

THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER.

THE literal meaning of the Chippeway word *Meseeseepe*, according to some authorities, is Water every where—and conveys the same idea which has been translated Father of Waters; while others assert that the Choctaws called it *Missah-Sippah*, which is interpreted *old, big, and strong*. When we remember the immense extent of the valley watered by this stream and its tributaries, the latter name must be considered singularly expressive.

That portion of the river known as the Lower Mississippi, extends from New Orleans to the mouth of the Missouri, a distance of about twelve hundred miles. As the highway for a multitudinous number of steam vessels of every size and character, it is of incalculable importance, not only to this country but to the world; but with regard to its scenery, it affords little of an interesting character. Excepting a few rocky bluffs found below Saint Louis, both shores of the river are low, level, and covered with dense forests of cotton-wood and cypress, where the panther and the wolf roam in native freedom, and the eagle swoops upon its prey undisturbed by the presence of man. The banks are of an alluvial character, and as the current is exceedingly rapid, the course of the river is constantly changing. You might travel a hundred miles without finding a place sufficiently secure to land; and the water is always so very muddy that a tumbler full will always yield half an inch of the virgin soil. The surface of the stream is never placid, but for ever turbulent and full of eddies and whirlpools, as if its channel were composed of a continued succession of caverns. Snags