SUN HUNTING

KENNETH L. ROBERTS

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1st Edition

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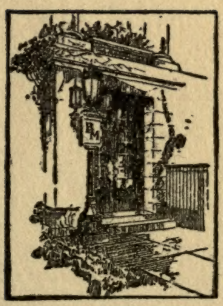

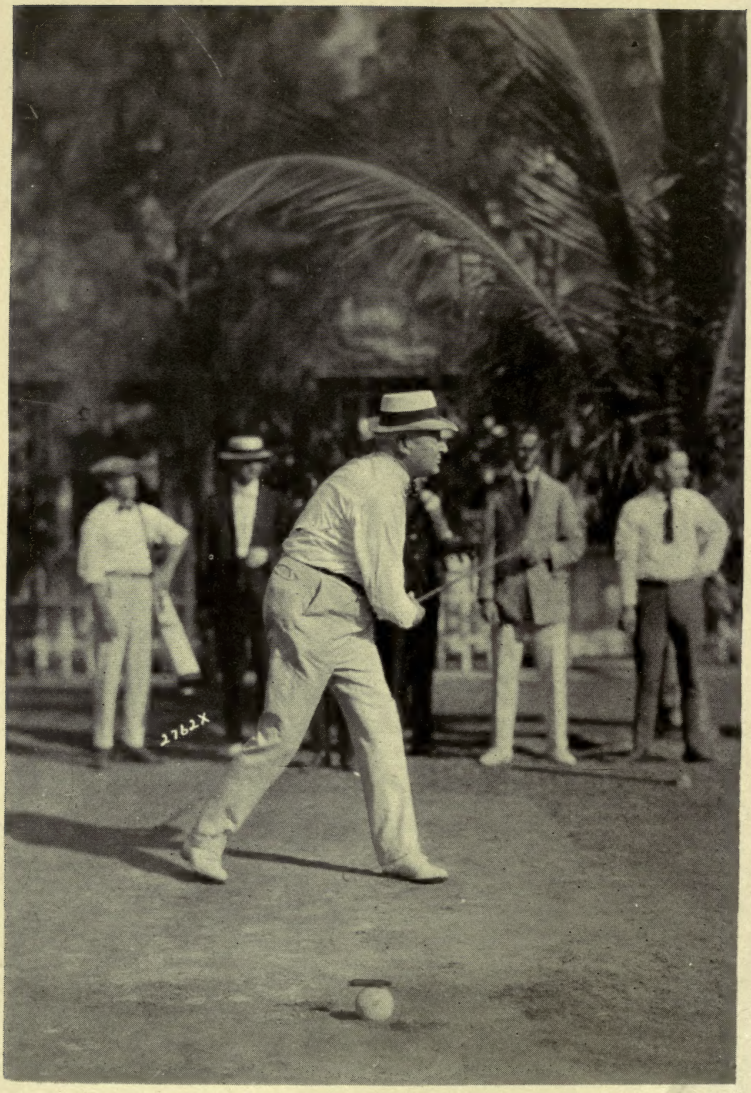

President Harding, an occasional sun-hunter, slices one into the palmettos on one of Miami Beach's three links.

SUN HUNTING

Adventures and Observations among the Native and Migratory Tribes of Florida, including the Stoical Time-Killers of Palm Beach, the Gentle and Gregarious Tin-Canners of the Remote Interior, and the Vivacious and Semi-Violent Peoples of Miami and Its Purlieus

By

Kenneth L. Roberts

Author of *Why Europe Leaves Home*

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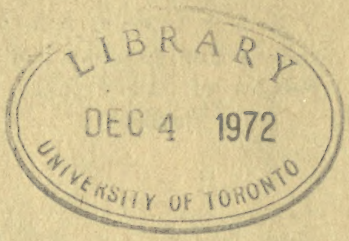

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To

Juan Ponce De Leon

who found in 1513

That Florida wasn't all it was

Cracked Up to be

but who Liked it Well Enough

to Go Back

This Book is Appreciatively

Dedicated

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BOOK ONE

THE TIME-KILLERS

SUN HUNTING

CHAPTER I

OF TIME-KILLING IN THE FRENCH AND ENGLISH MANNER—AND OF ANCIENT AND MODERN AMERICAN TIME-SLAUGHTERERS

PEOPLE who have any time to kill are usually filled with a deep and intense desire to kill it in some spot far removed from their usual haunts.

This desire is not so much due to their wish to avoid making a mess around the house as it is to the peculiar mental obsession known to the French as "homesickness for elsewhere." French society has been afflicted for years with a passionate desire to be somewhere that it isn't. A Parisian with time to kill aims to move up to the clear cold air of the mountains where he can kill

lots of it. When he gets to the mountains, it suddenly occurs to him that possibly he might find a little more time to kill at the seashore, where the eye may roam at will across the boundless and unobstructed waves. So he moves to the seashore and at once begins to suspect that in Paris one can find more weapons with which to cause time to die a lingering and horrible death. So he moves back to Paris, where he once more hunts restlessly for other means to kill time. He has the homesickness for elsewhere.

The English, too, have it to a marked degree. All Englishmen who have incomes larger than two hundred guineas a year own tea baskets with which they go off to distant heaths or popular woods on bank holidays and week-ends for the purpose of killing time and burying it with the appropriate funeral exercises. They are all the time running up to the moors for a bit of rough shooting, or over to Switzerland for

a bit of sheeing, or off to a country-house for a bit of punting or Scotch-drinking, or down to Brighton for a week-end. An English week-end is sadly misnamed, inasmuch as it usually consists of Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday, with a bit of Thursday and Tuesday thrown in for good measure.

Of late years, the American people have been growing increasingly proficient at time-killing. Forty years ago, the average American, confronted with a little extra time, didn't know what to do with it. Usually he took it into the front parlor and sat around on haircloth furniture with it, and became so sick of it that he never wanted to see its face again. If he felt within him the primitive urge to take it somewhere and kill it, he hesitated to do so because the roads were bad, automobiles hadn't been invented, and the South was only regarded as the place where the Civil War started. Distances were great. Few people cared to

travel, because it was generally believed that a person who absented himself from business more than one working day out of every five years was a loose, dangerous and depraved character. One of the most exciting things to do forty years ago was to put on a striped flannel coat and play croquet on the front lawn.

To-day, however, America has caught the germs of "homesickness for elsewhere" from the French and English. Florida has been reclaimed from the swamps and the Indians, the small automobile has been put within the means of stevedores, cooks, second-story workers and moderately successful story-writers, and golf trousers may be worn in western towns without causing the wearer to be shot. A road is cursed fluently by an automobilist if it is bad enough to get his wheel-spokes muddy. The business man who can't knock off work for two or three months a year is regarded pityingly as being either a back number,

feeble-minded, or a poor man. All of these things being so, Americans with time to kill can take it farther from home and kill it with more thoroughness than any other people on earth. They go into their time-killing with more energy than do Europeans. The European is usually content to do his time-killing within three hundred miles of home. The American is never content unless he can travel from fifteen hundred to three thousand miles, and wind up with an orgy of time-killing that would make a professional executioner look by comparison like the president of a Dorcas society.

CHAPTER II

OF THE PASSAGE FROM WINTER TO SUMMER IN ONE DAY'S TIME—AND OF THE HABITAT OF SOME RARE SPECIMENS

It is in Florida that the American time-killer may be found in all his glory; and the largest, most perfect and most brilliantly colored specimens are to be found at Palm Beach. It is at Palm Beach that one finds the very rare variety measuring twenty minutes from tip to tip.

One can best understand why it is that winter-bound northerners select Florida as the scene of their time-killing by following in their footsteps and boarding a Florida-bound night train in a northern city during a heavy blizzard.

Early the next morning, when one disentangles the bedclothes from his neck and elevates the trick shade of the sleeping-car window after the usual severe struggle, one finds that the snow has nearly disappeared.

The eye is wearied by the flat plains of North Carolina, relieved only by negro shanties and scrub pines. By afternoon North Carolina has merged into South Carolina. The flatness continues with unbounded enthusiasm; but there is no snow and the air is milder. The pines are marked with peculiar herring-bone gashes, whence flows turpentine, the painter's delight. Piney odors, vaguely reminiscent of tar soap, sheep dip and cold-remedies, float through the half-opened windows. Later that evening, as one returns to the dining-car to recover the hat which one has forgotten in the excitement of tipping the waiter, one hears frequent shrill frog-choruses from the pools beside the tracks. By midnight one is ringing for the porter to tear himself from his slumbers among the shoes in the smoking compartment and start the electric fans. One's rest is troubled by the heat and the increasing shrillness of the frog-choruses.

On the second morning the rising sun dis-

closes a limitless expanse of flatness, dotted with occasional palm trees and covered with a scrubby growth of near-palms or palmettos. The sun is hot and red. A black ribbon of asphalt road parallels the railroad; and at intervals along it appear flocks of flivvers nesting drowsily among the palms and the tin-can tourists. There is plenty of glaring white sand, and plenty of stagnant water. The air is full of swallows, and an occasional pelican flops languidly alongside the train, gazing pessimistically at the passengers.

The traveler perspires lightly and marvels at the thought that it was only night before last when he slipped on a piece of ice and got half a peck of snow down the back of his neck. He remembers that it is a great and glorious country—a fact which his contemplation of the antics of Congress had caused him to forget.

Occasionally the train flashes past little towns sitting hotly in the sun and sand

among a few orange and grapefruit trees. This is Florida, and the land looks as though it were worth about a nickel an acre—just as it has always looked until some one develops it and begins to sell off corner lots at a paltry five thousand dollars apiece.

Around breakfast time—a mere thirty-six hours since the train emerged from its northern blizzard and snow-drifts—the train crosses a shimmering strip of blue water and comes to rest beside a hotel that seems, at first glance, to be at least ten miles long. It stretches off so far into the distance that people up at the other end appear to be hull-down. In reality it is only about half a mile long, and only about five hundred times larger than the Mousam House at Kennebunk, Maine.

On the station platform are women in satin skirts, gauzy waists and diamond bracelets. Young men in white trousers dash up and down the platform on bicycles. The air is soft and balmy. Palm trees

stretch off into the distance in every direction. Wheel-chairs, propelled by dignified-looking negroes who sit on bicycle-seats directly behind the chairs and pedal vigorously, move hither and yon in a stately manner. Through the palm trees one catches glimpses of white yachts riding at anchor on blue water.

A wheel-chair stops at the edge of the station platform. In it are seated a dignified gentleman in white flannels, and a gracious lady in a satin skirt and a sweater covered with neat lightning effects in red, green and orange zigzags. One wonders whether this can be J. Pierpont Morgan or Charley Schwab. Then one hears the gracious lady whisper excitedly to the dignified gentleman: "Do you suppose that's Charley Schwab or J. Pierpont Morgan over there?" and hears the dignified gentleman reply in a hoarse undertone: "Shut up, or they'll think we're boobs!"

