were caulked with hemp and payed with white lead, before the boat was turned. Then they went over the inside and wherever a trickle of water appeared they stuffed in cotton.

The scow is 40 feet long and 16 feet wide. Over the gunwales were laid four-by-fours, 18 feet long, and spiked down. Then supports were placed under these and toenailed to the three inner braces, and to the four-by-fours. A two-foot projection was made at each end, making the floor 44 feet long. The flooring is of Georgia pine, tongued and grooved.

The lumber cost, including freight from Peoria to Henry, about \$100; the work about fifty more. There were over 100 pounds of nails used, 50 pounds of white lead in filling cracks, and several hundred pounds of tar on the bottom.

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The gunwales are of Oregon fir, straight and knotless. It would not add to the strength to have them of oak, as they are amply able to withstand any strain that can possibly be put on them in

navigating even the greatest of rivers. Oak would, however, add largely to the weight, and if we were pounding upon a snag this would add to the danger. As it was, we many times had this experience, and felt the comfort of knowing that a sound, well-braced, nailed and in every way secure hull was under us. The planking was of white pine, the four-by-fours on which the deck rested of Georgia pine. The cabin was of light wood, Oregon fir. When completed the hull formed a strong box, secure against any damage that could befall her. We cannot now conjure up any accident that could have injured her so as to endanger her crew. Were we to build another boat she should be like this one, but if larger we would have water-tight compartments stretching across her, so that even if a plank were to be torn off the bottom she would still be safe. And we would go down to Henry to have "Abe" De Haas and "Frank" Wood and "Jack" Hurt build her.

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Some leakage continued for some weeks, till the seams had swelled completely shut, and she did not leak a drop during the whole of the cruise.

During this time we continued to live in the cabin, the deck sloping so that it was difficult to walk without support. When the cabin was being moved we availed ourselves of Mrs. Wood's courtesy and slept in her house one night. After the cabin had been moved off we took the old scow apart, and a terrible scene of rotteness was revealed. The men who saw it, fishermen and boatbuilders, said it was a case for the grand jury, that any man should send a family of women and little children afloat on such a boat. There was no sign of an accident. The water had receded, leaving the shore end of the scow resting on the mud. This let down the stern a little. The new side was constructed of two-by-fours laid on their sides, one above the other, and to the ends were nailed the plank forming the bow and stern. Of these the wood was so rotten that the long sixty-penny spikes pulled out, leaving a triangular opening, the broad end up. As the stern of the boat sank the water ran in through a wider orifice and filled up the hull more and more rapidly. The danger lay in the absolute lack of flotation. New wood would have kept her afloat even when the hull was full of water, but her timbers were so completely water-soaked that the stout ropes broke in the attempt to raise her, even though with no load.

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Through the favor of Providence this occurred while we were moored in a shallow creek. Had it happened while in the deep river nothing could have saved us from drowning. As it was, we lost a good deal of canned goods and jelly, soap, flour, and other stores. But the most serious harm was that we were delayed by the necessity of building a new boat, so that we were caught in the November storms, and the exposure brought back the invalid's asthma; so that the main object of the trip was practically lost. We are thus particular to specify the nature of the trouble, as the vendor of the boat has claimed that the accident was due to the inexperience of our crew. That this was a mistake must be evident to even an inexperienced sailor, who reads this account.

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The old house on the sunken scow was cut loose and moved over onto the new one, and securely nailed down. An addition 8 feet square was added at the back for a storeroom, and the roof extended to the ends of the scow at both ends. This gives us a porch 11 by 18 feet in front, and one 10 by 8 behind. These are roofed with beaded siding and covered with the canvas we got for an awning, which we have decided we do not need. This is to be heavily painted as soon as we have time.

The entire cost of the new boat, the additional room and roofs, labor and materials, was about \$250; the old boat cost \$200, but the cabin that we moved onto the new hull could not have been built and painted for that, so that there was no money loss on the purchase. The launch, with its engine, cost \$365, so that the entire outfit stood us at \$830, including \$15 for a fine gunning skiff Jim got at Henry. The furniture is not included, as we took little but cast-offs; nor the outfit of fishing and sporting goods.

We must stop here to say a word as to the good people at Henry. Frank Wood and his family opened their house to us and furnished us milk and other supplies, for which we could not induce them to accept pay. Members of the Swan Lake Club placed at our disposal the conveniences of their club house. During the time our boat was building our goods lay out under a tree with no protection, not even a dog, and not a thing was touched. These fishermen surely are of a race to be perpetuated. Mr. Grazier also allowed us to use his ferryboat while endeavoring to raise the sunken boat and to store goods, and Mrs. Hurt offered to accommodate part of our family on her houseboat while our cabin was being moved to the new scow.

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CHAPTER VIII.

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THE LOWER ILLINOIS.

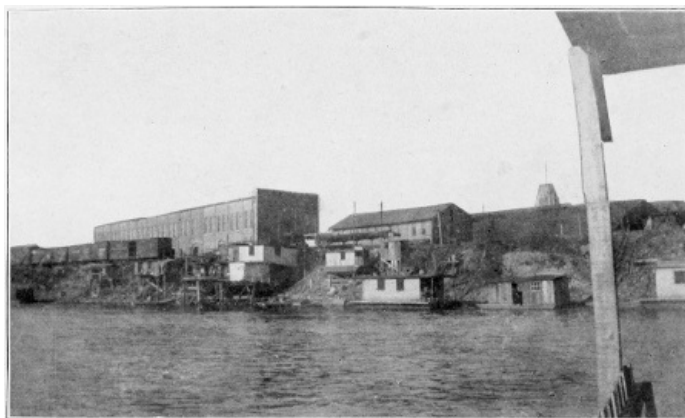
Saturday, Oct. 31, we bade adieu to the kind friends at Swan Lake, who had done so much to make us comfortable, and pulled down to Henry, passing the locks. Here we tied up till Sunday afternoon, the engine still giving trouble, and then set off. We passed Lacon pontoon bridge and town about 5 p. m., and three miles below tied up for the night. Next morning, the engine proving

still refractory, we floated down to the Chillicothe bridge, which was sighted about 11 a. m. This day was rainy and the new unpainted roof let in the water freely.

We waited at Chillicothe for the *Fred Swain* to pass, and then swung down to the bank below town, where we tied up. A farm house stood near the bank, and as we tied up a woman came out and in a loud voice called to some one to lock the chicken-house, and rattled a chain, suggestively; from which we infer that houseboat people have not the best reputation. We played the phonograph that evening, and the household gathered on shore to listen; so that we trust they slept somewhat securely. In the morning we bought some of the chickens we had had no chance to steal, and found the folks quite willing to deal with us. We had to wait for the *Swain*, as it was quite foggy and without the launch we could not have gotten out of her way.

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We drifted slowly down past Sand Point and The Circle lights, and tied up to a fallen tree, opposite the little village of Spring Bay. The boys were out of tobacco and had to row in for it. About 9 p. m. I heard shouts and then shots, and went out, to find a thick fog. They had lost their direction and it was only after some time and considerable shouting that they came near enough to see the lantern. We heard that the previous night the man who lights the channel lamps was out all night in the fog.



HOUSEBOAT TOWN, PEORIA.

Again we had to wait for the *Swain* to pass, and then floated down past Blue Creek Point. Here we saw a houseboat tied up, which a fisherman told us belonged to a wealthy old bachelor who lived there from choice. The current was slow as the river was wide, so about 2 p. m. we took a line from the good canal boat *City of Henry*, which for three dollars agreed to tow us to Peoria. This was faster traveling, but not a bit nice. However, it was necessary to get the engine in order, so we put up with it. We tied up above the upper bridge, with a nasty row of jagged piles between us and the shore. About 5 a. m. a northeast gale sprang up and washed us against the piles, to our great danger. Our boys arranged a two-by-four, nailing it against the side, so that the end stuck into the sand and fended us off the piles, and our gangway plank served the same purpose at the other end. This is a most important matter, as the snags might loosen a plank from the bottom.

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Friday, Nov. 6, 1903.—At last we seem to have found a real expert on gasoline engines. Instead of guessing that "mebbe" this or "mebbe" that was the matter, he went at it and soon found the difficulty. In a short time the boat was circling 'round the lake at a most enticing rate. We laid in a new store of groceries and at 9 a. m. today set out. By lunch time we had passed Pekin, and are now heading for the locks at Copperas Creek, the engine going beautifully and the weather bright and cool. About Peoria we saw great numbers of houseboats, many in the water, but the aged members had climbed out upon the banks and perched among a wonderful array of shanties. One house seemed to be roosting among the branches of several large trees. Many were seen along the river below, some quite pretty, but none we fancied as well as our own.

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Friday, Nov. 8, 1903.—We were held back by head winds and stopped before we reached the lock. Saturday we had good weather and little wind, and reached Copperas Creek just after lunch. There were three feet of water on the dam, and even the *Bald Eagle*, the largest steamer here, runs over it; but as we had paid for the lock we went through it. The lock-keeper took it out of us, though, by charging 15 cents for two quarts of milk, the highest price paid yet.

We got off this morning at 8:15, and although a heavy head wind prevails are making good time. Many loons are passing south, in large flights, and some ducks. The marshes on either side seem to be well supplied, but are club grounds, we are told. It is much warmer than yesterday, the south wind blowing strongly. We moored with the anchor out at the outer corner, up the river, and the line and gangway plank on shore, allowing about ten feet from boat to shore; and when the *Eva Alma* and the *Ebaugh* passed us there was no bumping against the shore. Evidently that is the way to moor, though in the great river we must give more space and more cable to the

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anchor.

At 10 a. m. we passed Liverpool, a hamlet of 150 inhabitants, half of whom must reside in houseboats. Some of these were quite large and well built.

We reached Havana about 4 p. m. Sunday, and as the south wind had become too fierce for our power we tied up below the bridge, at a fisherman's shanty. Monday morning it looked like rain, and the wind blew harder than ever, so we lay by and the boys finished putting on the tar paper roofing. When the wind is strong enough to blow the boat up stream against the current, the launch will be unable to make head against it. A couple live in an old freight car by us, and their home is worth seeing. The sand bluff is dug out for a chicken cave and pig-pen, and beautiful chrysanthemums are growing in boxes and pans, placed so as to retain the earth that would otherwise wash away. Fruit trees are also planted, and the woman tells me that the whole place is filled with flowering plants, now covered with sand for the winter. We notice two dracaenas.

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Tuesday, Nov. 10, 1903.—The storm lasted all day yesterday, pinioning us relentlessly to the beach. By 5 p. m. it let up, but we concluded to remain at our moorings till morning. This morning we got off at 7 a. m., and passed the Devil's Elbow lights before lunch. We did not tie up then, but threw out our anchor, which is less trouble and in every way better, as there is less danger of the snags that beset the shore. The air is rather cool for sitting outside but we spend much time there. The river is narrowing. Each little creek has a houseboat, or several, generally drawn up out of the water and out of reach of the ice. We saw a woman at one of the shabbiest shanty boats washing clothes. She stooped down and swung the garment to and fro in the water a few moments and then hung it up to dry.

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The shores are thickly dotted with little flags and squares of muslin, put up by the surveyors who are marking out the channel for the proposed deep waterway. These were few in the upper river. Every shallow is appropriated by some fisherman's nets, and at intervals a cleared space with sheds or fish boxes shows how important are the fisheries of this river.

There is a great deal of dispute along shore over the fishing rights. The submerging of thousands of acres of good land has greatly extended the limits of what is legally navigable water. The fishermen claim the right to set their nets wherever a skiff or a sawlog can float; but the owners think that since they bought the land from the Government and paid for it, and have paid taxes for forty years, they have something more of rights than any outsider. If not, what did they buy? The right to set nets, they claim, would give the right to plant crops if the water receded. Eventually the courts will have to decide it; but if these lands are thrown open to the public, the Drainage Board will have a heavy bill of damages. For it seems clear that it is the canal which has raised the level of the water.

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Meanwhile the fishing is not profitable. The fish have so wide a range that netting does not result in much of a catch. But if this rise proves only temporary, there will be good fishing when the water subsides.

The boy does not get enough exercise, and his constant movement is almost choreic; so we sent him out to cut firewood, which is good for his soul. The girl amuses herself all day long with some little dolls, but is ever ready to aid when there is a task within her strength. She is possessed with a laughing demon, and has been in a constant state of cachinnation the whole trip. At table some sternness is requisite to keep the fun within due bounds. All hands mess together—we are a democratic crowd. Saturday John W. Gates' palatial yacht, the *Roxana*, passed down while we were at lunch. We saw a cook on deck; and two persons, wrapped up well, reclined behind the smokestack.

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Nov. 11, 1903.—After a run of 22 miles—our best yet—we tied up at the Sangamon Chute, just below the mouth of that river. The day had been very pleasant. During the night our old friend the South Wind returned, but we were well moored and rode easily. The launch bumped a little, so the doctor rose and moved it, setting the fenders, also. Rain, thunder and lightning came, but secure in our floating home we were content. Today the wind has pinioned us to the shore, though the sun is shining and the wind not specially cold. The boys cut wood for the stove and then went after ducks, returning at noon with a pair of mallards. The new roof is tight, the stove draws well, and we ought to be happy, as all are well. But we should be far to the south, out of reach of this weather. We can see the whitecaps in the river at the bend below, but an island protects us from the full sweep of wind and wave.

Regular trade-wind weather, sun shining, wind blowing steadily, great bulks of white cloud floating overhead, and just too cold to permit enjoyable exposure when not exercising.

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Friday, Nov. 13, 1903.—This thing grows monotonous. Yesterday we set out and got to Browning, a mile, when the wind blew us ashore against a ferry boat that was moored there, and just then the engine refused to work. We remained there all day. The wind was pitiless, driving us against the boat till we feared the cable would break. We got the anchor into the skiff and carried it out to windward as far as the cable reached, and then drew in till there were five feet between the ferryboat and ours. In half an hour the anchor, firmly embedded in tenacious clay, had dragged us back to the boat and we had again to draw in cable by bracing against the ferry.

At 2 p. m. the wind had subsided, and after working with the engine till 4 we got off, and drew down a mile beyond the turn, where we would be sheltered. We moored with the anchor out up stream, and a cable fast ashore at the other end, lying with broadside up stream to the current, and a fender out to the shore. This fender is made of two two-by-fours set on edge and cross pieces let in near each end. The boat end is tied to the side and the shore end rams down into the mud. While at dinner the *Bald Eagle* came up, but we hardly noticed her wash. Moored thus, far enough out to avoid snags, we are safe and comfortable. But if too close in shore there may be a submerged snag that when the boat is lifted on a wave and let down upon it punches a hole in the bottom or loosens a plank.

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The night was quiet. We had our first duck supper, the boys getting a brace and a hunter at the fish house giving us two more. They had hundreds of them, four men having had good shooting on the Sangamon. This morning it is cool and cloudy, the wind aft and light, and the boys are coaxing the engine. If we can get a tow we will take it, as there is some danger we may be frozen in if we delay much longer.

Saturday, Nov. 14, 1903.—Despite the hoodoo of yesterday, Friday the 13th, we got safely to Beardstown before lunch, in a drizzle of rain that turned to a light snow. Temperature all day about 35. After lunch we started down and passed La Grange about 4:30 p. m. Probably this was a town in the days when the river was the great highway, but stranded when the railways replaced the waterways. There is a very large frame building at the landing, evidently once a tavern, and what looks like an old street, with no houses on it now. The tavern is propped up to keep it from falling down. No postoffice. We tied up about a mile above the La Grange lock, so that we may be ready to go through at 8 a. m. We hear that the locks are only opened to small fry like gasolines at 8 a. m. and 4 p. m., and it behooves us to be there at one of those hours. Just why a distinction should be made between steamers and gasolines is for officialdom to tell.

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Twice yesterday the launch propeller fouled the towrope, once requiring the knife to relieve it. This accident is apt to occur and needs constant attention to prevent. We arranged two poles to hold up the ropes, and this did well. It is good to have a few poles, boards and various bits of timber aboard for emergencies. Heavy frost last night, but the sun is coming up clear and bright, and not a breath of wind. We look for a great run today if we manage the lock without delay. The quail are whistling all around us, but we are in a hurry. The *Bald Eagle* passed down last evening, running quite near us and sending in big waves, but thanks to our mooring, we were comfortable and had no bumping. The water does no harm; it is the shore and the snags we fear.

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We were told that we would find the lockmen at La Grange grouty and indisposed to open the locks except at the hours named above; but this proved a mistake. They showed us the unvarying courtesy we have received from all canal officials since starting. They opened the gate without waiting for us. They said that in the summer, picnic parties gave them so much unnecessary trouble that they had to establish the rule quoted, but at present there was no need for it. The day is decidedly cool and a heavy fog drifting in from the south.

At Meredosia at 11 a. m., where Dr. Neville kindly assisted us to get a check cashed. Found a youngster there who "knew gasoline engines," and by his help the difficulty was found and remedied. Laid in supplies and set out for Naples. Weather cool, but fog lifted, though the sun refused to be tempted out.

CHAPTER IX.

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TOWING.

