

CHAPTER X.

MOBILE is situated in a swamp at the mouth of the Alabama River. To the west there is a small wooded promontory, at a short distance; on every other side the tall reeds of the swamp extend for many miles. This site has been fixed upon as well suited for shipping bales of cotton, a great number of which are brought down the river. Besides cotton shippers, the three descriptions of animated nature that thrive most there are doctors, alligators, and undertakers. The first endeavour to attract attention by handbills of cholera mixtures, &c., and the last by inviting pictures of coffins, which meet one at every turn.

I walked to the gaol here, where I found a large number of runaway slaves, and saw a huge whip, handcuffs and a number of other irons, hung up against the wall.

After a very short stay, I left by the steamer on the Alabama river for Montgomery. This river is not above 80 yards to 100 yards wide, and, where it issues from the swamp, is enclosed between high banks covered with forest, and runs at a rapid rate. Its breadth does not vary all the way to Montgomery, but its steep banks show at times sections of red and variegated marl, similar to what I had seen between Philadelphia and Washington. Montgomery, at which we arrived