This is Palm Beach, the very center of the winter time-killing industry.

CHAPTER III

OF THE PECULIAR DIFFERENCES BETWEEN TWO SIDES OF A LAKE—OF MONEY ODORS—AND OF THE QUESTERS AFTER CHARLEY SCHWAB

PALM BEACH is a long narrow strip of land which is separated from the mainland by a long narrow body of water known as Lake Worth, and by a sudden increase in living expenses. On the mainland side of Lake Worth is the rising young city of West Palm Beach, where one is not afraid—as he usually is in Palm Beach—to offer a storekeeper or a newsboy a nickel lest he should regard it as some strange, unknown foreign coin. West Palm Beach is full of ordinary people who are unacquainted with wheel-chairs and think nothing of walking two or three blocks, or even as much as half a mile if the necessity arises. They frequently get along for days at a time without spending

more than two dollars and eighty-five cents a day.

West Palm Beach has the same sort of climate that Palm Beach has, but the air of the place is somehow different. At Palm Beach one has the feeling that he is breathing the very same air that the world's greatest bankers and society people are breathing, whereas over in West Palm Beach one doesn't know or care who has been breathing the air. That is why so many people find the Palm Beach climate very invigorating, but always feel that the climate of West Palm Beach leaves them a little weak and tired.

Palm Beach, then, is a long narrow strip of land with the ocean on one side and Lake Worth on the other. The largest hotel, which has room for thirteen hundred paying guests at any one time, fronts on Lake Worth; while the next largest hotel is directly across the narrow strip of land, fronting on the ocean. In between are golf

links, and roadways edged with palms and avenues of towering, feathery, bluish-green Australian pines and simple little cottages that couldn't have cost a cent more than forty or fifty thousand dollars, and modest little shacks that might have set their owners back half a million or so, and club-houses and bathing pavilions and more palms and broad white roadways and men in white flannels and women in diamonds and perfumery and clinging gowns—and more palms.

Over everything there is an odor of money. Every breeze that blows is freighted with its rich, fragrant musky smell; and every person that one encounters on the street or in a hotel lobby seems to be about to spend a lot of it or to have just finished spending a lot of it. Some people seem to like the odor and some don't seem to care so much for it. Some, in fact, seem from their expressions to think that this money-odor has a great deal in common with smoldering rubber or asafetida.

The impression that Palm Beach is bound to make on any newcomer is one of general discomfort. Everybody seems to be staring critically and curiously at everybody else—due, of course, to the fact that almost everybody hopes or suspects that everybody else may prove to be Charley Schwab or Percy Rockefeller or E. T. Stotesbury or one of those prominent society people who part their names on the side.

People who enter and leave the hotel dining-room don't seem to know what to do with their hands. They pretend to an embarrassing ease of manner, which leaves everybody acutely conscious that they are very uneasy. The people at the tables can't keep their eyes off the people at other tables. The hotel lobbies are congested before lunch and after dinner with persons who have no interest in any scenery except that which other people are wearing. Although the beach at Palm Beach is many miles in length, all the bathers, near bathers and bather-

watchers cram themselves each noon into a few square yards of beach and watch one another like a gathering of lynxes.

People dawdle along the palm-fringed avenues and stare at one another blankly and questioningly. People sit self-consciously in wheel-chairs and look searchingly at people in other wheel-chairs. Bicyclists wheel languidly along the white roads and gaze intently at every one. "Are you Charley Schwab?" each eye seems to ask mutely. "Are you one of the Stotesburys? Are you anybody?"

CHAPTER IV

OF THE APOTHEOSIS OF THE BICYCLE—OF THE USES OF WHEEL-CHAIRS—AND OF THE MENTAL ACTIVITIES OF CHAIR-CHAUFFEURS

PALM BEACH is the heaven of the bicycle. In other parts of the world it has sunk in popular esteem until it is little else than a conveyer of telegraph boys and an instrument for the removal of skin from children's knees. But in Palm Beach it shares with the wheel-chair the honor of being the chariot of wealth and beauty.

Flocks of bicycles are parked beside every hotel entrance. Broad and flawless sidewalks are reserved for bicycles and wheel-chairs. The pedestrian who sets foot on them does so at his own risk, and is more than apt, if he does so, to have his coat driven several inches into his back by the front wheel of a bicycle.

There is no bicycle costume. Beautiful lady bicyclists wear anything: rakish sport clothes, fragile afternoon gowns, flowing costumes with long capes, and more extreme evening gowns. Large numbers of girls persist in bicycling while wearing tight skirts, so that the general effect is somewhat similar to that of a pony ballet made up as messenger boys.

On side-streets, one frequently sees the almost forgotten spectacle of a frail débutante learning to ride. On the dance floor she would float along as lightly as a tuft of thistledown. On a bicycle she wabbles heavily and helplessly from side to side, collapsing at intervals against her instructor with all the crushing weight of a California Redwood.

The wheel-chair is the favorite Palm Beach method of locomotion, and it is the only form of exercise ever taken by many Palm Beach visitors. Many old inhabitants claim that wheel-chair riding is excellent for

the liver, and devote at least two hours to it every afternoon. The negro chair chauffeurs drive the chair along by vigorous pedaling, and the alternate leg stroke gives the chair a gentle side to side motion which acts as a mild massage on the occupant. Two hours of such exercise is considered to be about enough by the most conservative Palm Beachers. It is their belief that the persons who ride for three hours run a great risk of over-exerting themselves.

The chair-chauffeurs, in addition to possessing tireless legs, are usually supplied with a vast fund of knowledge. This is most desirable; for many visitors speak to no one except the hotel clerks, the news-stand girls, the waiters and their wheel-chair chauffeurs during their entire stay. It frequently happens that their chair chauffeurs are their only guides, philosophers and friends; so the chauffeurs find it very valuable to be fairly familiar with all Palm Beach estates, to have a comprehensive grasp of the flora and

The living-room of the Everglades Club, smart and exclusive retreat of Palm Beach's smartest habitués.

Bradley's, the Monte Carlo of America.

The Casino at Palm Beach, where the photographers catch the society favorites reading from left to right.

fauna of the south, and to be conversant with all financial and social matters appertaining to the old-timer. They have also found that a frank exposition of their own philosophical meditations on men and things will sometimes arouse the interest and stimulate the generosity of their charges. "What sort of ducks are those, George?" usually brings the intelligent answer: "Those ain't no sort, suh. Those is just ducks." A query as to whether a wheel-chair is harder to push with one or two people in it brought the reply that there "wasn't no difference." But to push an empty one is the hardest. ¡Yes, suh! Must be because no money is being made. ¡Yes, suh!

CHAPTER V

OF THE TELEGRAM-EXPECTERS—OF THE DATE-GUESSERS—AND OF THE STATISTIC-WEEVILS

THERE are many lonely men and women at Palm Beach who almost cry with gratitude when somebody speaks to them. They are like many Congressmen, who are big people at home, but of less account in Washington than a head porter. Out of all the people who flock to Palm Beach to spend large amounts of money and bask in the soothing rays that emanate from the socially prominent, ninety per cent. might be compared to very small potatoes in a two hundred-acre lot. Even the majority of the people whose names are names to conjure with in Palm Beach society can't be found in the pages of *Who's Who.*

The majority of men who pay the bills at the big hotels are forced to struggle hard to kill time when they have finished their golf-

playing for the day. Enormous numbers of them seem to spend most of their spare time sitting dolefully around hotel lobbies and expecting telegrams that never come. If you fall into conversation with any man in any Palm Beach hotel lobby, he invariably explains his inactivity by saying that he is expecting a telegram.

Next to expecting telegrams, the most popular Palm Beach time-killer seems to consist of wondering what day of the week it is. Sneak up behind any two important-looking men who seem to be discussing affairs of moment, and the chances are ten to one that you will hear the following weighty conversation:

"Is to-day Tuesday or Wednesday? I sort of lose track down here."

"To-day? Why to-day's Wednesday. No; hold on! It's Thursday, isn't it?"

"No, I don't think so. I think it's either Tuesday or Wednesday. Still, I don't know: it might be Thursday."

"No, I don't believe it's Thursday. I was expecting a telegram on Tuesday, and it would have had to come before Thursday. I guess it's Wednesday."

"Yes, I guess it is. I thought for a while it was Tuesday."

"Oh, I don't believe it's Tuesday."

"No, I guess it's Wednesday, all right. That telegram ought to be here by now. How long are you staying here?"

"I don't know. I'm expecting a telegram and I can't tell till it gets here."

Having reached a comparatively ripe intimacy by this time, it is almost inevitable that one of them should advance one of the thousand statistical questions that are so frequently encountered at Palm Beach, such as "Did you ever stop to think how many nails it took to build this hotel?" A few seconds later both of them have produced envelopes and are figuring busily.

Men who have traveled thousands of miles for the purpose of killing time at Palm

Beach will frequently argue for two or three hours, and figure all over the backs of eight or ten envelopes and a couple of golf scores in an attempt to decide whether or not the value of all the diamond bracelets in Palm Beach would be sufficient to secure economic control of Russia. Newcomers to Palm Beach, knowing that America's greatest financiers flock there during the season, frequently make the mistake of thinking that two men knitting their brows over a lot of figures are probably two great money-kings working up a scheme to corner the nation's hop crop. In reality they are two ordinary citizens killing a little time by choking it to death with useless statistics.

CHAPTER VI

OF THE CHANGING OF CLOTHES—OF THE WAY THEY WEAR 'EM—AND OF THE FEMALES OF THE DRESS-FERRET SPECIES

COMPARED with the good old days when dresses hooked up the back in such an intricate fashion that one needed blueprints, diagrams and charts in order to hook up a dress properly, there is practically no dress-changing at Palm Beach nowadays. In the old days the womenfolk spent at least forty per cent. of their waking hours changing their clothes. They changed their clothes whenever the wind changed. They changed their clothes every time a train came in. They couldn't eat or go out in a wheel-chair or put on a string of beads or take a drink without changing their clothes. Their menfolk were kept constantly busy hooking them up the back.

To-day things are different. Dresses no longer hook up the back with their erstwhile whole-heartedness. Careful and competent observers state that many present-day dresses are safely attached to the human frame by as few as three hooks, all of which can be reached without dislocating an arm or displacing any vertebrae, and that an equal number of dresses are merely slid on over the head and worn just as they fall, without any further formality. A great many women at Palm Beach wear only two costumes each day—one for morning and afternoon that shows almost everything below the hips and one for evening that shows almost everything above the waist.

Not so many years ago a woman who wore only two dresses in one day at Palm Beach would have been regarded as mentally unbalanced or disgustingly pauperized.

The real snappy dressers, however, get in and out of three costumes a day; while it is not at all unusual to find prominent society

camp-followers staggering in and out of as many as five and six daily costumes. How they ever do it will ever remain a mystery to us simple writers and oatmeal-manufacturers and mattress-makers from the buckwheat belt.

