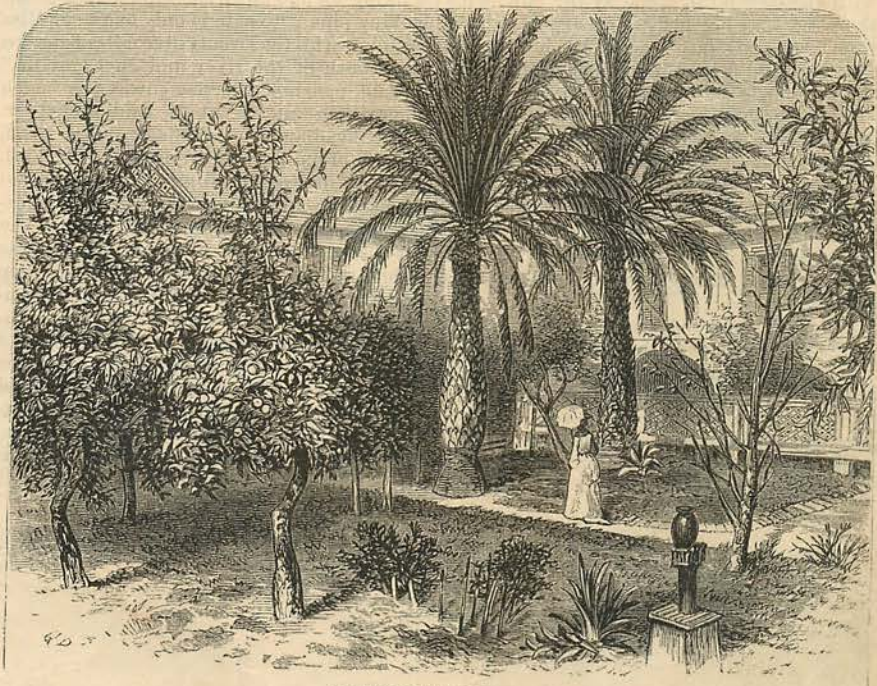


HARPER'S *Lib &* NEW MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

No. CCXCV.—DECEMBER, 1874.—VOL. L.

THE ANCIENT CITY.
IN TWO PARTS.—PART I.



GARDEN IN ST. AUGUSTINE.

“The world is far away; the broad pine-barrens
Like deserts roll between;
Be then our mother—take us for thy children,
O dear St. Augustine!”

IT was a party of eight, arranged by Aunt Diana. She is only my aunt by marriage, and she had with her a *bona fide* niece, Iris Carew, a gay school-girl of seventeen, while I, Niece Martha, as Aunt Diana always calls me, own to full forty years. Professor Macquoid went for two reasons—his lungs, and the pleasure of imparting information. It was generally understood that Professor Macquoid was engaged upon a Great Work. John Hoffman went for his own amusement; with us, because he happened to sail on the same steamer. He had spent several winters in Florida, hunting and fishing, and was

in his way something of a Thoreau, without Thoreau's love of isolation. Mr. Mokes went because Aunt Diana persuaded him, and Sara St. John because I made her. These, with Miss Sharp, Iris Carew's governess, composed our party.

We left New York in a driving January snow-storm, and sailed three days over the stormy Atlantic, seeing no land from the winter desolation of Long Branch until we entered the beautiful harbors of Charleston and Savannah, a thousand miles to the south. The New York steamer went no farther; built to defy Fear, Lookout, and the terrible Hatteras, she left the safe, monotonous coast of Georgia and Upper Florida to a younger sister, that carried us on to the south over a summer sea, and at sunrise one

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balmy morning early in February entered the broad St. Johns, whose slow coffee-colored tropical tide, almost alone among rivers, flows due north for nearly its entire course of four hundred miles, a peculiarity expressed in its original name, given by the Indians, Il-la-ka—"It hath its own way, is alone, and contrary to every other."

"The question is," said Sara St. John, "is there any thing one ought to know about these banks?"

"Ye banks and bray-aas of bon-onny Doo-oon," chanted Iris, who, fresh as a rose-bud with the dew on it, stood at the bow, with the wind blowing her dark wavy hair back from her lovely face; as for her hat, it had long ago found itself discarded and tied to the railing for safe-keeping.

"The fresh-water shell heaps of the St. Johns River, East Florida," began the Professor, "should be—should be somewhere about here." He peered around, but could see nothing with his near-sighted eyes.

"Iris," called Aunt Diana through the closed blinds of her state-room, "pray put on your hat. Miss Sharp! Where is Miss Sharp?"

"Here," answered the governess, emerging reluctantly from the cabin, muffled in a brown veil. Sunrise enthusiasm came hard to her; she knew that hers was not the beauty that shines at dawn, and she had a great longing for her matutinal coffee. Miss Sharp's eyes were faintly blue, she had the smallest quantity of the blondest

hair disposed in two ringlets on each side of her face, a shadowy little figure, indistinct features, and a complexion that turned aguish on the slightest provocation. Nevertheless, equal to the emergency, she immediately superintended the tying down of Iris's little round hat, and then, with her heelless prunella gaiters fully revealed by the strong wind, and her lisle-threaded hands struggling to repress the fluttering veil, she stood prepared to do her duty by the fresh-water shell heaps or any other geological formation. John Hoffman was walking up and down smoking a Bohemian-looking pipe. "There is only one item, Miss St. John, in all the twenty-five miles between the mouth of the river and Jacksonville," he said, pausing a moment near the bench where Sara and I sat as usual together. "That headland opposite is St. Johns Bluff, the site of old Fort Caroline, where, in 1564, a colony of French Huguenots established themselves, and one year later were massacred, men, women, and children, by the cut-throat Menendez, who took the trouble to justify his deed by an inscription hung up over the bodies of his victims, 'No por Franceses, sino por Luteranos!'—'Not as Frenchmen, but as Lutherans.' It is a comfort to the unregenerate mind to know that three years later a Frenchman sailed over and took his turn at a massacre, politely putting up a second inscription, 'Not as Spaniards, but as traitors, thieves, and murderers.'"



SHOOTING ALLIGATORS ON THE ST. JOHNS.

"That was certainly poetic justice," I said. "Who would imagine that such a drama had been enacted on that innocent hillside? What terrible days they were!"

"Terrible, perhaps, but at least far more earnest as well as more picturesque than our commonplace era," said Sara, with her indifferent air. She was generally either indifferent or defiant, and Aunt Diana regarded her with disfavor as "a young person who wrote for the magazines." Sara was twenty-eight years old, a woman with pale cheeks, weary eyes, a slight frown on her forehead, clear-cut features,

and a quantity of pale golden hair drawn rigidly back and braided close around the head with small regard for fashion's changes. I had met her in a city boarding-house, and, liking her in spite of herself, we grew into friendship; and although her proud independence would accept nothing from me save liking, I was sometimes able to persuade her into a journey, which she always enjoyed notwithstanding the inevitable descriptive article which she declared lurked behind every bush and waved a banner of proof-sheets at her from every sunshiny hill.

At Jacksonville the St. Johns bends to the south on its long course through the chain of lakes and swamps that leads to the mysterious Okeechobee land, a *terre*, or rather *aqua incognita*, given over to alligators and unending lies. The last phrase was added by Miss Sharp, who laboriously wrote down the Okeechobee stories current on the St. Johns, about buried cities, ruins of temples on islands, rusty convent bells, and the like, only to have them all demolished by the stern researches of the Professor. The Professor was not romantic.

"A buried city on the brim
Of Okeechobee was to him
A lie, and nothing more!"

We found Jacksonville a thriving, uninteresting brick-and-mortar town, with two large hotels, from whence issued other tourists and invalids, with whom we sailed up the river as far as Enterprise, and then on a smaller steamer up the wild, beautiful Ok-



ENTRANCE TO ST. AUGUSTINE.

lawaha, coming back down the St. Johns again as far as Tocoí, where, with the clear consciences of tourists who have seen every thing on the river, we took the mule train across the fifteen miles to the sea, arriving toward sunset at the shed and bonfire which form the railroad *dépôt* of St. Augustine. This shed has never been seen open. What it contains no one knows; but it has a platform where passengers are allowed to stand before their turn comes to climb into the omnibus. The bonfire is lighted by the waiting darkies as a protection against the evening damps. But they builded better than they knew, those innocent contrabands; their blazing fire only mildly typifies the hilarious joy of the Ancient City over the coming of its annual victim, the gold-bearing Northern tourist.

"But where is the town?" demanded Aunt Diana.

"'Cross de ribber, mistis. De omnibuster waitin'," replied a colored official, armed with a bugle. John Hoffman, having given directions as to his trunks, started off on foot through the thicket, with an evening cigar for company. Aunt Diana, however, never allowed desertion from her camp, whether of regulars or volunteers. She had her eye upon Mokes; she knew he was safe; so she called after the retreating figure, "Mr. Hoffman! Mr. Hoffman! We shall not know where to go without you."

"St. Augustine Hotel," replied Hoffman, over his shoulder.

"But you?"

"Oh, I never ride in that omnibus;" and the tall figure disappeared among the trees. He was gone; but Mokes remained, eyes and all. Mokes had large eyes; in fact very large, and pale green; but his fortune was large also, and Aunt Diana had a prophetic soul. Was not Iris her dear sister's child? So she marshaled us into the omnibus, which started off across the thicket, through the ever-present and never-mended mud hole, and out into a straight road leading toward the town through the deep white sand, which, logged over with the red legs of the saw-palmetto, forms the cheerful soil of Eastern Florida. The road was built on a causeway over a river and its attendant salt marshes; on the east side we could see two flags and the two spires of the city rising above the green.

"What river is this?" asked Aunt Diana, as we rolled over a red bridge.

"The San Sebastian," replied Miss Sharp, reading slowly from her guide-book in the fading light. "After three hours and one-half of this torture the exhausted tourist finds himself at the San Sebastian River, where a miserable ferry conveys him, more dead than alive, to the city of St. Augustine."

"But here is no ferry," I said.

"The 'exhausted tourist,' however, is here," observed Sara, wearily.

"The guide-book is at least so far correct that we may reasonably conclude this to be the St. Sebastian—so called, I presume, from the mythical saint of that name," remarked the Professor, peering out over his spectacles.

"Allow me," said Miss Sharp, eagerly producing a second small volume from her basket. "This saint was, I believe, thrown into a well—no, that isn't it. He was cast into a dungeon, and rescued by—by flying dragons—"

"Oh no, Miss Sharp," said Iris, as the

baffled governess wrestled with the fine print. "Sebastian was the one noted for his arrows; don't you remember the picture in my hand-book?"

Leaving the causeway, the omnibus entered the town through a gate of foliage, great pride-of-India-trees mingling their branches over the street for some distance, forming a green arched way whose vista made beautiful the entrance to the Ancient City, like the shaded pathway that led to the lovely land of Beulah in the old pictures of *Pilgrim's Progress*. On each side we could see a residence back among the trees—one of stone, large and massive, with an orange grove behind, the golden fruit gleaming through the glossy foliage, and protected by a picturesque hedge of Spanish-bayonets; the other a wide house surrounded by piazzas overhung with ivy and honeysuckle, a garden filled with roses and every variety of flower, gray moss drooping from the trees at the gate, and a roof painted in broad stripes which conveyed a charming suggestion of coolness, as though it were no roof at all, but only a fresh linen awning over the whole, suited to the tropical climate. Sara said this, and added that she was sure there were hammocks there too, hanging somewhere in shady places.

"Really, very meritorious," remarked Aunt Diana, inspecting the houses through her glasses, and bestowing upon them, as it were, her metropolitan benediction.

In the mean while the colored official was gayly sounding his bugle, and our omnibus rolled into the heart of the city—a small square, adorned with a monument. We noticed the upturned faces of the people as we passed; they were all counting. "One, two, three—only seven in all," said a young girl, with the beautiful hopeless hectic on her cheek. "One, two—seven, only seven," said a gentleman leaning on the railing near the post-office, with the weary invalid attitude

we knew so well, having seen it all along the St. Johns. We learned afterward that one of the daily occupations of the invalids of St. Augustine is to watch this omnibus come in, and count the passengers, invariably announcing the number with a triumphant "only," as much as to say, "Aha! old town!" thus avenging themselves for their enforced stay. It makes no difference how many



PLAZA AND MONUMENT.



THE BASIN.

come; the number may be up in the hundreds, but still the invalids bring out their "only," as though they had confidently expected thousands.

"Oh, the water, the blue water!" cried Iris, as we turned down toward the harbor. "Shall I not sail upon you, water? Yea, many a time will I!"

"Are you fond of aquatic excursions, Mr. Mokes?" inquired Aunt Diana, taking out her vinaigrette. "What an overpowering marshy odor!"

"Oh, the dear salt, the delicious salt breath of the sea!" murmured Sara, leaning out with a tinge of color in her cheeks.

No, Mokes was not fond of aquatic excursions in the sort of craft they had about here: if he had his yacht, now!

"Voilà," exclaimed Iris, "an officer! 'Ah, ah, que j'aime un militaire, j'aime un militaire, j'aime un—'"

"Iris," interrupted Aunt Di, "pray do not sing here in the street."

"Oh, aunt, you stopped me right on the top note," said Iris, glancing down the street after the uniform.

Arrived at the hotel, Aunt Diana began inspecting rooms. Sara wished to go to one of the boarding-houses, and John Hoffman, who met us on the piazza, proposed his. "I have staid there several times," he said. "The Sabre-boy waits on the table, and a wild crane lives in the back-yard."

"The crane, by all means," said Sara, gathering together her possessions. I pre-

ferred to be with Sara; so the three of us left the hotel for Hospital Street, passing on our way Artillery Lane, both names belonging to the British occupancy of the venerable little city.

"This is the Plaza," said John, as we crossed the little square; "the monument was erected in 1812, in honor of the adoption of a Spanish constitution. The Spanish constitution, as might have been expected, died young; but St. Augustine, unwilling to lose its only ornament for any such small matter as a revolution away over in Spain, compromised by taking out the inscribed tablets and keeping the monument. They have since been restored as curiosities. Castelar ought to come over and see them."

The house on Hospital Street was a large white mansion, built of coquina, with a peaked roof and overhanging balcony. We knocked, and a tall colored youth opened the door.

"The 'Sabre,'" said John, gravely introducing him.

"Why 'Sabre?'" I said, as we waited for our hostess in the pleasant parlor, adorned with gray moss and tufted grasses; "to what language does the word belong?"

"Child language," replied John. "There was a little girl here last year, who, out of the inscrutable mysteries of a child's mind, evolved the fancy for calling him 'the Sabre-boy.' Why, nobody knew. His real name is Willfrid, but gradually we all fell into the child's fancy, until every body called



THE SABRE-BOY.

him the Sabre-boy, and he himself gravely accepted the title."

A tap at the window startled us. "The crane," said John, throwing open the blind. "He too has come to have a look at you."

An immense gray bird, standing nearly five feet high on his stilt-like legs, peered solemnly at us for some moments, and then stalked away with what seemed very like a sniff of disdain.

"He does not like our looks," said Sara.

"He takes his time; not for him any of the light friendships of an hour," replied John. "Cranie is a bird of unlimited aspirations, and both literary and aesthetic tastes; he has been discovered turning over with his bill the leaves of Tennyson's poems left lying on the window-sill; he invariably plucks the finest roses in the garden; and he has been seen walking on the sea-wall alone in the moonlight, meditating, no doubt, on the vanities of mankind, with whom he is compelled reluctantly to associate."

"Do you hear the sound of the breakers, Martha?" said

Sara, waking me up in the middle of the night. We had the balconied room up stairs, and the sound of the distant surf came in through the open window in the intense stillness of the night. "It makes me feel young again," murmured my companion; but I fell asleep and heard no more.

Before breakfast, which is always late in Florida, John Hoffman took us to see a wonderful rose-tree.

"You must have sprays of bloom by the side of your coffee-cups," he said, "and then you will realize that you are really 'away down upon the Swanee Ribber.'"

"Do you mean to tell me that the Suwannee is in ambush somewhere about here?" began Sara, in her lead-pencil voice. She always declared that her voice took a scratching tone when she asked a manuscript question.

"Not directly here, seeing that it flows into the Gulf of Mexico, but it is in Florida, and therefore will do for melodious comparisons. You will hear that song often enough, Miss St. John; it is the invariable resource of all the Northern sailing parties on the inlet by moonlight. What the Suwannee means by keeping itself hidden away over in the western part of the State I can not imagine. I am sure we Northerners for years have mentioned that 'dar's whar our hearts am turning ebber,' in every key known to music."

"The tune has a sweet melody of its own," I said. "Nilsson herself sang it as an encore last winter."



ST. GEORGE STREET.

We walked out St. George Street, the principal avenue of the Ancient City, with the proud width of fifteen feet; other streets turning off to the right and the left were not more than ten and twelve feet wide. The old Spaniards built their coquina houses close together, directly upon the narrow streets, so that from their overhanging balconies on opposite sides they could shake hands with each other if so disposed. I do not think they were so disposed; probably they were more disposed to stab each other, if all accounts are true; but the balconies were near enough for either purpose. They had gardens, too, those old Dons, gardens full of fig, orange, guava, and pomegranate trees, adorned with fountains and flowers; but the garden was behind the house, and any portion of it on the street was jealously guarded by a stone wall almost as high as the house. These walls remain even now the most marked feature of the St. Augustine streets.

"What singular ideas!" I said. "One would suppose that broad shaded streets and houses set far back among trees would be the natural resource of this tropical climate."

"On the contrary, Miss Martha, the Spaniards thought that their narrow walled-in streets would act like so many flues to suck in every current of air, while their overhanging balconies would cast a more reliable shade than any tree."

"There is something in that," said Sara. "What a beautiful garden!"

"Yes; that is the most picturesque garden in St. Augustine, in my opinion," said John. "Notice those two trees; they are date-palms. Later in the spring the star-jasmine covers the back of the house with such a profusion of flowers that it becomes necessary to close the windows to keep out the overpowering sweetness. That little street at the corner is Treasury Street, and part of the walls and arches of this house belonged to the old Spanish Treasury Buildings."

A few blocks beyond, and the houses grew smaller; little streets with odd names branched off—St. Hypolita, Cuna, Spanish, and Tolomato—all closely built up, and inhabited by a dark-eyed, olive-skinned people, who regarded us with calm superiority as we passed.

"All this quarter is Minorca Town," said John, "and these people are the descendants of the colonists brought from the Greek islands, from Corsica, and Minorca, in 1767, by a speculative Englishman, Dr. Turnbull. Originally there were fourteen hundred of them, and Turnbull settled them on a tract of land sixty miles south of here, near Mosquito Inlet, where, bound by indentures, they remained nine years cultivating indigo and sugar, and then rising against the tyranny of their governor, they mutinied and



TREASURY STREET.

came here in a body. Land was assigned to them, and they built up all this north quarter, where their descendants now live, as you see, in tranquil content, with no more idea of work, as a Northerner understands the word, than so many oysters in their own bay."

"The Greek islands, did you say?" asked Sara. "Is it possible that I see before me any of the relatives of Sappho, she of 'the Isles of Greece—the Isles of Greece?'"

"Maybe," said John. "You will see some dark almond-shaped eyes, now and then a classical nose, often a mass of Oriental black hair; but unfortunately, so far, I have never seen the attractions united in the same person. Sometimes, however, on Sunday afternoons, you will meet young girls walking together on the Shell Road, with roses in their glossy hair, and as their dark eyes meet yours, you are reminded of Italy."

"I have never been in Italy," said Sara, shortly.

The reflection of an inward smile crossed John Hoffman's face.



THE SEA-WALL, ST. AUGUSTINE.

"But where is the rose-tree?" I said.

"Here, madam. Do you see that little shop with the open window? Notice the old man sitting within at the forge. He is a fine old Spanish gentleman and lock-smith, and my very good friend. Señor Oliveros, may we see the rose-tree?"

The old man looked up from some delicate piece of mechanism, and, with a smile on his fine old face, waved us toward the little garden behind the shop. There it stood, the pride of St. Augustine, a rose-tree fifteen feet high, seventeen feet in circumference, with a trunk measuring fifteen inches around and five inches through, "La Sylphide," yielding annually more than four thousand beautiful creamy roses.