Monday, Nov. 16, 1903.—The engine bucked yesterday, for a change, so we 'phoned to Meredosia and secured the services of the *Celine*, a gasoline launch of five-horse-power. She started at once, but arriving in sight of Naples she also stopped and lay two hours before she condescended to resume. About 3 p. m. we got under way, the *Celine* pushing, with a V of two-by-fours for her nose and a strong rope reaching from her stern to each after corner of the scow. Then our own engine awoke, and ran all day, as if she never knew what a tantrum was. We made

Florence, a town of 100 people, and tied up for the night. An old "doctor" had a boat with a ten-horse-power gasoline tied up next us. He travels up and down the river selling medicines. As these small towns could scarcely support a doctor, there is possibly an opening for a real physician, who would thus supply a number of them. Telephonic communication is so free along the river that he could cover a large territory—at least better than no doctor at all.

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LAUNCH TOWING.

During the night it blew hard, and rain, thunder and lightning made us feel sorry for the poor folk who were exposed to such dangers on shore. This morning we got off about 7:15, with a dull, lowering sky, fog, but a wind dead astern and a strong current, so that we are in hopes of a record run. So far our best has been 22 miles in one day.

The right bank shows a series of pretty high bluffs, the stratified rock showing through. Ferries grow numerous. A good deal of timber is at the riverside awaiting shipment—a good deal, that is, for Illinois—and remarkably large logs at that. It seems to go to Meredosia. The boy and his father had made a gangway plank, and a limber affair it was; so the boys are taking it to pieces and setting the two-by-fours up on edge, which gives more strength. There is a right and a wrong way of doing most things, and we invariably choose the wrong till shown better.

Bought some pecans at Meredosia—\$3.00 a bushel. It ought to pay to raise them at that price, which is rather low than high. The river is said to be lined with the trees, and one woman says she and her two daughters made \$150 gathering them this season. Hickory nuts cost 80 cents to \$1.20, the latter for big coarse nuts we would not gather in the East.

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Tuesday, Nov. 17, 1903.—Kampsville, Ill. Yesterday Mr. Hauser brought us this far with the gasoline launch *Celine*, and then quit—too cold. Cost \$12 for the tow. By the time we got here the northeast wind was blowing so fierce and cold that we tied up. The town seems very lively for so small a place, having a number of stores. They charged us 25 cents a gallon for stove gasoline, but only 8 cents a pound for very fair roasting beef. We were moored on a lee shore, with our port bow to land, lines from both ends to stakes on shore, and the gangway plank roped to the port corner side and staked down firmly; the anchor out from the starboard stern, so as to present that side to the wind and current. She swung easily without bumping, but the plank complained all night. We scarcely felt the waves from the *Bald Eagle* when she came in, but the wind raised not only whitecaps but breakers and we rocked some. It grew so cold that there was a draft through the unlined sides of the boat that kept our heads cold. Fire was kept up all night

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and yet we were cold.

We now see as never before how much harm was done by the old boat, that compelled us to remain so long in this northern latitude and get the November storms. But for this we would have been well below Memphis, and escaped these gales.

We got new batteries here, but this morning all the gasolines are frozen up, and we lay at our moorings, unable to move. They wanted \$20 to tow us 29 miles to Grafton, but have come down to \$15 this morning. We will accept if they can get up power, though it is steep—\$5.00 being about the usual price for a day's excursion in summer. All hands are stuffing caulking around the windows and trying to keep in some of the heat. Sun shining, but the northeast wind still blows whitecaps, with little if any sign of letting up. The launch that proposes to tow us is busy thawing out her frozen pump. We have put the canoe and skiff on the front "porch," so as to have less difficulty steering.

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The little Puritan still sits on the stove in the cabin, and easily furnishes two gallons of water a day when sitting on top of the stove lid. Four times we have turned on the water and forgotten it till it ran over. We might arrange it to let a drop fall into the still just as fast as it evaporates, if the rate were uniform, but on a wood stove this is impossible. Last night it burned dry and some solder melted out of the nozzle, but not enough to make it leak. It did not hurt the still, but such things must be guarded against.

The weather is warmer, sun shining brightly, but we must wait for our tow. The boys are getting tired of the monotony, especially Jim, who likes action. We have the first and only cold of the trip, contracted the cold night when our heads were chilled.

This afternoon Jim and the boy went one way for pecans and squirrels, and the three women another for pecans alone. This is the pecan country, the river being lined with the trees for many miles. In the cabin-boat alongside, the old proprietor is still trying to get his engine to work, while both his men are drunk. And he never did get them and the engine in shape, but lost the job. He did not know how to run his own engine, which is unpardonable in anyone who lives in such a boat or makes long trips in it.

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Thursday, Nov. 19, 1903.—Another tedious day of waiting. Cold and bright; but the cold kept us in. After dark Capt. Fluent arrived with his yacht, the *Rosalie*, 21-horse-power gasoline; and at 9 a. m. we got under way. Passed the last of the locks at 9:15, and made about five miles an hour down the river. Passed Hardin, the last of the Illinois river towns. Many ducks in the river, more than we had previously seen. Clear and cold; temperature at 8 a. m. 19; at 2 p. m., 60. About 3:25 p. m. we swung into the Mississippi. The water was smooth and did not seem terrible to us—in fact we had passed through so many "wides" in the Illinois that we were not much impressed. But we are not saying anything derogatory to the river god, for we do not want him to give us a sample of his powers. We are unpretentious passers by, no Aeneases or other distinguished bummers, but just a set of little river tramps not worth his godship's notice.

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Grafton is a straggling town built well back from the river, and looking as if ready to take to the bluffs at the first warning. The Missouri shore is edged with willows and lies low. We notice that our pilot steers by the lights, making for one till close, and then turning towards the next, keeping just to the right or left, as the Government list directs: Probably our craft, drawing so little water, might go almost anywhere, but the channel is probably clear of snags and other obstructions and it is better to take no chances. It was after 6 when we moored in Alton. Day's run, 45 miles in nine hours. We picked up enough ducks on the way down for to-night's dinner—two mallards and two teal.

Friday, Nov. 20, 1903.—Cold this morning, enough to make us wish we were much farther south. Capt. Fluent has quite a plant here—a ferry boat, many small boats for hire, etc. In the night a steamer jolted us a little, but nothing to matter. Even in the channel the launch ran over a sunken log yesterday. We note a gasoline launch alongside that has one of the towing cleats and a board pulled off, and hear it was in pulling her off a sand bar; so there is evidently wisdom in keeping in the channel, even if we only draw eight inches.

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A friend called last evening. Waiting at the depot he saw our lights and recognized the two side windows with the door between. It was good to see a familiar face.

We are now free from the danger of ice blockade. The current at the mouth of the Illinois is so slow that ice forming above may be banked up there, and from this cause Fluent was held six weeks once—the blocking occurring in November. But the great river is not liable to this trouble. Still we will push south fast. This morning we had a visit from a bright young reporter from an Alton paper, who wrote up some notes of our trip. The first brother quill we had met, so we gave him a welcome.

At 9 a. m. we set out for St. Louis, Mrs. Fluent and children accompanying her husband. The most curious houseboat we have yet seen lay on shore near our mooring place. It was a small raft sustained on barrels, with a cabin about six feet by twelve. A stovepipe through the roof showed

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that it was inhabited. Reminded us of the flimsy structures on which the South American Indians entrust themselves to the ocean.

The *Reynard* and her tender are following us, to get the benefit of Fluent's pilotage. A head wind and some sea caused disagreeable pounding against the front overhang, which alarmed the inexperienced and made us glad it was no wider. But what will it do when the waves are really high?



"BLUFF."

THE DESPLAINES.

CHAPTER X.

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ST. LOUIS.

St. Louis, Nov. 26, 1903.—We moored at the private landing belonging to Mr. Gardner, whose handsome yacht, the *Annie Russell*, came in on the following day. This was a great comfort, affording a sense of security, which the reputation of the levee made important. A reporter from the *Globe-Democrat* paid us a visit, and a notice of the boat and crew brought swarms of visitors. We were deluged with invitations so numerous that we were compelled to decline all, that no offense might be given. But Dr. Lanphear and his wife were not to be put off, so they drove down to take us for a drive through the Fair grounds, with their huge, inchoate buildings; and then brought to the boat materials for a dinner which they served and cooked there. It is needless to add that we had a jolly time.

Many applications were made for berths on the boat, which also we had to decline. One distinguished professor of national repute offered to clean guns and boots if he were taken along. Despite the bad reputation of the levee we saw absolutely nothing to annoy us. We heard of the cruelty of the negroes to animals but scarcely saw a negro here. It is said that they catch rats on the steamers and let them out in a circle of negro drivers, who with their blacksnake whips tear the animal to pieces at the first blow.

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We visited the market and had *bon marche* there, and at Luyties' large grocery. Meat is cheap here, steak being from 10 to 12 cents a pound.

Foreman turned up with the *Bella*, and tried to get an interview; but we refused to see him, the memory of the perils to which he had exposed a family of helpless women and children, as well as the delay that exposed us to the November gales, rendering any further acquaintance undesirable.

Frank Taylor, the engineer of the *Desplaines*, was recommended to us by his employer, Mr. Wilcox, of Joliet, as the best gasoline expert in America; and he has been at work on our engine since we reached St. Louis. It is a new make to him, and he finds it obscure. We have had so much trouble with it, and the season is so far advanced, that we arranged with the *Desplaines*, whose owner very kindly agreed to tow us to Memphis. This is done to get the invalid below the frost line as quickly as possible. The *Desplaines* is selling powder fire extinguishers along the river; and we are to stop wherever they think there is a chance for some business.

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At St. Louis we threw away our stove, which was a relic of Foreman, and no good; and bought for \$8.00 a small wood-burning range. It works well and we can do about all our cooking on it, except frying. As we can pick up all the wood we wish along the river, this is more economic than the gasoline stove, which has burned 70 gallons of fuel since leaving Chicago.

We stopped for Thanksgiving dinner above Crystal City, and the *Desplaines* crowd dined with us—Woodruff, Allen, Clements, Taylor and Jake. A nice crowd, and we enjoyed their company. Also the turkey, goose, mince pie, macaroni, potatoes, onions, celery, cranberries, pickles, nuts, raisins, nut-candy, oranges and coffee. The current of the river is swifter than at any place before met, and carries us along fast. The *Desplaines* is a steamer and works well.

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We made about 50 miles today and tied up on the Illinois side, just above a big two-story Government boat, which was apparently engaged in protecting the banks from washing. Great piles of stone were being dumped along the shore and timber frames laid down. It was quite cold. The shore was lined with driftwood and young uprooted willows, and we laid in a supply of small firewood—enough to last a week.

Friday morning, Nov. 27.—Temperature 20; clear and cold, with a south wind blowing, which makes the waves bump the boat some, the wind opposing the swift current. Got off about 7:45, heading for Chester, where the *Desplaines* expects to stop for letters.

CHAPTER XI.

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THE MISSISSIPPI.

Nov. 28, 1903.—Yesterday morning we left our moorings 45 miles below St. Louis, and came down the river against the wind. This made waves that pounded our prow unpleasantly. We passed the Kaskaskia chute, through which the whole river now passes, since the Government has blocked up the old river bed. A few houses mark the site of old Kaskaskia. Nearing the end of the chute, the *Desplaines* ran on a sand bar, as the channel is very narrow and runs close to the shore, which it is cutting away rapidly. It took two hours to free her. We tied up early at Chester, as they desired to work the town. During the night we were severely rocked by passing steamers, and bumped by the launch and skiff. This morning the river was smooth as glass. The *Desplaines* was not through with their work, so we did not set out till 10:30. By that time a gale had sprung up from the north and we had trouble. We were moored by a single line to the shore, and as this was cast off and the *Desplaines* began to move, her towline fouled the propeller. We drifted swiftly down toward a row of piles, but were brought up by the anchor hastily dropped. The steamer drifted down against us, narrowly missing smashing our launch, and getting right across our anchor rope. Blessed be the anchor to windward. But the staple to which the cable was fast began to show signs of pulling out, so we got a chain and small lines and made them fast to the timbers of the scow, so that if the cable broke they might still hold. Finally the rope was removed from the propeller, and after several attempts they got hold of us and steamed up to the anchor, so that five strong men could raise it. Then we went down stream at a rate to terrify one who knew the danger, if we should strike a sandbank. On we go, past the crumbling banks of sand stratified with earth, with government channel lights at close intervals. The channel changes from side to side constantly. We run by the lights, and are somehow absorbing a wholesome respect for this great, mighty, uncontrollable Mississippi. Today he is covered with whitecaps and the current runs like a millrace. It is cold and the fire eats up wood pretty fast.

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Monday, Nov. 30, 1903.—Cape Girardeau, Mo.—We passed Grand Tower, and greatly regretted the absence of sunlight, which prevented us getting snap-shots of the scenery. Two miles below the town we tied up on the Missouri side, with a good sandy beach alongside, our anchor carried ashore and rooted into the gravel. A bad way, for if there were a gale from the west the anchor would have soon dragged out. But the high bluffs protected us against wind from that quarter, and our fenders kept us out from the shore. Four steamers passed in the night, one of them the fine *Peters Lee*. Who is it said that the commerce of the Mississippi was a thing of the past? Just let him lie here on a houseboat and he will change his views. No nets are to be seen here, though probably the small affluents of the river would prove to be provided therewith, were we to examine them. In the morning we found a loaded hickory tree just opposite us, and the boys gathered a few nuts. We also picked up a few white oak slabs, which make a fire quite different from the light rotten drift.

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The boys set out ahead in the launch with designs on the geese. The wind set in about 10 a. m., but the river is so crooked that we could scarcely tell from what quarter it blew. It was cold, though, and the waves rough. As Glazier says, it seems to set in from the same quarter, about that time daily, and were we to float without a tow we would start early and tie up before the wind began. But that would depend on finding a good place to tie, and altogether a man who would try to float a heavy boat without power should take out heavy insurance first, and leave the family at home.

Where the river is cutting into a bank and the current strong, the wind whirling the cabin around, now with the current and again across or against it, there is every reason to look for being driven ashore and wrecked. Even were one to start about September 1st, and float only when the river is smooth, he would run great risks. At one place the Government had evidently tried to block up one of the channels by rows of piling and brush, but the water ran through and was piled up several feet high against the obstructions. The wind drove us directly down against it and the

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fifteen-horse-power tug could just keep us off.

Without the power our boat would have been driven against the piling with force enough to burst her sides and the piles as well, and a crevasse and shipwreck would have resulted. In the afternoon a large steamer passed up, leaving a train of waves so large that they washed up on the front deck and under the cabin, wetting our floor in a moment. J. J. is now nailing quarter-rounds along the edges, to prevent such an accident again. We are told to have guards placed in front of our doors to prevent them being driven in when waves hit us on the side; and I think stout bars inside will be advisable. A stout wave would drive these flimsy doors off their hinges.

Here we moored inside the bar, which protects us from waves coming from the river. A number of cabin boats are drawn up on shore, the occupants seeming mainly of the river tramp class. This is a nice looking town, of possibly 10,000 people. Unpaved streets. Many brick blocks. Saw one doctor, who seemed to have sunk into a mere drudge—no animation, no enthusiasm, it was impossible to get any expression of interest out of him. They bring milk here from an Illinois town 100 miles up the river.

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We paid 25 cents for a gallon.

A very courteous druggist near the landing seemed to make amends for the impassive doctor. Our pharmacal friend was a man of enterprise and had an ice-cream factory as well as a large and well-appointed shop.

December 1, 1903.—Yesterday the *Desplaines* wasted the morning trying to do business in Cape Girardeau. Good town, but no enterprise, they report. Excellent opportunity for a good grocery and provision store, judging by the prices and quality of food products offered us. We ran but 13 miles, tying up in front of the warehouse at Commerce, Mo. A small place, but they found a market for their extinguishers, with men who had the old kind that required refilling twice a year. Curious two-story stores, a gallery running around the whole room.

Shortly before reaching this place we passed two little cabin boats, tied up; seemingly occupied by two big men each. They called to us that they had been three weeks getting this far from St. Louis—about 145 miles. This morning we passed them a mile below Commerce, each with a row-boat towing and a man at the stem working two sweeps. Looked like work, but that is the real thing when it comes to cabin boating. They were in the current, but working cautiously near shore.

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It was snowing smartly as we set out about 7:30, but warmer than for some days. The little one has had asthma badly for some days, but it began to give way, and she had a fairly comfortable night. During the morning we got in a place where the channel seemed so intricate that the tug ran in to inquire of some men on shore; and in turning in, the house ran against a projecting tree so swiftly that had we not rushed out and held her off, the snag would have crushed in the thin side of the house. To even matters, we picked out of the drift a fine hardwood board, evidently but a short time in the water. Never lose a chance to get a bit of good timber for firewood—you never have too much.

Plenty of geese flying and on the bars, but the wary fellows keep out of range. Cleaned the Spencer and reloaded the magazine.

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Miggles simply outdoes herself, nursing her sick mother, ironing and otherwise helping Millie, and picking nuts for us. She has improved wonderfully this trip, which is developing her in all ways. She eats better than ever before, and is simply sweet. Cheeks rival the boy's in rosinness. The boy likes to get in with the men, and we see no evidence of talk unfit for an 11-year-old boy, but he returns very impatient of control, and ready to pout out his lips if any authority is manifested. The spirit of a man, and a man's impatience of control—but what would a boy be worth who did not feel thus? No milksops for us.

