

for fifteen years I have walked and returned, constructing a thought and then pausing to write it down. The trees are dappled like fawns by the sifting light of the morning sun. The whole high island is the work of Nature undisturbed, except by the occupancy of the cabins and the trails connecting them—and above these she has flung arches of sprays. Shall we find anything better in any other or future life? I cannot imagine it. I do not believe anything prettier or more refreshing ever was or will be.

In the old time of river navigation, when the Mississippi and her confluences were the only avenues of access to her vast and magnificent valley, we were accustomed to loiter at the roughly built log tavern of the period, or walk up and down the landing, waiting the coming steamboat. The shores of the stream were covered with forests, and the winding channel gave but short vistas of its waters. But while yet miles away the boat would blow its hoarse blast, which coming through the trees was softened into solemnity, and we could sometimes see her pillars of smoke rising against the horizon. Then all was busy excitement, a hurrying to and fro of stevedores, truckmen, and passengers. When she had landed and made her exchanges, and turned her prow again into the stream, there was fluttering of handkerchiefs from decks to shore, and not infrequently some tears.