"What a wealth of bloom!" said Sara, bending toward a loaded branch.

"'La Sylphide,' like other sylphs, is at her best when only half opened," said John, selecting with careful deliberation a perfect rose just quivering between bud and blossom, and offering it to Sara.

"No; I prefer this one," she answered, turning aside to pluck a *passée* flower that fell to petals in her hand. An hour later I saw the perfect rose in Iris Carew's hair.

"Niece Martha," said Aunt Diana energetically, appearing in my room immediately after breakfast, "I do not approve of this division of our party; it is not what we planned."

"What can I do, aunt? Sara ought not to pay hotel prices—"

"I am not speaking of Miss St. John; she can stay here if she pleases, of course, but you must come to us."

"Sara might not like to be left alone, aunt. To be sure," I continued, not without a grain of malice, "Mr. Hoffman is here, so she need not be too lonely, but—"

"John Hoffman here?"

"Yes; we came here at his recommendation."

Aunt Di bit her lips in high vexation; next to Mokes she prized John, who, although a person of most refractory and fatiguing ways, was yet possessed of undoubted Knickerbocker antecedents. She meditated a moment.

"On the whole you are right, Niece Martha," she said, coming to surface again; "but we shall, of course, keep together as much as possible. For this morning I have planned a visit to the old Spanish fort; Captain Carlyle will accompany us."

"And who is Captain Carlyle?"

"A young officer stationed here; he introduced himself to the Professor last evening, and afterward mistook me for Mrs. Van Anden, of Thirty-fourth Street. It seems he knows her very well," continued Aunt Di, with a swallow of satisfaction. (Ah, wise young Captain! Mrs. Van Anden's handsome face was at least ten years younger than Aunt Diana's.)

"I saw Iris glancing after a uniform last night as we came around the Plaza," I said, smiling.

But Aunt Di was true to her colors, and never saw or heard any thing detrimental to her cause.

It was a lovely February morning; the telegraph reported zero weather in New York, but here the thermometer stood at seventy, with a fresh sea-breeze. We stepped up on to the sea-wall at the Basin, where the sail-boats were starting out with pleasure parties for the North Beach. Iris had her Captain; Aunt Diana followed closely arm in arm with Mokes; Miss Sharp, jubilant, had captured the Professor; Sara and I were together as usual, leaving John Hoffman to bring up the rear with his morning cigar.

"The material of this wall," began the Professor, rapping it with his cane, "is that singular conglomerate called *coquina*, which is quarried yonder on Anastasia Island; but

the coping is, as you will perceive, granite."

"How delightful to meet the dear old New England stone down here!" exclaimed Miss Sharp, tapping the granite with an enthusiastic gaiter.

"The wall was completed in 1842 at a cost of one hundred thousand dollars, having been built by the United States government," continued the Professor.

"And why, nobody knows," added John, from behind.

"To keep the town from washing away, I suppose," said Sara.

"Of course; but why should the United States government concern itself over the washing away of this ancient little village with its eighteen hundred inhabitants, when it leaves cities with their thousands unaided? The one dock has, as you see, fallen down; a coasting schooner once a month or so is all the commerce, and yet here is a wall nearly a mile in length, stretching across the whole eastern front of the town, as though vast wealth lay behind."

"The town may grow," I said.

"It will never be any thing more than a winter resort, Miss Martha."

"At any rate, the wall is charming to walk upon," said Iris, dancing along on her high-heeled boots; "it must be lovely here by moonlight."

"It is," replied the Captain, with a glance of his blue eyes. He was a marvel of beauty, this young soldier, with his tall, well-knit, graceful form, his wavy golden hair, and blonde mustache sweeping over a mouth of child-like sweetness. He had a cleft in his chin like the young Antinous that he was, while a bold profile and commanding air relieved the otherwise almost too great loveliness of a face which invariably attracted all eyes. Spoiled? Of course he was; what else could you expect? But he was kind-hearted by nature, and endowed

with a vast fund of gallantry that carried him along gayly on the topmost wave.

"There is a new moon this very night, I think," observed Aunt Diana, suggestively, to Mokes.

But Mokes "never could walk here after dark; dizzy, you know—might fall in."

"Oh, massive old ruin!" cried Iris, as we drew near the fort; "how grand and gray and dignified you look! Have you a name, venerable friend?"

"This interesting relic of Spanish domination was called San Juan de Pinos—" began the governess, hastily finding the place in her guide-book.

"Oh no, Miss Sharp," interrupted Aunt Diana, who had noticed with disapprobation the clinging of the lisle-thread glove to the Professor's lank but learned arm. "You are mistaken again; it is called Fort Marion."

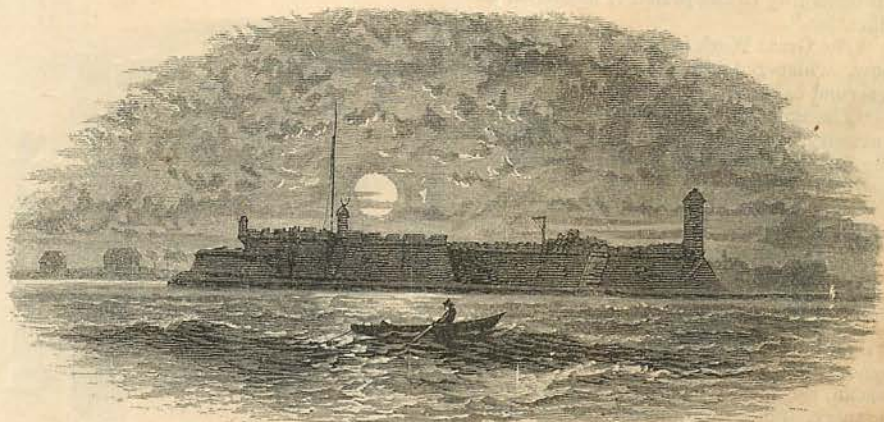
"It used to be San Marco," said John.

"I vote for San Marco; Marion is commonplace," decided Iris, sweeping away the other names with a wave of her dainty little glove.

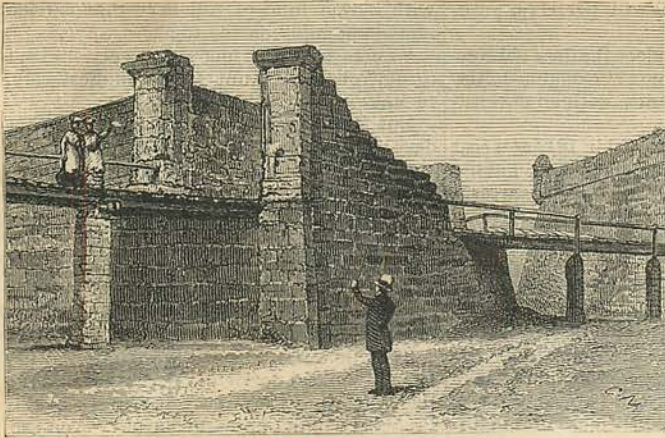
"A magnificent specimen of the defensive art of two centuries ago," began the Professor, taking up a position on the water-battery, and beginning to point out with his cane. "It is built, you will observe, in a square or trapezium—"

"Let us go up and have a dance on the top," said Iris.

"This is very instructive," murmured Aunt Diana, moving nearer to her niece. "Miss Sharp, pray call your pupil's attention to this remarkable relic." For Mokes had seated himself sulkily on one of the veteran cannon which frowned over the harbor like toothless old watch-dogs. There was no objection to an army Antinous as a picturesque adjunct, Aunt Diana thought; but it was well known that there was very little gold in the service outside of the buttons, while here at hand was a Cæsus, a genuine



OLD FORT SAN MARCO.



THE DEMI-LUNE—EXTERIOR.

live Croesus, sitting sulky and neglected on his cannon!

"Oh, certainly," said Miss Sharp, coming to the rescue. "Iris, my child, you observe that it is in the form of a trapezoid—"

"Trapezium," said the Professor—"trapezium, Miss Sharp, if you please."

"That daring young man on a—" chanted the Captain under his breath, as if in confidence to the southeast tower.

"In the salient angles of the bastions are four turrets or bartizans," continued the Professor.

"Oh yes; how interesting!" ejaculated the governess, clasping her lisle-threads together. "Partisans!"

"Bar-ti-zans," repeated the Professor, with cutting distinctness. "The moat, as you will notice, is fortified by an internal barrier, and there is an outer wall also which extends around the whole, following its various flexuses. By close observation we shall probably be able to trace the lines of the abatis, scarp, counterscarp, and fraise, all belonging to the period of mediæval fortification."

"The Great Work is evidently to the fore now," whispered Sara, as we sat together on a second cannon.

"The lunette, now, is considered quite a curiosity," said the Captain, briskly breaking in. "Miss Carew, allow me to show it to you."

"Lunette!" said the Professor, with lofty scorn.

"That is what we call it down here, Sir," replied Antinous, carelessly. "Miss Iris, there is an odd little stairway there—"

"Lunette!" repeated the Professor again. "But that is an example of the lamentable ignorance of the age. Why, that is a barbican, the only remaining specimen in the country, and, indeed, hard to be excelled in Europe itself."

"I have heard it described as a demi-

lune," I remarked, bringing forward my one item, the item I had been preserving for days. (I try to have ready a few little pellets of information; I find it is expected, now that I am forty years old.) The Professor took off his tall silk hat and wiped his forehead despairingly. "Demi-lune!" he repeated—"demi-lune! The man who said that must be a—"

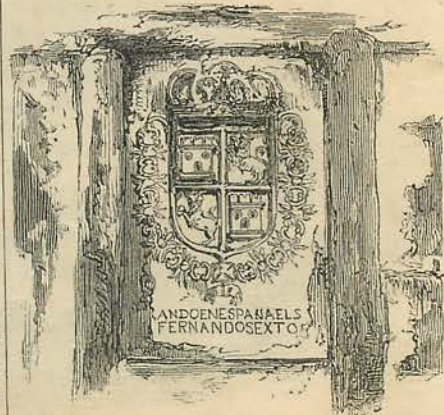
"Demi-lunatic,"

suggested John. "Forgive me, Miss Martha; it isn't mine, it's quoted."

We crossed a little draw-bridge, and passed through the ruined outwork, barbican, lune, or demi-lune, whichever it was. Iris and the Captain had disappeared. At the second draw-bridge we came face to face with the main entrance, surmounted by a tablet bearing an inscription and the Spanish coat of arms.

"It seems to be two dragons, two houses for the dragons, and a supply of mutton hung up below," said Sara, irreverently making game of the royal insignia of Spain. "Oh dear!" she sighed in an under-tone, "I ought to have all this written down."

"Here are the main facts, Miss St. John," said John Hoffman, taking out his notebook. "I collected them several years ago out of piles of authorities; they are authentic skeletons as far as they go, and you can fill them out with as many adjectives, fancies, and exclamation points as you please." He walked on, joining the others in the in-



COAT OF ARMS.

ner court-yard, where the Professor, the old sergeant in charge, the piles of cannon-balls, and all the ruined doorways were engaging in a wild mêlée of information. Left alone, Sara and I read as follows: "Fort here as far back as 1565. Enlarged several times, and finally finished much as it now stands in 1755. The Appalachian Indians worked on it sixty years; also Mexican convicts. The inscription over the entrance says that the fort was finished when Ferdinand Sixth was King of Spain, and Heredia Governor of Florida. It has been many times attacked, twice besieged, never taken. Occupied in 1862 by the Fourth New Hampshire regiment."

We had read so far when Aunt Diana came out through the sally-port. "Have you seen Iris?" she asked. "The sergeant is going to show us the window through which the Coochy escaped."

"The Coochy?"

"A cat, I believe; some kind of a wild-cat," said Aunt Diana, vaguely, as

her anxious eyes scanned every inch of the moat and outworks in search of the vanished niece. At length she spied a floating blue ribbon. "There they are, back in that—in that illumined thing."

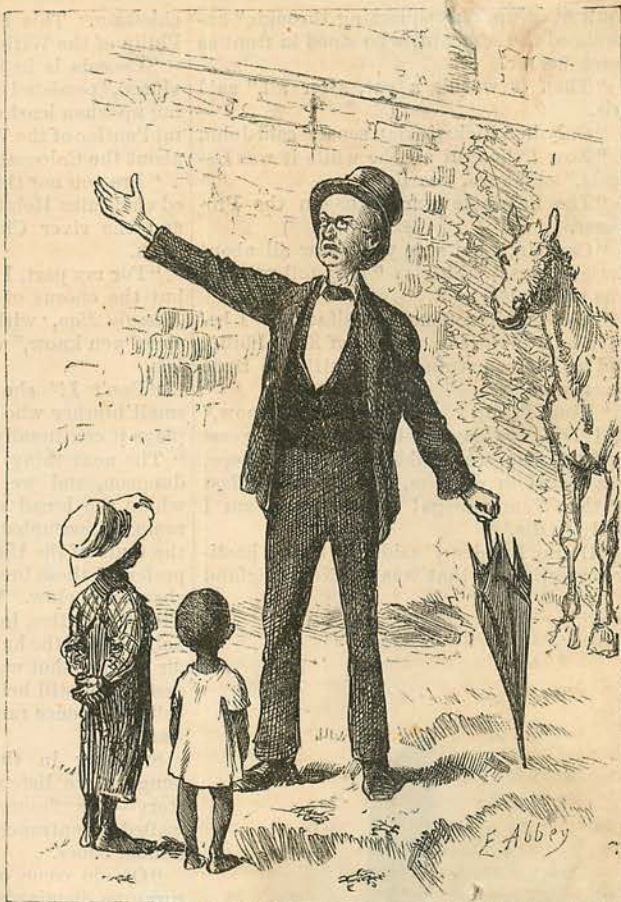
"Oh, Aunt Di! Why, that is the demi-lune."

"Well, whatever it is, do call Iris down directly."

I went after the delinquents, discovering after some search the little stone stairway, nicely masked by an innocent-looking wall, where was a second stone tablet containing the two dragons, their two houses, and the supply of mutton hung up below. There on the topmost grassy stair were the two young people, and had it not been for that floating blue ribbon, there they might have remained in ambush all the morning.

"Come down," I cried, looking up, laughingly, from the foot of the stair—"come down, Iris. Aunt Di wishes you to see the escaped cat."

"I don't care about cats," pouted Iris, slowly descending. "I am glad he es-



THE PROFESSOR.

aped. Let him go; I do not want to see him."

"Iris," began Aunt Di, "pray what has occupied you all this time?"

"The study of fortifications, aunt; you have no idea how interesting it is—that demi-lune."

"Many persons have found it so," observed John.

"We could not quite decide whether it was, after all, a demi-lune or a barbican," pursued Iris.

"Many persons have found the same difficulty; indeed, visit after visit has been necessary to decide the question, and even then it has been left unsettled," said John, gravely.

Following Aunt Diana, we all went into a vaulted chamber lighted by a small high-up window, or rather embrasure, in the heavy stone wall.

"Through that window the distinguished Seminole chieftain Coa-coo-chee, that is for to say, the Wild-cat, made his celebrated escape by starving himself to an atomy,

squirring up, and squeezing through," announced the sergeant, who stood in front as torch-bearer.

"Then it wasn't a cat, after all," said Iris.

"Only in a Pickwickian sense," said John.

"Now I thought all the while it was Osceola," said Sara, wearily.

"The Seminole war—" began the Professor.

"Captain, I am sure you know all about these things," said Iris; "pray tell me who was this Caloochy."

"Well," said Antinous, hesitating, "I believe he was the son of—son of King Philip, and he had something to do with the Dade massacre."

"King Philip? Oh yes, now I know," said Iris. "Chapter twenty-seven, verse five: 'Philip, while hiding at Mount Hope, was heard to exclaim, Alas, I am the last of the Wampanoags! Now indeed am I ready to die.'"

"Oh no, Iris dear," said Miss Sharp, hastily correcting; "that was the New England

chieftain. This Philip was a Seminole—Philip of the Withlacoochee."

"Osceola is in it somewhere, I feel convinced," persisted Sara; "he is always turning up when least expected, like the immortal Pontiac of the West. There is something about the Caloosahatchee too."

"Are you not thinking of the distinguished chieftains Holatoochee and Taholoochee, and the river Chattahoochee?" suggested John.

"For my part, I can't think of any thing but the chorus of that classical song, *The Ham-fat Man*, 'with a hoochee-koochee-koochee,' you know," whispered the Captain to Iris.

"Don't I!" she answered. "I have a small brother who adores that melody, and plays it continually on his banjo."

The next thing, of course, was the secret dungeon, and we crossed the court-yard, where the broad stone way led up to the ramparts, occupied during the late war by the tents of the United States soldiers, who preferred these breezy quarters to the dark chambers below. We passed the old chapel with its portico, inner altar, and niches for holy-water; the hall of justice. The furnace for heating shot was outside, and the south-east turret still held the frame-work for the bell which once rang out the hours over the water.

Standing in the gloomy subterranean dungeon, we listened to the old sergeant's story—the fissure, the discovery of the walled-up entrance, the iron cage, and the human bones.

"Oh, do come out," I said. "Your picturesque Spaniards, Sara, are too much for me."

"But who were the bones, I wonder?" mused Iris.

"Yes," said Aunt Diana, "who were they? Mr. Mokes, what do you think?"

Mokes thought "they were rascals of some kind, you know—thieves, perhaps."

"Huguenots," from John.

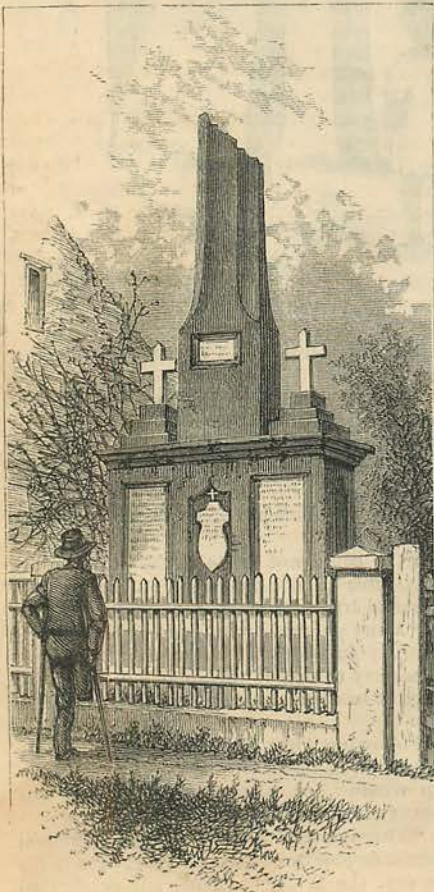
"Recreant priests," from myself.

"The architect of the fort, imprisoned that the secrets of its construction might die with him," suggested Miss Sharp.

"A prince of the blood royal, inconvenient to have around, and therefore sent over here to be out of the way," said Iris.

"For my part, I feel convinced that the bones were the mortal remains of 'Casper Hauser,' the 'Man with the Iron Mask,' and 'Have we a Bourbon among us,'" said Sara. Mokes looked at her. He never was quite sure whether she was simply strong-minded or a little out of her head. He did not know now, but decided to move a little farther away from her vicinity.

The Professor had left us some time before, and as we came out through the sally-port we saw him down in the moat in company



CONFEDERATE MONUMENT.

with the fiddler-crabs, an ancient horse, and two small darkies.

"I have discovered the line of the counterscarp!" he cried, excitedly. "This is undoubtedly the talus of the covered way. If we walk slowly all around we may find other interesting evidences."

But there was mud in the moat, not to speak of the fiddlers, whose peculiarity is that you never can tell which way they are going—I don't believe they know themselves; and so our party declined the interesting evidences with thanks, and passing the demilune again, went down to the sea-wall. Miss Sharp looked back hesitatingly; but Aunt Diana had her eye upon her, and she gave it up.

