

LETTER III.

Friday, Jan. 25.

Last evening we enjoyed the recreation common to passengers on the Mississippi—a quadrille in the saloon, a coloured artist having been improvised to supply the music. During the night we added to our experience breaking a *snag*, fortunately, however, without injury to the vessel. The danger in encountering this enemy is slight when going with the stream; the heavy roots of the tree usually become imbedded in the bottom of the river, when the trunk leans down stream, inclining till the top lies at the surface of the water. In this form the contact of a vessel ascending the stream is, of course, dangerous, whereas in descending the vessel passes over, suffering injury only when there is lack of room from shallow water. A tree lying in the stream, with the extreme top just under the surface of the water, is called a "sawyer;" it is, of course, most dangerous. We experienced also a breeze of wind so lively that we lay to for a while, and a smart shower of rain; this morning opened bright and somewhat fresh.

To-day, we are passing a number of cotton plantations that had evidently been places of mark before the war. Some of the dwellings remain undisturbed—neat, old-fashioned wooden houses, enclosed in thickly-planted gardens and hedges, with the village of negro residences adjoining. The latter are, for the most part (where yet standing), clean, white-washed and trim-looking. The overseer's residence is generally a half way house, both in locality and quality. A great number of the places of these homesteads present now but half-ruined chimnies, sad memorials of their former existence and of the manner of their destruction. A young

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