

much as a Pensacola gopher with a preposterously exaggerated back—had started from Pilatka some hours before daylight, having taken on her passengers the night previous ; and by seven o'clock of such a May morning as no words could describe, unless words were themselves May mornings, we had made the twenty-five miles up the St. John's to where the Ocklawaha flows into that stream nearly opposite Welaka.

Just before entering the mouth of the river our little gopher-boat scrambled alongside a long raft of pine logs which had been brought in separate sections down the Ocklawaha, and took off the lumbermen, to carry them back up the stream for another descent, while this raft was being towed by a tug to Jacksonville.

That man who is now stepping from the wet logs to the bow-guards of the Marion, how can he ever cut down a tree ? He is a slim, melancholy native, and there is not bone enough in his whole body to make the left leg of a good English coal-heaver : moreover, he does not seem to have the least suspicion that a man needs grooming. He is dishevelled and wry-trussed to the last degree ; his poor weasel-jaws nearly touch their inner sides as they suck at the acrid ashes in his dreadful pipe ; and there is no single filament of either his hair or his beard that does not look sourly and at wild angles upon its neighbour filament. His eyes are viscidly unquiet ; his nose is merely dreariness come to a point ; the corners of his mouth are pendulous with that sort of suffering which involves no particular heroism, such as gnats, or waiting for the corn-bread to get done, or being out of tobacco ; and his— But, poor devil ! I withdraw all that has been said : he has a right to look disheveled and sorrowful ; for listen : “ Well, *sir*,” he says, with a dilute smile as he wearily leans his arm against the low deck and settles himself so, though there are a dozen vacant chairs in reach, “ ef we didn' have ther sentermentalest rain right thar on them logs last night, I'll be dadbusted !” He had been in it all night.

I fell to speculating on his word *sentermental*, wondering by what vague associations with the idea of “centre”—*e. g.*, a centre-shot, perhaps, as a shot which beats all other shots—he had arrived at such a form of expletive, or, rather, intensive.

But not long, for presently we rounded the raft, abandoned the broad and garish highway of the St. John's, and turned off to the right into the narrow lane of the Ocklawaha, the sweetest water-lane in the world—a lane which runs for a hundred miles of pure delight betwixt hedge-rows of oaks and cypresses and palms and magnolias and mosses and manifold vine-growths ; a lane clean to travel along, for there is never a speck of dust in it, save the blue dust and gold dust which the wind blows out of the flags and the lilies ; a lane which is as if a typical woods-ramble had taken shape, and as if God had turned into water and