In the afternoon all the party excepting myself went over to the North Beach in a sail-boat. I went down to the Basin to see them off. "*Oseola*" was painted on the stern of the boat. "Of course!" said Sara. She longed to look out over the broad ocean once more, otherwise she would hardly have consented to go without me. The boat glided out on the blue inlet, and Miss Sharp grasped the professor's arm as the mainsail swung round



AUNT VINY.



VICTORIA LINKUM.

and the graceful little craft tilted far over in the fresh breeze.

"If you are frightened, Miss Sharp, pray change seats with me," I heard Aunt Diana say. The Captain was not there, but Mokes was; and John Hoffman was lying at ease on the little deck at the stern, watching the flying clouds. The boat courtied herself away over the blue, and, left alone, I wandered off down the sea-wall, finding at the south end the United States Barracks, a large building with broad piazzas overlooking the water, and a little green parade-ground in front, like an oasis in the omnipresent sand. At the north end of the wall floated the flag of old San Marco, here at the south end floated the flag of the barracks, and the two marked the limits of the Ancient City. The post is called St. Francis, as the foundations of the building formed part of the old Franciscan monastery which was erected here more than two centuries ago. Turning, I came to a narrow street where stood a monument to the Confederate dead—a broken shaft carved in coquina. Little St. Augustine had its forty-four names inscribed here, and while I was reading them over a shadow fell on the tablet, and, turning, I saw an old negro, who, leaning on a cane, had paused behind me. "Good afternoon, uncle," I said. "Did you know the soldiers whose names are here?"

"Yas, I knowed 'em; my ole woman took car' ob some ob dem when dey was babies."

"The war made great changes for your people, uncle."

"Yas, we's free now. I tank de Lord



AFRICA.

dat day de news come dat my chil'en's free."

"But you yourself, uncle? It did not make so much difference to you?" I said, noticing the age and infirmity of the old man. But straightening his bent body, and raising his whitened head with a proud happiness in his old eyes, he answered,

"I breave anoder breff ebber sense, mistis, dat I do."

Farther on I found a woman sitting at the door of a little shop with sweets to sell, and purchased some for the sake of making a mental sketch of her picturesque head with its white turban. "I have not the exact change, but will send it to you to-morrow," I said, intending to fee the Sabre to execute the errand. "Who shall I say it is?"

"Why, Viny, course. Every body knows Aunt Viny."

"I want to go over to Africa, Aunt Viny. Can you tell me the way?"

"Certain. You goes— You know St. Francis Street?"

"No."

"De Bravo's Lane, den?"

"No."

"Well, nebber mind. You goes 'long down Bridge Street—you knows dat?"

"No."

"I declar' for't, mistis, I don't jes know how to tell *you*, but whenebber *I* wants to go dar, I jes *goes*."

I laughed, and so did Aunt Viny. A colored girl came round the corner with a pail on her head. "Dar's Victoria; she'll show yar," said Aunt Viny.

"Your daughter?"

"Yas. Victoria Linkum is her name, mistis. You see, she was jes borned when Linkum died, and so I named her from him," said the woman, with simple earnestness.

The funny little Victoria showed me the way across a bridge over the Maria Sanchez Creek.

"Why is it called so—who was this Maria?" I asked. But Victoria Linkum did not know. Africa was a long straggling suburb, situated on a peninsula in shape not unlike the real Africa, between the Maria Sanchez Creek and the Sebastian River; it was dotted with cabins and an easy-going idle population of freedmen, who had their own little church there, and a minister whose large sil-

ver-rimmed spectacles gave dignity to his ebony countenance. "They do not quite know how to take their freedom yet," said a lady, a fellow-boarder, that evening. "The colored people, of St. Augustine were an isolated race; they had been family servants for generations, as there were few plantations about here, and, generally speaking, they were well cared for, and led easy lives. They held a great celebration over their freedom; but the truth is they don't know what to do with it yet, and their ideas take the oddest shapes. The Sabre, for instance, always insists upon going and coming through the front-door; he calmly brings in all his provisions that way—quarters of venison, butter, fish, whatever it may be, no matter who is present."

"Did you enjoy the afternoon, Sara?" I asked that evening.

"I can not tell you how much. If you could only have seen it—the blue inlet, the island, and the two light-houses, the surf breaking over the bar, and in front the broad ocean, thousands of miles of heaving water, with no land between us and Africa."

"You absurd child! as though that made any difference."

"But it does make a difference, Martha. If I thought there was so much as one Canary Island, the sense of vastness would be lost. I stood on that beach and drew in a long breath that came straight from the Nile."

"And Aunt Diana?"

"Oh, she was happy."

"Iris smiled upon Mokes, then?"

"Conspicuously."

"Naughty little flirt! And Miss Sharp?"

"One summer day—with pensive thought—she wandered on—the sea-girt shore," chanted Sara. "The madam-aunt had the Professor, and kept him!"

"And John Hoffman?"

"Mr. Hoffman said that we ought to be

very thankful for the simple, unalloyed enjoyment of the perfect day; how much better it was than the gaudy glare of cities, and so forth."

"I have noticed that no one ever says that who has not been well through the g. g. aforesaid, and especially the and-so-forth, Sara, my dear."

The sunny days passed; the delicious, indolent atmosphere affected us all; we wandered to and fro without plan or purpose in a lazy enjoyment impossible with Northern climate and Northern consciences.

"I feel as though I had taken hashesh," said Sara.

Crowds of tourists came and went, and liked or liked not the Ancient City according to their tastes.

"You must let yourself glide into the lazy tropical life," I explained to a discontented city friend; "it is *dolce far niente* here, you know."

But the lady did not know. "Very uninteresting place," she said; "nothing to see—no shops."

"What! going, Mr. Brown?" I asked one morning.

"Yes, Miss Martha, I *am* going," replied the old gentleman, decidedly. "I have been very much disappointed in St. Augustine—nothing to do, no cemeteries to speak of."

"Stay longer? No, indeed," said a lady who had made three toilets a day, and found nobody to admire them. "What you find to like in this old place is beyond me!"

"She is not far wrong there," commented Sara, *sotto voce*; "it is beyond her; that is the very point of the thing."

But, on the other hand, all those in search of health, all endowed with romance and imagination, all who could appreciate the rare charming haze of antiquity which hangs over the ancient little city, grew into love for St. Augustine, and lingered there far beyond their appointed time. Crowds of old ladies and gentlemen sunned themselves on the south piazzas, and troops of young people sailed and walked every where, waking up the sleeping woods and the dreaming water with song and laughter. The enterprising tourists came and went with their accustomed energy; they bought palmetto hats and twined gray moss around

them; they carried orange-wood canes and cigar boxes containing young alligators. (Why young alligators must always travel North in cigar boxes in preference to any other kind of box is a mystery; but in cigar boxes they always go!) Once a hand-organ man appeared, and ground out the same tune for two whole days on the Plaza.

"And what may be the name of that melody, Miss Iris—the one he is playing now?" asked the Professor, endeavoring to assume a musical air.

"He can only play one tune, and he has been playing that steadily for two days," replied Iris. "As far as I can make out from the discords it is intended to be Strauss's *Tausend und Eine Nacht*."

But the Professor, an expert in Hebrew, Greek, and Sanskrit, had never condescended to a modern tongue.

"Pray translate it for me," he said, playfully, with the air of an affable Sphinx.

"It is a subject to which I have given profound thought, Sir," said Iris, gravely. "It is not 'A thousand and one nights,' because the last night only is intended, and therefore the best way to translate it is, I think, 'The thousand and oneth.' I will give you some verses on the melody, if you like."

The Professor liked, and Iris began:

"TAUSEND UND EINE NACHT.

"The birds within their dells
Are silent; hushed the shining insect throng—
Now human music swells,
And all the land is echoing with song;
The serenade, the glee,
The symphony—and forth, mit Macht und Pracht,
Orchestral harmony
Is thrilling out *Tausend und Eine Nacht*.

"O thousand nights and one!
The witching magic of thy opening bars,
In little notes begun,
Might move to swaying waltzes all the stars
In all their shining spheres;
Then, soft, a plaintive air the music sings—
We dance, but half in tears—
To dearest joy a sadness always clings.



HOSE RAILROAD, ST. AUGUSTINE.

"O thousand nights and one!
 Could we but have a thousand nights of bliss!
 The golden stories spun
 By dark-eyed Arab girl ne'er equaled this.
 Soon over? Yes, we see
 The summer's fading; but, when all is done,
 There lives the thought that we
 Were happy—not a thousand nights, but one!"

"Dancing at a watering-place, you know—two young people waltzing—orchestra playing *Tausend und Eine Nacht*. You have danced to it a hundred times I dare say."

No, the Professor had neglected dancing in his youth, but still it might not be too late to learn if—

"Oh, I beg your pardon," said Iris, waking up from her vision. "I forgot it was you, Sir; I thought you were—were somebody else."

So the days passed. Iris strolled about the town with Mokes, talked on the piazza with Hoffman, and wore his roses in her hair (Hoffman was always seen with a fresh rose every morning); she even listened occasionally to extracts from the Great Work. But the sea-wall by moonlight was reserved for Antinous. Thus we dallied with the pleasant weather until Aunt Diana, like a Spartan matron, roused herself to action. "This will never do," she said; "this very afternoon we will all go over to the island and see the tombs."

Aunt Di's temper had been sorely tried. Going out with Mokes the preceding evening to find Iris, who was ostensibly "strolling up and down the wall" in the moonlight with the Captain, she had found no trace of her niece from one end of the wall to the other—from the glacis of San Marco to the flag-staff at the Barracks. Heroically swallowing her wrath, she had returned to the hotel a perfect coruscation of stories, *bon-mots*, and compliments, to cover the delinquency of her niece, and amuse the deserted Mokes; and, to tell the truth, Mokes seemed very well amused. He was not an ardent lover.

"Where do you suppose they are?" I said, *sotto voce*, to John Hoffman.

"The demi-lune!" he answered.

A sail-boat took us first down to Fish Island, which is really a part of Anastasia, separated from it only by a small creek. The inlet, which is named Matanzas River south of the harbor, and the North River above it, was dotted with porpoises heaving up their unwieldy bulk; the shores were bristling with oysters; armies of fiddler-crabs darted to and fro on the sands; heavy old pelicans, sickle-bill curlews, ospreys, herons, and even bald-headed eagles flew around and about us. We ran down before the wind within sight of the mysterious old fortification that guards the Matanzas channel—mysterious from the total absence of any data as to its origin. "Three hundred and fifty Huguenots met their death down

there," said John Hoffman; "massacred under the personal supervision of Menendez himself. Their bones lie beneath this water, or under the shifting sands of the beach, but the river perpetuates the deed in its name, Matanzas, or slaughter."

"Is there any place about here where there were no massacres?" asked Sara. "Wherever I go, they arise from the past and glare at me. Between Spanish, Huguenot, and Indian slaughter, I am becoming quite gory."

The Professor, who was holding on his tall hat with much difficulty in the fresh breeze, here wished to know generally if we had read the remarkable narrative of Cabeça de Vaca, the true discoverer of the Mississippi, who landed in Florida in 1527.

"Alas! the G. W. again," murmured Sara in my ear. Miss Sharp, however, wanted "so much to hear about it" that the Professor began. But the hat kept interfering. Once Mokes rescued it, once John Hoffman, and the renowned De Vaca suffered in consequence. The governess wore a white scarf around her neck, one of those voluminous things called "clouds." She took it off, and leaned forward with a smile. "Perhaps if you were to tie this over your hat," she said, sweetly offering it.

But the Professor was glad to get it, and saw no occasion for sweetness at all. He wanted to go on with De Vaca; and so, setting the hat firmly on the back of his head, he threw the scarf over the top, and tied the long ends firmly under his chin. The effect was striking, especially in profile, and we were glad when the landing at Fish Island gave us an opportunity to let out our laughter over hastily improvised and idiotic jokes, while, all unconscious, the Professor went on behind us, and carried De Vaca into the thirteenth chapter.

The island began with a morass, and the boatmen went back for planks.

"'Away to the Dismal Swamp he speeds,'" said Iris, balancing herself on an oyster shell, Mokes by her side (the Captain was absent—trust Aunt Diana for that!). "Those verses always haunt one so, don't they?"

Mokes, as usual in the rear, mentally speaking, wanted to know "what verses?"

"Moore's *Dismal Swamp*, of course. Sometimes I find myself saying it over fifty times a day:

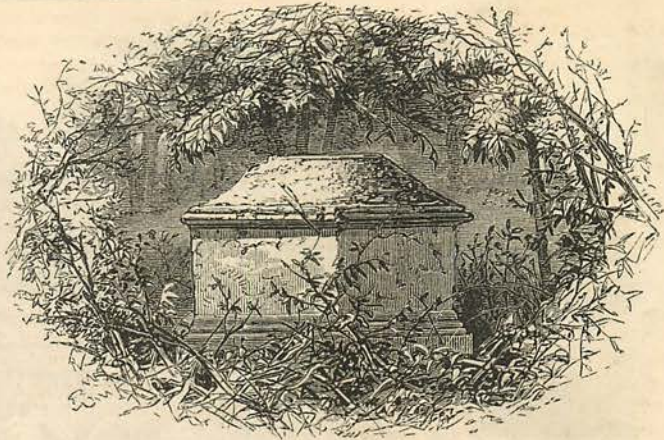
'They have made her a grave too cold and damp
 For a soul so warm and true;
 She has gone to the Lake of the Dismal Swamp,
 Where all night long, by a fire-fly lamp,
 She paddles her white canoe.'

Be sure and pronounce 'swamp' to rhyme exactly with 'damp' and 'lamp,'" continued Iris; "the effect is more tragic."

"Certainly," said Mokes, "far more."

Passing the morass on planks, we walked down a path bordered with Spanish-bayo-

nets, crossed the creek on a small boat lying there, and entered the enchanted domain. It seemed to be a large plantation run to waste; symmetrical fields surrounded by high hedges of the sour orange, loaded with its fruit; old furrows still visible in the never-freezing ground; every where traces of careful labor and cultivation, which had made the sandy island blossom as



TOMB ON FISH ISLAND.

the rose. In the centre of a broad lawn were the ruins of a mansion, the white chimney alone standing, like a monument to the past. Beyond, a path led down to a circle of trees with even, dense foliage; there, in the centre, shut out from the glare of the sunshine, alone in the greenery, stood a solitary tomb, massive and dark, without date or inscription save what the little fingers of the lichen had written. We stood around in silence, and presently another pleasure party came down the path and joined us—gay young girls with sprays of orange blossoms in their hats, young men carrying trailing wreaths of the yellow jasmine. Together we filled the green tree circle; and one of the strangers, a fair young girl, moved by a sudden impulse, stepped forward and laid a spray of jasmine on the lonely tomb.

"Et in Arcadia ego," said John, who stood behind me. "Do you remember that picture of the gay flower-decked Arcadians coming through a forest with song and laughter, and finding there a solitary tomb with that inscription? This is Arcadia, and we too have found the tomb."

Strolling on down the island, we came to a long arched walk of orange-trees trained into a continuous arbor.

"What a lovely wild old place!" said Iris. "What is its history? Does any body know?"

"It has not been occupied for nearly a century, I am told," said Aunt Diana.

"Who would have expected traces of such careful cultivation down on this remote island?" I said, as a new vista of symmetrical fields opened out on one side.

"There you make the common mistake of all Northerners, Miss Martha," said John Hoffman. "Because the country is desolate and thinly settled, you suppose it to be also wild and new, like the Western States and Territories. You forget how long this far peninsula has been known to the white man. These shores were settled more than

a century before Plymouth or Jamestown, and you can scarcely go out in any direction around St. Augustine without coming upon old groves of orange and fig trees, a ruined stone wall, or fallen chimney. Poor Florida! she is full of deserted plantations."

"But does any one know the story of the place?" repeated Iris, who preferred any diversion to Mokes's solo.

"Why insist upon digging it up?" said Sara. "Let it rest in the purple haze of the past. The place has not been occupied for a hundred years. We see this beautiful orange walk; yonder is a solitary tomb. Can we not fill out these shadowy borders without the aid of prosaic detail?"

The Professor, who had been digging up vicious-looking roots, now joined us. "When I was here some years ago," he began, in his loud, distinct tones, "I made a point of investigating—"

"Let us make a point of leaving," murmured Sara, taking me off down the walk. John Hoffman followed, so did Iris, and consequently Mokes, likewise Aunt Di. Miss Sharp longed to stay, but did not quite dare; so she compromised by walking on, as far as her feet were concerned, all the rest of her, however, looking back with rapt attention. "Yes? How interesting! Pray go on."

The Professor went on: we heard his voice in the rear. "It was called El Verjel (the garden), and its orange grove was the glory of St. Augustine—"

"Hurry!" whispered Sara, "or we shall hear the whole."

We hastened out into the sunny meadows, catching "killed by lightning"—"1790"—"he sent his oranges to London;" then the voice died away in the distance. John Hoffman kept with us, and we wandered on, looking off over the Matanzas, sweeping on to the south, dotted with sails, and the black dug-outs of the Minorean fishermen anchor-



A DESERTED PLANTATION.

ed along shore. The tide was out, and the coast-line bare and desolate.

"Nothing that H. H. ever wrote excels her 'When the tide comes in,'" I said. "Do you remember it?"

"When the tide goes out,
The shore looks dark and sad with doubt"—
and that final question,

'Ah, darling, shall we ever learn
Love's tidal hours and days?'"

"You believe, then, that love has its high and low tides?" said John, lighting a fresh cigar.

"Low tide," said Sara, half to herself—"low tide always." She was looking at the bare shore with a sadness that had real roots down somewhere.

"Very low, I suppose," commented John; "every thing is always very high or very low with you ladies. You are like the man who had a steamer to sell. 'But is it a low-pressure engine?' asked a purchaser. 'Oh yes, very low,' replied the owner, earnestly."

Sara flushed, and turned away.

"Do you do it on purpose, I wonder?" I thought, with some indignation, as I glanced at John's imperturbable face. I was very tender always with Sara's sudden little sadnesses. I think there is no one who comprehends a girl passing through the shadow-land of doubt and vague questioning that lies beyond youth so well as the old maid who has made the journey herself, and knows of a surety that there is sunshine be-

yond. Obeying a sudden impulse, I asked the question aloud. Sara was in front of us, out of hearing.

"Do I do what on purpose, Miss Martha? Tell anecdotes?"

"You know what I mean very well, Mr. Hoffman. Her sadness was real for the moment; why wound her?"

"Wound her! Is a woman wounded by a trifling joke?"

"But her nature is peculiarly sensitive."

"You mistake her, I think, Miss Martha. Sara St. John is coated over with pride like an armor; she is invulnerable."

I could not quite deny this, so I veered a little. "She is so lonely, Mr. Hoffman!" I said, coming round on another tack.

"Because she so chooses."

"It may not be 'choose.' Mr. Hoffman, why should *you* not try to—" Here I looked up and caught the satirical smile on my companion's face, and, vexed with myself, I stopped abruptly.

"You are a good friend, Miss Martha."

"She has need of friends, poor girl!"

"Why poor?"

"In the first place she is poor, literally."

"Poverty is comparative. Who so poor as Mokes with his millions?"

"Then she is poor in the loss of her youth; she is no longer young, like Iris."

"Oh, saw ye not fair Iris going down into the west!—a minute ago," said John, glancing after a vanishing blue ribbon. A sus-

picion, and not for the first time either, crossed my mind. "So it is little Iris, after all," I thought. "Oh, man, man, how can you be so foolish!" Then aloud, "I must go forward and join the others," I said, with a tinge of annoyance I could not conceal. John looked at me a moment, and then strode forward. I watched him; he joined Sara. I followed slowly. "There is a second tomb farther down the island," he was saying as I came up; "it is even more venerable than the first; a square inclosure of coquina, out of which grows an ancient cedar-tree which was probably planted, a mere slip, after the grave was closed. Will you walk that way with me, Miss St. John?" And with bared head he stood waiting for her answer.

"Thank you," said Sara, "I do not care to walk farther."

He bowed and left her.

