



On the St. John's.

THE St. John's River is the natural avenue of Florida, although since the year 1881 more than a thousand miles of railroad have been built in the State. The mouth of the river for a distance of many miles, or to Jacksonville, forms a beautiful harbour, of which Jacksonville—some fifteen miles distant from the sea—is the port-town. It is a river of swamps, palmettos, and orange groves.

The river is lazy and calm—the air is languid. The fruits of the tropics, and of almost all zones, wave in the air when a breeze breaks the silence and sleep of nature. Great alligators dwell amidst the tall reeds and white lilies, and are sometimes seen. Birds of gorgeous plumage doze among the eternal green of swamps and savannas.

The St. John's is a water-street. There are little towns everywhere, and airy balconies. Magnolia, with its red towers, is a city or town partly sunk in a green sea of magnolias and live-oaks. Three-quarters of a mile or so from Magnolia are the Green Cove Sulphur Springs. Palatka is situated about half-way in the usual steamer-route of the St. John's, and is built on a high bluff known as "Palatka Heights." It is in the orange-grove section, and is the usual starting-point for the Ocklawaha—one of the most beautiful of tropical rivers, that branches from the St. John's some miles above.

From Palatka one may go to Sanford by steamer and thence by rail to Tampa, near which De Soto landed and began his famous march that ended in the discovery of the Mississippi.

The Gulf winds warm the orange orchards
stir,

And from dark trees like walle,
In long festoons and threads of gossamer,
The trailing gray moss falls.

And ships come in from tropic seas, and go,
And sails the Gulf winds fan;
And few do know, or seem to care to know,
That here that march began

That set the crown of empires in the West
And gave the nations faith
That stand like gracious queens above the
rest

Upon the thrones of earth.
De Soto's bones lie deep beneath the wave,
Dust are his cavaliers;
The cypress waters, murmuring o'er his
grave,

The silent pilot hears
In that far river where they laid him down,
Where low the ring doves sigh,
And oft the full moon drops her silver
crown
From Night's meridian skies.

And here, where first his banners caught
the breeze,
The peopled towns arise,
And his great faith that piloted the seas
Beneath uncertain skies.

And dared the wilds by Christian feet
untrod,
Is strong with hope to man;
And here, where touched the New World's
ark of God,
Fair skies the rainbows span.

A Great Reformer.

FATHER CHINIQUY, a converted Catholic priest, is doing much to enlighten Romanists, whenever he can reach them, to the evils of popery,

and the blessedness of the new life in Christ. He is now in Baltimore, stirring up things wonderfully, and *The Baptist* of that city gives the following interesting account of his life:—

"For twenty-five years the Rev. Chas. Chiniquy was the most influential Roman Catholic priest in Canada. He wears on his breast to-day a gold medal given him by the Archbishop of Canada, as the apostle of temperance. He was a leader among them.

"In the year 1851, the Bishop prevailed upon Mr. Chiniquy to go to Illinois, for the purpose of forming a colony of French Canadians, and thus take the west for the Roman Catholic church. Mr. Chiniquy went, planted his cross in the wilderness, wrote letters to Canada, to France, and to Belgium, giving graphic descriptions of the fertility of the soil, and the ease of making a living; and soon he had gathered about him 75,000 French colonists.

"With his own money he built at St. Anne's, Illinois, a Roman Catholic church. Against the protest of the Roman powers, he circulated the Bible in their native tongues. He insisted upon their reading it. The result was he became unsettled in his views; and one Saturday afternoon, while in his room meditating and reading, there came upon him the power of God in the conviction of his sins. He felt that they were rolling on him like a dark mountain, and crushing him. He cried with many tears to God for salvation, and there for the first time he accepted Jesus Christ as the gift of God, and eternal life through him—and, on his knees,

with his hand upon his Bible he swore that he would follow God's book, and not be subject any longer to the Pope; that he would accept Jesus Christ as the complete Saviour, without the addition of penance, purgatory, Mary, or the saints.

"He went to his church next morning to find a crowded congregation. He told them that on yesterday he ceased to be their pastor. They cried out in astonishment, and there was great confusion. 'Shall I tell you why I have decided to leave the Church of Rome?' he asked them. They shouted as one man, 'Yes, tell us!' and then for two hours he preached unto them Jesus. At the close, he asked all who would now take Christ as their complete Saviour, renouncing penance and purgatory and the saints—take Christ also as master, and the Bible as their guide—which meant that they were to come out from the domination of the Pope—to make it known by rising to their feet. One thousand sprang up at once. They wept together, and shouted for joy.

"For three months, meetings were held in that church for preaching and inquiry, and one thousand more converts were added. Within two years the number swelled to 4,000, and of the five hundred families in the congregation, only fifteen remained faithful to the Pope. That church, built and paid for by Mr. Chiniquy, went into the hands of the Presbyterians, and he remained as their pastor for twenty-seven years.

"Thus began the work, which has gone on increasing in volume until more than 35,000 French Canadians have accepted Jesus as the gift of God, and have come out of Rome.

"For the past ten days, 'Father' Chiniquy has been in Baltimore, telling his experience, explaining what the Church of Rome means by liberty of conscience, and showing its attitude toward the Bible; and, as the result of his work, already not less than thirty persons—formerly Roman Catholics—have been converted. Whole families have come out, and, after hours of instruction from him, have determined to unite with Protestant Churches.

"Mr. Chiniquy is, of course, soundly abused by servants of the Pope, and those in sympathy with them; but he is a man of God—humble, cheerful, spiritual, and as bold as a lion. Though eighty years of age, he seems to have lost little of his vigour of mind or body. He is extreme; but it is well to be extremely right. Not a particle of bitterness is in his soul.



FLORIDA SCENE.