

which occur in other parts of North America. In January, 1852, the thermometer stood at 12° Fah., and all the orange trees were cut off. In January, 1854, it stood at 80°. This portion of the globe, situated between a cauldron of warm water (the Gulf of Mexico) on the south, and the enormous mass of ice that extends from Baffin's Bay to Behring's Straits on the north, undergoes the most violent changes of heat and cold, according as the wind blows from either quarter. Snow falls at New Orleans very seldom,—it is said, not more than once in twenty years,—but floating masses of ice from the frozen regions of the north have been seen in the Mississippi, passing the city.

I left this place by the railway to Lake Pontchartrain, a distance of six miles, which was accomplished in more than half an hour. The cars were more dirty and uncomfortable, and the rate of going slower, than any I had ever before experienced. The road lay mostly through a swamp, in which great quantities of the dwarf palm, or palmetto, as they call it, were growing. The railway ended upon a long wooden pier stretching into the shallow water of the lake, from which we were transferred to the steamer. From this we had to pick our way all night among low islands and in shallow water, until a little before daylight we got aground in a narrow channel, remained there three or four hours, and at last reached Mobile early in the afternoon of the next day.