Half an hour later, as Sara and I were strolling near the far point of the island, we caught through the trees a glimpse of Iris seated in the low, crooked bough of a live-oak, and at her feet John Hoffman, reclining on the white tufted moss that covered the ground. "Absurd!" I said, angrily.

"Why absurd? Is she not good and fair? To me there is something very bewitching about Iris Carew. She is the most graceful little creature; look at her attitude now, swinging in that bough! and when she walks there is a willowy suppleness about her that makes the rest of us look like grenadiers. Then what arch dark eyes she has, what a lovely brunette skin, the real brune! Pretty, graceful little Iris, she is always picturesque, whatever she does."

"But she is a child, Sara, while he—"

"Is John Hoffman," replied Sara, with a little curl of her lip. "Come, Martha, I want to show you some Arcadians."

"Arcadians?"

"Yes. Not the people who found the tomb in the forest, but some real practical Arcadians, who enjoy life as Nature intended."



ORANGE WALK.

"Who knows what she intended? I am sure I don't," I said, crossly.

Near the ruins of the mansion we found the Arcadians, a young man with his wife and child, living in a small out-building which might have been a cow-house. It was not more than ten feet square, the roof had fallen in, and was replaced by a rude thatch of palmetto leaves; there was no window of any kind, no floor save the sand, and for a door only an old coverlet hung up and tied back like a curtain. Within we could see a low settle-bed with some ragged coverings, a stool, powder, shot, and fishing tackle hung up on one side, and an old calico dress on the other; without was a table under a tree, a cupboard hung on the outside of the house, containing a few dishes, and the ashes of the family fire near at hand. Two thin dogs and a forlorn calf (oh, the cadaverous cattle of Florida!) completed the stock of this model farm.

"They eat and cook out-of-doors all the year round, I suppose. What a home! Did any one ever see such poverty," I said, "and such indolence? They do not even take the trouble to make a door."

"What do they want of a door? There is nothing to keep out but Nature. And as for poverty, they seem happy enough," replied Sara.

They did. The woman came to meet us with her brown baby, and the young husband took his gun and went out to find his supper—partridge from the wood, probably,

and oysters from the beach. They had lived there three years, the woman said. Her name was Anita, her husband's Gaspar, the baby was Rafaello. No, they did not work much. They had a few sweet-potatoes yonder, and sometimes she braided palmetto and took it down to the city to sell. Gaspar had a dug-out, and sometimes he sold fish, but not often. They had every thing they wanted. Did she know any thing about this old place? No, she did not. Couldn't she find out? Yes, she supposed she could; her people had lived along the Matanzas for years; but she never took the trouble to ask. Should she send that brown baby to school when it grew larger?

"To school?" And the young mother laughed merrily, showing even, white teeth, and tossing up the little Rafaello until he crowed with glee. "None of us-uns goes to school, my lady."

"But what will he do, then?"

"Do? Why, live here or somewhars, jes as we're doing," replied Anita. "That's all he wants."

"A great many people come over here in the season, do they not?" I asked, abandoning my educational efforts.

"Yes, pleasant days folks come."

"Do you think the ladies are pretty?"

"Sometimes," replied Anita, with a critical air.

"Wouldn't you like to look as they do?"

"Oh no," replied our "nut-brown mayde," with a broad, contented smile.

"And the gentlemen. What do you think of them?"

"Eh? the mens, did you say? Oh, they're so wimpsy!" And bursting into a peal of laughter, the mother tossed up the baby again until he too joined in the merriment over the "wimpsyneess," whatever that was, of the tourists from the North.

"Do you know, I feel as though Calhoun himself was laughing at me from his grave," I said, as we walked away. "Your Arcadians, Sara, have made me more conscious of my bodily defects than a whole regiment of fine city people. What a shape that woman had! what eyes! what teeth! But what did she mean by wimpsy?"

"Very likely she meant Mokes. He is certainly limpsy; then why not wimpsy? There he is, by-the-way."

So he was, sitting with (of all persons in the world!) the governess. "In 1648 there were three hundred householders resident in St. Augustine, Mr. Mokes," we heard her say as we drew near.

"Must have wanted to—beast of a place," commented Mokes. He looked up doubtfully as we went by, but not having decided exactly how strong-minded Sara might be, he concluded not to venture; the governess at least never posed a fellow with startling questions.

"Poor Mokes!" I said.

"Oh yes, very poor!"

"I was thinking of his forlorn love affair, Sara."



JOHN AND IRIS.



NEW LIGHT-HOUSE, ANASTASIA ISLAND.

"Iris may still be Mrs. Mokes."

"Oh no!"

"Do not be too sure, Martha. In my opinion—nay, experience—a young girl is far more apt to be dazzled by wealth than an older woman. The older woman knows how little it has to do with happiness, after all; the young girl has not yet learned that."

The *Osceola* carried us northward again, and then around into a creek where was the landing-place of Anastasia Island.

"This Anastasia was a saint," I said, as we strolled up the path leading to the new light-house. "She belonged to the times of Diocletian, and we know where to find her, which is more than I can say of Maria Sanchez over in the village."

"And who is this Maria Sanchez?" inquired Aunt Diana, in her affable, conversational tone. Aunt Di always asked little questions of this kind, not because she cared to know, but because she esteemed it a duty to keep the conversation flowing.

"Ah! that is the question, aunt—who was she? There are persons of that name in the town now, but this creek bore the name centuries ago; wherefore, nobody knows. Maria is a watery mystery."

The new light-house, curiously striped in black and white like a barber's pole, rose from the chaparral some distance back from the beach, one hundred and sixty feet into the clear air; there was nothing to compare it with, not a hill or rise of land, not even a tall tree, and therefore it looked gigantic, a tower built by Titans rather than men.

"Let us go up to the top," said Iris, peeping within the open door. We hesitated: one hundred and sixty feet of winding stairway may be regarded as a crucial test between youth and age.

"Oh, Aunt Di, not you, of course! nor you either, Miss Sharp, nor the Professor, nor Cousin Martha," said Iris, heedlessly. "You can all sit here comfortably in the shade

while the rest of us run up; we shall not stay long."

Upon this instantly we all arose and began to climb up those stairs. Sit there comfortably in the shade, indeed! Not one of us!

The view from the summit seemed wonderfully extensive—inland over the level pine-barrens to the west; the level blue sea to the east; north, the silver sands of the Florida main-land; and south, the stretch of Anastasia Island, its backbone distinctly visible in the slope of the low green foliage.

"How soft and blue the ocean looks!" said Iris. "I should like to sail away to the far East and never come back."

"If I only had my yacht here now, Miss Iris!" said Mokes, gallantly. "But we should want to come back some time, you know. Egypt and the Nile—well, they are dirty places; although I—er—I always carry every thing with me, it is almost impossible to live properly there."

We all knew what Mokes meant; he meant his portable bath. He aped English fashions, and was always bringing into conversation that blessed article of furniture, which accompanied him every where in charge of his valet. So often indeed did he allude to it that we all felt, like the happy-thought man, inclined to chant out in chorus, to the tune of the *Mistletoe Bough*,

"Oh, his portable ba-ath!

Oh, his por-ta-ble ba-ath!"

"You have, I am told, Mr. Mokes, the finest yacht in this country," said John Hoffman.

Well, it wasn't a bad one, Mokes allowed.

"I don't know which I would rather own," pursued John, "your yacht or your horses. Why, Sir, your horses are the pride of New York."

I glanced at John; he was as grave as a judge. Mokes glowed with satisfaction. Iris listened with downcast eyes, and Aunt Diana, who had at last reached the top stair, gathered her remaining strength to smile

upon the scene. Mokes came out of his shell entirely, and graciously offered his arm to Aunt Diana for the long descent.

But Aunt Di could—"excuse me, Mr. Mokes"—really hold on "better by the railing;" but "perhaps Iris—"

Yes, Iris could, and did.

John looked after the three as they wound down the long spiral with a smile of quiet amusement.

"All alike," he said to me, with the "old-comrade" freedom that had grown up between us. "La richesse est toujours des femmes le grand amour, Miss Martha."

"Don't quote your pagan French at me," I answered, retreating outside, where on the little platform I had left Sara gazing out to sea. She was looking down now, leaning over the railing as if measuring the dizzy height.

"If I should throw myself over," she said, as I came up, "my body would go down; but where would my soul go, I wonder?"

"Don't be morbid, Sara."

"Morbid? Nonsense! That is a duty word, a red flag which timid people always hang out the moment you near the dangerous ground of the great hereafter. We must all die some time, mustn't we? And if I should die now, what difference would it make? The madam-aunt would think me highly inconsiderate to break up the party in any such way; Iris would shed a pretty tear or two; Mokes would really feel relieved; the Professor would write an ac-

count of the accident for the *Pith-and-Ponder Journal*, with a description of the coquina quarry thrown in; Miss Sharp would read it and be 'so interested;' and even you, Martha, would scarcely have the heart to wish me back again." Tears stood in her eyes as she spoke, her face had softened with the sad fancies she had woven, and for the moment the child-look came back into her eyes, as it often comes with tears.

"And John Hoffman," I said, involuntarily. I knew he was still within hearing.

"Oh, he would decorously take his prayer-book and act as chief mourner, if there was no one else," replied Sara, with a mocking little laugh.

"Come down!" called Aunt Di's voice from below; "we are going to the coquina quarry."

I lingered a moment that John might have full time to make his escape, but when at length we went inside, there he was, leaning on the railing; he looked full at Sara as she passed, and bowed with cold hauteur.

"It is useless to try and make any body like her," I thought as I went down the long stairway. "Why is it that women who write generally manage to make themselves disagreeable to all mankind?"

We found Miss Sharp seated on a stair, half-way down, loaded with specimens, shells, and the vicious-looking roots of Fish Island.

"I am waiting for Professor Macquoid," she explained, graciously.

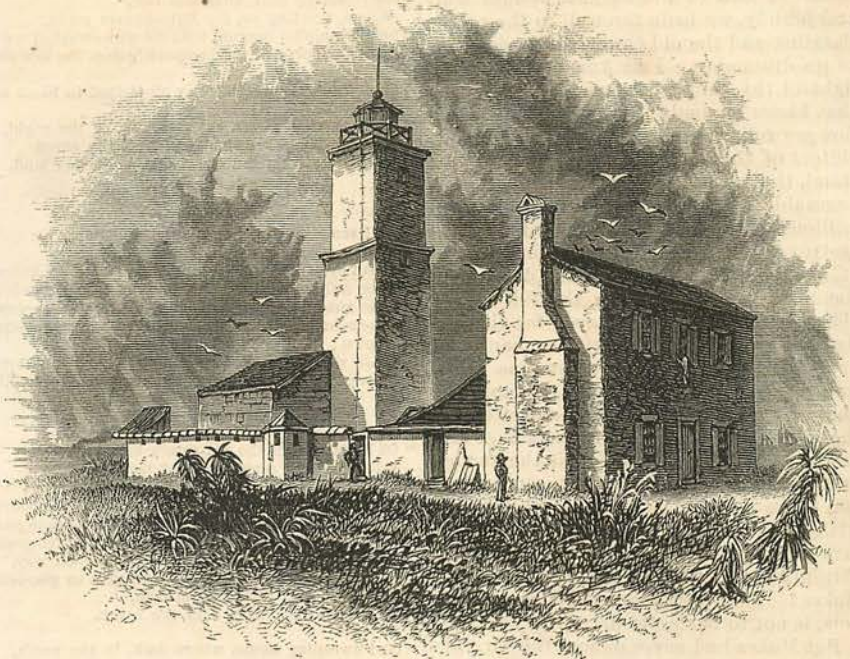
"He came as far as this, and then remembering a rare plant he had forgotten to take up, he went back for it, leaving the other specimens with me. I have no doubt he will soon return; but pray do not wait."

We did not; but left her on the stair.

Sara and I strolled over to the old lighthouse—a weather-beaten tower standing almost in the water, regularly fortified with walls, angles, and loopholes—a lonely little stronghold down by the sea. It was a picturesque old beacon, built by the Spaniards a long time ago as a look-out; when the English came into possession of Florida, in 1763, they raised the look-out sixty feet higher, and planted a cannon on the top, to



MISS SHARP WAITING FOR THE PROFESSOR.



OLD LIGHT-HOUSE, ANASTASIA ISLAND.

be fired as a signal when a vessel came in sight. The light that we had so often watched flashing and fading in the twilight as we walked on the sea-wall was put in still later by the United States government; in old times a bonfire was lighted on top every night.

"I like this gray old beacon better than yonder tall, spying, brand-new tower," I said. "This is a drowsy old fellow, who sleeps all day and only wakes at night, as a light-house should, whereas that wide-awake striped Yankee over there is evidently keeping watch of all that goes on in the little city. Iris must take care."

"Do you think he can spy into the demilune?" said Sara, smiling.

At the coquina quarry we found the Professor, scintillating all over with enthusiasm. "A most singular conglomerate of shells cemented by carbonate of lime," he said, putting on a stronger pair of glasses—"a recent formation, evidently, of the post-tertiary period. You are aware, I suppose, that it is found nowhere else in the world? It is soft, as you see, when first taken out, but becomes hard by exposure to the air." Knee-deep in coquina, radiating information at every pore, he stood—a happy man!

"And Miss Sharp?" I whispered.

"On the stair," replied Sara.

Not until we were on our way back to the sail-boat was the governess relieved from her vigil; then she heard us passing, and

came out of her own accord, loaded with the relics.

"Why, Miss Sharp, have you been in the light-house all this time?" asked Aunt Diana.

The governess murmured something about a "cool and shady place for meditation," but bravely she held on to her relics, and was ready to hear every thing about coquina and the post-tertiary, as well as a little raid into the glacial theory, with which the Professor entertained us on the way to the landing.

"Do you hear the drum-fish drumming down below?" said John, as the *Osceola* sailed merrily homeward. We listened, and caught distinctly the muffled tattoo—the marine band, as Iris said.

"I came across an old dilapidated book, written, I suppose, fifty years ago," said John. "Here is an extract about the old light-house and the drum-fish, which I copied from the coverless pages: 'We landed on Anastasia Island, and walked to the old light-house. Here a Spaniard lives with his family, the eldest, a beautiful dark-eyed little muchacha (young girl), just budding into her fourteenth year. Here, in this little fortified castle, Señor Andro defies alike the tempests and the Indians. Having spent an hour or two in the hospitable tower, and made a delicious repast on the dried fish which garnishes his hall from end to end, eked out with cheese and crackers and a

bottle or two of Frontignae, besides fruit and brandy, we bade farewell to the pretty Catalina and the old tower, for it was time to go drumming. Fair Anastasia, how delightful thy sunny beach and the blue sea that kisses buxomly thy lonely shore! Before me rolls the eternal ocean, mighty architect of the curious masonry on which I stand, the animal rock which supports the vegetable soil. How many millions upon millions of these shell-fish must have been destroyed to form a substratum for one rood of land! But it was time for drumming, the magic hour (between the fall of the ebb and the rise of the flood) for this delightful sport, whose superior enchantment over all others in the Walton line I had so often heard described with rapture—the noble nature of the fish, his size and strength, the slow approach which he makes at first to the hook, like a crab; then the sudden overwhelming transport that comes over you when you feel him dashing boldly off with the line is comparable to nothing save pulling along a buxom lass through a Virginia reel. What do you say to that, Mokes? That part about the Virginia reel, now, is not to be despised."

But Mokes had never danced the Virginia reel—had seen it once at a servants' ball, he believed.

"What *are* you doing, Sara?" I said, sleepily, from the majestic old bed, with its high carved posts and net curtains. "It is after eleven; do put up that pencil, at least for to-night."

"I am amusing myself writing up the sail this afternoon. Do you want to hear it?"

"If it isn't historical."

"Historical! As though I could amuse myself historically!"

"It mustn't be tragedy either: harrowing up the emotions so late at night is as bad as mince-pie."

"It is light comedy, I think—possibly farce. Now listen: it begins with an 'Oh' on a high note, sliding down this way: 'Oh-o-o-o-o-h!'"

"MATANZAS RIVER.

"Oh! rocking on the little blue waves,
While, flocking over Huguenot graves,
Come the sickle-bill curlews, the wild laughing loons,
The heavy old pelicans flying in platoons
Low down on the water with their feet out behind,
Looking for a sand-bar which is just to their mind,
Eying us scornfully, for very great fools,
In which view the porpoises, coming up in schools,
Agree, and wonder why
We neither swim nor fly.

"Oh! sailing on away to the south,
There, hailing us at the river's mouth,
Stands the old Spanish look-out, where ages ago
A watch was kept, day and night, for the evil foe—
Simple-minded Huguenots fleeing here from France,
All carefully massacred by the Spaniard's lance
For the glory of God; we look o'er the side,
As if to see their white bones lying 'neath the tide
Of the river whose name
Is reddened with the shame.

"Oh! beating past Anastasia Isle,
Where, greeting us, the light-houses smile,
The old coquina beacon, with its wave-washed walls,
Where the spray of the breakers 'gainst the low door
falls,
The new mighty watch-tower all striped in black and
white,
That looks out to sea every minute of the night,
And by day, for a change, doth lazily stand
With its eye on the green of the Florida land,
And every thing doth spy—
E'en us, as we sail by.

"Oh! scudding up before wind and tide,
Where, studding all the coast alongside,
Miles of oysters bristling stand, their edges like knives,
Million million fiddler-crabs, walking with their wives,
At the shadow of our sail climb helter-skelter down
In their holes, which are houses of the fiddler-crab
town;
While the bald-headed eagle, coming in from the sea,
Swoops down upon the fish-hawk, fishing patiently,
And carries off his spoil,
With kingly scorn of toil.

"Oh! floating on the sea-river's brine,
Where, noting each ripple of the line,
The old Minorcan fishermen, swarthy and slow,
Sit watching for the drum-fish, drumming down below;
Now and then along shore their dusky dug-outs pass,
Coming home laden down with clams and marsh grass;
One paddles, one rows, in their outlandish way,
But they pause to salute us, and give us good-day,
In soft Minorcan speech,
As they pass, near the beach.

"Oh! sweeping home, where dark, in the north,
See, keeping watch, San Marco looms forth,
With its gray ruined towers in the red sunset glow,
Mounting guard o'er the tide as it ebbs to and fro;
We hear the evening gun as we reach the sea-wall,
But soft on our ears the water-murmurs fall,
Voices of the river, calling 'Stay! stay! stay!
Children of the Northland, why flee so soon away?'
Though we go, dear river,
Thou art ours forever."

After I had fallen asleep, haunted by the marching time of Sara's verse, I dreamed that there was a hand tapping at my chamber door, and, half roused, I said to myself that it was only dreams, and nothing more. But it kept on, and finally, wide awake, I recognized the touch of mortal fingers, and withdrew the bolt. Aunt Diana rushed in, pale and disheveled in the moonlight.

"What is the matter?" I exclaimed.

"Niece Martha," replied Aunt Di, sinking into a chair, "Iris has disappeared!"
Grand tableau, in which Sara took part from the majestic bed.

"She went to her room an hour ago," pursued Aunt Di; "it is next to mine, you know, and I went in there just now for some camphor, and found her gone!"

"Dear, dear! Where can the child have gone to?"

"An elopement," said Aunt Di, in a sepulchral tone.

"Not Mokes?"

"No. If it had been Mokes, I should not have—that is to say, it would have been highly reprehensible in Iris, but— However, it is *not* Mokes; he is sound asleep in his room; I sent there to see." And Aunt Diana betook herself to her handkerchief.

"Can it be John Hoffman?" I mused, half to myself.

"Mr. Hoffman went up to his room some time ago," said Sara.

"And pray how do *you* know, Miss St. John?" asked Aunt Di, coming out stiffly from behind her handkerchief. "Mr. Hoffman would have been very glad to—and, as it happens, he is *not* in his room at all."

"Then of course— Oh, irretrievable folly!" I exclaimed, in dismay.

"But it isn't John Hoffman, I tell you," said Aunt Diana, relapsing into dejection again. "He has gone out sailing with the Van Anders; I heard them asking him—a moonlight excursion."