We pass many men and steamers, barges, etc., doing Government work on this river. Just above they are weaving mattresses of wood, which are laid along where the river cuts into the land, and covered with brush, earth and stones. Many miles of bank are thus treated, and some control exerted on the course of the river. But what a task! Do the men engaged in it get to take a personal interest in it, as does the trainer of a race horse?

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We now look for reminders of the civil war, and yesterday we saw on the Missouri shore the white tents of a camp. Not the destructive army of war, but the constructive forces of the modern genius of civilization. The St. Louis and Mississippi Valley Railroad is building its tracks along the shore, and every cliff is scarred by the cuts. And the great, giant river sweeps lazily by, as if he disdained to notice the liberties being taken with his lordship. But away back in the hills of Pennsylvania, the prairies of the Midwest, the lakes of Minnesota and the headwaters of the Missouri, in the Northwest Rockies, the forces are silently gathering; and in due time the old river god will swoop down with an avalanche of roaring, whirling waters, and the St. L. & M. V. R. R. will have, not a bill for repairs, but a new construction account.

CAIRO AND THE OHIO.

Cairo, Ill., Dec. 3, 1903.—We ran in here Thursday afternoon, and the little steamer had some trouble in pulling us against the current of the Ohio. The water is yellower than the Mississippi. We tied up below town, as we hear that they charge \$5.00 wharfage for mooring, or even making a landing in the city. The place where we moored was full of snags, but J. J. got into the water with his rubber waders and pulled the worst ones out from under the boat, till all was secure. Moored with the gangway plank out front and the other fender at the rear, both tied to the boat and staked at the shore end. Lines were also made fast to trees at each end. Thus we rode the waves easily—and well it was, for never yet have we seen so many steamers coming and going, not even at St. Louis. Several ferry boats ply between the Missouri and Kentucky shores and the city, transfer steamers carry freight cars across, and many vessels ply on the rivers with passengers and freight. Surely the men who advised Charles Dickens to locate lots here were not far out, as things were then; for the railroads had not as yet superseded the waterways. Not that they have yet, for that matter. Since coming here we have been inquiring for the man who proclaimed the rivers obsolete as lines for transportation.

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Cairo is the biggest and busiest town of 12,000 inhabitants we have yet seen. Many darkies are here, and the worst looking set of levee loafers yet. We had some oysters at "Uncle Joe's," on the main business street, the only restaurant we saw; and when we surveyed the drunken gang there, we were glad we came in our old clothes. Where we moored, the shore is covered with driftwood, and we piled high our front deck, selecting good solid oak, hard maple and hemlock, with some beautiful red cedar. Soft, rotten wood is not worth picking up, as there is no heat derived from it. Oak and hickory are the best. Old rails are good. Take no water-soaked wood if you can get any other—it will dry out in a week or two perhaps, but you may need it sooner, and when dry it may be worthless. Several men had erected a shack along shore which we should have taken shots at, but the sun was not out enough. *Desplaines* is doing a fair business.

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Hickman, Ky., Dec. 5, 1903.—We tied up here after a run of 38 miles from Cairo. The boys stopped at Columbus, Ky., but did no business—town full of extinguishers. Hickman is built of brick and stone, as to the business section, and lit by electricity. Made a bad moor, on a rocky shore, with anchor out and front starboard bow firmly embedded in mud; and this worried us so we slept poorly. Wind sprang up about 9 p. m., but not fierce. During the night several steamers passed and rocked us, but not much—the bow was too firmly washed into the mud by the strong current. This morning it took all hands half an hour to get us off, about 10 a. m. We were told at Hickman that 100 dwellings had been erected during the year, and not one was unoccupied. About 3,000 people, four drug stores, and an alert lot of business men in fine stores. Paid 30 cents a dozen for eggs, 10 cents for steak. We see many floaters, some every day. Ice formed along shore last night, but the sun is coming out bright and warm. Wind from the south, not heavy but enough to kick up a disagreeable bumping against our prow. This is always so when the wind is against the current.

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Donaldson's Point, Mo.—We stopped here yesterday afternoon about 2 p. m., that the boys might have a day's shooting. J. J., Allen and Taylor went out on the sand bar all night, and got nothing except an exalted idea of the perspicuity of the wild goose. *En passant* they were almost frozen, despite a huge fire of drift they kindled.

We tied up on the channel side, just below Phillips' Bar light, a good sandy shore with deep water and no snags—an ideal mooring place. We moored with the port side in, the *Desplaines* outside, lines fore and aft and the fore gangway plank out. But the launch was uneasy and would bump the stern, and there must have been a review of the ghosts of departed steamers during the night, for many times we were awakened by the swell of passing vessels rocking us.

This morning is clear and cold, temperature 20, with a keenness and penetrating quality not felt with a temperature twenty degrees lower in the north. We saw some green foliage in the woods, and Clement said it was "fishing pole"—cane! Our first sight of the canebrake. The Doctor, J. J., the boy and Clement went up through the cornfields to the woods, but found no game. A few doves got up, but too far away for a shot. Jim got a mallard, Woodruff a fox squirrel—and one whose name we will not disclose shot a young pig. An old darkey came down to the *Desplaines* with milk, chickens and eggs, for which he got a fabulous price; also a drink, and a few tunes on the phonograph, and he hinted that if they should shoot a pig he would not know it, or words to that effect. Hundreds of hogs ran the woods, and showed the tendency to reversion by their long, pointed heads and agile movements. Apparently they eat the pecans, for their tracks were thick under the trees. Rather expensive food, with the nuts worth 30 cents a pound.

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About 3:20 we got under way for down the river. This morning a floater passed quite close to the

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boat. Two men and a dog manned the craft. Said they were bound for Red River. The children gathered a bag of fine walnuts of unusual size. As we never lose a chance of adding to the woodpile, we gathered in a couple of oak rails and a fine stick of cedar, which we sawed and split for exercise.

There are no cows on the negro farms, no chickens. In fact, their traditional fondness for the fowl is strictly limited to a penchant for someone else's chickens. When we ask for milk they always take it to mean buttermilk, until enlightened. Here we saw a remarkable boat, a dugout canoe not over four inches in depth, and warped at that, but the women told us they went about in it during the floods. We bought some pecans, paying 7 cents a quart.

Tuesday, Dec. 8, 1903.—Sunday evening we ran till we reached New Madrid, Mo., about 8 p. m. We made a good landing, tying up with the tug alongside, lines out at each end, both fenders out and the launch astern. The boys did a good business here, and enjoyed the visit. Got meat and some drugs, but could get no milk or eggs, and only two pounds of butter in the town. After noon we got off and ran down to Point Pleasant, a decaying town isolated by a big sand bar in front of her, covered with snags. The *Desplaines* picked up a fine lot of wood here, enough to run them a week, which they piled on our front deck. This morning we came on to Tiptonville landing, where we saw a cotton field and gin. This is the northern limit of cotton cultivation, and it was poor stuff.

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Everyone who accosts us asks for whisky, which seems to be scarce. The temperance movement evidently has made great progress in these places. The bluffs grow higher as we go south, and no attempt seems made to restrain the river from cutting in at its own sweet will. Crumbling banks of loose sand and earth, fringed with slim willows and larger trees, at every rod some of them hanging over into the stream. The snag boat *Wright* seems busy removing these when menacing navigation, but we see many awaiting her.

This afternoon we passed a floater who had gone by us at New Madrid. Propelled by two stout paddles and four stout arms, they have made as good time as we with our tug. When we see how these men entrust themselves to the mercies of the great river in such a frail craft, it seems as if we had little to fear in our big boat. They have a little scow about six feet by ten, all but the front covered by a cabin, leaving just enough room in front for the sweeps, and they tow a skiff. If the wind is contrary or too stiff they must lie up, but at other times the current carries them along with slight exertion at the sweeps. The river is falling fast. Each night we tie up with all the boat floating easily, and every morning find ourselves aground. It seems to fall about six inches a night.

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Thursday, Dec. 10, 1903.—For two nights and a day we lay at Caruthersville, Mo., where the *Desplaines* had *bon marche*, selling 16 extinguishers and getting the promise of a dozen more. A large town, full of business and saloons, gambling houses, booths for rifle shooting and "nigger babies," etc. Tradespeople seemed surly and ungracious, except one woman who kept a restaurant and sold us oysters and bread. She was from Illinois. Still, it must be a place of unusual intelligence, as a doctor is Mayor.

Last night we had a disagreeable blow from the northwest. We went out and overhauled our mooring carefully before retiring. The back line was insecure, as there was nothing to which it could be attached, and the boys had merely piled a lot of rocks on the end; but we could see nothing better; so merely strengthened the lines fastening the fenders to the boat. It was a circular storm, apparently, as the wind died out and in a few hours returned. When we set out at 7:30 this morning it was fairly calm, but at 8:20 it is again blowing hard from the same quarter. The sun is out brightly and it is not cold. Whitecaps in plenty but little motion, as we travel across the wind. There are now no large towns before us and we hope to run rapidly to Memphis. The river is big, wide, deep and powerful. Huge trunks of trees lie along the bars. What a giant it must be in flood. Not a day or night passes without several steamers going up and down. The quantity of lumber handled is great, and growing greater as we get south. Our chart shows the levees as beginning above Caruthersville, but we saw nothing there except a little stone dumped alongshore. Waves pounding hard.

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Gold Dust Landing, Tenn., Dec. 10, 1903. In spite of a head wind we made a run of 52 miles today, and moored below a Government barge. The fine steamer *Robert E. Lee* was at the landing and pulled out just as we ran in. The day was clear and sunny, not very cold, about 39, but whenever we ran into a reach with the west or southwest wind ahead the boat pounded most unpleasantly. No floaters afloat today, but numbers along shore in sheltered nooks. The levees here are simply banked fascines, stone land earth, to keep the river from cutting into the shores. Even at low water there is an enormous amount of erosion going on. It takes unremitting vigilance to keep the river in bounds and the snags pulled out.

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Fogleman's Chute, Dec. 12, 1903.—We made a famous run yesterday of over 60 miles, and tied

up here about 5 p. m. on the eastern shore, the channel being on the west. A small cabin boat stands near us, in which are a man and three boys who have come down from Indiana, intending to seek work at Memphis. Their first experience cabin boating. We asked one of the boys if he liked it, and he looked up with a sudden flash of wildness and keen appreciation.

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A fierce south wind came up in the night, and there are situations more enviable than trying to sleep in a houseboat with three boats using her for a punching bag. And the little woman had asthma, badly, to make it worse. This morning it was blowing hard and raining. The rain beat in on the front deck and ran into the hold and under the quarter-rounds into the cabin. The roof leaked into the storeroom also. Millie was seasick and some one else would have been, but he took the children out for a rove. Found a walnut tree and gathered a large bag of fine nuts. The others brought in some squirrels and pocketsful of pecans, but we found neither. Stretched the skins on wood and applied alum to the raw surface, intending to make the little woman some buskins to keep her feet warm. Quantities of mistletoe grow on the trees about us. The sun came out about 2 p. m., when too late to make the run to Memphis, 22 miles, before dark. Yesterday was so warm that we could sit out in the open air without wraps. We are tied up to Brandywine Island, near the lower end.

After lunch we sallied out again and met the owner of the soil, who ordered us off in a surly manner. In the whole trip this is the first bit of downright incivility we have met. After he found we were not after his squirrels he became somewhat less ungracious. The sky soon became overcast again, and the rain returned. About sunset it set in to blow a gale from the northwest, and the billows rolled in on us. We got the launch and skiff out of danger, carefully overlooked our lines and fenders, but still the tug bumped against the side. How the wind blows, and the waves dash against the side of the tug driving her against our side with a steady succession of blows. It worried us to know that the safety of the boats depended on a single one-inch rope, and the tug lashed against the outside strained on it. The rope was tense as a fiddle-string. If it broke the stern of our boat would swing out and throw us on an ugly snag that projected slightly about six feet below us; and the tug would be thrown into the branches of a huge fallen cypress. So we took the long rope and carried it ashore to the north end, from which the wind came, and lashed it securely to a huge stump, then tied the other end through the overhang of our boat at that end. If the line parts the new line will hold us against the soft, sandy bank, and give time for further effort to keep us off the snag. As it turned out the line held, but it does no harm to take precautions, and one sleeps better.

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During the night the wind died out, and the morning of Sunday, Dec. 13, 1903, is clear and cold, a heavy frost visible. The river is full of floaters, one above us, two directly across, one below, another above, and one floating past near the other shore. The *Desplaines* is getting up steam and we hope to see Memphis by noon.



MEMPHIS LEVEE. "TOUGH CROWD."

THE CANOE.

CHAPTER XIII.

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DUCK SHOOTING.

Memphis, Tenn., Dec. 20, 1903.—We ran in here last Sunday morning, Dec. 13, intending to stock up and get out on Wednesday. But Handwerker had arranged a shoot for us at Beaver Dam Club, and there we spent Tuesday afternoon and Wednesday morning, bagging 26 ducks—12 mallards, 8 green-winged teal, 4 pintails, one widgeon and one spoonbill. Met Mr. Selden, the president of the club, and Mr. O'Sullivan, and of course enjoyed every minute of the time.

The club is built on social principles, with a large sleeping room with four beds; better conducive to fun than seclusion—and the first is what we seek at such resorts. After lunch we set out, with negro boatmen, finding a thin coat of ice over the lake. This is an old river bed, of half-moon shape, with a little water and bottomless mud. Thousands of ducks were perched on the ice and

swimming in the few small open spaces. We laboriously broke our way through the ice to our chosen stands, and constructed blinds. Each boat had three live decoys; and after this first experience with these we must say that we retired fully convinced of our innate regularity as physicians—for we cannot quack a bit! Every time a flight of ducks appeared, our tethered ducks quacked lustily, the drake keeping silent; and it was effective. That evening the shooting was the most exasperating in our experience. Twice we brought down doubles, but not a bird of either did we bag. We had eight birds down, wounded, which in falling broke holes in the ice—and we left them till we were going in, as they could neither fly nor swim off; but the sun came out warmer, melted the ice, and not a bird of the lot did we bag. If there is anything that takes the edge off a duck hunter's pleasure—at least of this one's—it is wounding a bird and not being able to put it out of misery.

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A good dinner made some amends, and the story telling continued far into the night—in fact was still going when the writer fell asleep.

Next morning we had better luck, and got every bird knocked down, as well as one of those winged the preceding day. In all we bagged 26 ducks during the two days—and that for a party of 12 on the two boats is not an excessive supply. Not an ounce of the meat was wasted, and we could have enjoyed another meal of them.

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One singular accident robbed us of a fine greenhead. A flock of five passed directly over our heads, so high that the guide said it was useless to try for them; but strong in our confidence in the Winchester we took the leader, and he tumbled. Yes, tumbled so hard, from such a height that he broke through the ice and plunged so deeply into the mud that we were unable to find him, after most diligent trials. We had been impressed with the force of a duck's fall, when shooting one coming directly head on, and can realize that a blow from one may be dangerous. In Utah we heard of a man who was knocked out of his boat and his head driven into the mud so far that he would have been smothered had not the guide been able to draw him out.

On reaching the boat Wednesday evening we found that J. J. had improved the opportunity of our absence by getting drunk, and had frightened the folk by developing that most objectionable form of it, a fighting drunk. After a few days he wound up in the lock-up, and there we leave him—thoroughly disgusted that he should have done such a thing when entrusted with the care of the sick wife and little ones.

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The wife and Doctor took dinner with some friends, meeting a number of Memphis folk; and it is with unusual regret we bid adieu to this fine city. Stores are dearer than in St. Louis.

We were all ready to start by Saturday morning, but it was raining and foggy, the wind from the south too strong for our launch. Then the bank to which we were tied began to cave in, and soon our toelines were adrift. The *Desplaines* got up steam and took us north, where we remained all day; but as it was changing toward the north by evening we pulled down below town and tied in a little cove under but at a distance from the bluff. All night it blew hard from the west, and drove us into the mud bank, where we are solidly planted now. Three lines out and the anchor, with the mud, held us pretty steady, but the tug heaved against us all night. Jim had cemented the front baseboard with white lead and this kept out the water, but it came in under the sides, and we will have to treat them similarly. The roof seemed tight. The windows leak, too, and will have to be sealed somehow—with putty, or the seams covered with strips of muslin glued on with varnish.

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Our Cairo wood is gone, and we are using drift, which is wet. We must saw and split about a cord, and let it dry out. There is great plenty along the shores. The Missis has had asthma as bad as ever before—small wonder.

The *Desplaines* seems to be overmanned, for the owner, Mr. Woodruff, asked us to take Taylor off his hands. This we are very glad to do, as we are short, since losing J. J., and Taylor has gotten our launch in good shape at last. In fact we might have used her from St. Louis if we had had him. Taylor is an Englishman, a teetotaler, and is studying with a correspondence school to fit himself for the highest positions attainable by an engineer.