Every morning directly after breakfast, the hotel lobbies fill up with women who want to talk about dress. The Palm Beach dailies and weeklies cater to their pitiable weakness by specializing on thrilling information of this nature. So far as the female contingent at Palm Beach is concerned, an economic conference in Europe or a presidential utterance on the Bonus hasn't a chance with such news as what Mrs. Harry Payne Whitney wore at the Beach Club last night.

Outside the warm sun may be beating down upon golden sands and an azure sea, the wind rustling softly through the palms and the bland air thrilling to the melodious murmur of the wheel-chair boys as they point out the Stotesbury cottage with caus-

tic comments on the height of the Stotesbury wall. Yet the dress-ferrets sit on with bated breaths in the cool gloom of the hotel lobbies while the papers inform their enthralled readers that:

"Very smart was the slate colored strictly tailored suit worn by Mrs. Aurelius Vandersouse, Jr., at a recent Poinciana luncheon. Her hat was of a tone of straw perfectly harmonizing with the suit and bore only a flat bow of tomato-wire for trimming. The Honorable Mrs. D. Dryver Flubyer's suit was fashioned of an imported bed-ticking fabric guiltless of any embellishment. Her chapeau was fashioned of the same fabric. Mrs. J. Eaton Swank wore a clinging gown of fromage-de-brie crêpe in a light heliotrope shade, fashioned in a one-piece style, with flowing sleeves and uneven hem, whose folds clung gracefully to the tall slender wearer."

That's the stuff to give the Palm Beach Battalion of Dress. Like Bosco, they eat it alive. They are veritable cormorants for it.

CHAPTER VII

OF THE FASCINATIONS OF THE BEACH—OF THE SAND-HOUNDS FROM ODESSA AND ELSEWHERE —AND OF PRUDES AND STYLISH STOUTS

AT HALF past eleven every morning, stimulated by the early morning talk of dress, all the feminine population of Palm Beach, accompanied by all obtainable male escorts, set out from their hotels and homes in wheel-chairs for their daily pilgrimage to the beach.

The beach is not prized by Palm Beach visitors because of its bathing facilities, but because of the perfect spirit of camaraderie and democracy which reigns there. A Philadelphia Biddle is just as apt as not to come along and accidentally rub damp sand on a South Bend Smith. Anything may happen. A Vanderbilt may ask you what time it is.

There is no distinction on the beach itself between the people who emigrated from Montana to Fifth Avenue back in '01 and the people who emigrated from Odessa to Houston Street back in '91. Both of them have the same funny knobs on their knees; and there are lots of them—especially of the Odessa set.

The beach is the only place in Palm Beach where everybody has an equal chance; and there everybody uses the same ocean and sits around in the same sand in almost hopeless confusion. Things are so congested that if one leans back carelessly and braces himself by sticking his hand down in the sand, the chances are excellent that a couple of ladies from Kansas City or Boston will come staggering along with their eyes fixed raptly on Mrs. B. Gurney Munn or Mrs. Jerome Bonaparte and sheer off two or three of one's fingers with their French heels.

The only portion of the beach which anybody considers worth using is the portion

directly in front of the casino, which is a large, gorgeous, white plaster bath-house with an outdoor swimming pool and polite attendants who are always appearing at inopportune moments and helping patrons to do things which they could do much better alone—such, for example, as removing a towel from a hook or lifting a brush and comb from a shelf.

Many people garbed in elaborate dresses stand on the terrace in front of the casino and stare down at the people on the beach, while the people on the beach stare up at them. On chairs on the beach there are many other elaborately gowned women who examine every one closely and are closely examined by every one.

Down in front of the entire mob stand large numbers of professional photographers who keep a careful lookout for exciting costumes and prominent faces, and constantly snap little groups of laughing people who subsequently appear in leading Sunday

papers or monthly magazines over legends like: "Far from Northern Snows: a happy society group on the Palm Beach sands: from left to right, J. Edge Smush, Mrs. B. Goodwin Eezy, the Honorable Mrs. Claribel Custard, I. Winken Ogle, Miss Patricia Swaddle. Behind the feet at the right, Perry Peevish, Jr."

Every little while the photographers find some one who is prominent and pretty without being too much overweight and overdressed; and when they do, they coax her out to an unoccupied section of beach and arrange her in a position of unstudied ease and graceful carelessness, and shoot half a dozen pictures of her admiring the distant horizon with a gay, unaffected, girlish laugh.

Everything on the beach is so simple and natural and wholesome that one can't help but like it. Then, too, one never gets that offensive, salty, seaweedy odor of ocean that one is apt to get on the New England

coast, owing to the ocean odors being completely overwhelmed by the rare and powerful French perfumes that are worn by many elements of Palm Beach society. If one closed his eyes, he might think that he was at a perfumery show and that somebody had kicked over all the bottles.

Palm Beach is not exactly what one would call a Prude's Paradise, but a prude can feel more at ease on the beach at Palm Beach than at any other resort in Florida. This is due to the fact that women are not allowed to appear on the beach with any portion of the leg uncovered. A policeman is stationed on the beach to see that this rule is enforced, and there is a great rejoicing among all the local prudes, who—like all prudes throughout the world—see evil where there is none, and pass blindly by the evils that every one except themselves can see.

This rule has brought about one great benefit in that it has prevented large numbers of ill-advised and otherwise charming

stylish stouts from rolling down their bathing stockings and exposing too much knee. Any rule that does this is a good rule—and it is generally agreed that there are more stylish stouts at Palm Beach than at any other resort on earth.

CHAPTER VIII

OF THE THREE DAY SUCKERS—OF TRUE SMARTNESS—AND OF THE BUCKWHEATS AND THE DEAD-LINE

WHEN the bathing hour has passed into history, the merry bathers and clothes-wearers sally forth in search of lunch. The ordinary run of Palm Beach visitors eat their lunch at their hotels. This act almost automatically stamps them as Buckwheats, or Three Day Suckers, or people who aren't Smart. A Buckwheat is a coarse, rude, barbaric person who is addicted to the secret and loathsome vices of eating buckwheat cakes for breakfast and not spending money recklessly.

A Three Day Sucker is a person who only stays a few days at Palm Beach. As a time-killer he is not regarded with any respect. He travels so far to kill time that he hasn't

any time left to kill when he gets there. This is not regarded as smart. Any one who stays less than two weeks is not viewed with favor by people who stay a month or more, and who know how important smartness is. If one wishes to have the respect of the cigar-counter clerks and the mail clerks and the head waiters and other Palm Beach people who—as the ultra-refined advertisements say—matter, one must above all things be smart. You might as well be dead at Palm Beach as not be smart.

Certain things are smart and certain things are not smart. It is smart, for example, for a man to go without a hat. It is smart to ride a bicycle. Any article of feminine wearing apparel that is essentially useless is smart. It is smart to speak of a thing as smart. It is not at all smart to tell a Palm Beacher that you would gladly disembowel him when you hear him use the word "smart" for the fiftieth time.

None of the big Palm Beach hotels rents

rooms without meals. One must pay for his meals as well. Two people at most of the big hotels pay a minimum rate of about thirty-five dollars a day for the two—which is about the amount from which the same people would have to separate themselves at any of the big New York or Chicago or Boston or Washington hotels by the time they had finished paying for their food. But if one wishes to be smart at Palm Beach, one mustn't lunch or dine at the hotel where one's meals are included on his bill. It is very buckwheat to do such a thing: very uncouth: very hick and very rough-neck: not, in a word, smart. That is why the desirable Palm Beach habitués, at the height of the season, find it difficult to spend less than a hundred dollars apiece per day. One can't indulge in games of chance or keep many wheel-chairs on that amount; but if one is reasonably careful and content to be only moderately smart, one can get along fairly well for a hundred dollars a day.

The truly smart person strives always to pay for two meals where one would normally be paid for. He strives to pay for one that he eats and for one that nobody eats. If one is living at the Poinciana, one should make an effort to lunch or dine at the Breakers or at the Country Club or at the Beach Club or at the Everglades Club, or one of the cottages. It is a fascinating system, and is based on the familiar society theory that the more useless a thing is, the smarter it is.

One of the smartest—in a society sense—of all the persons that come to Palm Beach is a man who never eats at the hotel where he lives, and who keeps a flock of twelve wheel-chairs always in attendance on him. Day and night his twelve wheel-chairs are waiting for him and his friends. They are used about an hour a day—but it is very smart to keep them waiting: frightfully smart. Useless and therefore smart.

The head waiters in the restaurants be-

come very proficient at distinguishing those who are smart from those who are not smart. In the dining-room of the largest hotel there is a cross-strip of green carpet which is known as the dead-line. The people who sit between the entrance and the dead-line have been carefully looked over by the head waiter and put in the smart class. But the people who are put on the kitchen side of the dead-line are dubs and Buckwheats in the judgment of the head waiter. Once people are put below the dead-line, they rarely have a chance to come up for air, but are doomed to stay down among the other Buckwheats for the remainder of their visit.

CHAPTER IX

OF THE SMARTEST THING IN PALM BEACH—OF LARGE AMOUNTS OF MONEY—AND OF THE OLD GUARD

THE smartest thing at Palm Beach is the Everglades Club. The Everglades Club is so smart that it almost gives itself a pain. It has only a few over four hundred members, but these four hundred include names that make a society editor's scalp tingle, and control so much money and jewels that the mere mention of them is enough to make any normal burglar tremble all over.

The Everglades Club building was started in the summer of 1918 by Paris Singer, who is a wealthy society man, as a hospital for convalescent officers. The war was over, however, before the building was ever used as a hospital; and it immediately occurred to the smartest of the Palm Beach colony that

the building was exactly the thing to use for a smart club where really smart people could go off by themselves and be too exclusive for words. The proposition was put up to Paris Singer, who saw the force of it; and that's how the Everglades Club started. The initiation fee and yearly dues might be expected to be about as large as the national debt, but in reality they amount to something like one hundred dollars initiation fee and fifty dollars yearly dues. The club has built a very smart and attractive apartment-house within a stone's throw of the parent building; and in it club members can rent small but smart apartments for a mere twenty-five hundred dollars a season—and there are several Maine summer resorts where one pays as much and gets much less for his money.

The club has its own golf links and tennis courts; and it has a restaurant whose chef could easily enter a cheffing contest with the leading Parisian chefs with an excellent

chance to win the diamond-studded skillet, or the seventeen-jeweled egg-beater. It is my fixed belief that if old M'sieu Marguery, who invented Filet of Sole Marguery, could have been led into the dining-room of the Everglades Club and placed where he could look out through the palms to the placid waters of Lake Worth, and handed a platter of Pompano Meuniere—it is my fixed belief, I say, that old M'sieu Marguery would have put his head down in his hands and cried like a child to think that he could have doubled his fortune if he could have started serving Pompano that way thirty years ago.