Then the three of us united:

MYSELF (<i>doubtfully</i>). "Can it be—	} the Captain!"
SARA (<i>decidedly</i>). "It must be—	
AUNT DI (<i>dejectedly</i>). "Yes, it is—	

THE COMING TRANSIT OF VENUS.

A LARGE portion of the astronomical world has for two years been busy with preparations to observe one of the rarest of celestial phenomena. When Venus last passed over the face of the sun the infants Napoleon and Wellington were sleeping in the arms of their nurses, all unconscious of the parts they were to play in the world's history; Washington, a loyal subject of King George, lived quietly on his Virginia plantation; and American independence was a dream of a few enthusiasts. Now, after the lapse of more than a century, the present generation is to witness two recurrences of the phenomenon, the one during the present year, and the other eight years later. Then the rest of the nineteenth century and the whole of the twentieth are to pass away without its again being seen. Finally, on June 8, 2004, our posterity will have an opportunity of again observing it.

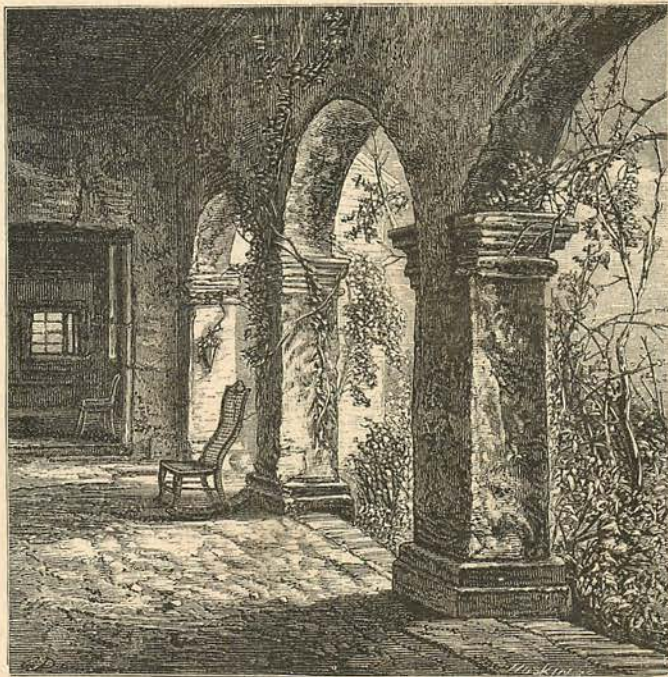
We know from our astronomical tables that this phenomenon has recurred in its regular cycle four times every 243 years for many centuries past. But it has been only in times comparatively recent that it could be predicted and observed. In the years 1518 and 1526 the idea of looking for such a thing does not seem to have occurred to any one. The following century gave birth to Kepler, who so far improved the planetary tables as to predict that a transit would occur on December 6, 1631. But it did not commence until after sunset in Europe, and was over before sunrise next morning, so that it passed entirely unobserved. Unfortunately the tables were so far from accurate that they failed to indicate the transit which occurred eight years later, and led Kepler to announce that the phenomenon would not recur till 1761. The transit of 1639 would, therefore, like all former ones, have passed entirely unobserved had it not been for the talent and enthusiasm of a young Englishman. Jeremiah Horrox was then a young curate of eighteen, residing in the north of England, but who, even at that early age, was a master of the astronomy of his times. Comparing different tables with his own observations of Venus, he found that

a transit might be expected to occur on December 4, and prepared to observe it, after the fashion then in vogue, by letting the image of the sun passing through his telescope fall on a screen behind it. Unfortunately the day was Sunday, and his clerical duties prevented his seeing the ingress of the planet upon the solar disk—a circumstance which science has mourned for a century past, and will have reason to mourn for a century to come. When he returned from church he was overjoyed to see the planet upon the face of the sun, but after following it half an hour the approach of sunset compelled him to suspend observing.

During the interval between this and the next transit, which occurred in 1761, exact astronomy made enormous strides, through the discovery of the law of gravitation and the application of the telescope to celestial measurements. A great additional interest was lent to the phenomenon by Halley's discovery that observations of it made in distant portions of the earth could be used to determine the distance of the sun—an element of which scarcely any thing was then certainly known. From some ancient observations of eclipses it had been concluded by Ptolemy that the distance of the sun was about 1100 semi-diameters, and this value was adopted with a few modifications for more than a thousand years. When the telescope enabled more accurate observations to be made, it was found that this estimate must be far too small; and from observations on Mars in 1672 Cassini concluded that the solar parallax was between nine and ten seconds, and consequently that the sun must be distant more than 20,000 semi-diameters of the earth. But this result was necessarily very uncertain, and, with the means then known, the only feasible way of attaining certainty seemed to be to adopt Halley's plan of observing transits of Venus.

The principles by which the parallaxes, and therefore the distances, of Venus and the sun are determined by Halley's method are quite simple. When Venus is between the earth and sun she is only about one-fourth as far from us as the sun is; conse-

THE ANCIENT CITY.
IN TWO PARTS.—PART II.



THE OLD HOUSE BALCONY.

“The tide comes in; the birds fly low,
As if to catch our speech:
Ah, Destiny! why must we ever go
Away from the Florida Beach?”

AUNT DIANA declared that I must go with her back to the hotel, and I in my turn declared that if I went Sara must accompany me; so it ended in our taking the key of the house from the sleepy Sabre-boy and all three going back together through the moon-lighted street across the plaza to the hotel. Although it was approaching midnight, the Ancient City had yet no thought of sleep. Its idle inhabitants believed in taking the best of life, and so on moonlight nights they roamed about, two and two, or leaned over their balconies chatting with friends across the way in an easy-going, irregular fashion, which would have distracted an orthodox New England village, where the lights are out at ten o'clock, or they know the reason why. When near the hotel we saw John Hoffman coming from the Basin.

“We had better tell him,” I suggested.

“Oh no,” said Aunt Di, holding me back.

“But we must have somebody with us if we are going any farther to-night, aunt, and he is the best person.—Mr. Hoffman, did you enjoy the sail?”

“I did not go,” answered John, looking somewhat surprised to see us confronting him at that hour, like the three witches of *Macbeth*. Aunt Di was disheveled, and so was I, while Sara’s golden hair was tumbling about her shoulders under the hat she had hastily tied on.

“Have you been out all the evening?” asked Aunt Di, suspiciously.

“I went to my room an hour ago, but the night was so beautiful I slipped down the back stairs, so as to not disturb the household, and came out again to walk on the sea-wall.”

“Sara did hear him go up to his room: she knows his step, then,” I thought. But I could not stop to ponder over this discovery. “Mr. Hoffman,” I said, “you find us in some perplexity. Miss Carew is out loitering somewhere in the moonlight, and, like the heedless child she is, has forgotten the hour. We are looking for her, but have no idea where she has gone.”

“Probably the demi-lune,” suggested John. Then, catching the ominous expression of Aunt Diana’s face, he added, “They have all gone out to the Rose Garden by moonlight, I think.”

“All?”

“Miss Sharp and the Professor.”

ALL THREE OF US. "Miss Sharp and the Professor?"

JOHN (*carelessly*). "The Captain too, of course."

ALL THREE OF US. "The Captain too, of course!"

JOHN. "Suppose we stroll out that way and join them?"

MYSELF. "The very thing—it is such a lovely evening!" Then to Aunt Di, under my breath, "You see, it is only one of Iris's wild escapades, aunt; we must make light of it as a child's freak. We had better stroll out that way, and all walk back together, as though it was a matter of course."

AUNT DI. "Miss Sharp and the Professor!"

SARA. "What a madcap freak!"

AUNT DI. "Not at all, not at all, Miss St. John. I am at a loss to know what you mean by madcap. My niece is simply taking a moonlight walk in company with her governess and Professor Macquoid, one of the most distinguished scientific men in the country, as I presume you are aware."

Brave Aunt Di! The first stupor over, how she rallied like a Trojan to the fight!

We went out narrow little Charlotte Street—the business avenue of the town.

"A few years ago there was not a sign in St. Augustine," said John. "People kept a few things for sale in a room on the ground-floor of their dwellings, and you must find them out as best you could. They seemed to consider it a favor that they allowed you to come in and buy. They tolerated you, nothing more."

"It is beyond any thing, their ideas of business," said Aunt Diana. "The other day we went into one of the shops to look at some palmetto hats. The mistress sat in a rocking-chair slowly fanning herself. 'We wish to look at some hats,' I said. 'There they are,' she replied, pointing toward the table. She did not rise, but continued rocking and fanning with an air that said, 'Yes, I sell hats, but under protest, mind you.' After an unaided search I found a hat which might have suited me with a slight alteration—five minutes' work, perhaps. I mentioned what changes I desired, but the mistress interrupted me with, 'We never alter trimmings.' 'But this will not take five minutes,' I began; 'just take your scissors and—' 'Oh, I never do the work *myself*,' replied Majestic, breaking in again with a languid smile; 'and really I do not know of any one who could do it at present. Now you Northern ladies are different, I suppose.' 'I should think we were,' I said, laying down the hat and walking out of the little six-by-nine parlor."

"I wonder if the people still cherish any dislike against the Northerners?" I said, when Aunt Di had finished her story with a general complaint against the manners of

her own sex when they undertake to keep shop, North or South.

"Some of the Minorcans do, I think," said John; "and many of the people regret the incursion of rich winter residents, who buy up the land for their grand mansions, raise the prices of every thing, and eventually will crowd all the poorer houses beyond the gates. But there are very few of the old leading families left here now. The *ancien régime* has passed away, the new order of things is distasteful to them, and they have gone, never to return."

Turning into St. George Street, we found at the northern end of the town the old City Gates, the most picturesque ruin of picturesque St. Augustine. The two pillars are moresque, surmounted by a carved pomegranate, and attached are portions of the wall, which, together with an outer ditch, once extended from the Castle of San Marco, a short distance to the east, across the peninsula to the San Sebastian, on the west, thus fortifying the town against all approaches by land. The position of St. Augustine is almost insular. Tide-water sweeps up around and behind it, and to this and the ever-present sea-breeze must be attributed the wonderful health of the town, which not only exists, but is pre-eminent, in spite of a neglect of sanitary regulations which would not be endured one day in the villages of the North.

Passing through the old gateway, we came out upon the Shell Road, the grand boulevard of the future, as yet but a few yards in length.

"They make about ten feet a year," said John; "and when they are at work, all I can say unto you is, 'Beware!' You suppose it is a load of empty shells they are throwing down; but no. Have they time, forsooth, to take out the oysters, these hard-pressed workmen of St. Augustine? By no means; and so down they go, oysters and all, and the road makes known its extension on the evening breezes."

The soft moonlight lay on the green waste beyond the gates, lighting up the North River and its silver sand-hills. The old fort loomed up dark and frowning, but the moonlight shone through its ruined turrets, and only the birds of the night kept watch on its desolate battlements. The city lay behind us. It had never dared to stretch much beyond the old gates, and the few people who did live outside were spoken of as very far off—a sort of Bedouins of the desert encamping temporarily on the green. As we went on the moonlight lighted up the white head-stones of a little cemetery on the left side of the road.

"This is one of the disappointing cemeteries that was 'nothing to speak of,' I suppose," said Sara.

"It is the Protestant cemetery," replied

John, "remarkable only for its ugliness and the number of inscriptions telling the same sad story of strangers in a strange land—persons brought here in quest of health from all parts of the country, only to die far away from home."

"Where is the old Huguenot burying-ground?" asked Aunt Di.

"The Huguenots, poor fellows, never had a burying-ground, nor so much even as a burying, as far as I can learn," said Sara.

"But there is one somewhere," pursued Aunt Di. "I have heard it described as a spot of much interest."

"That has been a standing item for years in all the Florida guide-books," said John, "systematically repeated in the latest editions. They will give up a good deal, but that cherished Huguenot cemetery they must and will retain. The Huguenots, poor fellows, as Miss St. John says, never had a cemetery here, and it is only within comparatively modern times that there has been any Protestant cemetery whatever. Formerly the bodies of all persons not Romanists were sent across to the island for sepulture."

The Shell Road having come to an end, we walked on in the moonlight, now on little grass patches, now in the deep sand, passing a ruined stone wall, all that was left of a pleasant home, destroyed, like many other outlying residences, during the war. The myrtle thickets along the road-side were covered with the clambering curling sprays of the yellow jasmine, the lovely wild flower that brings the spring to Florida. We stopped to gather the wreaths of golden blossoms, and decked ourselves with them, Southern fashion. Every one wears the jasmine. When it first appears every one says, "Have you seen it? It has come!" And out they go to gather it, and bring it home in triumph.

Passing through the odd little wicket, which, with the old-fashioned turnstile, is used in Florida instead of a latched gate, we found ourselves in a green lane bordered at the far end with cedars. Here, down on the North River, was the Rose Garden, now standing with its silent house fast asleep in the moonlight.

"I do not see Iris," said Aunt Diana, anxiously.

"There is somebody over on the other side of the hedge," said Sara.

We looked, and beheld two figures bending down and apparently scratching in the earth with sticks.

"What in the world are they doing?" said Aunt Diana. "They can not be sowing seed in the middle of the night, can they?"

"They look like two ghouls," said Sara, "and one of them has—yes, I am sure one of them has a bone."

"It is Miss Sharp and the Professor," said John.

It was. We streamed over in a body and confronted them. "So interesting!" began Miss Sharp, in explanatory haste. "At various times the fragments of no less than eight skeletons have been discovered here, it seems, and we have been so fortunate as to secure a relic, a valuable Huguenot relic;" and with pride she displayed her bone.

"Of course," said Sara, "a massacre! What did I tell you, Martha, about their arising from the past and glaring at me?"

"Miss Sharp," began Aunt Diana, grimly, "where is Iris?"

"Oh, she is right here, the dear child. Iris! Iris!"

But no Iris appeared.

"I assure you she has not left my side until—until now," said the negligent shepherdess, peering about the shadowy garden. "Iris! Iris!"

"And pray, Miss Sharp, how long may be your 'now?'" demanded Aunt Diana, with cutting emphasis.

This feminine colloquy had taken place at one side. The Professor dug on meanwhile with eager enthusiasm, only stopping to hand John another relic which he had just unearthed.

"Thank you," said John, gravely; "but I could not think of depriving you."

"Oh, I only meant you to hold it a while for me," replied the Professor.

On the front steps leading to the piazza of the sleeping house we found the two delinquents. They rose as we came solemnly up the path.

"Why, Aunt Di, is that you? Who would have thought of your coming out here at this time of night?" began Iris, in her most innocent voice. The Captain stood twirling his blonde mustache with the air of a disinterested outsider.

"Don't make a fuss, Aunt Di," I whispered, warningly, under my breath. "It can't be helped now. Take it easy; it's the only way."

Poor Aunt Di—take it easy! She gave a sort of gulp, and then came up equal to the occasion. "You may well be surprised, my dear," she said, in a brisk tone, "but I have long wished to see the Rose Garden, and by moonlight the effect, of course, is much finer; quite—quite sylph-like, I should say," she continued, looking around at the shadowy bushes. "We were out for a little stroll, Niece Martha, Miss St. John, and myself, and meeting Mr. Hoffman, he mentioned that you were out here, and so we thought we would stroll out and join you. Charming night, Captain?"

The Captain thought it was; and all the dangerous places having been thus nicely coated over, we started homeward. The roses grew in ranks between two high hedges, and blossomed all the year round. They were all asleep now on their stems, the full-

bosomed, creamy beauties, the delicate white sylphs, and the gorgeous crimson sirens; but John woke up a superb souvenir-de-Mal-maison, and fastened it in Iris's dark hair: her hat, as usual, hung on her arm. Aunt Diana felt herself a little comforted; evidently the undoubted Knickerbocker antecedents were not frightened off by this midnight escapade, and Iris certainly looked enchantingly lovely in the moonlight, with her white dress and the rose in her hair. If Mokes were only here, and reconciled too. Happy thought! why should Mokes know? Aunt Diana was a skillful general: Mokes never knew.

"How large and still the house looks!" I said, as we turned toward the wicket; "who lives there?"

"Only the Rose Gardener," answered John; "an old bachelor who loves his flowers and hates womankind. He lives all alone in his great airy house, cooks his solitary meals, tends his roses, and no doubt enjoys himself extremely."

"Oh yes, extremely," said Sara, in a sarcastic tone.

"You speak whereof you do know, I suppose, Miss St. John?"

"Precisely; I have tried the life, Mr. Hoffman."

The Professor joined us at the gate, radiant and communicative. "All this soil, you will observe, is mingled with oyster shells to the depth of several feet," he began. "This was done by the Spaniards for the purpose of enriching the ground. Ah! Miss Iris, I did not at first perceive you in the shadow. You have a rose, I see. Although—ahem—not given to the quotation of poetry, nevertheless there is one verse which, with your permission, I will now repeat as applicable to the present occasion:

"Fair Phillis walks the dewy green;
A happy rose lies in her hair;
But, ah! the roses in her cheeks
Are yet more fair!"

"Pray, Miss Sharp, can you not dispense with that horrible bone?" said Aunt Diana, in an under-tone. "Really, it makes me quite nervous to see it dangling."

"Oh, certainly," replied the governess, affably, dropping the relic into her pocket. "I myself, however, am never nervous where science is concerned."

"Over there on the left," began the Professor again, "is the site of a little mission church built as long ago as 1592 on the banks of a tide-water creek. A young Indian chieftain, a convert, conceiving himself aggrieved by the rules of the new religion, incited his followers to attack the missionary. They rushed in upon him, and informed him of his fate. He reasoned with them, but in vain; and at last, as a final request, he obtained permission to celebrate mass before he died. The Indians sat down

on the floor of the little chapel, the father put on his robes and began. No doubt he hoped to soften their hearts by the holy service, but in vain; the last word spoken, they fell upon him and—"

"Massacred him," concluded Sara. "You need not go on, Sir. I know all about it. I was there."

"You were there, Miss St. John?"

"Certainly," replied Sara, calmly. "I am now convinced that in some anterior state of existence I have assisted, as the French say, at all the Florida massacres. Indian, Spanish, or Huguenot, it makes no difference to me. I was there!"

"I trust our young friend is not tinged with Swedenborgianism," said the Professor aside to John Hoffman. "The errors of those doctrines have been fully exposed. I trust she is orthodox."

"Really, I do not know what she is," replied John.

"Oh yes, you do," said Sara, overhearing. "She is heterodox, you know; decidedly heterodox."

In the mean while Aunt Diana kept firmly by the side of the Captain. It is safe to say that the young man was never before called upon to answer so many questions in a given space of time. The entire history of the late war, the organization of the army, the military condition of Europe, and, indeed, of the whole world, were only a portion of the subjects with which Aunt Di tackled him on the way home. Iris stood it a while, and then, with the happy facility of youth, she slipped aside, and joined John Hoffman. Iris was a charming little creature, but, so far, for "staying" qualities she was not remarkable.

A second time we passed the cemetery. "I have not as yet investigated the subject," said the Professor, "but I suppose this to be the Huguenot burying-ground."

"Oh yes," exclaimed Miss Sharp; "mentioned in my guide-book as a spot of much interest. How thrilling to think that those early Huguenots, those historical victims of Menendez, lie *here*—here in this quiet spot, so near, you know, and yet—and yet so far!" she concluded, vaguely conscious that she had heard that before somewhere, although she could not place it. She had forgotten that eye which, mixed in some poetic way with a star, has figured so often in the musical performances of the female seminaries of our land.

"Very thrilling; especially when we remember that they must have gathered up their own bones, swum up all the way from Matanzas, and buried each other ore by ore," said Sara.

"And even that don't account for the last man," added John.

Miss Sharp drew off her forces, and retired in good order.

"Iris," I said, the next morning, "come here and give an account of yourself. What do you mean, you gypsy, by such performances as that of last night?"

"I only meant a moonlight walk, Cousin Martha. I knew I never could persuade Aunt Di, so I took Miss Sharp."

"I am surprised that she consented."

"At first she did refuse; but when I told her that the Professor was going, she said that under those circumstances, as we might expect much valuable information on the way, she would give her consent."

