

NOTES ON A  
WINTER TRIP TO CUBA AND BACK.

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LETTER I.

ON BOARD THE STEAMER "LUPPY GULL,"  
ON THE MUDDY MISSISSIPPI,  
Saturday, Jan. 19, 1867.

There are few of the uncomfortable situations of life but have some component or incidental compensation. In the present case the prospect, merely "looking out," is rather dreary; but then it is a fine time for "looking in," and for sending back an account of one's self. In company with H. and G. I left Chicago on Thursday night at ten o'clock by rail, having had, for the previous twenty-four hours, very cold weather, and being of course glad to leave that locality. The Illinois Central Railway from Chicago to Cairo conveys one over 365 miles of country that is rich in its capacity for producing corn and other cereals, and that covers extensive coal fields, but presents nothing of interest in the way of land-scape scenery. We witnessed, however, a lovely sunrise on the prairie which was warmed up far and near by the return of the "God of day." As we approached Cairo we found the temperature gradually modifying, with very little snow on the ground. At 6½ p. m. on Friday we reached Cairo, where we were besieged by the wordy representatives of several steamers, all "warranted to leave in twenty minutes." Having made a survey we transferred ourselves and our "plunder" to the "Luppy Gull," which is a large steamer with vast deck room for freight, an extensive saloon