

conversation, and then the croak of a raven would descend from the top of some dead tree ; now the mocking-bird, the dove, the red and blue-bird, the robin and the sparrow, favored me with a chorus of their own, while the whistle of the quail and the lark would now and then break forth to vary the natural oratorio. And to cap the climax, an occasional flock of ducks might be seen, startled away by our approach, also a crane feeding on the shore, or a bold fish-hawk pursuing his prey, while the senses were almost oppressed by the fragrance of blowing flowers, which met the eye on every side.

By multiplying the above two scenes almost indefinitely, and tinging them with the ever varying hues and features of the pleasant summer time, and by fancying on either bank of the river an occasional thriving village, "like sunshine in a shady place," you will have a very good idea of Mississippi scenery between the mouth of the Missouri and the Lower Rapids. These are twelve miles long, and the first on the river which impede its navigation. The water, during the dry season, varies from two to four feet in depth on these Rapids, but the channel is so very crooked that even the smaller steamers with difficulty find a passage. Below this point the eye of the traveller is occasionally delighted by a fine prairie landscape, but the following picture may be looked upon as a pretty accurate epitome of the scenery between Nauvoo, at the head of the Rapids, and Rock Island. It was the noontide hour of one of those heavenly days which occasionally make very happy the universal human world. My own heart, which had been darkened by the shadows of life, was made joyous by its dazzling loveliness. The sunshine slept upon the quiet landscape, as sweetly as if the world had never known a deed of sin, while every object which composed the scene performed its secret ministry of good. It was just such a day as George Herbert has made immortal in the following words :

"Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright,
The bridal of the earth and sky ;
The dew will weep thy fall to-night,
For thou must die."