"And the Professor?"

"Oh, I asked him, of course; he is the most good-natured old gentleman in the world; I can always make him do any thing I please. But poor Miss Sharp—how Aunt Di has been talking to her this morning! 'How you, at your age,' was part of it."

A week later we were taken to see the old Buckingham Smith place, now the property of a Northern gentleman, who has built a modern winter residence on the site of the old house.

"This is her creek, Aunt Di," I said, as the avenue leading to the house crossed a small muddy ditch.

"Whose, Niece Martha?"

"Maria Sanchez, of course. Don't you remember the mysterious watery heroine who navigated these marshes several centuries ago? She perfectly haunts me! Talk about Huguenots arising and glaring at you, Sara; they are nothing to this Maria. The question is, Who was she?"

"I know," answered Iris. "She is my old friend of the Dismal Swamp. 'They made her a grave too cold and damp,' you know, and she refused to stay in it. 'Her fire-fly lamp I soon shall see, her paddle I soon shall hear—'"

"Well, if you do, let me know," I said. "She must be a very muddy sort of a ghost; there isn't more than a spoonful of water in her creek as far down as I can see."

"But no doubt it was a deep tide-water stream in its day, Miss Martha," said John Hoffman; "deep enough for either romance or drowning."

Beyond the house opened out the long orange-tree aisles—beautiful walks arched in glossy green foliage—half a mile of dense leafy shade.

"This is the sour orange," said our guide, "a tree extensively cultivated in the old days for its hardy growth and pleasant shade. It is supposed to be an exotic run wild, for the orange is not indigenous here. When Florida was ceded to England in exchange for Cuba, most of the Spanish residents left, and their gardens were then found well stocked with oranges and lemons, figs, guavas, and pomegranates."

"Poor Florida! nobody wanted her," said John. "The English only kept her twenty

years, and then bartered her away again to Spain for the Bahamas, and in 1819 Spain was glad to sell her to the United States. The latter government, too, may have had its own thoughts as to the value of the purchase, which, although cheap at five millions in the first place, soon demanded nineteen more millions for its own little quarrel with that ancient people, the Seminoles."

"Headed, do not forget to mention, by Osceola," added Sara.

"Beautiful fruit, at least in appearance," I said, picking up one of the large oranges that lay by the hundreds on the ground. "Are they of no use?"

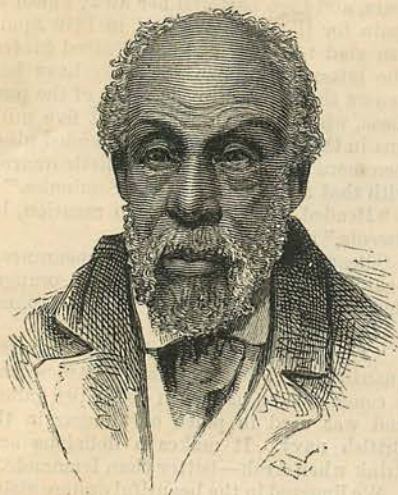
"The juice is occasionally sold in small quantities," replied our guide. "At one time it commanded a price of a dollar per gallon, and was used in place of vinegar in the British navy. It makes a delicious acid drink when fresh—better than lemonade."

We lingered in the beautiful orange aisles, and heard the story of the old place: how it had descended from father to son, and finally, upon the death of the owner who was childless, it came into the possession of a nephew. But among other papers was found one containing the owner's purpose to bequeath his property to the poor colored people of St. Augustine. This will, if it could so be called, without witnesses, and in other ways informal, was of no value in the eyes of the law. The owner had died suddenly away from home, and there was no testimony to prove that the paper expressed even a cherished intention. Nevertheless, the heir at law, with rare disinterestedness, carried out the vague wish; the place was sold, and all the proceeds invested for the benefit of the colored people, the charity taking the form of a Home for their aged and infirm, which is supported by the income from this money, the building itself having been generously given for the purpose by another prominent citizen of St. Augustine.

"You must see old Uncle Jack," concluded the speaker. "Before the war his master sent him several times to Boston with large sums of money, and intrusted him with important business, which he never failed to execute properly. By the terms of the will he has a certain portion of the land for his lifetime. That is his old cabin. Let us go over there."

Close down under the walls of the grand new mansion stood a low cabin, shaded by the long drooping leaves of the banana; hens and chickens walked in and out the open door, and most of the household furniture seemed to be outside, in the comfortable Southern fashion. Uncle Jack came to meet us—a venerable old man, with white hair, whose years counted nearly a full century.

"The present owner of the place has ordered a new house built for Jack, a pictur-



UNCLE JACK.

esque porter's lodge, near the entrance," said our guide, "but I doubt whether the old man will be as comfortable there as in this old cabin where he has lived so long. The negroes, especially the old people, have the strongest dislike to any elevation like a door-step or a piazza; they like to be right on the ground; they like to cook when they are hungry, and sleep when they are tired,

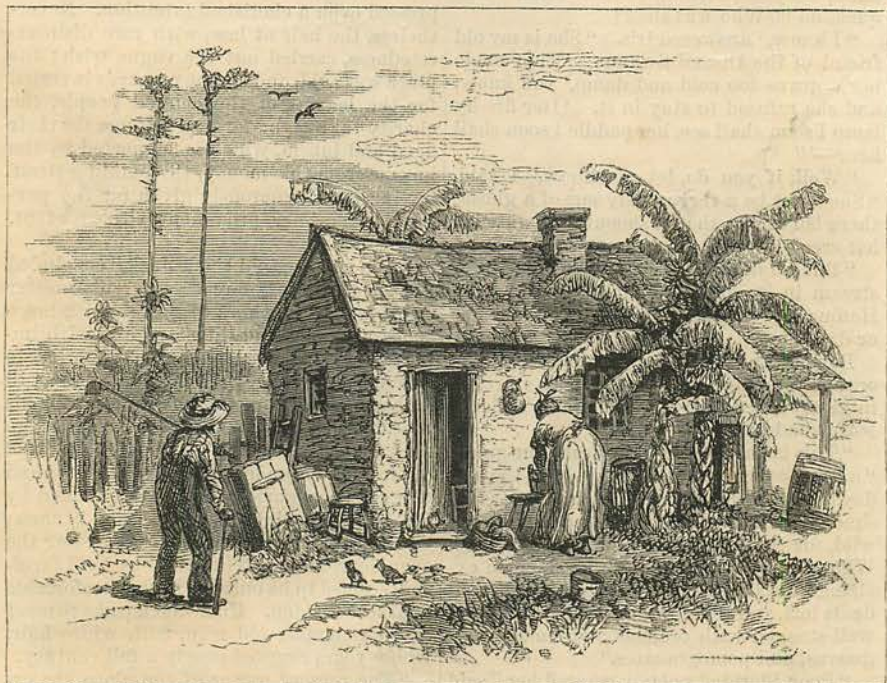
and enjoy their pipes in peace. Rules kill them, and they can not change: we must leave them alone, and educate the younger generation."

Returning down the arched walks, we crossed over into a modern sweet-orange grove, the most beautiful in St. Augustine or its vicinity. Some of the trees were loaded with blossoms, some studded with the full closed buds which we of the North are accustomed to associate with the satin of bridal robes, some had still their golden fruit, and others had all three at once, after the perplexing fashion of the tropics.

"There are about eight hundred trees here," said our guide, "and some of them yield annually five thousand oranges each. There is a story extant, one of the legends of St. Augustine, that formerly orange-trees covered the Plaza, and that one of them yielded annually twelve thousand oranges."

"What an appalling mass of sweetness!" said Sara. "I am glad that tree died; it was too good to live, like the phenomenal children of Sunday-school literature."

"In the old Spanish days," said John, "this neighborhood was one vast orange grove; ships loaded with the fruit sailed out of the harbor, and the grandees of Spain preferred the St. Augustine orange to any other. In Spain the trees live to a great age; some of them are said to be six hundred years old, having been planted by the Moors, but here an unexpected frost has



UNCLE JACK'S CABIN.

several times destroyed all the groves, so that the crop is by no means a sure one."

"So the frost does come here," I said. "We have seen nothing of it; the thermometer has ranged from sixty-eight to seventy-eight ever since we arrived."

"They had snow in New York last week," said Aunt Di.

"It has melted, I think," said John. "At least I saw this item last evening in a New York paper: 'If the red sleigher thinks that he sleighs to-day, he is mistaken!'"

"Shades of Emerson and Brahma, defend us!" said Sara.

Then we all began to eat oranges, and make dripping spectacles of ourselves generally. I defy any one to be graceful, or even dainty, with an orange; it is a great, rich, generous, pulpy fruit, and you have got to eat it in a great, rich, generous, pulpy way. How we did enjoy those oranges under the glossy green and fragrant blossoms of the trees themselves! We gave it up then and there, and said openly that no bought Northern oranges could compare with them.

"I don't feel politically so much disturbed now about the cost of that sea-wall," said Sara, "if it keeps this orange grove from washing away. It is doing a sweet and noble duty in life, and herein is cause sufficient for its stony existence."

We strolled back to the town by another way, and crossed again the Maria Sanchez Creek.

"Observe how she meanders down the marsh, this fairy streamlet," I said, taking up a position on the stone culvert. "Observe how green are her rushes, how playful her little minnows, how martial her fiddler-crabs! O lost Maria! come back and tell your story. Were you sadly drowned in these overwhelming waves, or were you the first explorer of these marshes, pushing onward in your canoe with your eyes fixed on futurity?"

Nobody knew; so we went home. But in the evening John produced the following, which he said had been preserved in the archives of the town for centuries. "I have made a free translation, as you will see," he said; "but the original is in pure Castilian."

"THE LEGEND OF MARIA SANCHEZ CREEK.

"Maria Sanchez
Her dug-out launches,
And down the stream to catch some crabs she takes
her way,
A Spanish maiden,
With crabs well laden;
When evening falls she lifts her trawls to cross the
bay.

"Grim terror blanches
Maria Sanchez,
Who, not to put too fine a point, is rather brown;
A norther coming,
Already humming,
Doth bear away that Spanish mail—den far from town.

"Maria Sanchez,
Caught in the branches
That sweetly droop across a creek far down the
coast,
That calm spectator,
The alligator,
Doth spy, then wait to call his mate, who rules the
roast.

"She comes and cranches
Maria Sanchez,
While boat and crabs the gentle husband meekly
chews.
How could they eat her,
That sehorita,
Whose story still doth make quite ill the Spanish
Muse?"

We heaped praises upon John's pure Castilian ode—all save the Professor, who undertook to criticise a little. "I have made something of a study of poetry," he began, "and I have noticed that much depends upon the selection of choice terms. For instance, in the first verse you make use of the local word 'dug-out.' Now in my opinion, 'craft' or 'canoe' would be better. You begin, if I remember correctly, in this way:

"'Maria Sanchez
Launches her dug-out—'"

"Oh no, Professor," said Sara; "this is it:

"'Maria Sanchez
Her dug-out launches.'"

"The same idea, I opine, Miss St. John," said the Professor, loftily.

"But the rhymes, Sir?"

The Professor had not noticed the rhymes; poetry should be above rhymes altogether, in his opinion.

The pleasant days passed, we sailed up and down the Matanzas, walked on the sea-wall, and sat in the little overhanging balcony, which, like all others in St. Augustine, was hung up on the side of the house like a cupboard without any support from below. Letters from home meanwhile brought tidings of snow and ice and storm, disasters by land and by sea. A lady friend, a new arrival, had visited the Ancient City forty years before, in the days of the *ancien régime*. "It is much changed," she said. "These modern houses springing up every where have altered the whole aspect of the town. I am glad I came back while there is still something left of the old time. Another five years and the last old wall will be torn down for a horrible paling fence. Forty years ago the town was largely Spanish or Moorish in its architecture. The houses were all built of coquina, with a blank wall toward the north, galleries running around a court-yard behind, where were flowers, vines, and a central fountain. The halls, with their stone arches, opened out into this greenery without doors of any kind, tropical fashion. Those were the proud days of St. Augustine; the old families reigned with undisputed sway; the slaves were well treated, hospitality was

boundless, and the intermixture of Spanish and Italian blood showed itself in the dark eyes that glanced over the balconies as the stranger passed below. It has all vanished now. The war effaced the last fading hue of the traditional grandeur, and broke down the barriers between the haughty little city and the outside world. The old houses have been modernized, and many of them have given place to new and, to my ideas, thoroughly commonplace dwellings. There is one left, however, the very mansion where I was so charmingly entertained forty years ago; its open arches remain just as they were, and the old wall still surrounds the garden. Up stairs is the large parlor where we had our gay little parties, with wines, and those delicious curled-up cakes, all stamped with figures, thin as a wafer, crisp and brittle, which seemed to be peculiar to St. Augustine."

"Did you know there was a native artist here?" said John, calling up one morning as he sat on the balcony, Sara and myself endeavoring to write duty letters.

"Painter or sculptor?" I inquired, pen in hand, pausing over an elaborate description of a sunset with which I was favoring a soul-to-soul correspondent. "Let me see: standing on the glacis with the look-out tower outlined against—"

"Sculptor," answered John. "His studio is on Charlotte Street not far from here. Let us walk down and see him."

"Look-out tower outlined against the golden after-glow. Is it worth going to see?"

"Indeed it is. There is a fine design—a lion carved in stone, and also a full-length figure of Henry Clay walking in the gardens of Ashland; and what is more, these statues are on top of the house outlined against—"

"The golden after-glow," I suggested.

"Certainly," said John. "And inside you will find rare antique vases, Egyptian crocodiles, Grecian caskets, and other remarkable works, all executed in stone."

"I have long craved an alligator, but could not undertake the cigar-box discipline," I answered, rising. "A crocodile carved in stone will be just the thing. Come, Sara."

We walked down Charlotte Street, and presently came to a small house with a low wing, whose open shutter showed the studio within. On the roof were two figures in coquina, one a nondescript animal like the cattle of a Noah's ark, the other a little stone man who seemed to have been so dwarfed by the weight of his hat that he never smiled again.

"The lion, and Henry Clay," said John, introducing the figures.

"Passé for the lion; but how do you make out the other?"

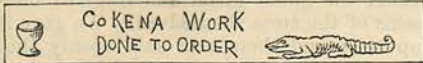
"Oh, Henry seems to be the beau idéal

of the South. You meet him every where on the way down in a plaster and marble dress-coat, extending his hand in a conversational manner, and so, of course, I supposed this to be another one. And as to the gardens of Ashland, as he has his hat on—indeed, he is principally hat—he must be taking a walk somewhere, and where so likely as his own bucolic garden?"

"I shall go back to my after-glow, Mr. Hoffman. Your Henry Clay is a fraud."

"Wait and see the artist, Martha," said Sara. "He is a colored man and a cripple."

We tapped on the shutter, and the artist appeared, supporting himself on crutches; a young negro, with a cheerful shining countenance, and an evident pride in the specimens of his skill scattered about the floorless studio—alligators, boxes, roughly cut vases, all made of the native coquina; or, as the artist's sign had it,



"It must require no small amount of skill to cut any thing out of this crumbling shell-rock," I said, as, after purchasing a charming little alligator, and conversing some time with the dusky artist, we turned homeward.

"It does," replied John. "Ignorant as he is, that man is not without his ideas of beauty and symmetry—another witness to the capability for education which I have every where noticed among the freedmen of the South."

"I too have been impressed with this capability," said Sara—"strongly impressed. Last Sunday I went to the Methodist colored Sunday-school on St. George Street. The teachers are Northerners; some resident here, some winter visitors; and the classes were filled up with full-grown men and women, some of them aged and gray-haired, old uncles and aunts, eager to learn, although they could scarcely see with their old eyes. They repeated Bible texts in chorus, and then they began to read. It was a pathetic sight to see the old men slowly following the simple words with intense eagerness, keeping the place under each one with careful finger. The younger men and girls read fluently, and showed quick understanding in the answers given to the teachers' questions. Then the little children filed in from another room, and they all began to sing. Oh, how they sang! The tenor voice of a young jet-black negro who sat near me haunts me still with its sweet cadences. Singularly enough, the favorite hymn seemed to be one whose chorus, repeated again and again, ended in the words,

"'Shall wash me white as snow—
White as snow.'"

"The negroes of St. Augustine were formerly almost all Romanists," said John, "and

many of them still attend the old cathedral on the Plaza, where there is a gallery especially for them. But of late the number of Methodists and Baptists has largely increased, while the old cathedral and its bishop, who once ruled supreme over the consciences of the whole population of la siempre fiel Ciudad de San Augustin, find themselves in danger of being left stranded high and dry as the tide of progress and education sweeps by without a glance. The Peabody Educational Fund supports almost entirely two excellent free schools here, one for white and one for colored children; and in spite of opposition, gradually, year by year, even Roman Catholic parents yield to the superior advantages offered to their children, and the church schools hold fewer and fewer scholars, especially among the boys. The Presbyterian church, with its pastor and earnest working congregation, has made a strong battle against the old-time influences, and it now looks as though the autocratic sway of the religion of Spain were forever broken in this ancient little Spanish city."

"At least, however, the swarthy priests look picturesque and appropriate as they come and go between their convent and the old cathedral through that latticed gate in their odd dress," said Sara. "Do you remember, in *Baddeck*, the pleasing historical Jesuit, slender too corpulent a word to describe his thinness, his stature primeval? Warner goes on to say that the traveler is grateful for such figures, and is not disposed to quarrel with the faith that preserves so much of the ugly picturesque."

"The principal interest I have in the old cathedral is the lost under-ground passage which, according to tradition, once extended from its high altar to Fort San Marco," I remarked. "I am perpetually haunted by the possibility of its being under my feet somewhere, and go about stamping on the ground to catch hollow echoes down below. We moderns have discovered at San Marco a subterranean dungeon and bones: then why not an under-ground passage?"

"And bones?" asked Sara.

"No; Spanish jewels, plate, and all kinds of mediæval treasures. I consider the possibility far more promising than Captain Kidd's chest. I have half a mind to begin digging."

"You would be obliged to take the shovel yourself, then, Miss Martha," said John. "Do you suppose you could hire the St. Augustiners to dig, really dig, day after day, Northern fashion? Why, they would laugh in your face at the mere idea. I am inclined to think there would never be another house built here if regular foundations and cellars were required; as it is, they set up the timbers as the children set up their houses of blocks. How clearly that sail-boat is out-

lined against the gray water, like a sketch in India ink! Is not that Miss Carew on board?"

"Yes, with Mr. Mokes," said Sara.

"And Aunt Diana," I added. "I remember now; Mr. Mokes gives a chowder dinner to-day over on the North Beach."

"I would not give much for chowder made by a Mokes," said John, with the scorn of an old camper-out in his voice.

"Oh, Mokes does not make it, Mr. Hoffman. What are you thinking of? Mokes make chowder! By no means. He has his servant and the boatmen to do all the work, and sends over his wines and ice beforehand. It will be an elegant dinner, I assure you."

"On the beach?"

"Yes, on the beach. Unfortunately, tables can not be transported, unless, indeed, Dundreary should arrive with his 'waft.' But the table-cloth will be damask, with a monogram worked in gold thread, and the conversation will be strictly Fifth Avenue-ish, I will answer for that."

"Great is the power of youthful beauty," I said, when we had reached our room again. "Here is Mokes with his money and wines, the Professor with his learning and bones, the Captain with his beauty and buttons, all three apparently revolving around that giddy little cousin of mine. And now comes John Hoffman!"

"With all his ancestors behind him! Has he taken her to the demi-lune yet?" said Sara, opening the *Princess of Thule*, which she read after a dose of Florida history, like sugar after a pill. "Do you know, Martha, I think poor Lavender is rather unfairly treated by the author of this book. He is ordered about by Ingram, and most unmercifully snubbed by Sheila, who, after all, manages to have her own way, 'whatever.'"

Now I had thrown John Hoffman purposely into my list of Iris's admirers in order to provoke something like a denial from Sara—these two seemed to feel such a singular kind of interested dislike toward each other; but my little bait caught nothing; Sara remained impassive.