The interior fixtures of the Everglades Club are of the proper sort to go with such food. The walls are hung with sixteenth century tapestries, and the dining-room is wainscoted with oak from the interior of a Spanish monastery.

There was some talk at one time of covering the wall of one room with silver plates

made by flattening the silver cocktail shakers of the club members. This was never done, however; and it is probable that the members found other uses for their shakers.

It would be idle to attempt to estimate with any accuracy the amount of money represented by members of the Everglades Club. If they were pushed, they could easily dig up one billion dollars among them.

While we are speaking in billions instead of in mere beggarly millions, it might be appropriate to mention that the most astute Palm Beach estimaters figure that the thirteen hundred guests who fill the Royal Poinciana Hotel at the height of the season, if placed in one room and carefully assayed, would yield at least two billion dollars.

The Country Club is another smart place at which to lunch or dine. There is no restaurant in Europe to my knowledge that is able to produce a better dinner than the Palm Beach Country Club, especially if one leaves it, as the saying goes, to François.

François is the head waiter; and he works in conjunction with a chef named Marius, who inherited most of his recipes from a gifted relative in the south of France, and who spends a large part of his time when not cooking in fearing that somebody will solve the recipes. The chief object of the Country Club is to provide a golfing retreat from the Buckwheats and the Three Day Suckers, who usually break for the hotel golf links immediately on arrival. Consequently the links which are open to the Buckwheats are apt to become so congested that if one doesn't stick rigidly in his place in the golf procession, he is more than apt to get a couple of golf balls in the side of the head and then have to stand aside for two hours while a long parade of golfers and near-golfers hacks its way past him. So the smart golfers go to the Country Club. It is there that one finds the Old Guard of Palm Beach.

The Old Guard is a hide-bound organiza-

tion of ardent golfers who know all the intimate personal scandal about practically every dollar that has changed hands in North America since the Dutch purchased Manhattan Island from the Indians for twenty-four dollars, and threw in enough rum to provide magnificent hang-overs for the families of the original owners.

One must have been a resident of Palm Beach for five years before he is allowed to join the Old Guard, the theory being that unless a golfer has lived there for five years, he is not thoroughly conversant with the essential features of Palm Beach gossip and will be apt to interrupt a calm and quiet game of golf to ask who the G. Daley Squabbles are going to marry when they have divorced each other, or some other equally irrelevant and unnecessary question.

CHAPTER X

OF THOSE WHO WISH TO CRASH INTO SOCIETY—AND OF THOSE WHO FURNISH THE PALPITATING SOCIETY ITEMS

THE business of being smart and appearing at the proper places at the proper hour is merely the accepted method of killing time with many Palm Beachers; but with many others it is as serious as the death of a near relative. Palm Beach is well sprinkled with people who are determined to break into New York society, and who have selected Palm Beach as the place to drive the entering wedge because results can be obtained there with greater speed, with less expense and with more noise than in any other section of the country.

A young New Yorker with a small income broke into society with a crash and married, not so very long ago, a beautiful widow

with a strangle-hold on society and a fortune that kept a couple of income tax experts working a month each year. He explained his system to a friend of mine with the peculiar half childish and half idiotic frankness that may frequently be encountered in the upper crust of society. If he had attempted to break in by way of New York, he said, he would have spent all his money on dinners and luncheons; and about as much notice would have been taken of his struggles as would be taken of a stray dish of prunes at a banquet. But by coming to Palm Beach and getting on the right side of the society reporters, he was able to give one fair-sized and comparatively inexpensive luncheon and have the news telegraphed immediately to the New York papers. By doing this a couple of times a season, he was able to repay all the invitations which he accepted in New York; and it was apparent to all New York newspaper readers that he was making a society splash at Palm Beach. So

he was soon accepted as being socially prominent, whereupon he picked out the richest thing in sight, married it and stopped worrying.

Many people at Palm Beach feel that they must have press agents to keep them in the limelight. There is one enterprising Palm Beach press agent who supplies the newspapers with palpitating items about seven or eight social climbers, and whose earnings from this source are over thirty thousand a year. When one reads of a socially prominent Palm Beacher doing something fearfully original, like giving a dinner to all her friends' dogs, one may know that she has been hiring a press agent to fill her mind with valuable ideas.

CHAPTER XI

OF THE ALIBI WINDOW—OF THE TRICK FLASKS AND CANES—OF DRINKERS FRAIL AND FAT—AND OF ONE CONCEPTION OF SIMPLICITY

THE Palm Beach crowd is always ready to part with money for anything that looks sufficiently smart and interesting. In order to facilitate the parting, some of the country's leading costumers and rug merchants and hat makers and jewelers have moved their branch stores into the hotel lobbies, so that the passers-by can separate themselves from their money with a minimum of exertion.

There is one Palm Beach window that is known as the Alibi Window. It is full of gorgeous diamond pendants and diamond bracelets and simple little ten-thousand-dollar rings; and the Palm Beach theory is that the shop's best customers are men who have

been raising what is somewhat loosely known as the dickens. As is well known, a man whose conscience is troubling him can frequently keep it quiet by getting his wife a pendant of diamonds set in platinum. At night, when the shop is locked up, all the jewelry is removed from the window and replaced with a large flock of frosted silver cocktail-shakers whose appearance alone is warranted to give even a Prohibition Enforcement Agent a thirst. This spectacle is supposed to make the observer hunt up some whisky and get himself nicely boiled, and possibly to make him fall so low as to speak disrespectfully of the society leaders. On the following day he buys jewelry to square himself with his wife.

Large, curved pocket flasks, two of which would make fine protective armor for the entire upper part of the body if worn on opposite sides, are popular at Palm Beach, as is a new trick cane that unscrews at a joint and reveals a long, slender bottle three-

quarters of an inch in diameter and two feet long. The popularity of these canes, which come in half-pint and pint sizes, indicate clearly that some enterprising hat manufacturer will soon get out a two-pint straw hat for Florida wear.

There is a great deal of fire-water in sight at Palm Beach at all hours of the day and night; and the débutante who can't absorb eight cocktails without raising her voice or falling over the chairs is regarded as being handicapped by some sort of inherited weakness. One of the most frequently pointed-out personages at Palm Beach is a very fat man who can—according to the claims made for him by his admirers—drink thirty-five cocktails at one sitting without blinking. The price of Scotch whisky starts down around forty dollars a case in the summer time and works gradually upward until at the height of the season one is paying from seventy to one hundred dollars a case for it.

The building-boom that has struck Palm Beach in the last five years is claimed by most of the loose claimers and enthusiastic drinkers to be due to Prohibition. A great many cottages have been erected by persons of wealth and social prominence in these five years; and the prevalent architectural idea for a simple little Palm Beach cottage seems to be a Spanish modification of a Union Station, or a Court of Jewels at a successful World's Fair.

To hear the drinkers tell it, these houses have been built so that the owners could have a place in which to drink without being watched or hurried or made to feel uncomfortable. This may be possible; but if it is, the house builders are the only ones who haven't felt free to drink when and where they choose.

The truth of the matter unquestionably is that the people who built houses liked the place and the climate, and so built in order to enjoy them more thoroughly than they

could be enjoyed in a hotel room smelling faintly of damp carpets and previous occupants.

CHAPTER XII

OF NUTS IN THE COCONUT GROVE—OF BRADLEY'S—OF THE RELAXATION AND AMUSEMENT OF THE BEACH CLUB-FELLOWS—AND OF GAMBLING IN GENERAL

After one has spent a fatiguing afternoon pricing whisky flasks, or being pushed along avenues of palms and Australian pines in a wheel-chair, or indulging in a little steady bridge and drinking, or some other equally arduous pursuit, the smart thing to do is to go to the Coconut Grove and participate in a little tea and dancing.

The Coconut Grove consists of a large and beautiful grove of coconut trees surrounding a polished dance floor. All the coconuts have been removed from the trees, owing to their well-known habit of falling off unexpectedly and utterly ruining any one who may be lingering beneath them. Thus the only nuts in the grove are the ones who come there to dance.

The Coconut Grove starts doing business at half past five every afternoon in the bright sunlight; but in a few minutes the tropic night closes down just as advertised in all books on the South Seas. By a little after six o'clock the only illumination comes from strings of red electric light bulbs strung through the palms and from the occasional flare of a match as some distinguished social butterfly tries to find out how much whisky he has left in his cane.

Later in the evening, the smart thing to do is to go over to what is formally known as the Beach Club, but universally spoken of as Bradley's. As trains from the north enter the Palm Beach station, the enormous bulk of the Royal Poinciana Hotel stretches out at the right of the train. On the left of the train, directly opposite the station and so close to the train that the traveler could toss even a lightweight biscuit on to its roof from the car window, is a long, low, white frame building with a large revolving ven-

The Coconut Grove at Palm Beach. The nuts have been removed from the trees; but plenty may be found at the tables on any winter afternoon.

Near the Flagler estate at Palm Beach.

The Australian Pine Walk between the Poinciana and The Breakers, Palm Beach.

tilator in one end. This is Bradley's, Palm Beach's oldest, most celebrated and most popular charitable institution—charitable because it assists people who have more money than they know what to do with to get rid of part of it in a quiet and eminently respectable way.

Every large resort in the world that caters to wealthy people has its gambling houses. In Europe the municipalities run them, recognizing the fact that all people of means who are on a holiday are bound to gamble. At America's resorts the gambling houses are usually concealed; but they exist none the less; and usually, because of the secrecy that surrounds them, they are lurking-places for troublesome aggregations of trimmers, bloodsuckers and crooks of various sorts.

Bradley's is different. It is run exclusively for the wealthy northern patrons of Palm Beach; and the person whose legal residence or place of business is located in

Florida is supposed to be barred. Almost everybody who goes there can afford to lose and lose heavily; and a list of the names of the people who play there every night would read like a list of America's leading celebrities, social lights and millionaires. There may be some who can't afford to play; but if there are any such, their folly in visiting Palm Beach marks them as persons who deserve to be ruined as expeditiously as possible.

A crook would be about as much at home in Bradley's as an icicle would be in the crater of Mt. Vesuvius.

All things considered, it is probably the only gambling house in the United States whose closing would be a calamity to the community.

Bradley's is a club. In order to be made a member, one must be introduced by a member. It is one of the few existing clubs which has no initiation fees and no dues; but for all that, the members usually spend

all they have in their clothes every time they go in for an evening of good fellowship and club life; so it isn't as inexpensive as it sounds.

