

the growth of inundation lands. At the foot of the rapids, the navigation of the river is impeded by the beds of gravel formed in it. The first rapids lie in latitude 31, 48, 75, 5, N., a little above which there is a high ridge of primitive earth, studded with abundance of fragments of rocks, or stone, which appear to have been thrown up to the surface in a very irregular manner. The stone is of friable nature, some of it having the appearance of indurated clay; the outside is blackish from exposure to the air; within it is a grayish white; it is said that in the hill the strata are regular, and that good grindstones may be here obtained. The last of the rapids, which is formed by a ledge of rocks crossing the entire bed of the river, was passed in the evening of the 27th; above it the water became again like a mill-pond, and about one hundred yards wide. The whole of these first shoals, or rapids, embraced an extent of about a mile and a half; the obstruction was not continued, but felt at short intervals in this distance. On the right, about four leagues from the rapids, they passed the "Bayou Aux Bœufs," a little above a rocky hill: high lands and savannas are seen on the right. On sounding the river they found three fathoms water on a bottom of mud and sand. The banks of the river above the bayou seem to retain very little alluvial soil; the highland earth, which is a sandy loam of a light gray color, with streaks of red sand and clay, is seen on the left bank; the soil not rich, bearing pines, interspersed with red oak, hickory, and dog-wood. The river is from sixty to one hundred yards wide here, but decreases as you advance. The next rapid is made by a ledge of rocks traversing the river, and narrowing the water channel to about thirty yards. The width between the high banks cannot be less than one hundred yards, and the banks from thirty to forty feet high. In latitude 32, 10, 13, rapids and shoals again occurred, and the channel was very narrow; the sand-bars, at every point, extended so far into the bend as to leave little more than the breadth of the boat of water sufficiently deep for her passage, although it spreads over the width of seventy or eighty yards upon the shoal.

In the afternoon of the 31st, they passed a little plantation or settlement on the right, and at night arrived at three others adjoining each other. These settlements are on a plain or prairie, the soil of which we may be assured is alluvial, from the regular slope which the land has from the river. The bed of the river is now sufficiently deep to free them from the inconvenience of its inundation; yet in the rear, the waters of the Mississippi approach, and sometimes leave dry but a narrow strip along the bank of the river. It is, however, now more common, that the extent of the fields cultivated, (from one-fourth to one-half mile,) remains dry during the season of inundation: the soil here is very good, but not equal to the Mississippi bottoms; it may be esteemed second rate. At a small distance to the east are extensive cypress swamps, over which the waters of the inundation always stand to the depth of from fifteen to twenty-five feet. On the west side, after passing over the valley of the river, whose breadth varies from a quarter of a mile to two miles, or more, the land assumes a