Toward sunset the same evening we waited on the Plaza in company with the entire population of the town for the distribution of the one mail, accomplished with some difficulty by the efficient, active, Northern postmaster, in consequence of the windows being darkened with flattened noses, and the doorways blocked up, to say nothing of beatings on the walls, impatient calls through the key-hole, and raids round the back way by the waiting populace. Having wrestled manfully for our letters, we all strolled down Tolomato Street, reading as we went. Iris journeyed languidly through the sand; she had received no letters, and she had Mokes on her hands, Mokes radiant with the reflection of his private three-cor-



A FLORIDA CART.

nered chowder party, and the smiles she herself had bestowed upon him over on that wicked North Beach. "Oh, for a horse!" she sighed. "Nay, I would even ride in a Florida cart."

Aunt Diana was weary, but jubilant; she had the Professor and the Trojan war, and did her duty by them. Miss Sharp ambled along on the other side, and said "Indeed!" at intervals. Sara read her letters with a dreary sort of interest; her letters were always from "Ed.," she used to say. John and I, strolling in advance, carried on a good, comfortable, political fight over our newspapers.

"Another cemetery," said Sara, as the white crosses and head-stones shone out in the sunset on one side of the road.

Mokes, stimulated to unusual conversational efforts by the successes of the day, now brought forward the omnipresent item. "This is—er, I suppose, the old Huguenot burying-ground, a—er—a spot of much interest, I am told."

"Yes," replied Sara. "This is the very spot, Mr. Mokes."

"Oh no, Miss St. John," said Aunt Diana, coming to the rescue, "you mistake. This is Tolomato."

"It makes no difference. I am now convinced that they are *all* Huguenot burying-grounds," replied Sara, calmly.

The little cemetery was crowded with graves, mounds of sand over which the grass would not grow, and heavy coquina tombs whose inscriptions had crumbled away. The names on the low crosses, nearly all Spanish, Minorcan, Corsican, and Greek, bore witness to the foreign ancestry of the majority of the population. We found Alvarez, La Suarez, Leonardi, Capo, Carrarus, Ximanes, Baya, Pomar, Rogero, and Hernandez. Among the Christian names were Bartolo, Raimauld, Rafaelo, Geronimo, Celestino, Dolorez, Dominga, Paula, and Anaclata.

"It looks venerable, but it only dates back about one hundred years," said John. "Where the old Dons of two or three centu-

ries ago buried their dead, no one knows; perhaps they sent them all back home, Chinese fashion. An old bell which now hangs in the cathedral is said to have come from here; it bears the inscription, 'Sancte Joseph, ora pro nobis; D. 1682,' and is probably the oldest bell in the country."

"And what was it doing here?" said Mokes, with the air of a historian.

"There was once an Indian village here, called Tolomato, and a mission chapel; the bell is supposed to have come from the chapel."

"Is that the chapel?" asked Mokes, pointing to a small building on the far side of the cemetery. He was getting on famously, he thought, quite historical, and that sort of thing.

"No; that is a chapel erected in 1853 by Cubans to the memory of Father Varela. The old Tolomato chapel was—was destroyed."

"How?" inquired Mokes.

John glanced toward Sara with a smile. "Oh, go on," she said, "I am quite prepared! A massacre, of course!"

"Yes, a massacre. The Indians stole into the chapel by night, and finding Father Corpa engaged in his evening devotions, they slew him at the altar, and threw his body out into the forest, where it could never afterward be found. The present cemetery marks the site of the old mission, and bears its name."

Mokes, having covered himself with glory, now led the way out, and the party turned homeward. Sara and I lingered to read the Latin inscription over the chapel door, "Beati mortui qui in Domino moriuntur." John beckoned us toward a shadowed corner where stood a lonely tomb, the horizontal slab across the top bearing no date, and only the initials of a name, "Here lies T—F—."

"Poor fellow!" said John, "he died by his own hand, alone, at night, on this very spot: a young Frenchman, I was told, but I know nothing more."

"Is not that enough?" I said. "There is a whole history in those words."

"There was once a railing separating this tomb from the other graves, as something to be avoided and feared," said John; "but time, or perhaps the kind hand of charity, has removed the barrier: charity that can pity the despairing, suffering, human creature whose only hope came to this—to die!"

Happening to glance at Sara, I saw her eyes full of tears, and in spite of her effort to keep them back, two great drops rolled down and fell on the dark slab; John saw them, and turned away instantly.

"Why, Sara!" I said, moved almost to tears myself by sudden sympathy.

"Don't say any thing, please," answered Sara. "There, it is all over."

We walked away, and found John standing before a little wooden cross that had once marked a grave; there was no trace of a grave left, only green grass growing over the level ground, while lichen and moss had crept over the rough unpainted wood and effaced the old inscription. A single rose-

bush grew behind, planted probably a little slip when the memory of the lost one was green and fresh with tears; now, a wild neglected bush, it waved its green branches and shed its roses year by year over the little cross that stood, veiled in moss, alone, where now no grave remained, as though it said, "He is not here: he is risen."

"Look," said John. "Does it not tell its story? Why should we be saddened while we have what that cross typifies?"

That evening, happening to take up Sara's Bible, I found pinned in on the blank leaf these old verses:

"There is a calm for those who weep,
A rest for weary pilgrims found;
They softly lie and sweetly sleep
Low in the ground.

"The storm that wracks the wintry sky
No more disturbs their deep repose
Than summer evening's latest sigh
That shuts the rose.

"I long to lay this painful head
And aching heart beneath the soil,
To slumber in that dreamless bed
From all my toil."



THE SUICIDE'S GRAVE.

"Poor child!" I said to myself—"poor child!"

"Who do you think is here, Niece Martha?" said Aunt Diana one morning a week later. "Eugenio; he came last night."

"What, the poet?"

"Yes; he will stay several days, and I can introduce him to all of you," said Aunt Di, graciously.

"I shall be very glad, not only on my own account, but on Sara's also, aunt."

"Oh, Eugenio will not feel any interest in a person like Miss St. John, Niece Martha! He belongs to another literary world entirely."

"I know that; but may not Sara attain to that other world in time? I hope much from her."

"Then you will be disappointed, Niece Martha. I am not literary myself, but I have always noticed that those writers whose friends are always 'hoping much' never amount to much; it is the writer who takes his friends and the world by surprise who has the genius."

There was a substratum of hard common-sense in Aunt Diana, where my romantic boat often got aground. It was aground now.

The next morning Eugenio presented himself without waiting for Aunt Di, and John proposed a walk to the Ponce de Leon Spring in his honor.

"It is almost the only spot you have not visited," he said to us, "and Eugenio must see the sweep of a pine-barren."

"By all means," replied the poet, "the stretching glades and far savannas, gemmed with the Southern wild flowers."

"You have missed the most beautiful flower of all," said Iris, "'the wild sweet princess of far Florida, the yellow jasmine.'"

The Captain was with us, likewise Mokes; but Aunt Diana had sliced in another young lady to keep the balance even; and away we went through the town, across the Maria Sanchez Creek, under the tree arches, and out on to the broad causeway beyond.

"What! walk to Ponce de Leon Spring!" exclaimed the languid St. Augustine ladies as we passed.

"They evidently look upon Northerners as a species of walking madmen," I said, laughing.

"It is a singular fact," commented Sara, "that country people never walk if they can help it; they go about their little town and that is all. City people, on the contrary, walk their miles daily as a matter of course. You can almost tell whether a young lady is city or country bred from the mere fact of her walking or not walking."

"Climate here has something to do with it," said John, "and also the old Spanish ideas that ladies should wear satin slippers

and take as few steps as possible. The Minorcans keep up some of the old ideas still. Courtship is carried on through a window, the maiden within, a rose in her hair, and the favorite Spanish work in her hand, and the lover outside leaning on the casement. Not until a formal acceptance has been given is he allowed to enter the house and rest himself and his aspirations in a chair."

"We have adopted English ideas of exercise in New York," said Eugenio, "but they have not penetrated far into the interior as yet, and are utterly unknown south of Mason and Dixon's line. St. Augustine, however, is still Spanish, and no one expects the traditional Spanish *señorita*, with her delicate slippers, fan, and mantilla, to start out for a six-mile constitutional—it would not be her style at all. By-the-way, I saw a beautiful Spanish face leaning from a window on St. George Street this morning."

"Yes," said Mokes, consequentially. "There are two on St. George Street, two on Charlotte, and one on St. Hypolita. I have taken pains to trace—er—to trace them out; they like it—er—and I have, I may say, some experience in outlines and that sort of thing—galleries abroad—old masters, etc. Paint a little myself"

"Indeed!" said Eugenio. "Original designs, I suppose?"

Oh no; Mokes left that to the regular profession. They had to do it, poor fellows—wouldn't interfere with them.

"Very generous," said Eugenio.

Yes, Mokes thought it was. But gentlemen of—of fortune, you know, had their duties—as—as such.

"How much I should like to see your pictures, Mr. Mokes!" said the poet, assuming an air of deep interest.

The highly flattered Mokes thought that "perhaps—er," he "might have one or two sent down by express;" he always liked "to oblige his friends."

"Don't chaff him any more," whispered John, with a meaning glance toward Iris.

"What! not that lovely girl!" exclaimed Eugenio, under his breath.

"Two or three millions!" said John.

"Ah!" replied the poet.

On the red bridge Sara paused a moment and stood gazing down the river. "What a misty look there is away down there over the salt marshes!" she said, "the boats tipped up on shore, with their slender masts against the sky. The river is certainly going down to the sea, and yet the sea-breeze comes from behind me."

"The Sebastian is nearer the ocean up here than it is down at its mouth," said John. "Look across: there is only the North Beach between us here and the ocean."

"Between us and Africa, you mean."

"What is it that attracts you toward Africa, Miss St. John?" asked Eugenio.

"Antony," replied Sara, promptly. "Don't you remember those wonderful lines written by an Ohio soldier,

"I am dying, Egypt, dying;
Ebbs the crimson life-tide fast?"

"Dear me, Miss St. John, I hope you are not taking up *Antony and Cleopatra* to the detriment of the time-honored *Romeo and Juliet*! Romeo is the orthodox lover, pray remember."

"But I am heterodox," replied Sara, smiling.

Beyond the river the road led through the deep white sand of Florida. Iris's little boots sank ankle deep.

"Take my arm," said the Captain.

Now taking the arm means more or less, according to the arm and the way it is offered. The Captain was tall, the Captain was strong, and he had a way with him. Iris was small, Iris was graceful, and she had a way with her. To say that from that moment they flirted boundlessly all the afternoon does not express it. I am sorry to

say, also, that John and the poet openly, and Sara and I tacitly, egged them on. The bullion star of Mokes had been in the ascendant long enough, we thought. The Professor had a staff, a trowel, and a large basket for specimens.

He made forays into the thicket, lost himself regularly, and Miss Sharp as regularly went to the rescue and guided him back.

"How many old tracks there are turning off to the right and the left!" I said. "Where do they go?"

"The most delightful roads are those that go nowhere," said Eugenio, "roads that go out and haze around in the woods just for fun. Who wants to be always going somewhere?"

"These roads will answer your purpose, then," said

John. "Most of them go nowhere. They did go out to old military posts once upon a time, in the Seminole war, but the military posts have disappeared, and now they go nowhere. They are pretty tracks, some of them, especially the old Indian entrance to St. Augustine—a trail coming up from the south."

Turning to the right, we passed through a little nook of verdure, leaving the sand behind us. "This," said John, "is a hamak; and if I have a pet grievance, it is the general use of the word 'hummock' in its place. 'Hummock' is an arctic word, meaning to pile up ice; but 'hamak' is pure Carib or Appalachian, and signifies a resting or abiding place, a small Indian farm. There is another kind of soil in Florida which has the singular name of 'slobbered land.' This has a rocky substratum, impervious to water, four feet below the surface, which holds the rain-falls as though it—"

"Devoured its own tears," suggested Eugenio. "But where are your flowers, good people? Is not this the land of flowers?"

"No," said John; "that is another mis-



A PINE-BARREN.

take. The Spaniards happened to land here during the Easter season, which they call Pascua Florida, the flowery Passover, on account of the palms with which their churches are decorated at that time; and so they named the country from the festival, and not from the flowers at all. There is not one word said about flowers in all their voluminous old records—"

"Don't be statistical, I beg," interrupted Eugenio. "And are there no flowers, then?"

"Oh yes," answered Sara, "little wee blossoms in delicate colors starring over the ground, besides violets and gold-cups; these are the yeomanry. The Cherokee roses, the yellow jasmine, and the Spanish-bayonets, with their sceptres of white blossoms, are the nobility."

Presently we came out upon the barren, with its single feathery trees, its broad sky-sweep, its clear-water ponds, an endless stretch of desert which was yet no desert, but green and fair. The saw-palmetto grew in patches, and rustled its stiff leaves as we passed.

"I can't think of any thing but Spanish ladies looking out between the sticks of their fans," remarked Eugenio.

"That's just like it," said Iris, and plucking one of the fan-shaped leaves, she gave the idea a lovely coquettish reality. The Captain murmured something (he had a way of murmuring). What it was we could not hear, but then Iris heard, and blushed very prettily. Mokes took the "other young lady," the sliced one, and walked on loftily. She went. The truth is, they generally go with three millions.

"There is something about the barrens that always gives me the feeling of being far away," said Sara.

"The old attraction," replied Eugenio. "'Over the hills and far away' is the dream of all imaginative souls. Do you remember

"'Afar in the desert I love to ride,
With the silent Bush-boy alone by my side?'"

"'There is a happy land,
Far, far away,'"

I sang.



LOU-EE-ZY AND LOW-II-ZY.

"Yes, that is it," said John, "and even our old friend 'Swanee Ribber' owes his dominion to the fact that he is 'far, far away.'"

A little trail turned off to a low cabin on the bank of a brook; we saw some flowers, and wandered that way for a moment. It was the lonely little home of a freedman, and two children stood in the doorway staring at us with solemn eyes. We bestowed some pennies, which produced a bob of a courtesy; then some jokes, which brought out the ivories.

"What are your names, children?" I asked.

"They's jes Lou-ee-zy and Low-ii-zy," replied a voice from within-doors. "They's twins, and I's took car' ob dem allays."

It was a crippled old auntie who spoke. She told us her story, with long digressions about "ole massa" and "ole miss."

"After all, I suspect you were more comfortable in the old times, auntie," I said.

"What's dat to do wid de acquisition ob freedom?" replied the old woman, proudly. "De great ting is dis yer: Lou-ee-zy is free, and Low-ii-zy is free! Bot' ob dem! Bot' ob dem, ladies!"

"I have never been able to make them confess that they were more comfortable in the old days, no matter how poor and desolate they may be," I said.

"The divine spark in every breast," replied Eugenio. "But where is the spring, Hoffman? I like your barren; it smacks of the outlaw and bold buccaneer, after the trim wheat fields of the North, and there is

a grand sweep of sky overhead. Nevertheless, I own to being thirsty."

"It is not ordinary thirst," replied John; "it is the old yearning which Ponce de Leon always felt when he had come as far as this."

"He came this way, then, did he?"

"Invariably."

"If I had been here at the time I should have said, 'Ponce' (of course we should have been intimate enough to call each other by our first names)—'Ponce, my good friend, have your spring a little nearer while you are magically about it!'" And taking off his straw hat the poet wiped his white forehead, and looked at us with a quizzical expression in his brilliant eyes.

"It is warm," confessed Aunt Diana, who, weary and worried, was toiling along almost in silence. Mokes was nearly out of sight with the "other young lady;" Iris and the Captain were absorbed in that murmured conversation so hopeless to outsiders; and Spartan matron though she was, she had not the courage to climb around after the Professor in cloth boots that drew like a magnet the vicious cacti of the thicket. Miss Sharp had leather boots, and climbed valiantly.

At last we came to the place, and filed in through a broken-down fence. We found a deserted house, an overgrown field, a gully, a pool, and an old curb of coquina surrounding the magic spring.

"I wonder if any one was ever massacred here?" observed Sara, looking around.

"The Fountain of Youth," declaimed John, laddling out the water. "Who will drink? Centuries ago the Indians of Cuba came to these shores to seek the waters of immortality, and as they never returned, they are supposed to be still here somewhere enjoying a continued chernubic existence. Father Martyn himself affirms in his letter to the Pope that there is a spring here the water thereof being drunk straightway maketh the old young again. Ladies and gentlemen, the original and only Ponce de Leon Spring! Who will drink?"

We all drank; and then there was a great silence.

"Well," said the poet, deliberately, looking around from his seat on the curb, "take it altogether, that shanty, those bushes, the pig-sty, the hopeless sandy field, the oozing pool, and this horrible tepid water, drawn from, to say the least, a dubious source—a very dubious source—it is, all in all, about the ugliest place I ever saw!"

There was a general shout.

"We have suspected it in our hearts all winter," said the "other young lady;" "but not one of us dared put the thought into words, as it was our only walk."

The poet staid with us a day or two longer, and charmed us all with his delightful, winsome humor.

"Do you know, I really love that man," I announced.

"So do I," said Iris.

"That is nothing," said John; "he is 'the poet whom poets love,' you know."

"But we are not poets, Mr. Hoffman."

"We are only plebes, and plebes may very well love what poets love, I think."

"But it does not always follow," I said.

"By no means. In this case, however, it is true. All love Eugenio, both poets and plebes."

"He is the Mendelssohn of poets," I said; "and, besides that, he is the only person I ever met who reminded me of my idea of Mendelssohn personally—an idea gathered from those charming 'letters' and the *Achester* book."

The next evening Eugenio and Sara went off for a stroll on the sea-wall; two hours later Sara came back to our room, laid a blank book on the table, and threw herself into a chair.

"Tired?" I asked.

"Yes."

"It is a lovely evening."

"Yes."

"Did you have a pleasant time?"

"Yes."

I knew that blank book well; it contained all Sara's printed stories and verses; my eyes glanced toward it.

"Yes," said Sara; "there it is! I gave it to him yesterday. I knew he would read it through, and I knew also that I could read his real opinion in those honest eyes of his."

"Well?"

"There isn't a thing in it worth the paper it is written on."

"Oh, Sara!"

"And what is more, I have known it myself all along."

"Is it possible he said so?"

"He? Never. He said every thing that was generous and kind and cordial and appreciative; and he gave me solid assistance, too, in the way of advice, and suggestive hints worth their weight in gold to an isolated beginner like myself. But—"

"But?"

"Yes, 'but.' Through it all, Martha, I could see the truth written in the sky over that old look-out tower; we were on the glacis under that tower all the time, and I never took my eyes off from it. That tower is my fate, I feel sure."

"What do you mean? Your fate?"

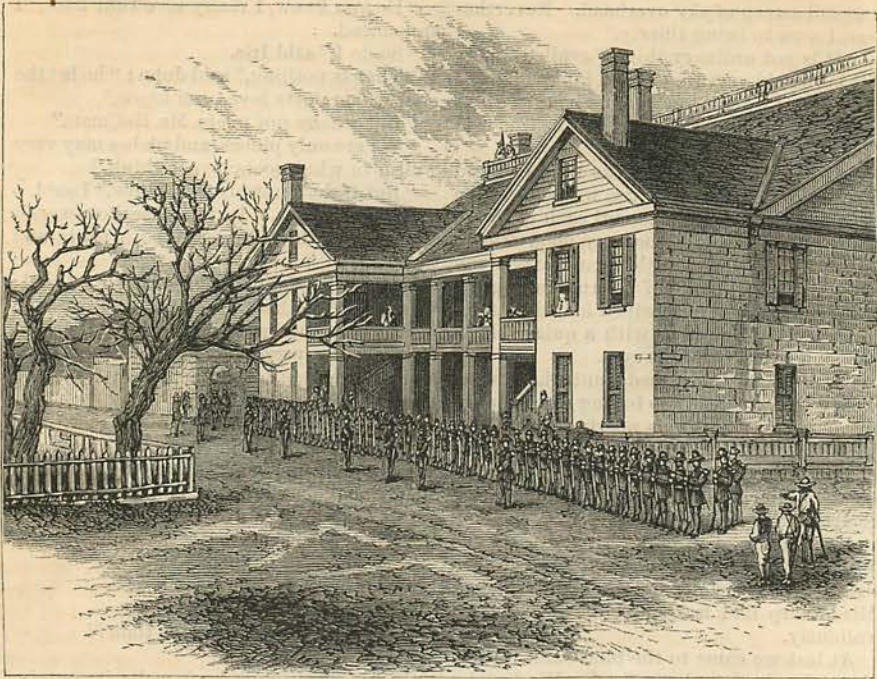
"I don't know exactly myself. But, nevertheless, in some way or other that look-out tower is connected with my fate—the fate of poor Sara St. John."

