

Board of Works of Fall

"STAR." Semi-Weekly and Weekly. The former edition published WEDNESDAYS AND SATURDAYS. Terms: \$2.00 per annum in advance.

The Star. VOLUME II. CHATHAM, N. B., DECEMBER 18, 1880. NO. 214.

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THE SUNDAY MAGAZINE. THE January Number, which commences a new volume, is a VERY BRILLIANT HOLIDAY ONE, opening with a poem, "Christmas," and followed by "Christmas Carols and Customs."

The Independent. The foremost religious newspaper of the United States.-JOSEPH COOK. The Independent seeks the patronage of the public on three grounds, as follows:

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RATES OF ADVERTISING IN THE Semi-Weekly Star. SPACE. LENGTH OF TIME. RATES. A Column, One Year \$100

The North Star. CHATHAM, N. B., DECEMBER 18, 1880. J. E. COLLINS, Editor.

Life in Florida. THE SULPHUROUS SPRINGS IN WHICH THE INVALID WASHES AWAY HIS PAINS.

THE TRIP UP THE RIVER--THE PINES AND PALMETTOS--THE MEADOW HEN. THE ALIGATORS ON THE BANKS--THE TOWN OF ST AUGUSTINE--A FORT INVESTED WITH HIDEOUS BATS AND NIGHT OWLS.

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The scenery as we moved up appeared to increase in beauty, freshness and variety. Palmettos, magnolia, swamp ash and sweet bay tree lined the banks. Sometimes rounding a sudden turn in the river we would see an alligator stretched at full length upon the muddy shore taking his ease in the sun.

The passengers for St. Augustine disembark at Tocoi. There is little beauty here. But we were nearing our place of debarkation and soon reached it. Tocoi, at which place the passenger for St. Augustine leaves the steamer, is a small collection of houses on the eastern bank of the St. John's between thirty and forty miles above Jacksonville; of beauty it can boast but little.

Nearing St. Augustine we come to the Sebastian river, an arm of the sea running back of the town. The land on both sides of this creek is covered with a tall coarse grass, among which the traveller catches a glimpse now and then of the dusky form of a little meadow hen as it scampers off out of sight uttering a succession of sharp grating little screams of the most discordant sound.

The omnibus drove up at the door with a flourish of the drivers horn; while my companion looked to the baggage and ordered a repast. I strolled across the green to look at the fort whose indistinct outline loomed against the background, half sea and half sky.

I followed a path-way across the drawbridge which now is never raised. The bolts still remain in the solid walls but the chains with the Spanish soldierly who manned them have long disappeared. I entered the archway in the immensely thick walls: it was dark and damp when I heard a strong rushing sound as if I was surrounded by innumerable wings, and oh horror: a cloud of bats and screech owls whose nightly home this gloomy cavern was, screamed and flapped their ghostly wings around me, sometimes brushing them across my face.

I was paralyzed with horror and disgust but for an instant I remained motionless, then turning I fled from the horrible place. My first morning in St. Augustine will not soon be forgotten; the glorious sunshine the softly blowing breeze that crept over the sea and through all the queer old streets and nooks of this queer old town. The pure salty odor of the air, the strange appearance of everything from the town to the landlady who was a Minorcan, made me experience a sort of relief, as I fancied somehow I had reached an entirely new and strange country; that I had gone ages back, left all my weakness and fever behind and reached a paradise inhabited by Don Quixote and his confidants.

I almost longed to see a windmill that the same bold knight might come to attack it with his customary intrepidity. Every thing was Spanish from the architecture of the fort to the look and language of the people. The family always spoke in Spanish unless my fellow traveller or myself was present. The signs over the store doors were particularly Spanish. I read such names as "Olivera," "Hernandez," and many others that brought to my mind how at one time Spains chivalry and nobility had bodden those narrow streets and the dresses of the duenna and her charge had swept the narrow sidewalks; and I thought as I strolled along Hypatia Street, how many changes had taken place in the little old town since R. de' Gardine de Larduniers landed there only to be driven away again; captured and executed by Menendez. St. Augustine is the oldest settlement founded by Europeans not only in the United States but in North America. The Spanish in it do seem as if they are to never die. And as you tread the quaint old streets, of the queer little town the question you ask yourself is, Is it here in times gone past such fierce rivalry existed, is it in these little streets blood flowed so freely?

[To be continued.]