One has to be careful what he says to the Memphis people. We mentioned to Prof. Handwerker our need of a dog, and added that we preferred one that did not like negroes, as we wanted him to give warning when any stray ones came near. Next day down came a crate containing a little dog, a brindle terrier, with the word that he could not abide negroes. He at once proceeded to endear himself to every one on board, and fully verified his recommendations. His name is Bluff; and surely never was dog better named. The brave little creature would, we verily believe, bluff an elephant.

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CHAPTER XIV.

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President's Island, Dec. 21, 1903.—Yesterday was one of high hopes and unexpected disaster. All morning Taylor wrestled with the engine; Fluent ran down to tell of a telegram awaiting us; we went up in the *Desplaines* and found it was concerning some mss. not delivered by the express; found the office open, the mss. had been returned to Chicago Saturday on wire from there, and no explanation as to why it had not been delivered during the week, on every day of which we had been to the express office after it. Holiday rush.

At 1 p. m. we got off, the launch behind and steered by ropes running around the cabin to its front. All went well till Jim came in to dinner and we took the ropes—gave one turn to see which way the steering ran, found we were wrong and at once turned the other way, but that one turn gave the unwieldy craft a cant in to the shore, along which ran the swift current, and we drifted among a lot of snags, the launch caught, the boat caught, tore the blades off the propeller, broke the coupling; let go the anchor, and came to. In the melee we noticed the front end of a gasoline launch rise from some snags—a wreck, buoyed up by the air in the tank. The boys rowed back but could not locate it. Then we tried to lift our anchor, to find it fouled with something too heavy to be raised, and had to buoy it and cast loose with the 75 feet of cable attached to it.

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We drifted quietly down to the southern end of this island, where we tied up to the sand bar.

Out fenders, one long line to a half-buried log far up the shore, the boat held well off to guard against the falling water leaving us aground. Well we did, for this morning the launch was so firm in the sand that we had trouble to get loose. The night was clear and quiet, and this morning the same—a light wind blowing us along down the river. Laid in a lot of driftwood in long sticks. Missy had a good night but is a little asthmatic this morning. Swept out into the current and floating now in true cabinboat style. We will keep clear of the Tennessee Chute next time.

The *Desplaines* came along as we were lying at the lower end of the island, and came in to our signal. As we were totally disabled and would have to send to Auburn, N. Y., for new flukes for our propeller, they agreed to help us out, and took us in tow. They ran back to see if they could find the anchor or the sunken boat, but failed to locate either.

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Hardin's Point, Ark., Dec. 23, 1903.—Yesterday we ran in here after a fifty-mile run. Tied up quite near the light, which was not well, as the *Kate Adams* coming near rocked us as badly as any steamer we have yet met. We passed her and her consort, the *James Lee*, both aground within half a mile of each other, near Mhoon's. Both got off, as the *Lee* came down today. The river is lower than usual, as the Mhoon gauge showed minus three.

We laid in a good supply of wood, and then Jim and Frank found a lot of cannel coal over on the sand bar, and all day they have been loading up the *Desplaines* and our boat with it. Some barge has been wrecked there and the small pieces washed away, so that what is left is in large pieces, the smallest taking a strong man to lift. It is curiously water-burnt. The edges are well rounded, so it must have been long under water. A little darkey brought around six silver bass, weighing possibly half a pound each, for which he accepted forty cents. They have a barrel ready for shipment. He called them game fish.

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A fine buck shot out of the woods on the other side, followed at a distance by ten hounds, and the deer nearly ran into Woodruff's boat, then swam to this side, where our boys vainly tried to get a shot. An old darkey said he could have been easily drowned by the man in the skiff; but we are glad that species of murder did not offer attractions to Woodruff. The bars are resonant with the honking of the geese. The natives have no cows, chickens, nothing to sell, not even pecans—which here become "puckawns." This evening Jake brought in a fine wild goose, the first we have seen on board as yet. It has blown from the south all day, but is quiet this evening.

Helena, Ark., Dec. 25, 1903.—We left Hardin Point about 9 a. m., with the wind dead ahead, and strong enough to make the beating unpleasant. The front deck is loaded with over a ton of coal, and this seems to make the boat steadier, less inclined to pitch and toss like a cork on the waves.

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Christmas day is clear and bright, the sun out, thermometer at 10:30 standing at 55 outside in the shade, and with a little wood fire running up to 90 in the cabin. The Missis is better, her asthma becoming more spasmodic and better controlled by smoke. It rained all last night, and though the caulking did good, there was still some water came in around the surbases. We got some putty to help out the lead. At every stop we pick up something of value to us; usually some good hard firewood. Here we found a section of the side of a boat washed ashore, solid oak, with several bolts a yard long through it. Frank lugged it in and has broken it up into stovewood, and secured the bolts for stakes.

About 2 p. m. we reached Helena, a town of about 25,000. Moored at a distance up the stream, and landed on a muddy shore. The muddy south. We are all coated with the most adhesive of muds, the fineness of the grain rendering it difficult to remove from the clothes. The town is full of negroes, celebrating the holiday; and nearly all carry suspicious looking jugs. The costumes and shouting would make the fortune of a museum in the north. Found it impossible to secure a turkey fit to eat, but got the Missis some fine oysters and a chicken, and bear-steaks for our

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dinner—at 25 cents a pound. Game is not allowed to be sold in the state. Pity they do not extend the prohibition to whisky.

We made candy, and in the evening had the crew all in, and grabbed for presents in a big basket under a newspaper. We had a happy time, although we were all out on the big river far from home. The *Desplaines* let their wild goose spoil, and threw it overboard this morning. At 10 a. m. we set out for down the river.

We searched the Memphis papers for some intimation as to J. J.'s fate, but found none. Found the tale of an Indiana man who was coming down on a houseboat with his wife, intending to make his home in Greenville, Miss. He was told at Cairo that there was a law in Tennessee against carrying concealed weapons, so here he started out with his pistol in his hands. He was arrested and sentenced to jail for a year less a day, and \$50 fine, the law forbidding the carrying of weapons. Such a punishment, administered to a stranger unaware of the law seems a travesty of justice. It is said here that it is safer to kill a man than to carry a weapon; and it seems so.

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CHAPTER XV.

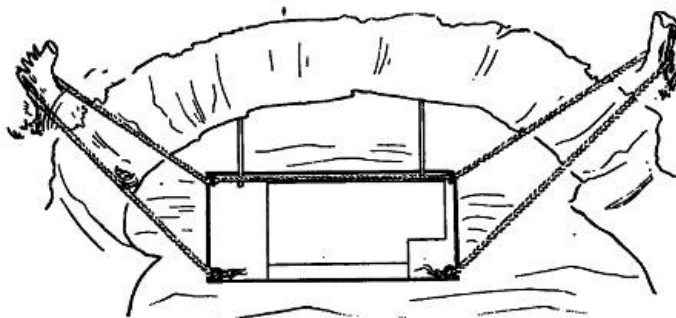
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MOORING.

We have been studying the subject of mooring, and present the following as an ideal moor:

The fenders are stout poles six inches thick at the butt, three at the small end, which rests on shore. This end is deeply embedded in the dirt, so that it will not float away or ride up on the bank. The big end is firmly fastened to the side timbers, the four-by-fours running across the boat under the floor, by a short chain, which will not chafe out like a rope. The latter is better, as being elastic, however. Either must be strong to spare. The cable is an inch Manilla rope. Thus moored we are ready for all chances. The best thing to moor to is a stump or log firmly embedded, and as far as possible from shore, if crumbly, for the current may cut in fast. At Memphis our stake, forty feet from shore, was washed out in an hour. Never tie close to a bank that may fall in on the boat, or to a tree that may fall and crush you; or to a bank that may hold you ashore if the water falls in the night; or, worst of all, over a snag, for the waves of a passing steamer may lift the boat up and drop it so hard on the snag as to knock a hole in the bottom. When possible moor where you will have a bar to protect you from the force of waves rolling in from a broad stretch of water. A narrow creek or cove would be ideal, but as yet we have hardly seen such a thing where we wanted to stop. When moored with the long side to the shore, less surface is exposed to the current and the wind, and less strain put upon the cables.

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AN IDEAL MOOR.

CHAPTER XVI.

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A LEVEE CAMP.

Allison's Landing, Ark., Dec. 26, 1903.—We landed here after dark last night, having been delayed at Friars' Point by the tug getting aground. The cabinboat floated down the river some distance, and then the back current and wind carried her on a sand bar. The tug was three hours getting free, by warping off with the anchor.

We found this a levee camp. Hardly had we landed when a big negress came aboard to see what we had for sale. They wanted drygoods badly, and were much disappointed. Two pleasant gentlemen boarded us, the heads of the camp; and spent the evening on the tug, with singing and music. They are here surrounded by negroes, and a little white association seemed as agreeable to them as it was to us. In the night all hands but Dr. and Taylor went cat-hunting.

At 11 p. m. a furious wind storm sprang up from the northeast, exactly the direction from which to blow us on shore; which was providential, as we only had one long line out and that poorly secured to a stake in the soft, oozy bank. Frank saw that everything was right, and wisely went to bed; but we could not rest easy, and sat up till 4 a. m. The canoe on the roof blew over against the stovepipe and we had to get out four times and push it back with a pole. It grew quite cold and the fire was grateful.

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About midnight the hunters came back with the usual luck to tell of. This morning Jake, the boy and Doctor went out to a bayou after ducks, but saw none. This country is said to swarm with game but it keeps hidden from us. What a thing is a bad reputation!

In the woods we noted the buds springing from the roots of the cypress, the size of an egg, and growing upward in hollow cones, called cypress knees. It is a remarkable and noble tree, the buttressed stumps giving promise of superb height, which seems rarely realized. Half a mile back from the landing we came upon the levee, a great bank of earth but partly covered with grass. Deep and narrow bayous run parallel with it, in which could be seen the movements of quite large fish.

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Robins, redbirds, jays, woodpeckers, blackbirds, and a variety of still smaller birds abounded; but we did not get any game. The two gentlemen in charge of the levee camp, Mr. Rogers and Mr. Ward, went with us into the woods, but the game was wary. All hands so thoroughly enjoyed the visit at this hospitable camp that for the rest of the trip we talked of it. We were indebted to these gentlemen for a roast of fresh pork. Their task is a difficult one, to keep in order so many negroes, all of the rough and illiterate sort. Quarrels over "craps" and shooting among the negroes are not infrequent, and in one a white man, passing by, was killed. Mr. Rogers has the repute of getting his men to work, and we heard a scrap of a song among them, expressive of their sentiments or impressions:

"Blisters on yo' feet an' co'ns on yo' han',
Wat yo' git for wo'kin' fo' de black-haired man."

A firm hand is absolutely necessary to rule these men, with whom weakness is perilous. Only a few weeks after our visit to one of these camps a negro got in a dispute over a trivial sum in his account, got hold of the pistol the white man in charge had incautiously left in the negro's reach, and shot him dead. If there is anything in the art of physiognomy, many of these levee men are desperadoes.

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Dec. 28, 1903.—We left our friendly entertainers at Allison's and ran down to a bar, where Woodruff took in several tons of very good coal, costing nothing but the trouble of shipping. Mr. Rogers accompanied us to Modoc.

Tied up at Mayflower landing, a good moor. A German there told us a trading boat at the landing above took away \$6,000 in three days last year. The trader has a large scow, with a cabin, and a steamer to handle it. Every place we stop the people come to inquire what we have to sell. We got off at 7 a. m. today, passed the mouths of the White and Arkansas, and have run at least 60 miles. We have landed after dark, and we are not sure as to where we are. The weather has been most pleasant, temperature about 60 all day, little wind. The river is full of drift, but there is little traffic. Just now a little steamer passed up. At Riverton were several small ones, but otherwise the solitude is unbroken.

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The shores are wild, the banks continually crumbling into the river. A prodigious number of snags must be furnished yearly. Very few wild fowl appear. Floaters appear occasionally, but probably there will be fewer now, as many are directed to the White river. This is probably near Monterey Landing. As the landing was narrow and beset with snags we moored with the prow to the bank, two lines to the shore and the anchor out astern. We have much to say about mooring; but it is a matter of supreme importance to the comfort and even the safety of the crew. It is not specially pleasant to turn out of bed in one's nightclothes, with the temperature below freezing, to find the boat adrift in a furious storm and pounding her bottom out on snags.

We bought a new anchor from a trading boat at Allison's. It is 50 pounds, galvanized, with folding flukes and a ring at the end for a guy rope, so that if fouled as the other was, we can pull the flukes together and free it. Paid four dollars for it—same as for the other, but this is a much better anchor, though not as strong as the solid one.

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Jim has gone around the cabin and puttied up the cracks, and we hope the next rain will keep out. If not, we will get deck pitch and pay the seams.

Arkansas City, Ark., Dec. 30, 1903.—Landed here shortly after noon, and spent the balance of the day. About 1,000 people, mostly black; some good stores; got a few New Orleans oysters, which are sold by number, 25 cents for two dozen; bought a new anchor rope, 75 feet, 3.4 inch, for \$3.04, or 14½ cents a pound. Eggs, 35 cents a dozen. No trade for extinguishers, though

Woodruff had a nibble for his steamer. Weather clear, and temperature rising to about 60 in midday, cold at night. This morning at 8, temperature 34. No wind. River smooth. What a lot of gasoline engines are in use. There are at least six boats rigged with them here. One Memphis party is building a new hull ashore and moving an old cabin on it. The lady who owns the hotel and drug store has mocking birds for sale, \$25.00 for a singer—lady birds not worth selling.

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Got off near 9 a. m., for Greenville.

January 1st, 1904.—We left Arkansas City on the 30th, at 9 a. m., and reached Greenville, Miss., that evening just before dark. It is a rambling town, behind the levee, about 10,000 people, but evidently has considerable business. Twenty-five mills of various kinds are there. Supplies higher than since leaving Chicago—15 cents for meat of any sort, 35 cents for eggs or butter, 25 cents for a dozen fine large shell oysters from New Orleans, the first we have met, and which the sick woman appreciated \$25.00 worth.

The *Desplaines* did some business, but many of the mills are owned in the cities and the managers cannot buy here.

An old negro lives in a little gully washed by the rain in the bank, close to where we tied up. He has a little fire, and lies there all night with a board on edge to rest his back against. In the morning we took him a cup of coffee which he took eagerly, but without thanks. An old negress brought him something—presumably food. Last night it rained some, but this morning he was still there. During the day we saw him wandering about the streets, reminding one of a lost dog.

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We left at noon, but as it was still raining it was equally uncomfortable going or lying still. They tried the tug alongside, but the rudder would not swing the big cabinboat and they had to return to towing. About 2 p. m. the fog shut in so dense that we had to make a landing, presumably in Walker's Bend, on the Arkansas side. Frank brought off some of the finest persimmons we have yet seen. The cabin is so warm that some flies have appeared, probably left-overs, though the Missis says they have them all the winter down here. Picked up a nice lot of drifting boards for stove.

Exploration establishes the fact that we are just below Vaucluse Landing, and that the land is rich in pecan trees, well laden with nuts, which these lazy darkies let go to waste. Frank found a store in the neighborhood. Chicot lake, back of us, is said to be rich in ducks, and if the fog lasts tomorrow we must have some. The putty has kept out the rain today very well. We suffer for ventilation, though, and awake in the morning with headaches. It is bright moonlight, but still foggy. It rained during the night and we secured a fine supply of rainwater in the launch cover.

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Shiloh Landing, Miss., Jan. 3, 1904.—We lay last night at Wilson's Point, La., and all night we listened to the creaking of our fenders against the side, and felt the heave of the tug as she surged against our side under the influence of a driving northwest wind. Said wind carried us along yesterday for a run of over 44 miles, sometimes with and at others against us, as the river curved. It was a cold wind and made the cabin fire comfortable. Two sailboats passed us going down, one a two-master from Chicago and the other the *Delhi*, from Michigan City. They made good with the wind. There was a large trading boat with stern wheel above our landing, but we did not visit her.

About 1 p. m. we ran in here, and the tug people stopped because Mr. Rogers' brother was in charge. We found a levee camp with 36 tents, and examined the commissary with interest. Got some canned oysters for the Missis. No milk or eggs, fresh meat or chickens. The men all carry big 44s, and sometimes use them, we hear. It grows colder—at 5 p. m. temperature outside 30—and the cold is harder to bear than a much lower one up north. Every few miles there is a landing, and a pile of cotton bales and bags of seed waiting for the *Delta* or *American*, fine steamers that ply between Vicksburg and Greenville.

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The great, greedy river, forever eating its banks, which crumble into the current constantly, even now when the water is so low. Every sand bar has its wrecks, and opposite Lake Providence we saw men and teams busy over the coal in sunken barges.

Monday, Jan. 4, we left Shiloh at 7:20, clear and cold, temperature 28, moon shining, but the sun not yet visible from behind the bluff.

Yesterday we passed the steamer *City of Wheeling*, fast on a bar, and we hear she has been there for two months—grounded on her first trip. But the water is rising and she expects to be soon released.

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CHAPTER XVII.

VICKSBURG.