Anybody in Palm Beach, from the wheel-chair boys to the policemen, can supply the inquirer with all the standard Beach Club stories, usually starting with the one about the man who lost six thousand dollars in one evening and left Palm Beach hurriedly the next morning. A few hours later, one of the Bradley brothers was visited by a young woman who was obviously in great distress. Her eyes were red and swollen and she was sobbing convulsively. She explained that her husband had lost six thousand dollars the night before, that the money didn't belong to him and that unless she could get the money back for him, he would have to go to prison. So Bradley gave back the six thousand dollars after telling the young woman to tell her husband never again to set foot in the Beach Club. A

few days afterward the same man turned up in the Beach Club and began to play. Bradley summoned him to his office and asked him how he dared to do such a thing after his losses had been returned to his wife. "What do you mean?" asked the man, "I'm not married."

"Then you didn't leave town because you were ruined?" asked Bradley.

"You bet I didn't!" said the man. "I went down to Long Key fishing with my business partner, who came down here with me."

A woman in an adjoining room had heard the two men talking before their departure, and had cashed in on the conversation.

Then there is the story about the wife who used to extract uncashed chips from her husband's clothes whenever he played at Bradley's, and who cashed them in for twenty-five thousand dollars without her husband knowing that he had lost anything. And the one about the gentleman who

cleaned up seventy thousand dollars in one week.

It is not at all unusual to see one of the big steel men or oil men placing five hundred dollars in chips on the board at each turn of the wheel, and dropping fifteen or twenty thousand dollars in half an hour.

CHAPTER XIII

OF THE DIVERGENCES BETWEEN BRADLEY'S AND MONTE CARLO—OF THE IDIOSYNCRASIES OF THE LITTLE WHITE PILL—OF THE ODDITIES OF FAT PLAYERS—OF TIME-KILLING PASTIMES—AND OF THE WISDOM OF DIONYSIUS THE ELDER

ABOUT the only similarity between Bradley's and the Monte Carlo Casino is the squareness of the game and the roundness of the roulette wheels. A majority of the people who gamble at Bradley's are the extreme opposite of the majority of the people who gamble at Monte Carlo; and in these two gambling houses any observer may discover an outstanding difference between the European's and the American's attitude toward money. For years Americans have been disparaged by Europeans as money-grubbers. As a matter of fact, the people of all nations, generally speaking, are money-grubbers, in that they devote themselves to

earning money on which to live. The European, however, pursues his money with an unrelenting ferocity; and when he overtakes it, he seizes it with such an iron grip that the head on each coin almost bursts into shrill screams of agony. The European makes money in order to save it; and he never lets go of it if he can help it. The American regards money-making as a fascinating game; and he makes it in order to spend it.

At Monte Carlo almost every gambler, out of the thousands that play there, plays a system. He uses a system book, checking each turn of the wheel in it, and writing down column upon column of figures. He devotes hours to computing his chances of winning; and practically every system player believes implicitly that he isn't risking his money, but that he has a sure system that will enable him to get something from the Casino for nothing. He gambles for profit; not for pleasure.

At Bradley's, nobody plays a system. All of the club-members—oil millionaires, steel millionaires, short-haired and short-skirted débutantes, and fat dowagers half concealed behind interlacing ropes of pearls and diamonds—play only for the thrill of playing. A person who used a system book would probably be regarded as being either insane or drunk. Nine-tenths of the women don't know enough about the game to play anything except a number full on the nose, or red and black. In roulette a number can be played full on the nose; and if it turns up on the wheel, the player receives thirty-five for one. If one is satisfied with smaller odds, and with better chances of winning, one can place his money between two numbers, or in the middle of four numbers, or on a transversal of three numbers, or on a double transversal of six numbers, or in various other ways. At Monte Carlo the favorite woman's bet is the single and double transversal. At Bradley's the men, and women

too, bet almost entirely on single numbers. They want the big thrill that comes from collecting thirty-five dollars for each dollar that they put up. They become foolishly stubborn about it, sticking to a single number so long that it would have to turn up three or four times in succession in order to enable them to break even. Fat ladies at Bradley's love to take a fat roll of chips in one hand and run the hand down a column of numbers, allowing the chips to slip off their fingertips and stay where they drop.

There are two gambling rooms in Bradley's—the big octagonal outer room in which there are six roulette tables and two French Hazard tables, and the small inner room for men only, in which there are three roulette tables and one French Hazard table. The inner room provides a retreat for the men whose attention is constantly distracted in the outer room by the frequent demand on the part of their wives and daughters for another fifty dollars.

By half past nine o'clock every night, Bradley's is so crowded that one must almost fight his way from table to table. No matter where one threw a brick in the assemblage, it would be certain to hit a millionaire and carom against two other millionaires before falling to the floor. Until midnight there are usually more women than men engaged in observing the idiosyncrasies of the little ivory ball; and the hold-up man who succeeded in holding up the clientele of the Beach Club at eleven o'clock at night would have no difficulty at all in picking up at least ten million dollars' worth of loot in jewelry alone. Many of the women wear their strings of pearls in double and triple loops so that they wont trip on them when they walk, and most of them seem to think that they may get rheumatism if they don't wear at least five diamond bracelets on their left wrists.

One frequently sees these ladies rolling up the Lake Trail at midnight in wheel-

chairs with a quarter million or a half million dollars' worth of jewels sparkling in the moonlight. They are merely out taking the air, so that they can go back to the party which they just left and renew their activities without falling asleep. They dance and play cards and slip a few cocktails and exchange light persiflage until four and five and six o'clock in the morning.

They grow stronger and stronger as the season grows older, until toward the end they may be found going in bathing in their ballgowns at dawn and indulging in other tireless activities. If a tough, hardy Indian scout or Alpine mountain climber tried to follow them for three days, he'd drop in his tracks with fatigue.

Such is life among the time-killers of Palm Beach. They go there to kill time, and they are diligent at it. Old man Plutarch states that "Dionysius the Elder, being asked whether he was at leisure, replied, 'God forbid that it should ever befall me.'"

The Palm Beach time-killers operate on the same principle. The last thing in the world that they desire is leisure, and the person who argues that Palm Beach is frequented by the leisure class is suffering from warped perception. They have different ways of killing time. Some of them talk it to death and some of them worry it to death, and some of them smother it with money. No time gets by them: they kill it all; and however they choose to do it, they're the hardest working people in the world.

BOOK TWO

THE TIN-CANNERS

CHAPTER I

OF JANUARY IN THE NORTH—OF THE WINTER PASTIMES OF MR. AND MRS. CHARLES WALNUT—AND OF A PENETRATING CHILL

SCENE I of this drama of American manners is laid in the small and more or less flourishing town of East Rockpile in the northern state of Massachusetts, Illinois, Maine, Indiana, Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Vermont, Ohio or Connecticut. Or Rhode Island or Michigan. Or New Hampshire or New York.

The month is January and there are three feet of snow on the ground. The temperature is so low that the mercury has shriveled in the thermometer bulb until it looks like a small silver cherry in a cocktail. The feet of passers-by make the same sort of squeak in the frozen snow that a mouse makes when it unexpectedly falls six feet behind a bedroom wall at two o'clock in the morning.

Mrs. Charles Walnut, wife of East Rockpile's popular contractor and builder, is seated before a roaring open fire in the parlor of the Walnut home reading a mail-order catalogue. Directly behind her chair an oil stove emanates heat-waves and an oil-stove odor. In spite of this Mrs. Walnut shivers perceptibly from time to time and hunches herself more firmly into the woolen shawl that is wrapped around her shoulders. She is studying the portion of the catalogue devoted to Gardening Tools.

There is a loud thumping and kicking outside. The front door opens and closes with a bang, and a moment later Mr. Walnut enters the room chafing his ears briskly. "My gorry, it's cold!" he observed, moving his feet up and down in a gingerly manner.

"Take off your overshoes, Charles, and don't track snow all over the house," replies Mrs. Walnut. "What made you so late? Did you stop at the drug store? Wasn't there any mail? I believe that furnace has

gone out or something, Charles, and you'd better go down and see if you can't do something. I had to light the oil stove to keep my back from freezing."

"That furnace is all right," declares Mr. Walnut, sniffling loudly and unbuckling his overshoes. "'Taint any use trying to heat anything in this weather. There wasn't anybody at the drug store on account of it being so cold. The train was late on account of froze switches or something. There wasn't any mail except three seed catalogues. My gorry, Emma, one of those catalogues has got a picture of a tomato eight inches through. The name of it's the Great Ruby. We want to get a lot of those Great Rubies in May, Emma."

"Yes," says Mrs. Walnut despondently, "and when we get around to picking 'em, they'll be about the size of crab apples, and we'll feel like Great Rubes."

"It's the cold weather that makes you feel that way, Emma," says Mr. Walnut compas-

sionately. "In April, when the grass begins to get green and the robins begin to sing at sun-up, you'll feel better."

"Maybe so, Charles," says Mrs. Walnut, "but that's three months away. Sometimes I wish I could go to sleep like a bear in December and sleep until April. Go down and fix the furnace and then come to bed. It's the only warm place in the house."

Mr. Walnut leaves the room obediently, clumps noisily down the cellar stairs, and is soon heard operating on the furnace and depleting his coal supply. Mrs. Walnut listens with a quick succession of shivers to the shrill squeaking of sleigh-runners on the snow. The fire-whistle sounds three hoarse, bronchial notes, marking the arrival of nine o'clock and of a meaningless something known as curfew. Mrs. Walnut picks up the oil stove, clutches her shawl tightly against her chest, goes out into the tomb-like hall, and is heard mounting the front stairs stiffly.

CHAPTER II

OF A PRONOUNCED CHANGE OF SCENE—OF A DARING GAME OF CHANCE AMID TROPICAL SCENTS—AND OF THE GLOATING OF CHARLES WALNUT AND HERMAN BLISTER

SCENE II of this emotional cross-section of national life is laid on the outskirts of the thriving town of Porgy Inlet, Florida. One year has elapsed between Scenes I and II. The month is January. A soft breeze rustles the palm-fronds and sets the waters of the near-by inlet to lapping soothingly against the shore. Electric lights are hung at intervals between the palms and the moss-hung live oaks; and beneath them are parked automobiles of all sizes and shapes. Some of the automobiles are bloated and swollen out of all semblance to an automobile; while others are obviously automobiles, but have spouted great tent-like wens at the side or rear. The license plates on these automobiles show that

they come all the way from Maine, from Ohio, from Dakota, from Massachusetts. Indiana is heavily represented, as are Michigan and Illinois, to say nothing of Minnesota, Rhode Island, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, Connecticut, Washington, Vermont and a number of other states.

Around a folding camp-table beneath one of the largest and mossiest live oaks sit Mr. and Mrs. Charles Walnut of East Rockpile and Mr. and Mrs. Herman Blister of Tackhammer, Michigan. Mr. Walnut, as has been stated, is a contractor and builder. Mr. Blister's business or calling is that of corn-farmer. The Walnuts and the Blisters are in the act of finishing up an exciting game of hearts. "My gorry," declares Mr. Walnut as he slaps down his last card with great violence on Mr. Blister's lead, "my gorry, I certainly thought I was going to get stuck with that queen of spades!" He figures hastily on the back of an envelope. "You folks owe us seven cents," he announces

eventually. Mr. Blister sighs deeply, removes a shiny black wallet from his trousers pocket and wrenches seven cents from it reluctantly.

