Truth's Contributors.

THE SUNNY SOUTH.—No. 4.

BY REV. HUGH JOHNSTON, M. A., B. D.

THE ST. JOHN'S RIVER.

The charming river of mild and sunny Florida is the St. John's. Visit London without seeing Westminister Abbey, Ludgate Hill, York Street, Regent Street or Pall Mall; visit Paris without seeing the Rue de Rivoli or Place de La Concorde, or Rome without seeing the Corso or St. Peters, but do not visit Florida without a sail up the St. John's River. A noble stream it is as it rolls along in the pride and pomp of its affluent waters for a hundred miles, varying in width from one to six miles. A clear, broad, beautiful, magnificent stream is the Lower St. John's River. Then the stream narrows, and for another hundred miles it winds its tortuous way through swamp and lowland, amid tangled jungles of oak and cypress, climbing vines and hanging mistletoe, rank weeds and grasses. Then for two hundred miles from Lake Monroe to the head waters of the river in Lake Washington, where you follow a channel still narrower, more crooked and more shallow, through the savannas and everglades. This is tropical Florida, and this upper section of the river is given over to the aligators and to hunters and fishermen, who find it a paradise, for the waters are teaming with fish and the land alive with game.

Starting from Jacksonville we find the five-mile wide stream bordered with a magnificent, park-like country. The shores present a series of bold bluffs and striking declivities, dotted with handsome villas and hamlets, and fringed with forests of live-oak and groves of orange. How beautiful they are. What a sight! Oranges, oranges, oranges—apples of gold in pictures of emerald. How glorious the rich, ripe oranges, hanging in clusters of five or ten amid the thick, glossy, green foliage of a tree rising 20 or 30 eet high, and whose boughs describe a symmetrical curve. Here land is very dear. Everybody has an orange grove. It is the great industry. Many are doing well, others doing ill. We made the acquaintance on the steamer of two young Englishmen who had come out to the country, started poor, and had done well. They had just made the purchase of another grove. They had been industrious and had succeeded. You cannot purchase a plot of ground from three to ten acres, plant it with young oranges, and then lie down on your back expecting the ripe, luscious, golden fruit to drop into your mouth. It takes five years of culture and care before the trees begin to bear. A good tree, when twenty-five years old, will bear ten thousand oranges as an annual yield, and thus pay a net profit each year of about $200. Our steamer is gliding along past broad, well-cultivated fields and thrifty orange groves, and cozy, quiet retreats along the curving shore. We are constantly landing at white villas with elegant homes and pretty gardens and lawns, while here and there are towns of note. Fifteen miles from Jacksonville, on the western shore, is the town of Mandarin, embowered amid groves of orange and live-oak, bright with gardens, well-kept lawns and tasteful residences. Here is the winter home of Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe. Her beautiful cottage was closed up, as the state of the Professor's health did not allow her to leave her northern home, else we would have paid homage to the great and gifted authoress of "Uncle Tom's Cabin." Some friends of ours called and wandered through the garden, and carried away with the the most lively impressions in the shape of little burrs that pierce through and irritate the skin, like prickling needles. Poor woman, she is pestered to death with visitors. A party of ladies who worshipped her called to see her, but was met at the garden gate by the Professor, who very courteously, but very firmly, refused them admittance. They then begged for the gift of an orange to carry away as a memento of the place. No, but he *would sell them* a dozen! Alas, how their enthusiastic admiration of the great personality effervesced.

Another charming spot is Hibernia, deeply shaded in the foliage of lofty magnolias, live-oaks, and orange groves—cyprus and wild azalia. Farther on is Magnolia, a very popular resort, about 25 miles south of Jacksonville. The hotel is one of the most elegant and spacious to be found anywhere on the continent, and the proprietor is the owner of the San Marco, in St Augustine, and the Maplewood Hotel at Bethlehem, in the White mountains. The grounds are very spacious and large, and elegant cottages furnish comfortable quarters for those who prefer this mode of accommodation. The kind-hearted owner will not allow a gun to be fired on his premises, and, as the result wild ducks come in millions for safety from the hunter's gun, and throng and cover the bay, and are as tame as any farm fowls. In the gardens of Magnolia, in the depth of winter, we tasted ripe strawberries, and saw growing the finest of cabbages, cauliflower, beets, turnips, corn, and other vegetables.

