

"Dun'no."

"Would you be kind enough to send a porter up to see?"

"Yes."

I waited about fifteen minutes and then asked, "Did you send the porter up to see?"

"No."

"Would you mind doing so?"

"In a minute."

I waited about another quarter, and then he called a hall boy that happened to be passing.

"Any stove in 108?"

"No, sir."

"Any in 66?"

"Yes'ir."

Turning to me he said—"Stove in 66."

"What do you charge a day for that room?"

"Six dollars."

"Does that include fire?"

"No."

"How much extra for a fire?"

"\$1.50."

"I will take these two rooms."

"All right."

"Will you have a fire made on?"

"Yes."

You may be sure that after that sample I did not trouble Capt. Vail with any more conversation than was absolutely necessary. Next morning, after breakfast, I paid a visit to some of the principal objects of interest in the place. Just in front of the hotel is a fine public square called the "Plaza de la Constitution." In the centre of the Plaza stands a monument erected in honor of the Spanish Liberal Constitution. When the Constitution was abolished these monuments in all dominions of the Crown were ordered to be destroyed, but a compromise was effected on this by the removal of the inscribed tablets. On the cession of Florida to the United States the long concealed tablets were brought from their hiding places and reinserted in the monument. On this plaza were burned effigies of John Hancox and Samuel Adams, early in the American Revolution, while the English held Florida. Within the same enclosure, to the eastward, there is also a monument of very recent construction, much higher, and of a widely different character, as is evidenced by the inscriptions upon it. On the west side, facing the one just described, is—

"OUR DEAD."

*"In memory of our loved ones who gave their lives in defence of the Confederate States."*

Beneath this are twenty-three names, the majority of which must have come from the native population; and on the east side, facing the river, is seen—

*"Erected by the Ladies' Memorial Association of St. Augustine, Fla., A. D. 1872."*

On this side there are a like number of names, the majority of them being evidently of Minorcan or Spanish origin. The north and south sides bear a Latin cross.

On the north side of the "Plaza" stands the old slave market. It is nothing more than a shingled roof, supported by fourteen brick piers. The floor, which is of brick, is raised about two feet above the ground. Fourteen substantial brick piers support a shingled roof, and between each two piers, at a height of about six feet, are heavy beams of oak,

to which the slaves were chained. Who can picture to themselves the scenes of misery that were here enacted, when human beings, with immortal souls, were sold, like the beasts that perish, to the highest bidder?

In the afternoon I paid a visit to old Fort Marion, which was first called San Juan, and then St. Marco. It stands on the sea front, at the upper or northerly side of the town. The material of which it is built is a unique conglomerate of fine shells and sand, known as coquina rock. The rock is found in large quantities on Anastasia Island, at the entrance to the harbour, and is easily cut into blocks of the desired shape and size. The fort was a hundred years in building, and, while owned by the British, was said to be "the prettiest fort in the King's dominion." Its castellated battlements, its formidable bastions with their frowning guns, its lofty and imposing sallyport, surmounted by the Royal Spanish Arms; its portcullis, moat and drawbridge; its circular and ornate sentry boxes, at each principal parapet angle; its commanding look-out tower, and its stained and moss-grown massive walls, impress the external observer as a relic of the distant past; while a ramble through its heavy casemates, its crumbling Romish chapel, with elaborate portico and inner altar and holy water niches; its dark passages, gloomy vaults, and more recently discovered dungeons, bring you to ready credence of its many traditions of inquisitorial tortures, of decaying skeletons, found in the latest opened chambers, chained to the rusty ringbolts, and of alleged subterranean passages to the neighbouring convent.

These stories lose none of their force by being recited in the fitful light of the dim lamp of your military guide, as you follow him into the damp and noisome recesses to the echo of your own foot-fall, or the grating lock and creaking hinge of the slow swinging ancient doors. Many a dark tally-list on the mouldering walls, or a rudely executed sketch shows how the dragging days were noted or employed by weary prisoners of long ago; and the narrow loop-holes are shown, through which the two Seminole chiefs attempted their escape, one making it good, and the other sticking fast in the crevice, until he was rescued, with barely his life remaining."

But it is only fair to give both sides of the story as regards the finding of iron cages enclosing human skeletons. The following is a copy of a letter written to Mr. John L. Edwards of Jacksonville, Fla., in reply to one of his, asking if anything in the way of cages, skeletons, etc., had been found in the fort:—

"SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTE."

"JOHN L. EDWARDS, *Jacksonville, Fla.*

"Sir—In reply to your letter of July 20th, we have to say that no objects, such as those said to have been found in the dungeon of the old fort at St. Augustine, have ever been received by us, although we are aware that the impression is otherwise."

"Truly yours, etc., JOSEPH HENRY,  
"Secretary Smithsonian Institution."

At the time of General Oglethorpe's attack on St. Augustine, the old fort, or castle as it was then called, stood a bombardment of thirty-eight days, from batteries erected on Anastasia Island. But the injury done to the walls was slight; for the spongy walls of coquina received and imbedded the heavy shot, as would the embankment of a modern earthwork. The marks left by the shot can still be plainly seen to-day. But time is slowly but surely doing its