Mrs. Walnut waves a wisp of Spanish moss reprovingly at a mosquito that is dancing gaily in front of her nose. "Now, Charles," says she dreamily, "if you're going up the inlet after yellowtails at sun-up to-morrow, we've got to be getting to bed. You know the last time you sat up late, it made you nervous and you lost forty cents pitching horseshoes."

From the water's edge sounds the tinkle of a mandolin; a distant quartet toys successfully with *Mandy Lee* in spite of the fact that the tenor is decidedly sour; a baby in a near-by automobile awakes to the woes of its new life with a series of shrill and wheezy bleats; the balmy air is rich with the mingled scent of jasmine, orange peel, salt water and talcum powder.

"All right, Emma," says Mr. Walnut,

pocketing his seven cents and stretching his arms comfortably. "I think mebbe if I get a good sleep, I might catch me enough red snappers for a mess."

Mrs. Walnut precedes him into the khaki tent which is attached to the side of their small automobile like a giant fungus, and as Mr. Walnut raises the flap to follow her, he looks back at Mr. and Mrs. Blister and bursts into hoarse laughter. "Say, Herm!" he bawls pleasantly. Mr. Blister halts expectantly. "Back home," says Mr. Walnut, jerking his head over his left shoulder, "back home they're fixing the furnace and hoping the pipes won't freeze."

"Haw, haw, haw!" replies Mr. Blister with evident enjoyment.

"My gorry!" ejaculates Mr. Walnut by way of expressing combined disgust for and despair of the human race. And the tent-flap falls behind him as he joins Mrs. Walnut.

CHAPTER III

OF MIGRANTS AND MIGRATIONS—OF THE TRUE SUN-HUNTER AND HIS DESIRES—AND OF HIS UNIFORM, AND HIS FLUENT ASSORTMENT OF EQUIPMENT

THE manner in which modern migrations are stimulated is pretty much the same all over the world. A resident of Poland, having no money and no job, borrows enough money from a relative in America to make the trip. Having made it, he writes back pityingly to his friends in Poland. "Why," he asks in his letter, "should you stay in Poland? It is a rotten place. Borrow some money and come over here quick. The place is full of rich suckers who will buy anything you show them. All of the Americans have got money. Come quickly before somebody gets all of it away from them." As soon as it becomes known that America can offer advantages which

Europe doesn't possess, the European is filled with a passionate desire to capture a few of them. Philosophers who have made a careful study of human motives and emotions have embalmed the philosophy of migrations in a few phrases, such as "distance lends enchantment," and "they all look good when they're far away." These phrases are true; but the thing that lends the greatest amount of enchantment to a distant piece of real-estate is a letter from Cousin Walt or Friend Herbert saying, "You ought to see the fish we catch down here. A full course dinner only costs seventy-five cents. Don't miss this next year."

The northern states, in the past few years, have developed a new type of migrant. Instead of being hot on the trail of any sort of coin, currency or legal tender, as is the modern European immigrant, and instead of being in search of political or religious freedom, as were many European immigrants during the past century, the modern

migrant is after warm weather during the winter months. He is a sun-hunter. He is sick of four months of snow and ice. He is heartily tired of cold feet, numb ears, red flannel underwear, rheumatism, stiff necks, coal bills, coughs, colds, influenza, draughts, mittens, ear-tabs, snow shovels, shaking down the furnace, carrying out ashes, and falling down on an icy sidewalk and spraining his back. It gives him a prolonged pain to wear his overshoes and a muffler and to have to thaw out the radiator of his automobile every two or three days. The bane of his existence is sitting around the house for four months waiting for April to come along and unstiffen his joints. He wants sun and lots of it. If he must spend four months doing nothing, he prefers to spend it amid the Spanish moss and the palm trees, harkening dreamily to the cheerful twittering of the dicky-birds and to the stirring thuds of coconuts, oranges and grapefruit as they fall heavily to the ground.

In the big hotels in Palm Beach, Miami, Ormond, Daytona, St. Augustine and other Florida resorts are the time-killers, with their jewel-lariats and their acres of white trousers: with their flask-trimmed tea-dances and their hard-boiled social aspirations and their refined gambling houses, and their trick whisky-canes. The sun, to the time-killers, is not of the utmost importance. If they were unable to change their clothes several times a day they would feel ill-at-ease; if they were unable to be charged a little matter of forty dollars a day for a double room and bath, they would feel that they were being slighted in some way; if they couldn't have the knowledge that they were inhaling the same air which was being inhaled by the leading millionaires and society pets, they would feel cheated.

Not so the sun-hunter. The sun-hunter knows the value of a dollar. He usually knows the value of a nickel, also. It is said that before he relinquishes his hold on a

twenty-five-cent piece, he gives it a farewell squeeze of such violence that the eagle on it frequently emits a strangled squawk of anguish. This statement, I believe, is a gross exaggeration. The fact remains, however, that one never finds the sun-hunter throwing his money around in the loose, spasmodic manner which always characterizes the genuine time-killer. And the sun-hunter wants just two things: sun and air. He knows nothing about Charley Schwab or Harry Payne Whitney or the Stotesburys, and he would take no interest whatever in them unless they got between him and the sun.

He might entertain the notion of running over to Miami Beach to view the residence of Bob Hassler, who invented a Ford shock-absorber; but other plutocrats and social luminaries leave him cold.

Clothes mean nothing in his life. The male sun-hunter is usually garbed in dark trousers which hang loosely on his legs like

the trousers always inflicted on sculptured statesmen by sculptors of the Horace Greeley period. He may or he may not wear a coat, depending entirely on his whim of the moment; but he almost invariably affects the old-fashioned gallus, or suspender. He will be found in this garb on Sunday morning, when fishing for yellowtails on the edge of a creek with a bamboo pole; he will be found in it on Wednesday afternoon, when visiting the movies; and he will be found in it on Friday evening when engaged in an exciting game of euchre with a pair of brother and sister sun-hunters. He may change it, but there are few who are aware of it if he does. It is the sun-hunter's uniform.

The sun-hunters are not recruited from any one class of citizens. The natives of Florida, with their unflagging determination to place everything in the most favorable light, tell you that they are bankers, merchants, doctors, lawyers and what-not. They'd

have you think that most of them are bankers. As a matter of fact, there are some bankers among them—and some burglars, too. The bulk of them are farmers; for a farmer can, if he wishes, arrange matters so that he has little or nothing to do during the winter months. Next to them come contractors, builders and carpenters. The sun-hunters are the people who can get away from home with the least amount of trouble; and among them one finds retired business men of all sorts, dairymen, doctors, bankers, lawyers and similar folk.

Such is the modern American migrant, and Florida is the goal of his migration. As soon as the first snow begins to fall in the North, or when the earth has tightened up under a black frost, the sun-hunters prepare for their flight to the South. Great numbers of them travel by automobile; and their automobiles are completely stocked with folding chairs, collapsible beds, accordeon-mattresses, knock-down tents, come-apart

stoves, telescopic dishwashers and a score of dishpans, tables, dinner-sets, tin cups, water-buckets and toilet articles that fold up into one another and look like a bushel of scrap-tin. In addition to this, each automobile carries a large assortment of canned goods. There are canned goods under the seats, slung against the top, packed along the sides, tucked behind cushions and stacked along the floor. Some of the automobiles are so well stocked with canned things that they could make a dash for the Pole. And as one passes some of them on the road, they sound as though their owners were carrying a reserve supply of canned goods under the hood—loose.

CHAPTER IV

OF THE TIN-CAN TOURISTS OF THE WORLD—OF IMMIGRANTS AND OTHER UNSUPERVISED VISITORS, NATIONAL AND LOCAL—OF CHEAP SKATES—AND OF THE REASON WHY TIN-CANNERS DO NOT ABOUND IN PALM BEACH

It is due to the heavy weight of cans carried by these automobiles that the true, stamped-in-the-can sun-hunter is known to himself, to his friends and to his enemies as a tin-can tourist. He lives in more or less permanent settlements known as tin-can towns; and his interests are safeguarded by a flourishing organization rejoicing in the impressive title of Tin-Can Tourists of the World.

The badge of the Tin-Can Tourists of the World is a small white celluloid button with the letters T C T tastefully disposed on it in dark blue. The insignia of the order is a small soup-can mounted on the radiator

of the member's automobile. There is also a password which the members bawl at one another when they pass on the road; but this is one of the secrets of the fraternity that should not be profaned by publication.

The Tin-Canners organized in 1919 at the Tampa Tin-Can Town and have held conventions there ever since. The present membership of the order is estimated by some of the most important officials or Khans of the Tin-Can Tourists to be in excess of thirty thousand.

Practically every Florida town and city, large and small, located inland or on the gulf or on the ocean, provides a tin-can town or a tin-can village for the tin-can tourists. Occasionally these towns are free and provide not only all the comforts of home, but comforts that home never possessed for most of the tin-canners. The largest and most celebrated tin-can town is in De Soto Park, East Tampa, on the shore of Tampa Bay. Hundreds of automobiles are lined

A tin-can paradise on the shore of Tampa Bay.

The apotheosis of tin-can comfort.

A tin-can camp between Palm Beach and Miami.

up side by side throughout the winter in De Soto Park. The camp, which is carefully regulated and policed by the municipal authorities, is free. A trolley line connects it with the business section of Tampa. In the center of the camp is a pavilion where entertainments are given. The camp has electric lights, running water, city sewerage, shower baths and an enormous hot-water tank. Tourists are permitted to send their children to the excellent schools on payment of fifty cents a week—which is too little.

Oddly enough, fifty cents a week, or twenty-five dollars a year, is the amount that naturalization experts want to charge aliens for their schooling, but that Congress considers too high. It's not enough for American tin-canners; but it's too much for aliens. How does Congress get that way?

About the only things that aren't furnished for the tin-canners are free telephones, a free morning paper and free butler and valet service.

During the 1920-1921 season there were great numbers of free tin-can camps throughout Florida; but Florida towns found, as the United States itself is beginning to find, that an open-handed and unsupervised welcome to any person who can scratch up enough money to take advantage of the welcome will bring nothing but annoyances, losses and misery in its train. The Tampa camp was a success because it was very carefully regulated and policed. Many of the other free camps, however, suddenly woke up to the truth of the old adage that people never appreciate the things that they get for nothing. This is, of course, the old problem of immigration reduced to a personal basis.

The United States talks for a century about the necessity of restricting immigration and forcing aliens to pay for the privilege of enjoying America's benefits, but in that hundred years, she does next to nothing. Florida towns, confronted with a mild edi-

tion of the same problem, take action overnight.

