

HOME & SCHOOL.

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Winter in the South.

BY THE EDITOR.

Our bracing winter weather in Canada, while it gives tone to the nerves and vigour to the frame of those who are well, is often very trying to those who are in delicate health. Such are often compelled to seek the more genial atmosphere of a Southern clime. Indeed, many owe their prolonged life and restored health to their winter migration, like the swallows, to the South.

The present writer derived much benefit from a visit to Florida last winter, while recovering from a severe attack of typhoid fever.

It was a very striking change from the cold and blustering March morning, on which I left Toronto, to the summer-like weather in which, three days later, I was able to write by an open window, and was glad to seek the shade when out of doors. As I rode over the Credit Valley, and Canada Southern Railway through Western Ontario, the fields were covered with snow. As I passed through Michigan and Ohio the snow gradually disappeared. At Cincinnati I took the comfortable buffet sleeping car of the Louisville and Nashville road, and in twenty-six hours passed from the domain of winter to that of summer. To an invalid just recovering from a serious illness it was a most delightful experience.

Pensacola, on the Gulf of Mexico, is the first Florida port at which we stop. It has a noble harbour, and sometimes floats more square-rigged shipping than any port in the United States. It is a favourite sail down the harbour to the historic Fort Pickens, Fort McRae, and the U. S. Navy-yard. The principal exports are timber and naval stores. All through Alabama and Northern Florida are vast "turpentine orchards" of the long needled pitch pine. The trees are scarfed with chevron-shaped gashes through which exudes the resinous sap. This is collected and in rude forest stills is manufactured into turpentine, tar, and resin. A very picturesque and rather uncanny sight it is to see the night fires of these stills and the gnome-like figures of the blacks working amid the flames.

There are few more striking evidences of the growth of the Chautauqua movement than the existence of a successful Chautauqua Assembly at De Funiak Springs in the heart of Florida. It was a genuine surprise to find such a

well-equipped institution in what was till recently a primeval wilderness. The lake, which is situated in the centre of the grounds, is one of the most remarkable bodies of water that I know. It is a perfect circle with uniformly sloping shores. It has no inlet or outlet, and its waters, sixty

the lovely lake of which we have spoken. At night, when illuminated with a score of blazing camp fires, it looks like fairy-land. The programme covers over a month, and embraces lectures, concerts, readings, stereopticon entertainments, illustrations in costume of oriental life, etc., and compares not

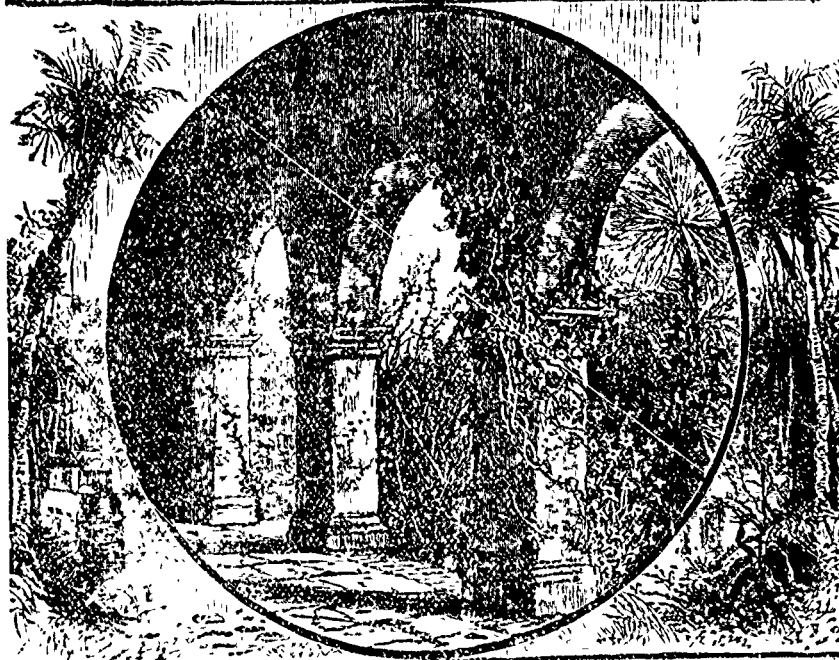
present writer had the honour to take part in the programme. The great bulk of the visitors were from the North, and a great attraction it is to exchange our wintry winds for out-of-door amusements and pleasant company in the sunny South.

The pleasant cities of Tallahassee and Jacksonville are reached by the Florida Key Line Railway. Jacksonville is the great rendezvous of tourists and health-seekers in the South. It is the largest city in the State, its resident population being about 16,000, but probably 100,000 tourists pass through it during the winter months. It is always a surprise to the Northern visitor. On one side of the car is the St. John river, with its palmetto-fringed shore, and on the other side an almost metropolitan city greets his eyes. Fine buildings, crowded streets, and the rush and bustle of a Northern city are something unexpected in a region long considered almost a wilderness.

About thirty-three miles north of Jacksonville is the interesting old sea-port of Fernandina. It was founded by the Spaniards in 1632, and has the finest harbour on the coast south of Chesapeake Bay. The ocean beach affords a remarkably hard smooth drive of nearly twenty miles. From Fernandina the Florida Transit Railway extends directly across the State to Cedar Keys, on the Gulf Coast, through some of the most picturesque scenery of the peninsula, and another division penetrates the rich orange belt of the southern part of the State.

This is one of the greatest lines in the South, controlling about 500 miles in the State and a million acres of its best land. It traverses in its Northern section the oldest and best settled parts of the State. Upon it are situated Tallahassee, the capital, and Jacksonville and Fernandina, its largest towns. Almost every place of importance, Cedar Keys, Leesburg, Tampa, etc., is reached by its Southern extensions, which penetrate the best orange-growing region.

Orange growing is one of the great industries of the State. One scarcely knows the taste of an orange till he has eaten the rich, pulpy Florida fruit, fresh from the tree. At Fort Harlee, on the Key Line Railway, stands the celebrated "oldest orange tree in Florida." This noble tree measures nine feet in circumference about the trunk, is thirty-seven feet high, and has borne 10,000 oranges in a single year. Its age is unknown, but its existence as



HARBOUR, SPANISH HOUSE, AND OLD GATE, ST. AUGUSTINE, FLA.

feet deep at the centre, are crystal clear. It is surrounded by forests of pitch pine, whose resinous odours are said to be exceedingly beneficial to weak lungs. The salt sea breezes, tempered by blowing through twenty miles of this pine forest, have a remarkable tonic effect. The grounds are magnificent, 260 acres surrounding

unfavourably with that of the mother Chautauqua of the North. Among the host of speakers and preachers were Governor Perry, General C. B. Fisk, Col. Cowden, President Hopkins, Col. Bain, Prof. Sherwin, Dr. Deems, Bishop Walden, Mrs. Alden—"Pansy"—and many others of less or greater reputation. In such good company the