A little farther on is Green Cove Springs one of the most enjoyable places in Florida. How balmy is the air, how sweet the fragrance from the pines, how glorious the paths opening out upon the river, how lovely the woodland scenes, where but oaks and lofty magnolias intertwine their branches like over-arched cathedral aisles, festooned with vines and morning glories, the yellow jasmine and Spanish moss. And how refreshing is the plunge into the swimming baths.

The spring is warm sulphur. The water boils up from a great fissure 20 feet below the surface at the rate of three thousand gallons a minute. It is clear as crystal, the bottom and sides of the rock being tinted with the prismatic hues, and the temperature is about 78°.

The swimming pools are below the basin of the spring—in the open air, within an enclosure, say 100 feet by 40 or 50. The water is four or five feet deep, and the volume flows quietly along. The water is not unpleasant to drink, and has wonderful action upon the liver and kidneys, and for bathing it is most delicious, so warm and soft, and full of cleansing power. A rare luxury it was to return from the post office with a letter from home telling of the severest weather—the mercury below zero—enter the dressing-room, disrobe amid the song of birds, and plunge into the open bath, the air around you soft and balmy, the water soft and warm.

The Clarendon is a fine hotel. But we stopped at "The Pines," a home-like and attractive place, kept by the genial Col. Morgan. The Colonel comes from Kentucky, and, I believe, is closely related to the Morgan of guerilla, fame. His wife is an ardent Southerner, a cultured woman, writes with a vigorous and charming pen, paints beautifully, plays the piano and guitar skilfully, and, along with her other accomplishments is] the most famous breadmaker of the South. Talk of the Vienna baking and Swiss rolls—such biscuit I never tasted, so light and airy they dissolved in the mouth.

We found there our near neighbors and friends Drs. Trout and Tefft, who, during my stay, were joined by Mr. Trout, who was called suddenly South, by his wife's severe illness.

The famous walk along the river is called St. David's Path, or Lover's Walk, pronounced the most lovely woodland scene in the world. Words are utterly inadequate to paint the scene. The quiet live oaks standing like massive columns, and tall magnolias and cypress, their far-reaching branches interlacing overhead like the frilled roof of some Gothic cathedral, the deep shade of their ever-green foliage mingled with the dark glossy vendure of the magnolia, and the delicate feathery cypress leaf, with spots of the sky here and there through the openings, while gently swaying in the breeze depending from the over-arching canopy, the long gray moss drapery, with vines and wild grape—the ground beneath carpeted with the palmetto shrub—the rays of the sun glancing through the tinted verdure, or the silent moon pouring its silver beams upon forest and river. I give it up, and leave my readers to dream of the sylvan scene.

Farther up is Tocoi, east and west. The principal town between Jacksonville and Welaka is Palatka, at the head of a fine bay, surrounded by orange groves and gardens. The town was desolated by fire a year ago, but signs of thrift and enterprise abound, and it is rising from its ashes to its old place of importance.

FROM WINNIPEG TO THE ROCKIES.

No. 2.

BY REV. R. A. STAFFORD, A.B.