What happened was this—and the same thing to a far greater degree and with far more evil and wide-spread results, is happening to the United States and will keep on happening until immigration is rigidly restricted:

Word began to go forth in the northern states that free camping-grounds were to be had in Florida towns and cities; that if one bought a second-hand flivver at the beginning of winter and beat his way to these camps, he could live more cheaply than he could live in the North, could afford to accept lower pay for his services than could the Florida natives, and could go back North in the spring with money in his pocket and sell his flivver for what he paid for it. These are almost exactly the same reasons that brought a million immigrants a year to America from Eastern and Southern Europe before the war.

Florida has made it plain that she wants no more of these seasonal laborers who can't make a satisfactory living in their own communities. Most of them are so hard-boiled that a diamond-pointed drill is needed to penetrate their shells; and most of them have as much regard for neatness, cleanliness and the rights of others as a Berkshire hog has for a potato-peel. Tin-can towns have begun to charge various prices for the privilege of staying in them—prices ranging from twenty-five cents a night to seventy-five cents a night, or from four dollars to ten dollars a month. Even the free towns won't admit residents who wish to go to work each day. They've got to be tourists, or devote themselves to taking the air. As a result the seasonal laborers who went to Florida for the 1921-1922 season were taking themselves homeward early in 1922 and hurling many a deep, guttural, rough-neck curse at the state of Florida as they went. America would get very rapid and satisfactory action

on her immigration problem if her citizens could be brought in personal contact with its rottenness.

These automobile hoboes are about as welcome in Florida as a rattlesnake at a strawberry festival. The Florida newspapers, usually very slow indeed to find any flaws in anybody or anything that has secured a foothold in the state, emit poignant shrieks of rage at the very thought of them. Early in 1922 a North Carolina paper, with the smugness which characterizes the utterances of a resort newspaper when it thinks it is administering a painful black eye to another resort, stepped forward with a tale to the effect that 1922 was seeing a great exodus from Florida of broke, hungry and disheartened tourists. Instantly the Florida papers threw their palpitating typewriters into the breach. "The only Florida tourists beating it back to the North," declared the *Tampa Tribune* scornfully, "are the cut-rate, fly-by-night cheap-skates who have been com-

ing to the state and preying off the public for the past many years. . . . The state has enough of its own honest labor to take care of without opening its doors to the floater who is here to take the bread out of his brother's mouth for less than the honest price. This winter Florida is taking care of its own out-of-work men and women. The riff-raff, the confidence men, the fakir, the wage cutter and the public mendicant all get the cold shoulder in Florida."

The true sun-hunter and the tin-can tourist in good and accepted standing are received in most parts of the state with the same quiet welcome that would greet the arrival of a new citrus fruit. The big resorts like Palm Beach and Miami Beach don't welcome the tin-canners; but those resorts don't welcome any one who isn't able to spend at least fifty dollars a day on the merest essentials. And there are a number of young men employed by the leading Palm Beach hostelries who have nothing but un-

utterable contempt for the person who doesn't spend one hundred dollars a day while he is at Palm Beach.

So far as I know, tin-canners have never attempted to wield their can-openers at Palm Beach or Miami Beach; and it is highly probable that the regular Palm Beach set would give the tin-canners even more of a pain than the tin-canners would give the Palm Beach set. One can imagine the anguish on both sides if Mrs. J. Vanderplank Fritter of Park Avenue and a party of her prominent friends, should, after going in bathing in full evening dress, at one A. M., emerge in a still-potted state and run smack into a flivver loaded with that well-known tin-canner, Herman Blister, of Tackhammer, Michigan, and his wife, sister, daughter and maiden aunt. The Fritter party might feel that its entire evening had been spoiled; but the Blister family would probably feel that a sinister cloud had descended on their entire season.

CHAPTER V

OF PORTABLE BUNGALOWS—OF THE RHEUMATIC DAIRYMAN—OF THE LITTLE OLE TRUCK—OF SIMPLE PLEASURES AND LOW EXPENDITURES

THE tin-canner spends, for his winter of travel, about the same amount of money that a seasoned Palm Beach mixer frequently spends in a couple of days. This isn't exaggeration, either.

On the road between Miami and Palm Beach I encountered a commodious portable bungalow lumbering noisily along in the general direction of Palm Beach at the rate of about fifteen miles an hour. It filled the entire road, which was nine feet wide at that point. There are many stretches of fine macadamized road in Florida which are exactly nine feet wide, so that when two machines pass each other, one or both of them has to take to the ditch. The reason

for such peculiar road-building is supposed to be due to the fact that the road-engineers took a look at the surrounding country, decided that nobody would ever be willing to live in it, and figured that all traffic along the road would run in only one direction—north. They were mistaken, as people usually are about the development of Florida.

At any rate, this portable bungalow filled the road, and it continued to fill the road until it found a good hard place beside the road that would permit it to get out of the way without tearing itself to pieces. It had a thermometer hanging beside its back door in an attractive manner, and three neighborly-looking people were sitting placidly on its glassed-in front porch. Across the base of the front porch, in large gold letters, was painted the owners' address, Bellevue, Ohio, from which fact one might suspect that the owners were not persons who were striving to hide their lights beneath a bushel, or who would shrink timidly from publicity.

When questioned, the suspicion became a certainty. The owners of the portable bungalow proved to be typical tin-can tourists, equally ready to share with you their last tin of Norwegian sardines or Chicago baked beans in the Boston manner, or to furnish you with concise and intimate information concerning their own or their neighbors' business and family affairs from the panic of 1907 down to the present day.

The owner of the portable bungalow was a dairyman near Sandusky, Ohio, who had grown tired of developing rheumatism, chilblains and a grouch during the long winter months, and had decided three years before to spend the winter in Florida. He had enjoyed his first winter so much that he had persuaded a couple of friends to make the trip with him during the second winter; and this winter there were two other couples in his party. The other four people traveled ahead in a little sedan; while he and his wife and his eighteen-year-old son pounded along

behind in the ole truck. "Yessir, this house here is nothing but our ole delivery truck with a camping top put on it, and she certainly is the greatest ole truck you ever saw! Why, my gracious, she'll just go through anything, this ole truck will. Why, coming through the Everglades this ole truck ran into . . ."

That is one of the hall-marks of the simon-pure tin-can tourist. No matter how battered and dilapidated his automobile may be, it has qualities which place it above all other cars—even above other and newer cars of the same make. It can extricate itself from thicker mud and from deeper sand than other automobiles. Its feats of endurance are super-automotive. They verge—to hear the tin-canner tell it—on the miraculous. After the tin-canner has dwelt for some time on the almost-human intelligence of the little ole car, one thinks of it as standing up on its hind wheels and honking with delight when its master says a kind word to it.

The dairyman's portable bungalow, which would slough its skin with the advent of spring and return to its less romantic duties of trucking milk, contained a portable stove, countless canned things, a fully equipped sink and kitchen cabinet, three hammocks, bedding for seven people, and a phonograph, to say nothing of numerous odds and ends like chairs, dishes, pans, suit-cases and what-not.

In the party that used this portable bungalow as a base there were, as I have said, seven people. The seven of them had started from near Sandusky on the twenty-second of November, worked down to the west coast of Florida, lingering at the larger and better resorts, crossed over to the east coast and were slowly working back up through Palm Beach and Ormond. I met them on the eighth of February, so that they had been on the road for two months and a half. The expenses were borne equally by all of the travelers, except the dairyman's

son, who worked out his keep by doing the dirty work around the cars. Each of the other six chipped five dollars apiece into a general pool as money was needed. In the two and one-half months a grand total of five hundred and ten dollars had been chipped in; and this sum covered the total expenditures of the trip—gasoline for both automobiles; inner tubes, tires and repairs for both automobiles; street-car fares when needed; food for seven people; and movies whenever the spirit and the movies moved together. This meant an average of seventy-three dollars apiece for two and one-half months' travel in the sunny South, or almost exactly a dollar a day apiece. Such an expenditure contrasts startlingly with expenditures in the big resorts, where one week's expense for a man and his wife may easily cause a thousand-dollar bill to degenerate into a two-ounce package of chicken-feed.

The dairyman declared that to travel in

the way he was traveling cost him about one-third as much as it would have cost him to travel to Florida in trains and to live at hotels and boarding-houses. From this statement it can be seen that one doesn't necessarily have to be a millionaire in order to spend a winter in Florida.

CHAPTER VI

OF MRS. JARLEY, THE ORIGINAL TIN-CANNER—OF THE TWO SCHOOLS OF TIN-CAN THOUGHT—OF THE HARD-BOILED BACHELOR WITH THE CONDENSED OUTFIT—AND OF FOLK WHO RIDE ON THE BACKS OF THEIR NECKS

MR. CHARLES DICKENS, in *The Old Curiosity Shop,* described the original luxurious tin-canning vehicle; but Dickens knew the contraption as a caravan. And instead of being motor-driven, it was, of course, horse-drawn. The original tin-can tourist appears to have been Mrs. Jarley, proprietress of Jarley's Waxwork, who "rode in a smart little house upon wheels, with white dimity curtains festooning the windows, and window shutters of green picked out with panels of a staring red, in which happily contrasted colors the whole concern shone brilliant. . . . One-half of it . . . was carpeted, and so partitioned off at the further end as to accommodate a sleeping-place, constructed

after the fashion of a berth on board ship, which was shaded, like the little windows, with fair white curtains, and looked comfortable enough, though by what kind of gymnastic exercise the lady of the caravan ever contrived to get into it, was an unfathomable mystery. The other half served for a kitchen, and was fitted up with a stove whose small chimney passed through the room. It held also a closet or larder, several chests, a great pitcher of water, and a few cooking utensils and articles of crockery."

Heated discussions arise among the tin-canners as to the proper size of a camping outfit. The man with a portable bungalow scorns the man who jams all his belongings into a small space as being an old woman and a tight-wad; while the man who packs his camping outfit into the small machine views the portable bungalow owner with the utmost contempt as being inefficient, spoiled by luxury, a road hog and a slave to his belongings.

In Lemon City, a suburb of Miami, I found a tin-canner whose tin-canning outfit was probably the extreme opposite of the portable bungalow outfit. His home was Chicago, and since early autumn he had jounced from Chicago down to Texas, around the eastern side of the Gulf of Mexico, down the west coast of Florida and up the east coast.

He was a hard-boiled bachelor of the sort who announces loudly that he doesn't propose to bother anybody and that he doesn't want anybody to bother him. His means of locomotion was a small Ford runabout with a box-like contraption behind the seat similar to that used by salesmen who carry their samples around with them. Nothing was strapped to the sides or the running boards of the machine; it was an ordinary runabout with the top up and with an inconspicuous box attached behind. Into this box, which a carpenter had built for him for a matter of seven dollars, the tin-canner had packed

everything that he needed for a five months' camping trip. He had lain awake at night for years doping out exactly where he was going to carry the butter and how he could fry the eggs with the least commotion; and the final result was a masterpiece of compactness—or such compactness that if any one but the inventor had tried to repack the camping outfit, he might have sweated over the problem for two hours and still had enough left over to fill a freight car.