In John Hoffman's room at the same time another conversation was going on.

JOHN. "Has she genius, do you think?"

EUGENIO. "Not an iota."

JOHN. "What do you mean, you iron-



UNITED STATES BARRACKS—A DRESS PARADE.

hearted despot? Has the girl no poetry in her?"

EUGENIO. "Plenty; but not of the kind that can express itself in writing. Sara St. John has poetry, but she ought not to try to write it; she is one of the kind to—"

JOHN. "Well, what?"

EUGENIO. "Live it."

Eugenio went, leaving real regret behind. The crowd of tourists began to diminish, the season was approaching its end, and Aunt Diana gathered her strength for a final contest.

"We are not out of the wilderness yet, it seems," said Sara to me, in her mocking voice. "Mokes, the Captain, the Professor, and the Knickerbocker, and nothing settled! How is this, my countrymen?"

Our last week came, and the Captain and Iris continued their murmured conversations. In vain Aunt Diana, with the vigilance of a Seminole, contested every inch of the ground; the Captain outgeneraled her, and Iris, with her innocent little ways, aided and abetted him. Aunt Di never made open warfare; she believed in strategy; through the whole she never once said, "Iris, you must not," or wavered for one moment in her charming manner toward the Captain. But the pits she dug for that young man, the barriers she erected, the obstructions she cast in his way, would have astonished even Osceola himself. And all the time she had Mokes to amuse, Mokes

the surly, Mokes the wearing, Mokes who was even beginning to talk openly of going!—yes, absolutely going! One day it came to pass that we all went up to the barracks, to attend a dress parade. The sun was setting, the evening gun sounded across the inlet, the flash of the light-house came back as if in answer, the flag was slowly lowered, and the soldiers paraded in martial array—artillery, "the poetry of the army," as the romantic young ladies say—"the red-legged branch of the service," as the soldiers call it.

"What a splendid-looking set of officers!" exclaimed Iris, as the tall figures in full uniform stood motionless in the sunset glow. "But who is that other young officer?"

"The lieutenant," said the "other young lady."

"He is very handsome," said Iris, slowly.

"Yes, very. But he is a provoking fellow. Nobody can do any thing with him."

"Can't they?" said Iris, warming to the encounter. (Iris rather liked a difficult subject.) Then, "Oh, I forgot we were going so soon," she added, with a little sigh. "But I wonder why the Captain never brought him to call upon us?"

"Simply because he won't be brought," replied the "other young lady."

"I will tell you what he is like, Iris," I said, for I had noticed the young soldier often. "He is like the old Indian description of the St. Johns River: 'It hath its

own way, is alone, and contrary to every other."

Review over, we went on to the post cemetery, beyond the barracks, the Captain accompanying us, glittering in gold-lace.

"Were there any encounters in or near St. Augustine during the late war?" began Aunt Di, in a determined voice. Time was short now, and she had decided to cut the Gordian knot of Mokes; in the mean time the Captain *should not* get to Iris unless it was over her dead body.

"No," replied Antinous. "The nearest approach to it was an alarm, the gunners under arms, and the woods shelled all night, the scouts in the morning bringing in the mangled remains of the enemy—two Florida cows."

"A charmingly retired life you must lead here," pursued Aunt Di; "the news from the outside world does not rush in to disturb your peaceful calm."

No, the Captain said, it did not rush much. Four weeks after President Fillmore's death they had received their orders to lower the flag and fire funeral guns all day, which they did, to the edification of the Minorcans, the Matanzas River, and the Florida beach generally.

The military cemetery was a shady, grassy place, well tended, peaceful, and even pleasant. A handsome monument to all the soldiers and officers who fell during the long, hard, harassing Seminole war stood on one side, and near it were three low massive pyramids covering the remains of Major Dade and one hundred and seven soldiers, massacred by Osceola's band.

"There is a dramatic occurrence connected with this story," said Miss Sharp, sentimentally. "It seems that this gallant Major Dade and the other young officers attended a ball here in St. Augustine the evening before the battle, dancing nearly all night, and then riding away at dawn, with

gay adieux and promises to return soon. That very morning, before the sun was high in heaven, they were all dead men! So like the 'Battle of Waterloo,' you remember:

'There was a sound of revelry by night,
And Belgium's capital had gathered then
Her beauty and her chivalry.'

I do not think this incident is generally known, however."

"No, I don't think it is," replied John; "for as Major Dade and his command were coming up from Key West and Tampa Bay, on the west side of the State, and had just reached the Withlacoochee River when they met their fate, they must have traveled several hundred miles that night, besides swimming the St. Johns twice, to attend the ball and return in time for the battle. However," he added, seeing the discomfiture of the governess, "I have no doubt they would have been very glad to have attended it had it been possible, and we will let it go as one of those things that 'might have been,' as I said the other day to a young lady who, having been quite romantic over the 'Bravo's Lane,' was disgusted to find that it had nothing at all to do with handsome operatic scoundrels in slouch hats and feathers, but was so called after a worthy family here named Bravo."

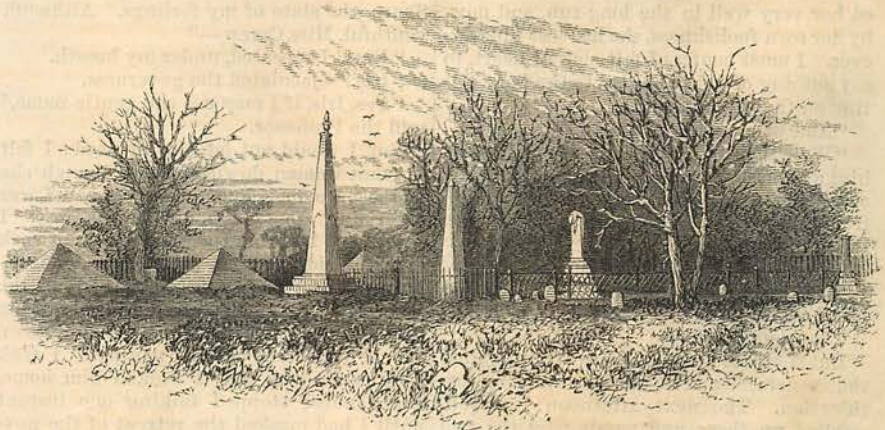
The Professor now began to rehearse the Dade story; indeed, he gave us an abstract of the whole Florida war. Aunt Diana professed herself much interested, and leaned on the Captain's arm all the time. Miss Sharp took notes.

"Come," whispered Sara, "let us go back and sit on the sea-wall."

"Why?" I said, for I rather liked watching the Captain's impalement.

"Martha Miles," demanded Sara, "do you think—do you really think that I am going either to stand or stand through another massacre?"

The next morning I was summoned to



MILITARY CEMETERY.

Aunt Di by a hasty three-cornered note, and found her in a darkened room, with a handkerchief bound around her head.

"A headache, Aunt Di?"

"Yes, Niece Martha, and worse—a headache also," replied a muffled voice.

"What is the trouble?"

"Adrian Mokes has gone!"

"Gone?"

"Yes, this morning."

"Off on that hunting expedition?"

"No," replied Aunt Diana, sadly; "he has gone, never to return."

I took a seat by the bedside, for I knew Aunt Di had a story to tell. Now and then she did let out her troubles to me, and then seemed to feel the better for it, and ready to go on for another six months. I was a sort of safety-valve for the high pressure of her many plans.

"You know all I have done for Iris," she began, "the care I have bestowed upon her. Unhappy child! she has thrown aside a princely fortune with that frivolity which she inherits from her father's family. My dear sister Clementina had no such traits."

"Did she really refuse him, then?"

"No; even that comfort was denied to me," said poor Aunt Di; "it would have been something, at any rate. But no; her conduct has been such that he simply announced to me that he had decided to take a leisurely trip around the world, and afterward he might spend a year or so in England, where the society was suited to his tastes—no shop-keepers, and that sort of thing."

"Happy England!" I said; but Aunt Di went on with her lamentations. "He certainly admired Iris, and Iris has certainly encouraged him for months. It is all very well to talk about romance, but Iris is an extravagant little thing, and would be wretched as a poor man's wife; even *you* can not deny that, Niece Martha" (I could not, and did not). "Mokes would have suited her very well in the long-run, and now, by her own foolishness, she has lost him forever. I must confess I felt sick at heart, to say nothing of being chilled to the bone sitting on that damp stone."

"And where were you then?"

"Well, to tell the truth, I thought I would hint a little something to Mokes—delicately, of course—and, as we were walking to and fro on the sea-wall, I proposed strolling into the demi-lune."

"That demi-lune!" I exclaimed.

"Yes; it is quite retired, you know, and I had never seen it."

That demi-lune!

But that was not all I had to lay up against that venerable and mysterious outlying fortification. The next afternoon I myself strolled up there, and passing by the two dragons, their two houses, and the supply

of mutton hanging up below, I climbed the old stairway, and turning the angle, sat down on the grass to rest a while. I had a new novel, and leaning back comfortably against the parapet, I began to read; but the warm sunshine lulled me before I knew it into one of those soothing after-dinner naps so dear to forty years. The sound of voices woke me. "No; Miss Miles is superficial, not to say flippant."

("Decidedly, listeners never hear any good of themselves," I thought; "but I can't show myself now, of course, without making matters worse. If they should come up farther, I can be sound asleep.") For the voice came from the little hidden stairway, and belonged unmistakably to our solemn Professor.)

"And Miss St. John is decidedly overbearing," continued our learned friend.

"It is only too true," sighed the voice of the governess. "But those are the faults of the feminine mind when undisciplined by regular mental training."

"I have noticed, however, one mind" (and here the Professor's voice took a tender tone)—"one mind, Miss Sharp, whose workings seem to follow my own, one mind in which I can see an interest, veiled, of course, as is seemly, but still plainly discernible to the penetrative eye—an interest in my Great Work, now in process of compilation. My emotional nature has, I fear, been somewhat neglected in the cultivation of my intellectual faculties, but there is still time for its development, I think."

Miss Sharp, in a gentle, assenting murmur, thought there was.

("So it has come about at last," I said to myself; "and very well suited they are, too.")

"This mind might be of assistance to me in many ways," continued the Professor. "I could mould it to my own. And I can not let the present happy occasion pass without disclosing to you, my dear Miss Sharp, the state of my feelings. Although youthful, Miss Carew—"

"Iris!" I repeated, under my breath.

"Iris!" ejaculated the governess.

"Yes, Iris, if I may use the gentle name," said the Professor.

But I would not let him proceed; I felt for that woman down stairs as though she had been a man and a brother, and I was determined to save her from the rest. I threw my book and a great piece of rock over the side of that perfidious old demi-lune, the startled Professor rushed up the stairs, and there I was, innocently waking up, and regretting that the wind had blown the new volume off the parapet. I took that man's arm, and I walked him home, and I never stopped talking one instant until I had masked the retreat of the governess up stairs to her own room; and then

I went back to Hospital Street and told Sara.

"No doubt she is sitting there now, surrounded by her relics, the vicious-looking roots, the shells, the lumps of coquina, the spiny things, and the bone," said Sara, laughing.

"Don't laugh, Sara; it is too real. She liked that man."

"So much the worse for her, then," replied my companion. "She had better tear out her heart and throw it to the dogs at once."

When Sara answered me after that fashion, I generally let her alone.

"Aunt Diana is really going to-morrow," I said, the next evening, as John Hoffman and I stood leaning on the Plaza railing, waiting for the mail.

"Yes; shall you go also?"

"No; we have decided to remain another week, Sara and I. But I am really surprised; I thought Iris would carry the day; she was determined to stay longer."

"I think I can account for that," said John, smiling. "We were walking together last evening in the moonlight on the seawall, and, happening to stroll into the demi-lune—"

"Oh, that demi-lune!"

"Yes, that demi-lune. There we found the Captain."

"The Captain?"

"The Captain. But not alone. Miss Arabella—Miss Van Amsterdam was with him!"

Now Miss Van Amsterdam was a beauty and an heiress.

The next morning we bade farewell to the departing half of our party. "Do you think that impervious old Professor will try it again between here and New York?" I said, as we strolled back from the little *dépôt*.

"I doubt it," answered Sara. "He is the kind that goes in ankle deep, and then hesitates over the final plunge. But probably all the rest of his life he will cherish the delusion that he had only to speak, and he will intimate as much to his cronies over a temperate and confidential glass of whisky on winter nights."

"After all, Miss Sharp is worth twenty Professors. How silently and even smilingly she bore her fate! Iris, now, pouted openly over the Captain's desertion."

"She will forget all about it before she is half way to Tocol, and there will be a new train of admirers behind her before the steamer enters the Savannah harbor," said Sara, smiling.

"Do you know who has been the real heroine of the romance of these last weeks, Sara?"

"Who?"

"The demi-lune!"

Our one remaining week rolled its hours swiftly along. Every morning the Sabre-

boy began the day by ringing his great bell, beginning on the ground-floor, then up the stairs, a salvo in our little entry-way, a flurry around the corner, and a long excursion down the gallery, with a salute to all outdoors on the rear balcony; then counter-march, ringing all the time, back to the second-story stairs, up the stairway, and a tremendous clanging at the three blue doors; then, face about, and over the whole route again down to the ground-floor, where a final flourish in jig time always brought the sleepy idea that he was dancing a double-shuffle of triumph in conclusion.

"I don't know which is the worst," said Sara, "the dogs that bark all night, the roosters that crow all day, the Sabre and his morning clanging, or the cathedral chimes, those venerable and much-written-about relics that ring in the hours like a fire-alarm of cow-bells gone mad."

"Do you know that to-morrow will be Easter?" I said, when we had but two days left. "We must ask Mr. Hoffman to take us out this evening to hear the Minorcans sing; to-morrow we will go to the Episcopal church, and then, on Monday, ho! for the bonny North."

"Very bonny!" said Sara.

"Do you agree to the programme, made-moiselle?"

"All save the church-going."

"We are not Episcopalians, I know, but on Easter-Sunday—"

"Oh, it isn't that, Martha. I don't want to go to church at all. I am not in the mood."

"But, Sara, my dear—"

"Yes, and Sara, my dear! Religion is for two classes—the happy and the resigned. I belong to neither. I am lost out of the first, and I haven't yet found the second. I took this journey to please you, Martha. I don't blame you; it was all chance; but— You think you know all my life. You know nothing about it. Martha, I was once engaged to John Hoffman."

"What! engaged?"

"Yes, for six short months. But it was ten years ago, and I was only eighteen. He had forgotten both it and me, as I could see by his face when you first introduced him on that New York steamer. I am only one of a succession, I presume," continued Sara, in a bitter tone. (I thought it very likely, but did not say so.) "I was at home up in the mountains then, and he came that way on a hunting expedition. It was the old, old story, and I was so happy! I knew little and cared less about his social position. I was educated, therefore I was his peer. But he was stern, and I was proud; he was unyielding, and I rebellious; he wished to rule, and I would obey no one, although I would have given him freely the absolute devotion of every breath had he not demand-



EASTER-EVEN SERENADE.

"What will it be like, Mr. Hoffman?" I said, as soon as we reached the street, in order to make talk.

"Principally singing," he replied, "according to an old custom of the Minorcans. On Easter - even the young men assemble with musical instruments, and visit the houses of all their friends. Before they begin singing they tap on the shutter, and if they are welcome there is an answering tap within. Then follows the long hymn they call *Fromajardis*, always the same seven verses, with a chorus after each verse, all in the Minorcan dialect. Next comes a recitative soliciting the customary gifts, a bag is held under the window, and the people of the house open the shutter, and drop into it eggs, cheese, cakes, and other

ed it. We parted, still up in the mountains, where he had lingered for my sake, and I had never seen him since that day until, when fairly out at sea, he appeared on the deck of that steamer. He took the initiative immediately with his calm politeness, and I was not to be outdone. I flatter myself that not one of you suspected that we had ever met before. And now, Martha, not one word, please. There is nothing to say. We shall soon be parted again, very likely for another ten years, as he does not return North with us. Do not fancy that I am unhappy about it. I am like Esther in *Bleak House*, when, after that unwished-for and unpleasant offer of marriage, she nevertheless found herself weeping as she had not done since the days when she buried the dear old doll down in the garden. It is only that the old chords are stirred, Martha dear; nothing more."

When, late in the evening, John sent up word that he was waiting for us, I hesitated; but Sara rose and said, "Come," in her calm, every-day manner, and I went.

dainties, while the young men acknowledge their bounty with a song, and then depart."

We followed the singers for an hour, listening to the ancient song, which sounded sweetly through the narrow streets in the midnight stillness. My two companions talked on as usual, but I could not. I was haunted by that picture of ten years ago.

Easter-Sunday morning I went to church alone; Sara would not go with me. John Hoffman sat near me. I mentioned it when I returned home.

"I hate such religion as his," said Sara. She was lying on the couch, with her defiant eyes fixed on the blank wall opposite.

"Dear child," I said, "do not speak in that tone. It is ten years since you knew him, and indeed I do think he is quite earnest and sincere. No doubt he has changed—"

"He has not changed," interrupted Sara; "he is the same cold, hard, proud—"

Her voice ceased, and looking up, I saw that she had turned her face to the wall, and was silently weeping.

In the evening I begged her to come with

me to the Sunday-school festival. "It will do you good to see the children, and hear them sing," I said.

She went passively; she had regained her composure, and moved about, pale and calm.

The church stood on the Plaza; it was small, but beautiful and complete, with chancel and memorial windows of stained glass. Flowers adorned it, intertwined with the soft cloudy gray moss, a profusion of blossoms which could not be equaled in any Northern church, because of its very carelessness. Not the least impressive incident, at least to Northern eyes, was the fact that the ranks of the children singing, "Onward, Christian soldiers," were headed by an officer in the United States uniform, the colonel commanding the post, who was also the superintendent of the Sunday-school. And when, in reading his report, the superintendent bowed his head in acknowledgment of the rector's cordial aid and sympathy, those who knew that the rector had been himself a soldier all through those four long years, and fighting, too, on the other side, felt their hearts stirred within them to see the two now meeting as Christian soldiers, bound together in love for Christ's kingdom, while around them, bearing flower-crowned banners, stood children both from the North and from the South, to whom the late war was as much a thing of the dead past as the Revolution of seventy-six.

As we came out of the church the rising

moon was shining over Anastasia Island, lighting up the inlet with a golden path.

"Let us go up once more to the old fort," whispered Sara, keeping me in the deep shadow of the trees as John Hoffman passed by, evidently seeking us.

"Alone?"

"Yes; there are two of us, and it will be quite safe, for the whole town is abroad in the moonlight. Do content me, Martha. I want to stand once more on that far point of the glacis under my look-out tower. That tower is my fate, you know. Come; it will be the last time."

We walked up the sea-wall and out on to the glacis, with the light-house flashing and fading opposite; the look-out tower rose high and dark against the sky. Feeling wearied, I sat down and leaned my head against one of the old cannon; but Sara went out to the far point, and gazed up at the look-out.

"My fate!" she murmured; "my fate!"

A quick step sounded on the stone; from the other side, leaping over the wall, came John Hoffman; he did not see me as I sat in the shadow, but went out on to the point where the solitary figure stood looking up at the ruined tower.

"Sara," he said, taking her hand, "shall we go back to ten years ago?"

And Fate, in the person of the old watch-tower, let a star shine out through her ruined windows as a token that all was well.



THE LOOK-OUT TOWER.