

large. One was pointed out to us as comprising one hundred acres, and containing ten thousand orange trees, the fruit from which in one season sold for twelve thousand dollars. There were no oranges on the trees that we could discover as we passed; the harvest season was some months ago, and these golden apples had doubtless been long since converted into golden coin. The houses that we could see among the orange groves seemed small as compared with those on the sugar plantations, and the negro cabins were wanting.

This cultivated belt extends for about sixty miles below New Orleans, running back on both sides of the river to a depth of about half a mile. Beyond and below this what land there is cannot be cultivated, it is mere swamp and sea marsh, and floating prairie, whose hard bottom has not yet been discovered. Within this arable strip on each side of the river there is grown a considerable quantity of figs, and small quantities of lemons, citrons, bananas, and occasionally the pomegranate and persimmon.

Late in the afternoon we passed out of the river and turned our course nearly due east across the gulf. Night comes suddenly in this southern latitude. We were scarce out of sight of land when the darkness shut us in. The next day was beautifully bright, the sky without a cloud, a strong breeze just rippled the water, which broke in a white foam from the steamer's bow as it ploughed its eastward track. At noon our captain took his observations and reported our position to be in latitude  $28^{\circ} 59'$  north, longitude  $85^{\circ} 39'$  west from Greenwich, the thermometer indicating  $70^{\circ}$  Fahrenheit. When night came on, and the "sentinel stars set their watch in the sky," we looked for our familiar northern constellations. They were bright as ever, but strangely low down towards the horizon, thus intimating to us that we were far from home. And

now the water broke from our steamer's bow in waves that sparkled with phosphorescent light. It was a novel sight to a landsman. This morning the day broke bright and clear, and we threaded our way among the rocky islands as soon as there was light enough to find the channel, and tied up to the pier at Cedar Key. It was an unusual thing, so said our captain, for him to reach Cedar Key in time to connect with the morning train: but we were fortunate.

The village of Cedar Key seems to be a very small, quiet, dreary sort of place, whose most conspicuous objects are two hotels, on one of which we could read in large letters the words "The Suwanee." At once there came floating through the memory the long forgotten

'Way down upon de Swanee ribber,  
Far, far away;

Dere's where my heart is turning ebber,

Dere's where de old folks stay.

All up and down de whole creation,

Sadly I roam,

Still longing for de old plantation,

And for de old folks at home.

All de world am sad and dreary,

Ebery where I roam;

Oh, darkeys, how my heart grows weary,

Far from de old folks at home.

We had little opportunity to examine this little place, built upon an island, the gulf terminus of the Florida Transit Railway, for our train was soon at the wharf to receive us, and we were on our way again. We afterwards learned that on one of the pretty islands that stud the entrance to Cedar Key, the Faber Brothers have a saw mill and machine shop which give employment to quite a colony in preparing cedar wood for the well known Faber lead pencils.

The country through which we passed for some time after leaving Cedar Key was mostly covered with tall pines of very slender growth, without branches save just near the top. The variety