Thursday, Jan. 7. 1904.—We arrived at Vicksburg in the afternoon of Monday, Jan. 4, and were much impressed by the beauty of the city as seen from the river. Spread along the heights it looks like a large city, though it only claims a population of about 22,000. Contrary to expectation we found it busy, with evidences of life and enterprise. The Government has built a levee which blocks up the mouth of the Yazoo, and by a canal diverted the water of that river into the channel that runs along the front of the city; the old bed of the river Mississippi previous to 1876, when it cut a new bed for itself and threatened to leave the historic fortress an inland town.

Just before reaching the city we met a row of whirlpools reaching across the channel, whose violence would make a man in a skiff feel queer. These are the only notable ones we have seen, except just before reaching Arkansas City.

The *Desplaines* could not tow us against the swift current in the Yazoo, so left the houseboat about 300 yards up that stream and steamed up to the city. After visiting the postoffice we started to walk back along the levee, reaching the place we had left the boat just before dark. She was not there, and we walked along the bank up stream till it grew too dark to see, then got lost among the railway buildings till directed by a friendly youth to the street where the cars ran. Reached the tug at last, and the owner took us back with a lantern along the levee, finding the boat in the great river, the boys having dropped down out of the Yazoo. As we received the flukes for our launch, which Taylor put on, we concluded to part company from the tug, and settled up with them. Meanwhile the quarreling among her crew came to a climax and Jake was set on shore by them. He was pilot, cook, hunter and general all-round utility man, coming for the trip without wages, and it seems to us suicidal for them to dismiss him, when negro roustabouts are refusing \$4.00 a day from the steamers, and engineers impossible to secure at any price. We were full handed, but liked Jake, so we took him aboard as a supernumerary till he could do better. [Pg 129]

The 6th was dull and rainy but we got off, and ran about 16 miles in the afternoon, tying up somewhere in Diamond Bend, probably below Moore's Landing.

At V. had a letter from J. J., saying he had been sentenced to a year in the workhouse and \$50.00 fine for carrying weapons.

During the night it rained heavily, and we caught a fine lot of rainwater in the launch cover. One learns to appreciate this on the river.

During the afternoon we saw a negro shoot from the bank directly down on a few geese, of which he wounded one. It swam across the river and we got out the skiff and followed. On shore it crouched down as if dead, and waited till Jim got within ten feet, when it got up and flew across the river. We followed, and he shot it with a rifle when about 150 yards off.

By that time we were miles below the darky, and as he has no boat we fear he will not be on hand to put in a claim for the goose. We bought one at V. for 90 cents; also eight jack-snipe for a dollar. Roast beef was 12½ cents for round, 25 for rib, and 17½ for corned beef. Milk 10 cents a quart from wagon, buttermilk 20 cents a gallon, butter, 30 for creamery and 25 for country. [Pg 131]

Waterproof Cutoff, Friday, Jan. 8, 1904.—We ran about 23 miles on the 7th, the engine simply refusing to go; and we drifted most of the time. Once we got fast on a nasty snag and it took all our force to get off. We tied up to a sand bar near Hard Times Landing, in the bend of that name. Bluff and the children had a refreshing run on the sand. Got off today at 8 a. m., and by 10 the engine started off in good shape and has been running well all day. The weather is clear and warm, thermometer standing at 72 this afternoon. Little wind, but that from the south. Some clouds betoken a possible rain. Our first wild goose for dinner on the 6th, and all liked it well.

Saturday, Jan. 9, 1904.—We ran about forty miles yesterday, tying up above L'Argent in a quicksandy nook. At 4 this morning these lazy boys got up and started to float, making several miles before daybreak. It is foggy at 8 and the sun invisible, but warm and with little wind. The launch is running fitfully. Passed Hole-in-the-Wall and now opposite Quitman Bluff. [Pg 132]

Jan. 10, 1904.—Yesterday we reached Natchez at 1 p. m., and by 4 had got our mail and supplies and were off down the river. The engine balked under the influence of a lower temperature, and we had only made about five miles when we had to tie up on account of the darkness. It rained hard.

CHAPTER XVIII.

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RIVER PIRATES.

We had had our suppers, the children and Missis had gone to bed, and we were about following them, when through the rain we heard someone get upon the front deck. It was raining hard. We called out, asking who was there. A man replied in a wheedling voice, saying that he was alone, lost in the rain, and wished to remain till it was light enough to see his way. We asked who he was, and he responded that he was a prominent citizen of the neighborhood and asked us to open up the cabin a little bit. The doors are on the sides, and he was evidently puzzled as to how to get into the cabin. We were undressed and told him we could not let him in; but he insisted. We called to the boys to see what was wanted, thinking it might be some one in trouble; so Jake went out. The man began to talk pretty saucily, but then Jim and Frank got out, and at once his tone changed. He suddenly got very drunk, though perfectly sober a moment before. Another man turned up also, in a skiff alongside. He gave a rambling incoherent account of why he was there; but the other man called angrily for him to come on, and soon they left, rowing into the darkness. The man who came aboard was about 5 feet 6; 45, red-faced, deep-set eyes; his hat drawn well over his face; rather heavily set. The other was a sulky-faced man about 25, with light hair. That they were river pirates there is not a doubt; and had we been short-handed there would have been trouble.

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Next morning we set out, slowly floating with a little headwind, through a fog. Temperature at 8 a. m., 50. Natchez-under-the-hill has disappeared under the assaults of the river, and with it the wild characters that made it famous, or rather notorious. The city is now said to be as orderly and safe as any in the south. We now get fine gulf oysters at 50 cents to \$1 a hundred. They come in buckets. Shell oysters are still rare. We got a small bunch of bananas at Natchez, for 60 cents.

We passed Morville, floating about three miles an hour. We have never been able to secure any data as to the speed of the current in the rivers.

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Jan. 11, 1904.—We ran 42 miles yesterday, to near Union Point, tying up to a sand bar. The boys crossed to a railway camp and were told game was very abundant, so that it was hardly safe for a single man to go out with the hounds at night—bear, panther and cat. We had a head wind all day, from the west, sometimes strong enough to raise a few whitecaps, and the engine did her stunt of bucking—which shows what she is good for when in good humor. Temperature went up to 72 and hung around 70 all day. This morning at 8 it is 42. The children and dog had a much needed run on the sand. The boy needs much exercise and laboriously chops at the heaviest wood he can find.

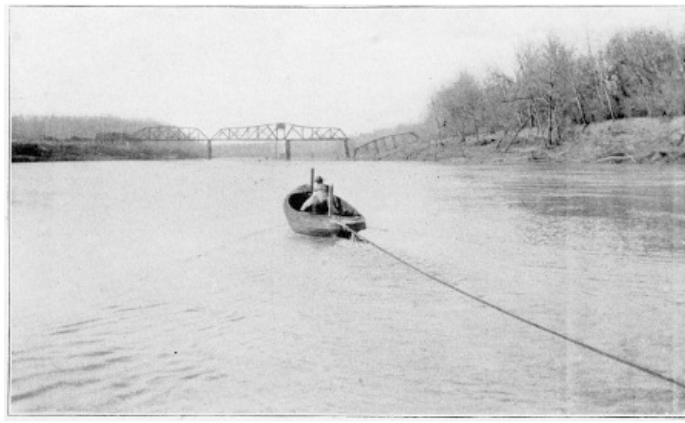
CHAPTER XIX.

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THE ATCHAFALAYA.

By lunch time we reached the mouth of the Red River, and found a rapid current running into it from the Mississippi. We landed on the bar and sent to town for mail, but found the postoffice had been moved to Torrasdale, several miles away—and after walking up there found no letters. At 3 p. m. we started up the Red, rapid, crooked, much in need of the services of a snag boat; weather so warm the invalid came out on deck for an hour or more. Turned into the Atchafalaya about 5 p. m., a deep stream, said to be never less than 50 feet deep. The same shelving banks as the great river, formed by the continual caving. We found a bed of pebbles at the mouth of the Red and really they were like old friends. Stone is a rarity here.

We tied up a little way beyond Elmwood Landing. Henceforth we have neither charts nor lights, but we have a born pilot in Jake, and he will pull us through. A bad day for the asthma, in spite of the warmth.



RED RIVER.

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Jan. 12, 1904.—If solitude exists along the Atchafalaya it is not here. The left bank is leveed and roofs appear about every 100 yards. The right bank is lined with little trees growing down to and into the water. At Denson's Landing, or Simmesport, the right bank begins a levee; there is the inevitable gas launch, a tug, and numerous other craft, with a fish market. The wind blows dead ahead, and raises waves nearly as big as in the big river. Pretty bum houseboats, apparently occupied by blacks. Some noble trees with festoons of Spanish moss. No nibbles on the trotline last night, but a huge fish heaved his side out of the water just now. Alligator gar.

Pleasant traveling now. All day long we have voyaged along the Atchafalaya with a wind from—where? It requires a compass to determine directions here. In fact the uncertainty of things usually regarded as sure is singular. Now up north we know just where the sun is going to rise; but here the only certainty about it is its uncertainty. Now it comes up in the east—that is, over the east bank of the river; but next day it may appear in the west, north or south.

The wind was against us all morning, but since lunch—which we had at Woodside—it has been back of us or sideways, and has driven us along. Fine levees line the banks. Just now we are passing a camp at work. It is a noble river, wide and deep, with a current about as swift as the great river. Even now, when the Barbre gauge shows $6\frac{3}{4}$ feet above low water only, there is no obstruction to navigation by as large steamers as plow the Mississippi. Now and then a little spire or black stack peeping above the levee shows the presence of a village. Temperature hovers about 62. Only a solitary brace of ducks seen in this river as yet.

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All afternoon we have been pursuing Melville. At 3 p. m. it was four miles away; an hour later it was five miles off, and at 5 we had gotten within three miles of the elusive town. We concluded to stop, in hopes it might get over its fear and settle down; so tied up. We ascended the levee, and a boy told us the town was within half a mile. The river is lonely, not a steamer since leaving the mouth of Red, where the *Little Rufus* came down and out, politely slowing up as she neared the cabin boat, to avoid rocking us. An occasional skiff is all we see, though the landing is common, but no cotton or seed, nothing but lumber.

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We were correct as to our estimate of the visitors we had the other night—river pirates. Their method is to come on rainy nights when the dogs are under cover. By some plausible story they gain admittance to the cabin and then—? Have the windows guarded by stout wire screens, the doors fitted with bars, and a chain. Any visitor to a cabin boat after night is a thief, and on occasion a murderer. If he desires admittance after being told you are not a trader or whisky boat, open the chain and when he tries to enter shoot him at once. It is the sheerest folly to let one of those fellows have the first chance. No jury in the world would fail to congratulate you for ridding the river of such a character. There are no circumstances that can be imagined in which an honest man would act in the way these men did. If they wanted shelter from the rain the shore was handy. If they mistook the boat for friends, the mistake was apparent and they knew very well they had no business to continue their visit.

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Wednesday, Jan. 13, 1904.—Made a good start. We got under way about 8:30, and Melville bridge soon came in view. The day is clear and warm, water smooth as glass, with no perceptible current, and the engine starts off as if nothing ever ruffled her temper.

CHAPTER XX.

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MELVILLE—FIRST DEER HUNT.

Melville, La., Jan. 19, 1904.—We found this a quiet little town of 600 people, including negroes; with sufficient stores for our simple needs, and a daily mail east and west. We found some pleasant young gentlemen here, with plenty of leisure and hounds, and some of us go out for deer every day. So far no one has brought in any venison, but Jim and Frank have had shots.

The thermometer stands at about 60 to 70 all day; fires are superfluous except at night for the weak one, the grass and clover show up green in spots, and really we seem to have skipped winter. In the swamps the palmettoes raise their broad fans, the live oaks rear their brawny trunks, and bits of green life show up on all sides. Really, we do not see what excuse the grass has for being brown, if it be not simple force of habit, or recollection of a northern ancestry.

The negro women wear extraordinary sunbonnets, huge flaring crowns with gay trimming. The foreigners are Italians or Greeks; and are in the fruit and grocery trade. An old superannuated Confed. brings us a small pail of milk daily, for which he gets 10 cents a quart. [Pg 142]

The river is leveed 15 miles down, and the system is being extended southward. There is a difference of opinion as to the levees, some claiming they are injurious as preventing the elevation of the land by deposit of mud; while one large sugar raiser said it would be impossible to raise crops without them. The truth seems to be that the immediate needs require the levees; but if one could let the land lie idle, or take what crops could be raised after the floods subside, it would be better for the owner of the next century to let in the water.

We have had our first deer hunt. Six of us, with four hounds, set out in the launch. Arriving at the right place we disembarked and walked through the woods about a mile, the dogs having meanwhile started out independently. Here they located us, in a small clear space, and the rest went on to their respective stands. We looked about us and were not favorably impressed with our location. It was too open. Deer coming from any quarter would see us long before we could see them. So we selected a spot where we could sit down on a log, in the shade of a huge cypress, with the best cover attainable, and yet see all over the clearing. Then we waited. [Pg 143]

By and by we heard a noise as of breaking twigs to one side. We crouched down and held our breath, getting the rifle up so as to allow it to bear in the right direction. Waited. A little more noise, but slight. Waited. No more. Sat till our backs got stiff and feet cold. Then carefully and quietly paced up and down the path. Sat down again. Concluded to eat lunch, an expedient that rarely fails to start the ducks flying. No good for deer.

Shifted position, walked up the path to a bunch of hollies, laden with berries. A bird was at them, and as by this time our faith in deer was growing cool we concluded to take a shot at a robin. Did so. Missed him—but to our horror and relief he turned out to be a mocking bird!

Walked up the path and found a sluggish bayou with running water across it. Weren't thirsty, but doubted the wisdom of drinking that water, and that made us thirsty. Cirled around the center of our clearing. Noted the way the cypresses throw up stumps from the roots. Saw a big turtle in the bayou. Red birds came about, but no robins—they are game birds here. Searched the trees for squirrels—none there. Thought of everything we could recollect—even began to enumerate our sins—and got into an animated discussion with a stranger on the negro question, awaking with a start. Shot at a hawk that roosted on a tree just out of gunshot. Scared him, anyhow. [Pg 144]

Finally, when desperate with the task of finding expedients to keep us awake, we heard a horn blown—or wound?—and not knowing but that some one might be lost, whistled shrilly in reply. Occasionally a shot was heard here and there; once in a moon the dogs gave tongue in the remote distance. Finally one of the boys appeared, then the old uncle, and the rest came stringing in. One had seen a deer but did not get a shot at it. So we took up the line of march for the river, where the launch returned us to the cabin boat. And so ended our first deer hunt.

We have now been at it a week, and several of the boys have had shots at the animals, but no horns decorate our boat, nor does venison fill our craving stomachs. There are deer here, their evidences are as plain as those of sheep in a pasture. But the only benefit they have been to us is in the stimulation of the fancy. The weird and wonderful tales spun by those who have had shots at the elusive creatures, to account for the continued longevity and activity of their targets, are worth coming here to hear. Surely never did deer go through such antics; never did the most expert tumbler in any circus accomplish such feats of acrobatic skill. The man who catches flying bullets in his teeth should come down here and receive instruction from these deer. [Pg 145]

We took the Missis and daughter over to Baton Rouge, and installed them in a huge, old-fashioned room, on Church St., a block from the postoffice and the leading stores; with a lady of means, who sets an excellent table, lavishly spread, and with the best of cookery, at a price that seems nominal to us. The lofty ceilings seem doubly so after the low deck of the cabin; the big canopied bed of walnut and quilted silk recalls the east; while violets, camellias, hyacinths and narcissus blooming in the open air, as well as sweet olive, and the budding magnolias, make one realize that the frozen north is not a necessity. [Pg 146]

January 23, 1904.—We find Melville a very good place to stay—supplies plentiful, the people pleasant, and the place safe. The boys go out for deer every day, but as yet no success has

rewarded them. One day they chased a doe into the river, where two boys caught her with their hands and slaughtered her. Bah!

The weather has been ideal—warm enough to make a fire oppressive save nights and mornings—but we are now having a cold snap, whose severity would make you northern folk, who sit in comfort over your registers, shiver. We have actually had a white frost two nights in succession. Fact!

On the shore close by roost at least 100 buzzards. They are protected and seem aware of it; roosting on the roof of the fish boat below us. They tell us the sharks come up here so that bathing is unsafe, and tell queer stories of the voracity and daring of the alligator gars. The alligator is by no means extinct in Louisiana, being still found of gigantic size in the bayous.

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Little is said here on the negro question, which seems to be settled so well that no discussion is needed.

Day after day we sit at the typewriter and the work grows fast. Tomorrow we go to Barrow's convict camp for a shoot, and quite a lot have gathered, and are waiting till the engine chooses to start. Every day we have to push the boat from shore or we might be hard aground in the morning, as we are today. The water fell last night till it uncovered six feet of mud by the shore. The river is said to be over 100 feet deep opposite. The bridge is built on iron tubular piers that seem to be driven down till they strike a stratum capable of supporting the weight. These are said to be 100 feet deep.