Leaving Medicine Hat, beautiful in its situation, and turning the face toward the setting sun, after about 100 miles are passed, the banks of snow begin to appear, outlined against the sky. The morning sun is pouring a full flood of light, which brings out clearly every mountain peak, radiant in its snowy mantle. Those towering heights are yet about 150 miles away, so that now we only see the summits, and shall have nearly a day to study their growing magnitude as we approach. What a strange fascination they exert! In the distance their outlines are all triangular, and the appearance as though some God-like force had heaped countless pyramids in a long line, without much regard to their position or relation to each other. Here and there a dark form lifts itself up above those that seem nearer, and suggests a study—why, higher, it should not appear as white as others not so far removed. But it lies in the shadow of some still more aspiring eminence. Even snow cannot appear bright without the aid of the golden light, and the picture of vast mountains of snow is, therefore, varied by great pyramids here and there of darkening shadow. It will be from eight to ten hours before we can be near enough to discern more distinctly the individual characters of these silent monuments of eternal power; but in the meantime the traveler's eye will not wander much from the one point of attraction. The prairie sea has lost whatever charm its unrelieved monotony once possessed. It will soon begin to rise in gentle undulations, that shall swell up into the foot hills of the Rockies. These hills, anywhere away from the neighboring mountains, would be gigantic indeed. For more than sixty miles we wind around among them. They constantly suggest the thought of a school of hills having been dismissed, and the hundreds of pupils going leaping away, each according to his own particular pleasure. They are robed in a thick covering of grass, any rock only appearing here and there at rare intervals, or breaking out in the high bank of a river. Their sides slope gently up into the well-rounded top. Excursionists speak of having been at the summit of the Rockies. This language is delusive. It suggests a train creeping along a rocky ledge, turning about on its own track, and, at last, after strange experiences, making its goal away up in the high altitudes. But there are no such experiences on the C. P. R. line, at least not on the eastern side. You are on an upward grade for many miles, before actually entering the gap in the mountains, and have risen some hundreds of feet, but have not been conscious of any abrupt or difficult ascent. You enter, at last, the valley of the Kananaskis—a valley yet wild, but full of elements of exquisite attractiveness. Your train moves along over a track as level as almost any on the prairie. Sometimes you are actually for a little time on a slightly down grade, while high on either side rises the stupendous mountain wall; and so you proceed to the divide, about sixty miles from the gap, and are then tunnelled through into the valley of the Kicking Horse River, and are prepared to begin the descent on the western slope. Here the grades are undoubtedly steep, and railway men tell some pretty steep stories of trains running away, when the brakes were held on so firmly as to prevent any revolution of the wheels, which slid along the rails, emitting all the time glowing sparks, like an ascending rocket. Our trip ended at the divide, so that we had no opportunity of observing so wild a race.

No language will be too strong to describe the charm of these great mountains. I have said the foothills are great. Yet when the line of the actual mountains is reached, they rise up as abruptly as the wall of a house, and their rocky sides seem to have no kindred with anything else in the locality; and they continue an unbroken chain, varying in form, some rising high above their neighbors; but on either side a continuous wall of rock all the way to the divide.

Sixty miles before entering the gap

CALGARY

was passed. This is a new city, not yet a full year old; but its 5,000 inhabitants bend themselves to every line of business common in towns of its size, with all the staid gravity of age, and seem to understand each other as well as old neighbors. It lies at the junction of the Bow and Elbow rivers, and, though sixty miles away, is apparently within speaking distance of the great white robed messengers of Almighty power. The rare beauty of the situation is scarcely equalled in all this western world. The sunlight that pours upon Calgary will shine upon a visitor to that point long after his departure.

This is a sort of *entrepot* for the vast ranching business which extends north and south for hundreds of miles. If there were no other causes to promote its prosperity, this alone would make Calgary a distributing centre of great importance, and insure it a steady growth of business and population, as the constantly increasing demand for western beef is sure to cause a constant extension of the ranching enterprise. All the region, for a hundred miles and more east of the mountains, is admirably adapted to the raising of stock. The temperature of the winter is relieved by the chinook winds, so that herds can provide for themselves on the verdant hills, or in the sheltered valleys, from the first day of life until they are ready to be shipped to market. Nature could not have better adapted any