January 24, 1904, we all went down to Capt. Barrow's camp for a deer hunt, which possessed no features differing from those of the five preceding. At 4 p. m. we quit, and started on our return. But the dogs had not come in, so when we got up to the old convict camp we stopped, and Budd and Jake went back for them. And there we waited till after 10 p. m. It grew quite cool so that the boys built a fire. Just on the bluff above us was an old deserted house, about ready to fall into the river when the banks shall have crumbled away a little more. We found in it an ancient mahogany four-post bedstead and a spinning-wheel, an old horn powderhorn, and other relics of antiquity.

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There were our own party of four, Budd and Wally, Thomassen and his son "Sugar," Mr. Sellers (from one of the Melville stores), and two negro hunters, Brown and Pinkham—and right worthy men and good hunters they are. The fire was fed by beams from the old house, and as its cheerful warmth was felt, the scene would have been a worthy one for an artist's pencil. The odd stories and ceaseless banter of the negroes and the boy were enhanced by the curious dialect. Constantly one blew his horn, and was answered by the party who were out, or by others; and some one else was blowing for other lost dogs, so that the woods were musical. An old hound had come in early, tired out, and when the horns blew he would try to get off, but was tied; so he would give vent to his discontent in the most doleful of long-drawn-out howls, like a prolonged note from an owl. At last boys and hounds came in, and we were home to our boat by midnight.

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Somehow the yoke once worn till thoroughly fitted to the neck, becomes a part of the bearer; and the best contented of the negroes were those who held with their old masters. Even the shackles of civilization become attractive in time—and we have resumed the reading of a daily paper since we can get it regularly. And we like the *Picayune*, finding in its editorials a quiet dignity that we appreciate, even though we may not agree with the political sentiments. And there is an air of responsibility about it; a consciousness that what it says counts, and must therefore be preceded by due deliberation, that is novel. The local color is also attractive. For instance the river news, and—the jackstuffs! Now, don't say you do not know what jackstuffs are. We will not spoil it by telling. And Lagniappe!

CHAPTER XXI.

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BATON ROUGE—THE PANTHER.

Baton Rouge, La., Feb. 1, 1904.—While you in the North are wrestling with zero temperatures, we are experiencing what these folk term terrible winter weather. Men go about with heavy overcoats buttoned up to the chin, and I saw one the other day with a tall coonskin cap, with folds down over his neck, and earflaps. An open-grate fire is comfortable in the mornings and tempers the chill of night for the little one. Even the Chicago man finds a light overcoat advisable in the mornings, though with light-weight underwear and thin outer clothes.

Nevertheless, the violets bloom everywhere, jonquils, polyanthus narcissus, camellias and sweet olive are in bloom, and the big rose bushes are covered with leaves and buds that already show the color of the flower. The grass is green in New Orleans parks, and the magnolias are budding. Masses of chickweed cover the margins of drains and several plants of unknown lineage—to the writer—are in bloom. And this is the weather to which we constantly hear the epithet "terrible" applied here.

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But residents of the North who were raised in Dixie do not freeze. Exposure to cold brings with it the ability to withstand it, and not only that but all other morbid influences as well. It increases the vitality, the power of resisting all noxious powers that threaten the health and life of man.

But this applies to the sound and well, not to those who already possess a material lesion of one or more organs. For them this soft, balmy air, this temperature that permits a maximum of exposure to the open air, are health-giving, life-prolonging, comfort-securing.

People speak of the sudden changes here—warm today and tomorrow cold—as objectionable; but so they do everywhere, and we have found no more changeability than elsewhere. And as to the rains: When it does rain it pours, but most of it has been at night so far, and during the day it dries off nicely. It is said that this is the rainy month, and we may have to modify this view later. So far the rains have not been a feature worthy of citation, as against the climate.

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Much attention has been given the drinking water of late years in the riverine cities, and generally they have water on which they pride themselves. Artesian wells are mostly utilized. The river water is muddy and unsightly, but probably safe and certainly palatable. We depend on our Puritan still, and a tripoli filter, and utilize the rain water we catch in the canvas cover of the launch. No trouble has as yet affected us from this source; and we are satisfied it pays well to take precautions.

From St. Louis down the river fairly bristles with opportunities for men who understand business and have a little capital. But timber lands are pretty well taken up. An Ohio party paid \$100 an acre for 100 acres here in this Atchafalaya country the other day.

The people? Well, we have simply adopted the whole—white—population, and find them delightful. There has not been a discordant note in our intercourse with this warm-hearted, hospitable folk, who unite the courtesy of the French with a sincerity that makes itself felt every moment.

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Dogs! Everyone seems to own hounds here. We had a few runs with them; they came aboard and inspected us, and after due deliberation approved of us, took up their home with us and declined to stay away; so that at night one can scarcely set foot outside the cabin without stepping on a sleeping hound. Even the women folk are disarmed when these dogs look up with their big, beautiful eyes and nuzzle their cold noses into the hand for a caress. One great fellow reared up against us, placed his paws on our shoulders and silently studied our face awhile, then dropped to the ground and henceforth devoted himself to us, never being far from our side. We felt complimented!

Go out with the gun, and see how these slumberous animals awake to joyous life and activity. Then the long, musical bay, the ringing of the hunters' horns, the quick dash of the deer past your stand, with the dogs after, in full cry—say, brother, these low lands when leveed, cleared and cultivated, will yield two bales of cotton to the acre, and with cotton at 15 cents and over, is not that splendid? So shut your ears against the cry of the wild, and only consider what Progress means, and how the individual and civic wealth is increasing as these wild lands are brought under the plow and made productive of dollars. For is not all of life simply a question of dollars, and success measurable only in the bank account? So put away from you the things that make life worth living, and devote yourself with a whole heart to the task of making your son a millionaire, that he may make his son a multimillionaire, and so on. It will do you so much good in the Great Beyond to know this. That the money for which we give up all that renders life enjoyable will either render our descendants dissipated and useless, or enable them to oppress their fellowmen, need not be considered. Money is all there is in life.

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The wife, daughter and Doctor are domiciled at Baton Rouge, while the boys took the boats down to Alabama Bayou for a week with the big game. Here is the small boy's report, verbatim:

Dear Mama and Papa: You talk about us not sending you any venison. If I had any money I would send you enough to make you sick. I went hunting with the boys this morning. Jim, Hudson and I went together. Bud drove with the dogs. Jake and Frank went together. Frank took his shotgun and he got lost from Jake, went to shooting robins. Jake got on an island and did not know where he got on at. He had to wade a stream two feet deep. After we had been looking for a stand we heard a shot behind us, and then a rifle shot to the right of us, and three blows of Bud's horn, which means dead deer. Jake was the first one to him, being only 300 yards. We walked two and one-half miles before we got to him. When we got there he had a big doe laying over a log. Bud drew him and they took turns carrying him home. Every tooth in my head aches from chewing venison. How are all of you? I waded about 30 ditches today over my shoe tops and one over my knees. Bud said if I followed the dogs with him he would give me first shot, and if I missed he would get him. Millie made me a belt to fit the rifle cartridges. I christened my axe in deer blood. Bud said Queen was 10 feet behind it, King 20 feet and Diamond ran up and threw the deer after it was shot. Then it got up and Diamond got it in the throat and brought it down. I will have to close as it is time to go to bed. With love to all,

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William.

Not bad for an 11-year-old. Everyone has been complaining of the terrible weather here—frost three nights last week, and a light overcoat not oppressive, though it is hardly necessary except for the tendency one has to put his hands in his pockets otherwise. We asked one of the natives what they would do in Chicago with zero weather, and he replied with an air of conviction:

"Freeze to death."

We have a nibble for the boat. The river at Memphis is so full of floating ice that the ferry boats cannot run; and that looks as if we might not be able to get our boats towed to St. Louis before late spring—and we want to be free. We note blooming in the open many violets, polyanthus narcissus, camellias, sweet olive, magnolias just budding out, and white hyacinths. The grass is putting up green shoots. Large beds of chickweed are plentiful. The vinca was nipped by frost last night. Next door is a fine palmetto and the great roses covering the gallery are full of green leaves and the remains of the last crop of blossoms, with new buds coming out. What a terrible winter!

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There is a street fair here. These people go about the country and exhibit wherever they find a town that will pay them, their price here being, it is said, \$2,000 for a week. The Red Men pay them, and probably the merchants subscribe to it, the business brought to town compensating them. There are a number of attractions, like a little splinter broken off the poorest part of Atlantic City. But it gives something to see and do and talk about, to a town where there is too little of either for the demand. There are a huge and a dwarf horse, glass blowers, a human dwarf, contortionist, jubilee singers, kinoscope, trained dogs and monkeys, dissolving statue, and of course the nigger babies and knives to throw at and miss. We have run against these aggregations all the way down, and they are evidently becoming a feature of the smaller towns.

Curious place for a State Capital. In our room stands a fine walnut wardrobe with a door broken open; and there is not a mechanic in the city who can mend it. Glass is broken, and it remains so; any quantity of miscellaneous mending and repairing needed, but it stands. The sunny south is a bit slipshod; the ladies are delightful, but they do not work their finger ends off cleaning out the last possibilities of dust and dirt—they leave it to the darkies, who do what they cannot avoid doing and stop right there.

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That our boys are not devoid of descriptive ability—and imagination?—this chapter, written by Frank, will demonstrate.

"At Melville, on the Atchafalaya, we became acquainted with some young men who had a fine pack of deer hounds. They also call these "nigger dogs," because they are employed for trailing convicts who escape from the camps along the river.

"Early in the morning our hunting party gathered on the levee—the Doctor, Budd Tell, his brother Wylie, and two uncles, and four of us. The old men were settlers and hunters of bobcat, deer, panther, bear and other game. They said they had killed 160 deer in one winter, and though we doubted this, we afterward found it was true.

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"We penetrated the woods till a desirable spot was reached, and here Budd posted us on our stands. These are places clear of underbrush for a space, so that the hunter may see to shoot anything that invades his location. One man remains with the dogs, termed the driver. He was left about two miles behind. When all had been placed the signal was given, to start the dogs. Soon we could hear the music of their baying, as it did not take long for them to strike a deer trail, and a fresh one at that. The chase led in the Doctor's direction and presently we heard him shoot—and he had downed his first deer. He got two that day. I shot one, and Budd got a little fat doe. The others were fine bucks, weighing 175, 150 and 123 lbs. At least we thought so, after taking turns packing them, on a pole; and that was the only scale we had; so we think it was legal, under the circumstances.

"As we were returning to the boat with our four deer, two men to each, one man could be taking it easy all the time. Somehow the bunch got separated in the cypress swamp, and suddenly we heard the scream of a panther. Then there were a number of shots, and after that silence, for a couple of minutes. Then came a rifle shot. Jake and I being together, we hurried in the direction of the shots. Soon we heard a noise that we could not make out the cause of. We were still packing the deer. Then we came in sight of the Doctor, stooping over Budd's brother. Close by lay a dead panther. Budd's breast and arms were badly torn by the claws of the animal, and his brother had a scalp wound and was insensible. However, we all turned in to help, and he was soon on his feet, somewhat damaged and rather faint, but still in the ring.

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"The panther had sprang on them from a tree, knocking Wylie down, then turning on Budd who attacked the animal as soon as he realized what was the trouble. The panther started for him like a cyclone and had his shirt and some skin jerked off in less time than it takes for me to tell it. Budd says he sure thought his time had come, and being somewhat of a church member he put up a little call for help. Just then the Doctor ran up, and by a lucky shot disabled the beast, which was soon dispatched. He got the hide. The panther weighed over 100 lbs. and measured 5 feet 10 inches from nose to tip of tail.

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"As Budd and Wylie were too weak to carry the deer, the big cat was allotted to them, and two of us took each a deer till we got out of the timber, about dark. We reached the boat at 6 p. m., very tired. But we had had our fun, and some of us had had an experience not usual even to houseboat travelers. And we got the panther—though it came very near getting two of the best fellows to be found in the south."

Unfortunately the prize so highly valued was lost. The skin was stretched out and placed on the

roof to dry; that night the wind blew, and next morning the skin had disappeared. The one now ornamenting the Doctor's den was purchased to replace the original.

Will some one explain how it happens that an indifferent shot, when brought in face of such a proposition will make an unerring snap shot, when a slight deviation would endanger the life of the companion? Many years ago, while traversing the woods of Pennsylvania, we heard our companion cry for help, after two shots close together. We ran at full speed, and saw him standing still, gazing at a huge snake at his feet. Even as we ran we brought our double-barrel to our shoulder and without taking aim blew the serpent's head off. There was no time to aim, and had we done so it is doubtful if we could have made as good a shot.

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CHAPTER XXII.

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THE BOBCAT.

Melville, La., Feb. 3, 1904.—Budd was watching some deer down the river, when he saw a bobcat come out of the brush near by. He shot the cat, when a buck ran out within twenty feet of him. He made a quick shot at the buck, got him, and then ran after the cat. She had crawled under some brush and thinking her dead he crawled after her. Just as he caught hold of her leg to pull her out she turned on him and flew at his chest, in which she embedded her claws. There was a lively tussle for a few minutes, when he got away, and the cat crawled under a log. But when he again attempted to pull her out she flew at him, apparently little the worse for her wounds; and it was not till he succeeded in cutting her throat that she died. He was pretty well clawed up, sufficiently to deprive him of any further desire to tackle a bobcat, only a few of whose lives had been expended.

Here is a native's sample story:

"Father had been troubled by a bear that ate his corn, so he sat up one night to get him. He noted where the bear came in from the canebrake, and placed himself so that the wind blew from that place to his stand. It was bright moonlight. Along in the night came Bruin, sniffing and grunting. He paused at the fence till satisfied the way was clear, then knocked a rail off the top and clambered over. He made his way among the corn, and rearing up began to pull off the ears and eat them. Then dad fired a handful of buckshot into him, breaking his shoulder. The bear made for the place he had crossed the fence, scrambled over, and crashed through the brake. Dad marked him down as stopping at a huge dead tree that could easily be seen above the canes.

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"By this time the shot had aroused the folks, and dogs, darkies and men came running out. The dogs sought the trail, but the only one that found it was a little mongrel tyke, who started off after the bear and was soon followed by the rest. The men tried to keep up, but dad ran right for the big tree. A crooked branch across his path sprang into a coil and rattled a warning at him. He stopped and gave it the other barrel, and ran on. Coming up to the tree there was the bear, standing up, and with his one arm raking the dogs whenever they ventured within reach. Already the bravest showed evidences of his skill. One of the men shot him—in fact they all shot, and the bear rolled over. Dad went up to him, and some one remarked that he must be a tame bear, as his ear was nicked. Dad felt the ear, and remarked how warm it was—and just then the old bear whirled around, reared up, and seized dad in a real bear hug. Fortunately it was a one-armed hug, and by a quick movement he was able to wriggle away, and then one man who had not shot put his gun to the bear's ear and shot half his head away. On the way home they picked up the snake, which was seven feet long, and had 11 rattles and a button."

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At Shiloh Landing, Miss., our boys were told of a negro who ate glass. He came in while they were there, and cracked up a lamp chimney and ate it, literally and without deception. He said he could walk over broken glass without harm. He also was impervious to snakes. And while they talked a huge cotton-mouth copperhead wriggled out on the floor. There was a unanimous and speedy resort to boxes, barrels and tables, till the serpent was killed. It seems the negro has a fancy for collecting snakes and had brought this one in in a box, from which he made his escape.

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This morning we went out for robins, and got a mess; of which we contributed one—could not shoot a little bit. After lunch we waited for the mail and then bid good-bye to the kindly folk who had made Melville so pleasant to us, and started on our journey up the Atchafalaya. The river is wider, swifter and bigger than when we came down; and we will be glad to get into the great river again. We have quite a collection of skins—deer, cat and coon—gifts of our friends. We ran a few miles and then the engine pump quit, and we tied up. Fair and clear, warm at midday enough to make a vest a burden.



SPANISH MOSS (ATCHAFALAYA).

CHAPTER XXIII.

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ASCENDING THE ATCHAFALAYA.

Atchafalaya River, Feb. 4, 1904.—There is a very perceptible difference between descending a river and ascending it. Our gallant little launch finds the cabinboat a difficult proposition against the current, as aggravated by the rising floods. We made but a few miles yesterday and tied up for the night. An unexpected steamer came along about 12:30 and gave us a good tumbling. She returned later, having doubtless taken in her freight at Melville meanwhile. This morning an east wind drives us against the shore, so that we have to steer out, and that makes it a head wind; so the shore creeps slowly past. It is cloudy and feels like rain, though warm. The river is very muddy, and full of drift over which the boat rumbles constantly. Many doves are seen on the trees along shore but, as usual, we are in a hurry and cannot stop for sport.

During the Civil War, we are told, the Atchafalaya could be bridged by three carts, so that soldiers could cross. Now it is nowhere less than sixty feet deep, and two-fifths of the water of the Mississippi go through it to the Gulf. Every year it is enlarging, and the day may come when the Mississippi will discharge through it altogether, and Baton Rouge and New Orleans be inland cities. This route to the Gulf is 150 miles shorter.

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Atchafalaya River, Feb. 6, 1904.—We made but a short run yesterday, the wind stopping us two miles below Oderberg, just within 150 yards of a turn around which we had to go to get the wind in our favor. But we could not do it. Boy and Dr. shot some robins and Jake got a mud hen; and from a passing wagon we secured a roast of beef. An old colored woman sold us some buttermilk, for two bits. This morning it was rainy and foggy, but under great difficulties we pushed ahead and made Simmesport by lunch. Here we engaged a gasoline boat to take us around into the Mississippi, for seven dollars—about 14 miles—and felt we got off well at that. The current in the Red is said to be too fierce for our little boat. We did as well as possible, by hugging the low shore, and when the one we were on became high and eroded we crossed to the other. In that way we avoided the swift current and often got a back one, or eddy. The steamer *Electra* dogged us all morning, passing and stopping at numerous landings till we passed her. When we land we find houses quite close along either shore. The rural population must be large along the leveed part of the river. At Simmesport we obtained butter, milk and lard, besides crackers and canned oysters. No meat. One bunch of brant appeared in the fog this morning, but refused to listen to our arguments favoring closer acquaintance.

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Red River, Feb. 7, 1904.—That is, we suppose you call it the Red, but it is now in truth an outlet of the Mississippi. We got to Simmesport, had lunch, and arranged with a boy there to tow us through to the Mississippi with a 5-horsepower gasoline. Hitched it behind, our launch alongside, and started. The wind was as often contrary as favorable, and we labored up the Atchafalaya till we got to Red River. The water is decidedly red, but is backed up into the Red by the lordship of the Great River, which sweeps up the Old River channel with resistless force. None of the Red water gets past Barbre Landing, either into the Atchafalaya or the Mississippi. We turned into the Red or Old River about 2:30, and by 6 had made about three miles, stopping in sight of Turnbull Island Light No. 2. First the lever of our reversing gear broke, and here a log swept under the launch and broke the coupling bolt. This had happened the preceding day, and we had no extra left, so had to stop as the other boat alone could make no headway against the swift current. As it was, with both boats we had to coast along as close as possible to the shore, where the current

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was slowest, to make any progress at all. In the middle we were swept back. The boys left us to return to Simmesport, where they were to make new coupling bolts and return here this morning. We had a sleepless night. All day it was foggy and rainy; in the night occasional showers pattered on the roof; and floating wood rumbled under the boat. The water is full of this stuff and it is impossible to prevent it going under the scow, where it sticks and retards progress or emerges to foul our propeller. This morning it is still sticky, showery and slightly foggy; temperature at 9 a. m., 72. When the steamer rocked us the other night Jake and Doctor turned out in their nightgowns to fend off, and then stood leaning over the rail talking for a time. Catch cold, turning out of a warm bed in January? Naw! Whatchergivinus? This terrible winter weather!

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About 11:30 the boys returned with the tug and new bolts for our coupler. We had hard work getting through the bridge, where the current was fierce; but by 2 p. m. we were in the Mississippi and headed down stream.

Bayou Sara, Feb. 8, 1904.—We tied up last night in Morgan's Bend, after dark. Started to float all night, but the fog came up, lightning showed in the east, and we thought it wise to take no chances. We had the launch hitched behind and when a steamer passed up quite near, it made her leap and try to get her nose under the overhang, which might have swamped her. This morning we got off at 5 a. m., floating till after breakfast, when we set the old churn at work. Now the sun is up brightly, a breeze freshening up from the east, which is dead ahead just now, and the town in sight. We talk of loading the boat with palmettoes for the St. Louis fair market, and getting a tow north, if we cannot get a fair price for the outfit.

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By 9 we reached Bayou Sara, where we increased our crew by three of Louisiana's fair ladies, and at 11 resumed our journey. The wind had subsided and we journeyed south over a river smooth as glass. Much driftwood annoyed us, threatening our propeller blades. The poetry of travel today, too warm for the folk to stand in the sun. Historic Port Hudson was soon before us. It is now back from the river, Port Hickey being its successor. Temperature 80 at 2 p. m. This terrible winter! We are counting the miles between us and our dear ones at Baton Rouge.

We reached Baton Rouge about 6 p. m., having made over 50 miles, and the longest run of the trip.

CHAPTER XXIV.

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DUCKING AT CATAHOULA LAKE.

Prof. Handwerker came down to Memphis, and we went for a duck shoot. We went by rail to Alexandria and chartered a wagon with two sketchy ponies and an aged veteran as driver, who took us about 20 miles to Catahoula Lake. The toll man at the bridge valued our outfit at 40 cents, and collected the entire price each way. The road lay through a lumber country, where the yellow pine was being rapidly cut out. Arriving within a mile of the lake, we concluded to stop with Mr. S., rather than rest our old limbs in the doubtful protection of the tent we had brought.

S. lived on a tract he had homesteaded, in a "plank-up" house of three rooms. At the end of the living room was a large chimney of mud and sticks, with andirons, in which a large fire burned constantly. There were holes in the chimney of a size convenient for the cat to crawl through, which the men had not had time to mend. Cracks an inch wide between the plank let in a sufficiency of air, when the one window—unencumbered with sash and glass—a simple wooden shutter, swung shut. The family consisted of the man, his wife, two sons aged 16 and 12; horses, cows, oxen, chickens and numerous pigs. The latter were dying off, and we saw numerous carcasses in the woods, the consequence of a lot of diseased animals being brought in by a neighbor. S. had had a sawmill, and with the aid of his sons and wife—the latter the engineer—had turned out about 7,000 feet of lumber a day. For this he had received his stock; but the wife did not feel that they were doing well enough and persuaded him to sell the mill and raise cotton.

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They cleared a few acres which they farmed till the yield fell off, when they let it lie fallow and farmed another bit. They had intended to saw up a lot of wood for a new house, but somehow it had been neglected, or when a lot had been got out some one made a dicker for it. The stock of food for the animals had run short, and chop sold at the stores for \$1.00 a bag for cash, \$1.60 on credit; so the animals ran in the woods and ate Spanish moss. This, we were assured, was a good, nutritious food, when the animals got used to it. All were very thin. One horse looked like a walking skeleton, and in fact died during our stay—but then it was so reduced by the time it died that the loss was trifling. The horses had long since stripped the berries from the china berry trees. We were told that eight crops of alfalfa had been cut from a field in this region last summer; so that it is simply a question of cultivating a few more acres to supply proper food to the stock. The five cows gave about a quart of milk a day. They were milked once a day—if they came up to the house in time; if not, it went over till next day.

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Mr. S. was a fine, good-natured man, who did not drink, or permit liquor or cards in his house. He had some trouble with his shoulder, which seriously interfered with his work, though he hauled logs to the sawmill, the small boy driving. He was very proud of his wife; vaunting her as the best worker in the parish, excepting their nearest neighbor; and those two women, he averred, could equal any men in farming cotton, chopping or sawing wood, and cultivating the garden. It was edifying—touching—to see Mrs. S. bridle with pleasure under this well-deserved approval.

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The two boys attended to the fires, on alternate days; and they sure did show great mathematical talent, for they could calculate to a certainty the exact quantity of wood that sufficed for the day and next morning, so as to leave over not a scrap for the lessening of the other boy's labors. In the evening a huge backlog was placed in the big chimney, with two smaller pieces underneath, and some cypress under that to keep up a blaze. Then all hands gathered around, S., the Professor and the aged driver, with their pipes, the two boys chewing, and Mrs. S., with a little stick projecting from her mouth, which puzzled us, till the idea of its significance flashed across our mind—snuff! And then they set in persistently and systematically to put the fire out, by well-directed expectoration. And we are bound to say that in accuracy of aim Mrs. S. was not behind the menfolk.

Bedtime came. A big feather-bed was dragged out and placed on the floor in front of the fire, some comforters thrown over it, with pillows, and we were politely offered our choice of the bed on the floor or that on the wooden bedstead. It was left to us, and we took one apprehensive look at the ancient stead—quite undeserved was the suspicion—and chose the floor, remarking that we could not turn a lady out of her bed. This was met with remonstrances on the part of these warm-hearted people, but it was left that way. The old man and the two boys took the other bed, and the seven of us lay down to sleep in the one room. First the lady retired to the kitchen while we disrobed; then we offered to do the same to give her a chance, but this was unnecessary, as she didn't disrobe. The old man got in bed and lit his pipe; she took a fresh portion of snuff, and we presume the boys a new quid. During the night we occasionally heard S. scratching matches to light up. The bed of wild duck feathers favorably modified the hardness of the floor, and we slept well.

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Before daybreak we heard S. lighting up, and then, with difficulty, he induced the boy on duty to arouse and attend to the fire. Then Mrs. S. arose and when we showed signs of consciousness we had a cup of coffee—black, good quality, well sweetened, but without milk. Breakfast of smoked pork, more coffee, and hot bread—corn or wheat. We may add that this was also our dinner and our supper, varied by cracklin' bread, hot biscuits, and an occasional pie of berries or peaches. Once sweet potatoes and once dried peas. If a visitor dropped in, coffee was served around. And we had ducks.

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In the morning we hooked up the team and went down to the lake. The formation is similar to that at Bear River, Utah; broad flats covered with a few inches of water, the soil a stiff clay that will generally hold a man up, but not always. But the people here have no boats, build no blinds, and their only idea of duck shooting is to crawl on their bellies through the mud till they can get a pot shot at a flock of ducks in the water. They use heavy loads and No. 2 shot. As we did not shoot ducks that way, our success was not very great. Still we got as many as we could eat—and that's enough.

The older boy suggested that we cross the lake to a group of cypresses, where the shooting was good. We waded in about a hundred yards, when the wading began to get pretty heavy, our feet sinking in over the ankles. The Professor concluded to turn back, and took up his stand by a lone cypress near the margin of the water. We felt that it was the part of wisdom to do so also; but the boy began to chuckle and a smile of derision appeared on his face. Now we don't like to be "backed down" by a "kid," and he assured us the boggy place did not extend far and then the bottom became firmer; so we kept on across the lake. It was said to be a mile, but it proved to be at least ten. We had not gone far when we began to realize several things: That the boy lied; that we weighed nearly 200 lbs.; that the borrowed waders we had on were much too large; that though in our life of 54 years we had ascertained that we were a great many different kinds of a darned fool, this was one more kind. The waders were tied to our waist, but soon pulled off so that we walked on the legs; sank in over ankles at each step, but had to immediately withdraw the foot to keep from going still deeper. We got tired—very tired—but dared not stop. Out of breath, the throat burned as if we had taken a dose of red pepper, but we could not stop for breath. Fell down and struggled up with boots full of water; and after an eternity of effort struggled out on the other side, to stand in the cold, teeth chattering, trying to get shelter against the cold wind in the hollow of the cypress, and still keep a lookout for ducks. The fingers were too cold to pull the trigger, almost, but a sprig came in and we nailed him. And no more came our way.

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Just before we had frozen stiff the boy came back and we set out to walk around the lake. It was only half as far as straight across. Some strays passed over, and in response to our call a mallard duck settled down upon the ground. The boy looked inquiringly at us, but we told him we did not take such shots, and he crawled up and executed the bird. A jack snipe rose, and fell promptly. Wading across a bayou we caught a glimpse of green shining on the shore, and it proved to be a teal, directly in front. He rose when we were within 40 feet, and fell with his head shot off; which evidently elevated us in the estimation of the boy. Meanwhile the Professor had accumulated a respectable collection of birds; and we had game enough for the table.

Arriving at the house, a discussion arose as to the way to cook them. We stoutly maintained that a bird that had a distinctive flavor like a teal should be lightly broiled. But the lady intimated that she had something else in contemplation that would open our eyes and enlarge our views. It did both. Will it be believed that those delicate little teal, the snipe, sundry squirrels and quail subsequently brought in, were ground up with smoked pork and onions into an undistinguishable mass of sausage, and fried? Shades of Vatel!

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One look at the proud face of the designer of the dish, and the Professor loudly vaunted the idea, and took another helping. No one could have had the heart to dissent—and our virtue was rewarded, for nothing could induce our good hostess to cook the birds any other way. The Professor's praise settled that. Though his name indicates an origin Teutonic rather than Milesian, and his huge frame would have easily sustained the armor of Goetz von Berlichingen, he must have kissed the Blarney stone, and no living woman could resist the charm of his approval.

We lived on the food described for a week, and drank enough coffee to paralyze the Postum Cereal man—the Professor negotiated 14 cups a day—and had not a trace of our acid dyspepsia. Is there any remedy for this complaint, except hard work?

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One evening a neighbor came over with his wife, the one who had so high a reputation as a worker. She was a thin little woman, with hollow cheeks and great brown eyes, sad, as their only child had been recently killed by accident, while out hunting. The inevitable snuff stick protruded from her lips. The husband was a bright, merry fellow, who at once struck up a trade with our old driver. They traded wagons, then fell to about their horses, and as the spirit of trade aroused the sporting blood the younger man asked if the other had a "trading hat," or jackknife, and finally proposed they should go out on the gallery and trade clothes to the skin. "Would trade everything he owned but the old woman," he announced.

The driver was a character in his way. He owned to 75 years, rivaled the Professor's 6 feet 4 inches when erect, but was wholly longitudinal in dimensions. On the road he informed us at intervals of five minutes that the road was "pretty heavy today." He stood in awe of the Professor's deep bass, and seeing this that irreverent youth played it on the old man in a way to be reprobated. Mrs. S. gave us a pie one day for lunch, and smilingly announced that it was the exclusive property of the Professor. Accordingly the latter authoritatively forbade all others meddling with his pie. About noon S. and the Doctor came across the lake to the wagon, and began foraging for lunch. S. got out the pie and each of us took a liberal slice, in spite of the old driver's protest that it was the Professor's pie, and he must be held guiltless. Pretty soon the Professor came over, and on seeing the hole in the pie bellowed in an awful voice: "Who took my pie?" The old man threw up his arm as if to protect his head, and anxiously cackled that he had no hand in it, that it was the Doctor and S., and that he had told them they should not do it. Just then the Doctor sauntered in, and the Professor tackled him about who ate the pie. Dr. at once assured him it was the old driver; that he had seen the stains of the berries on his lips; which mendacious statement was received by the old man with voluble indignation. S. came up, and on being appealed to at once "caught on," and put the blame on the driver. He was simply speechless with this most unjust charge. All the rest of the day the Professor scolded over the pie, and we thought of new arguments showing that no one but the driver could have purloined it. But about bedtime, after there had been stillness for a time, a still small voice came from the old man saying with a tone of dawning comprehension: "I believe you fellows have been having fun with me about that pie." This was too much, and the walls fairly cracked with the howls of delight.

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We did not treat the old man very badly, though, as on leaving he assured us if we ever came again into that country he would be only too willing to join us in a similar trip.

CHAPTER XXV.

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SOME LOUISIANA FOLKS.

No negroes have ever been allowed to settle in the Catahoula country. The dead line is seven miles from Alexandria. No objection is made if anyone desires to bring a negro servant temporarily into the country, but he must go out with his employer. Once a lumberman brought negroes in, and determined to work them. They were warned, and left. Next year he brought in a new lot, and announced that he would protect them. They were duly warned, but refused to leave. One morning they were found—seven of them—hanging to the rafters of their house. Years elapsed before the experiment was again tried. The coroner's jury brought in a verdict of suicide—and this was in dead earnest—no joke or hilarity intended. To disregard due warning was equivalent to any other method of self-destruction.

When in after years an attempt was made to work negroes here, warnings were duly posted on their doors. The negroes left. But the employer was a determined man, and swore he would be eternally dingbusted—or words to that effect—if he didn't work all the niggers he pleased; and he enlisted a new lot of the most desperate characters he could find. Warning was given and

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neglected; when one evening, as the darkies sat at supper, a rifle bullet knocked the nail keg from under one of them, and next morning not a negro was to be found in the vicinity.

Observe the dispassionate, thoroughly conservative and gentlemanly way the people handled the affair. There was no thirsting for gore, no disposition to immolate these misguided folks to their employer's obstinacy; just a gentle hint that Catahoula did not allow negroes. An intimation to the employer followed, that a repetition would be followed by a rifle aimed at him, not the keg this time, and he was wise enough to see the point.

We have heard these people spoken of as being dangerous characters. They might be such, if misunderstood and their prejudices rudely affronted. But we found them a simple, warm-hearted, scrupulously honest set, with whom we thoroughly enjoyed a week's companionship, and expect to go back for another one. Their interests are limited, their viewpoint may not permit an extensive outlook, but their doors are always open to the stranger, the coffee-pot on the stove, and the best they have is offered him with a courtesy that never fails. They take little interest in politics, newspapers we did not once see there, and schooling is limited. Mrs. S. did not go to church in summer, because that would involve the putting on of shoes—though she did say that if she chose to go she would not hesitate to march into church in her bare feet, let those dislike it who might!

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But do not imagine that these worthy people are deficient in common sense. Mr. S. was perfectly aware that the timber he does not cut now is worth three times what it was when he took up this land, and will be worth more every year.

This pine must reproduce itself with marvelous rapidity. We saw the furrows of the old cotton cultivation running away back through the woods, in which the trees were about ready for the saw. There is plenty of land still open for homesteading, but one must hunt it up for himself, as the government gives absolutely no information to inquirers, except that township maps cost a dollar apiece. If you want to know what townships of what parishes have land available, just get on your horse and explore, till you find out.

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The land companies make amends for this. There are about ten million acres of land in Louisiana, and of this over six millions are offered for sale in one little pamphlet before me. Much of this is sea marsh, which ought to produce sea island cotton. We could find no one who knew of its ever having been tried, but presume there is some reason for not raising it, as this is a very profitable crop, selling for double the market price of ordinary cotton.

Why is there so much land for sale? For we did not meet a solitary man, northern or southern by birth, who seemed to contemplate leaving the state. The truth is there are not enough inhabitants to utilize the land. Millions of acres are lying idle for want of workers. Every inducement is extended to men to settle here and utilize the resources now going to waste.

The South needs "Yankees." An ex-Confederate, discussing Baton Rouge, said: "A dozen live Yankees would regenerate this town, and make fortunes at it." They would pave the streets, cover in the sewers, build up the vacant spots in the heart of the city, supply mechanical work at less inhuman prices than are now charged, and make this rich and intelligent community as attractive in appearance as the citizens are socially.

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One such man has made a new city of Alexandria. He has made the people pave their streets, put in modern sewerage, water, electricity, etc., build most creditable structures to house the public officials, and in a word, has "hustled the South," till it had to put him temporarily out of office until it got its "second wind."

In consequence Alexandria has no rival in the state except Shreveport. And the people like it; they brag of Walsh and his work, take immense pride in the progress of their beautiful city, and have developed into keen, wide-awake Americans of the type that has built up our country.

It seems essential for the incentive, the leaven, to come from outside; but this is the lesson of history. Xanthippus did nothing for Corinth, but aroused Syracuse. Marion Sims vegetated in comparative obscurity till he left the South, to become the leading surgeon of New York and Paris. What would Ricord have been had he remained in America? The interchange of blood, the entering of a stranger among any community, acts as a disturbing element, that arouses action. And without action there is no progress.

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The most promising indication is that this seems fully comprehended in the South, and the immigrant is welcomed.

It is well to be cautious about accepting as literally true the statements made to strangers. People will exaggerate; and the temptation to fill up a more or less gullible "tenderfoot" is often irresistible.

Thus, we are told that connections between white men and negro women are quite common; in fact, almost a matter of course. And these connections are defended, as exalting the white woman to such a pinnacle that the seduction of one would be followed by lynching the seducer; while there is no wrong done the negro woman, because she has no moral sense in such matters, to be injured. Instead of feeling that she is "lost," she brags of her "conquest."

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But several facts lead us to doubt the literal truth of these statements. We note that the same tales are told in illustration that we heard when here five years ago. No new material seems to have appeared in that time. Then again, the mulatto is exceedingly rare; the negroes met on the

streets and in the fields being pure black. These and similar facts lead us to receive the above accounts with a very large grain of salt.

CHAPTER XXVI.

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FROM WINTER TO SUMMER IN A DAY.

March 11. 1904.—We left Chicago at 6 p. m. The ground was covered with snow, the winds cutting through our clothes, and winter still held his own relentlessly. By the time we reached Cairo the change was evident; and next evening at the same hour we were well down in Mississippi, and our clothes oppressively warm. Trees were in full leaf, and numerous cold frames showed that trucking was in full operation. Rain set in and followed us to Memphis, but then the sky cleared. We found full summer at New Orleans, the grass in the parks green, the foliage that of midsummer. At Baton Rouge the violets were about over, but the roses were enough to discourage one from ever again trying to raise them in Chicago.

Why do people suffer from the winter north when they need not do so? Many shiver and pine for the warm days, during this month of blustering cold, when everyone has had enough winter and longs for spring, while all they have to do is to jump on a train and in 24 hours they are in this delightful clime. When need compels, we must take our medicine without a grumble; but to many all that keeps them north in March is inertia and thoughtlessness.

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There are many little businesses carried on in these river boats. We saw many trading boats which supplied ordinary necessities and carried small freights, or gathered up skins and other little products not worth the while of steamers to stop for. Photographers ply up and down the streams; a fortune teller makes good profits; a quack sells liniments and other drugs, and does a bit of unlicensed practice; and very likely some boats sell whisky. We did not hear of an evangelist, yet there seems to be a need for some work of this sort. One man sold roofing paint along the river for good profits.

The South would do well to study the practical applications of the maxim: "Put yourself in his place." The Italians keep goats as the Irish do pigs. Both forage for a living, and supply an important place in the social economies. The goat is to the Italian a matter of course. But a doctor was annoyed by the animals, and told his Italian neighbor he must keep his goats shut up. He did not do so, and so the doctor shot the goats. Next morning, as the doctor passed the Italian's stand, the latter drew a pistol, remarking: "You shoot my goat; I shoot you," and shot the doctor dead. This nearly precipitated a race riot.

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If there was no law against allowing goats to run at large, the Italian was strictly within his rights. It was up to the doctor to fence his premises. If there was such a law, the doctor should have called on the proper officers to enforce it. In either case he was in the wrong; and the habit of taking the law in one's own hands was responsible for the tragedy.

The discontent of the negro with plantation life and work is not, we are everywhere told, a matter of wages. Then why is there no intelligent attempt made to study the question with a view to devising means of attaching him to the place? He is a child in many respects, and amusement goes far in rendering him contented and happy. Were he these, he would not be restless to leave the plantations. A barbecue next week, a dance Saturday night, a little fun in expectation, would go far to keep him quiet, and need not cost more than a trifle of what it would be worth. The problem seems easy enough, but we have heard of no attempt to solve it on such lines.

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CHAPTER XXVII.

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VOYAGE ENDED.

And here our voyage ended. The doctor moved ashore to join his wife and children. Millie went to St. Louis, and Jim to Oklahoma; while Frank and Jake remained on the boat until it was finally disposed of. Frank had worked on the engine until he had mastered her, and found the difficulties. She had never been properly installed, so we got blue prints from her builders and reset the engine in accordance with them. We got new batteries, a block tin pipe in place of the iron one which took the gasoline from the tank to the engine, and rust from which had figured largely in the troubles we experienced. The pump had been literally cut to pieces by the mud in the river water and a new one was obtained. When thus refitted, she ran without a balk; and we really believe a child could have managed her. She turned out to be what had been claimed for her, remarkably fast. In fact, we left her with the determination that our next engine should be a Fay and Bowen, also. She was sold to a resident of Baton Rouge, for \$300; the alterations having

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cost the Doctor about \$50, in addition to the boys' wages. One thing we learned—never order work down here without a distinct agreement as to the work and the price. Frank ordered a little fixing at a local shop, for which he said \$6 was a liberal price; but the man brought in a bill of over \$16.

The small boats, guns and shells were sent back to Chicago, most of the furniture sold for trivial sums, and the cabin boat left in the charge of Mr. S. S. Lewis, of the Lewis Lumber Co. for sale. All attempts to obtain a tow up the river failed. The big coal companies' agents referred us to the home office, but said the price would not be less than \$300. We heard that the captains of tow boats going up would take us up for a trifle, but we did not find one of these chances, after waiting two months. Some men talked of buying the cabin and launch and taking it around to the Bayou Manchac for a hunting and fishing lodge, but nothing came of it.

We might have sold by bringing the outfit around to the Gulf ports, but had no leisure for this. A plan was suggested to load the cabin with palmettoes and take them to St. Louis to serve as decorative plants at the Fair; but the Superintendent of Audubon Park said the plants would not live, that when the root of a palm was cut it died back to the stalk, and it was doubtful if a new growth of roots would take place. But men who try to extirpate the palms say they are unkillable; and the two we took up and replanted in the boat were still living after two months, and had out two new leaves each. Possibly we might have made a good thing, as the boat could have carried 1,000 good-sized palms.

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At New Orleans we hear these cabin boats are so plentiful they cannot be given away. The *Desplaines* was sold there for a good price.



BAY ST. LOUIS, MISS.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

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DANGERS AND DELIGHTS.

A few words as to certain dangers that might be expected on such a trip. We were never annoyed by loafers, tramps, or unpleasant visitors of any sort, with the one exception of the probable river pirates whose visit is described. At the towns people let us alone, and those who were interested enough to call on us were entirely unobjectionable. Of course our numbers may have had some influence.

We never had any malaria or other febrile affection, and most of our drug supply was superfluous. Half a dozen articles would comprise the list for any ordinary party.

During the entire trip we never saw a snake, alligator, centipede, scorpion or any other venomous reptile. Flies and mosquitoes left us at the first frost, and our mosquito hats and veils were never used. The other insect pests of the south—fleas, gnats, redbugs, ticks and jiggers—began to show up in April, after we had left the boat and were living on shore. We were out in the wrong season for fish, turtles and frogs, and in fact found difficulty in procuring any fish at all, excepting carp, for our table. But a little more activity on our part would probably have remedied this—we did not try to fish much. So with the shooting—we did not try very hard, and never shot more than we could eat without waste.

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It was our impression that the South fairly bristles with opportunities for business. There is plenty of cheap land, room for hundreds of thousands of farmers and lumbermen, dairies, general stores, supply houses of every sort. Fruit, berries, garden truck of all sorts, nuts, milk, butter, chickens and ducks, eggs, and many other articles might be raised and a market found for them along the river. There is a very short supply of nearly all these products, right where they could be raised.

The old prejudice against a white man's working alongside a negro seems to be dying out. We

saw men of both colors working together too often for it to be in any degree exceptional. Negro mechanics in New Orleans get from four to seven dollars a day, and are very independent as to their work. Many large planters rent small lots to negroes, others to Italians, and sell on easy terms to either whenever they wish to buy. So far has the disdain of manual work subsided that we were informed that in one of the most prominent (white) universities many of the pupils support themselves in part by waiting on the table, washing dishes, and in other ways.

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Assuredly it is not now looked upon as degrading to any white man in the south, that he should work with his hands, if need be.

If there is any prejudice now against northern men who come to settle in the south, it kept itself out of our sight. Instead, we find immigration agents established by the state, to set before the men of the north the advantages they can secure by coming south. Of the numerous northern men we met and talked with, who had come south, but one spoke of encountering prejudice—and we strongly suspect he had given good cause. Many northern men, like the writer, have married southern girls, and thus the lines of separation between the sections are becoming confused and indistinct.

One Indiana man, who had come south, expressed what may be taken for the usual view, as we received it: "Any northern man who has \$3,000 is a fool if he does not bring it down here and make his fortune in ten years out of it." And this is the man for whom there are such abundant openings here—the one who has a small capital and good business sense.

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The River—that great, wonderful river. We descended its current at the time the water was at the lowest; but the impression of its giant power grew on us daily; the resistless sweep of the current, the huge boils rising from the depths, the whirlpools; but above all the cutting away of the banks. We soon discovered that levees are not meant as restraints of this erosion—the river flows how and where it will—but to protect against the flood waters. From Alton to the gulf there is scarcely a stone to be seen, and the current flounders about through the soft alluvium, like a whale in blankets. When the cutting approaches the levees new ones are constructed further back; and the intervening country is handed over to its fluvial master.

The commerce of the river systems is a thing of the past, but a shadow of what it was about wartime. The railways carry the freights now. But how is it more people do not travel by water? Years ago we went by steamer from Cincinnati to Louisville, and thoroughly enjoyed the trip—the quiet, absence of rattle and smoke, the lovely panorama floating by, the music, the well-served meals, and the leisurely, cultured folk who were really taking time to travel pleasantly, instead of the hustle of limited expresses. Surely, the only reason more people do not enjoy this mode of travel is that they do not know of it.

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But when one floats on the bosom of the great river there grows up a certain fascination for it. We saw one cabin boat in which an elderly man was said to have lived for years, alone. A man of wealth, who could have utilized Pullmans had he chosen. One can readily comprehend this; for long will it be ere the beating of the waves against the side of the boat ceases from our dreams. A little cabin boat that one could manage, dogs for the only companions, guns and rods, and the long, quiet sojourn where the coal and other trusts matter not a whit—and where could hermit find such a delightful retreat!

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Then for the elderly man who has outlived his family and the period of active participation in the world's warfare. What a home for a group of such men, who could be company for each other.

CHAPTER XXIX.

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RESULTS.

The Doctor enjoyed every moment of the trip. While we have recorded all the accidents and drawbacks, the reader must not imagine that they were really serious or detracted much from the pleasure. If we fished and hunted but little it was because we found so much of interest and delight that the time was filled without these pastimes. We did not use our wheels much for the same reason—we had so much going on that we rarely felt the desirability of more means of occupying our time. The work went on well, and in this respect the plan worked out as expected. There were abundance of time and few interruptions; time for study, for putting the thoughts on paper; and the little breaks when called on deck, never disarranged the mental machinery. The exercise was most beneficial. Chopping or sawing wood, and helping with the boat work, brought the digestion into good condition, and we came home much stronger than we left.

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The same may be said of the children. The boy enjoyed it all; the girl did well, but naturally got tired and longed for her little friends. Both improved in physique and broadened their ideas, and laid in a store of knowledge. They learned much and were not roughened in manners.

The invalid did pretty well and would have done much better had our original plan been followed; but the delay caused by building the new boat allowed us to be caught in the November storms on the Illinois, and then it was a constant hurry to get south. Toward the last she tired of the boat and longed for the flesh-pots of Egypt—other women to talk clothes to, dry goods stores, the luxuries of civilization. Few women have enough of the gipsy in their blood to stand seven months' travel without ennui.

The experience of the *Desplaines* showed the wisdom of beginning with a clear understanding with the crew and paying them fair wages. They took the crew on an indefinite arrangement, paying no wages. When they fell in with us their crew became discontented, constant quarreling resulted, and the crew broke up. Naturally, when they found our men receiving wages for easier work than theirs, dissatisfaction resulted. Don't go on such an expedition with the crew on a "no wages" basis. Pay fairly, or else make up the party on the basis of equal participation in the expenses; but don't mix matters.

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Don't buy an old boat. There is a satisfaction in knowing that the timbers beneath you are sound and put together in the strongest possible manner, and amply able to withstand the fiercest trials they can possibly receive. Especially if women and children are to form part of your crew, you want to feel easy on the score of your boat. Have the boat built at a place like Henry, where well-selected lumber and honest work will go in the building. Have it brought to Chicago and start in the boat here.

Do not have a boat more than sixteen feet wide, outside measure, that is to pass through the canal.

Have the roof thoroughly watertight and the crevices about the base of the cabin protected by quarter-rounds and calking so that there will be no water leaking in there when waves wash over the deck. Have a good large open deck in front, for there you will live in pleasant weather. Get a good wood-burning stove for cooking—gasoline and oil are too expensive, when you get wood for nothing.

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Select your party with care; not everyone who goes into such a trip with enthusiasm will wear well, when living half a year in a boat with you. Leave out people who expect the luxuries of a well-appointed hotel. Limit the clothing for men and women to two suits each; one for the boat and one for town. You may not disturb the latter for months. If you can possibly avoid it, take no one in the party who drinks liquor even in moderation—certainly not in the crew. Every modification of this opens the door to trouble. If a guest takes his morning eye-opener the crew will want to do so; and some one of them may be of the sort that can not taste it without getting crazy drunk.

It seemed to us that anyone of a mercantile turn could do a good business along the river; pay expenses and make money. Everywhere along the great river people boarded our boat, asking what we were selling. The men asked for whisky, the women for dry goods or dressmaking. At one landing a trader sold eighteen skiffs. On the Atchafalaya we passed a cabinboat bearing in large letters the title: "The White Elephant Saloon." We heard that this boat had given the authorities much trouble, but can not vouch for the truth of the report. She was selling liquor, evidently, and we gave her a wide berth. Melville was a temperance town, but there was a shanty across the river known as "the Goose," where liquor was sold, and a skiff ferry to it was well patronized. The owner was building a large cabinboat at a cost of \$1,000, but for what purpose we could only presume; and our presumption was that it would be a profitable investment.

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To make a similar trip leave Chicago between the 15th and 30th of September, provide for towage through the canal to La Salle, and float down the rivers, stopping when the weather is unpleasant. You should take a tow from Kampsville to the Mississippi, as there is little current from the Illinois into it. Thereafter even so small an engine as our 3-horse-power will suffice, as you will not be hurried and can await favorable winds. The larger the boat the more men will be required. Ours was right for four men; and that is a good number for a party. There will be no danger of annoyance, while a smaller party might meet some ugly customers. With every additional member the chances for disagreement increase—and life is too short for quarreling. On reaching the mouth of Red River, ascend that stream till you can reach Catahoula Lake, if you are after ducks and geese; though the old river-bed lakes along the Mississippi will furnish plenty. But if deer and other large game attract you, descend the Atchafalaya to Alabama bayou; then pass through Grand Lake to the gulf and coast around to the string of resorts along the coast from Bay St. Louis to Pensacola and the Florida coast, if so long a trip is desired. If you ascend the rivers you will need tows, unless your power is large.

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The results of the trip to the writer may be summed up as: Better work, better done, and more of it, than would have been possible in the same time at the city home; a renewal of vitality, digestion improved, years rolled back so that again has come that sense of capacity to work without limit, that has not been present for years; and a crowd of pleasant recollections that will endure for life.

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Would we like to go again? Just give us the chance!

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