The front of the box came off and proved to be shelves packed with tin cans and other matters pertaining to the kitchen. A khaki top and sides pulled out of the top of the box, extending straight backward from the machine top, and were held in place by collapsible uprights. The seat of the machine, laid along the top of his kitchen shelves, formed his bed; and on this was placed what he called a shoulder-and-hip mattress. All a person needed, he explained, was a mattress that made a comfortable resting-place for

his hips and shoulders: it made no difference what became of his legs. His cooking utensils, including a collapsible stove no bigger than a fair-sized inkwell, came out of a small tin suit-case. He had every move planned out in detail.

"In the morning," he explained, fondling his outfit with the proud and gentle hands of a parent, "I get up and eat one of these individual packages of breakfast food. While I'm doing that the water is boiling for my coffee, and as soon as the coffee is done, I put on my frying pan with bacon and eggs in it. I use two paper napkins for my tablecloth. When I have finished breakfast, I put the eggshells in the breakfast-food box, wipe out the frying-pan with the napkins, put them into the box on top of the eggshells, and touch a match to the box. That cleans everything up." He knew exactly how, when and where he was going to do everything, and he was delighted to knock off a couple of days to explain any or all of

his well-ordered regimen to any one who wanted to know about it. He would even deign to explain it as fully as possible to some who didn't want to know about it. One of his greatest pleasures was to unpack and pack the tin suit-case that contained his kitchen utensils. It seemed impossible that any human agency could get all of them into the space at his disposal, but he could do it almost every time. Occasionally he would find himself with a frying-pan left over when the packing was finished; but instead of getting excited he would unpack calmly and coolly and fit the things together with a practised hand until there was nothing left over. He had a collapsible chair that dropped into the side pocket of his coat and took up less space than a note-book. He had a diminutive double-ended ice-cream freezer. This was his ice-chest. Butter went in one end and milk or cream in the other. The biggest day in the life of this genius will, I believe, be when he discovers a collapsible

frying pan that will fold into a one-pound bacon box.

The ordinary tin-canner, unlike these two extreme examples, is content with an ordinary, small touring car, which, when in motion, has a part of his camping outfit attached to every exposed part of his machine. The tent and a couple of suit-cases are attached to one running board; mattresses and blankets are attached to the other; cases of canned goods, kitchen utensils and other odds and ends are fixed to the rear or concealed beneath a false floor in the tonneau. The false floor is frequently carried to such an extreme that the occupants of the automobile convey the impression of riding around the world on the backs of their necks. When the ordinary tin-canners break out their camping outfit, the tent extends out at right angles from the side door of the car, so that the occupants of the tent can use the car as a combination lavatory, sitting-room, chiffonier, clothes closet, pantry and safe-deposit vault.

CHAPTER VII

OF THE MIGRANT FROM MARION—OF HIS FEARS—OF LAND AT A NICKEL AN ACRE—OF SAND FLEAS AND SAND SPURS—OF LONELINESS AND HONEY-MOONERS—AND OF THE DOCTOR WHO WAS RUN TO DEATH

I CONFERRED with a mild-spoken tin-canner at a Miami tin-can camp one hot February afternoon as to tin-canning in general. His wife, who was a capable and keen-witted lady in a blue gingham dress, sat with us and dug the soft substance out of tiny pine cones, her idea being to sandpaper them and varnish them at a later date, and make them into fascinating strings of beads. This is one of the most popular diversions among lady tin-canners—almost as popular as is horseshoe pitching among the male tin-canners.

The tin-canner was a non-committal corn farmer from the vicinity of that newly-

famous Ohio town, Marion. Careful thought on his part, assisted by frequent promptings from his wife, brought out the following information: He had broken away from the farm for the winter because he preferred sitting around where it was comfortably warm to sitting around where it was uncomfortably cold. He wasn't particularly struck with Florida land, but he liked the Florida air. Looking at Florida land with the eye of an Ohio farmer, he felt that he wouldn't particularly care to pay much more than a nickel an acre for most of it. He met up with a lot of Michigan and Ohio farmers along the road, and they felt the same way about it. Still, it was kind of restful and soothing to look at, and the sun and the air more than made up for the drawbacks of the land. The sun was nicer just to sit in than the Ohio sun, and there was more of it. This Florida sun made a person feel kind of trifling—trifling being southern and mid-western slang for

lazy. He wouldn't want any Florida people to hear him say that some of the land looked worthless, because they would probably pass an act through the legislature forbidding him to come back into the state again—and he wouldn't like that because it was a real pleasant place to come back to—in the winter. Besides, you couldn't tell much about this Florida land from looking at it. Something that was a swamp one year would be nice solid land the next year and selling for fifty dollars a front foot. These Florida people were real touchy people and you had to be mighty careful what you said when they were around. The sand flies pricked holes in him every afternoon, but he preferred not to mention it when any Florida people were around for fear they would say he was a California man that had been paid to come over and cast slurs on Florida's fair name. And for the same reason he disliked to mention the sand fleas that came up out of the sand around sun-down and

nipped him all over the legs, or of the sand spurs that caught in the trousers and felt as though several people were prodding him with ice-picks.

There was one bad feature connected with tin-canning, and that was loneliness. There were a lot of honeymooners among the tin-canners, and they were about the only ones who didn't seem to get lonely. Unless you had a couple of friends to travel with, or were honeymooners, you were apt to get lonely and homesick, and go back where it was cold, and be sore at yourself for going back.

They were traveling with a doctor and his wife from back home. The doctor was the only doctor in the neighborhood and he had been just run to death. Folks wouldn't let him alone. He was just run to death. Somebody was getting sick every minute, and they'd call him up at all hours of the day and night and just run him to death. For years he'd been planning to take a vaca-

tion and rest up, but they ran him so he couldn't. So finally when he heard that they were going to Florida, he just up and went. Oh, he was run to death, but a few weeks in Florida had done him a world of good. No, he didn't know how his former patients were getting along. Probably they were all right. Probably there was some young college feller looking out for them. There generally was in a case like that. He didn't know. Things like that didn't worry you much when you struck Florida and began to sit out in the sun.

CHAPTER VIII

OF THE MARVELOUS SITTING ABILITY OF THE TIN-CANNERS—OF THE PARKS IN WHICH THEY SIT—OF THE HORSESHOE BUGS AND THE CHECKER AND DOMINO BEETLES—OF THE DELICATE MOVEMENTS OF A CELEBRATED HORSESHOE TOSSER—AND OF THE INTERNATIONAL HORSESHOE CLUB

And so we return to the great craving of the sun-hunters: to sit in the sun and take the air. Golf is a matter of which they know little; tennis is regarded as a game for muscleless smart Alecks; polo might be a sort of dog or a movie actor—they're not quite sure about it; sea-bathing is a diversion in which they rarely indulge. But they are remarkable sitters. Given a bench in the sun, they can outsit a trained athlete or the United States Senate.

All of the towns and cities and large tin-can camps of Florida cater to the sun-hunters by setting apart a sunny park where they

can gather and commune silently or monosyllabically with one another, chew tobacco, discuss fertilizers, cuss the administration and indulge in the games to which they are addicted. Some of the sun-hunters who wear the benches shiny in these parks are tin-canners; and some are seasonal sun-hunters who have left their farms and their businesses in the North and hired a bungalow in Florida for two hundred or four hundred or eight hundred or one thousand dollars a season; and some are professional sun-hunters from the North who have made barely enough money to last them the rest of their lives unless the country goes Bolshevik or unless Congress taxes their savings out of existence and who have bought homes for themselves in Florida; and a very few are rebellious husbands from the big hotels who have sneaked away from the money-perfumed atmosphere of the time-killers and incurred their wives' disgust and loathing by mingling with the rough-necks.

Take, for example, Royal Palm Park at Miami. It is larger than some of the Florida parks for sun-hunters; but the people who use it are no different from those who use similar parks all over Florida.

On one side of the park is Biscayne Bay, with ginger-breadish house-boats and gleaming steam yachts and broad-winged flying boats crowded along the shore. On another side is Miami's principal business street, lined with modern office buildings and up-to-the-minute haberdasheries and modistes and drug-stores and real-estate offices and hotels and soft-drink emporiums and parked automobiles and bustling shoppers.

In the park itself, beneath the softly rustling palms, an audience of silent sun-hunters, sprawled on benches which surround the edges, gaze intently at the long double row of horseshoe pitchers and at a score of long tables crowded with men who are brooding over obviously important matters. The men at the tables are the skilled checker,

chess and domino players of the tin-can camps and the sun-hunters' colonies. At one table one afternoon I recognized a doctor who had cured my childish ailments in Maine many years ago. Opposite him was a cattleman from Iowa. Beside him was a crippled begger and panhandler who owned no home at all; and busily playing checkers with the panhandler was a prosperous-looking small-town banker from Illinois.

Checker and domino tournaments of terrifying ferocity take place at frequent intervals. The champion checker player of Miami issues a challenge to the champion checker player of West Palm Beach, and the outcome is awaited with breathless interest. It is not unusual for individuals to wager as much as fifty cents on the result.

For hair-raising excitement and action so thrilling that it frequently causes hardened sun-hunting onlookers to swallow their chews, one must turn to the horseshoe pitchers. Horseshoe pitching is the repre-

Photograph by F. A. Robinson

Miami's main street at midday showing that there is one automobile to every seven-eighths of an inhabitant.

A portion of the Tin-Can City at Tampa, with tin-canners engaged in their favorite pursuits.

sentative sport of the tin-canner and the sun-hunter, just as the representative sport of the British working man is drinking Burton's and just as the representative sport of certain African tribes is wearing rings in their noses.

Just as an Englishman is unable to see anything in baseball, and just as most Americans yawn heartily at the mere mention of cricket, so is the ordinary passer-by unable to detect the charm in horseshoe pitching. He sees a long row of men tossing horseshoes at iron stakes and another long row of men digging the horseshoes out of the dirt and tossing them back at other stakes. But the sun-hunters get out immediately after breakfast and pitch all day with feverish intensity and passionate concentration, only quitting when the sun goes down behind the palms in a golden haze.

Some of the horseshoe experts carry their private horseshoes with them in leather bags, and it is not unusual for an

aspiring horseshoe tosser to seek out the experts and pay handsomely for copies of the instruments with which they won to fame and high position. Thus it may be seen how among horseshoe tossers, as well as among golfers, ballplayers and others who should know better, the delusion persists that a workman may attain perfection through his tools instead of through himself.

The more skilful tossers carry with them all the appliances of their avocation—tape measures with which to measure the distance of the shoes from the stake; calipers to measure their distance from one another; chalk with which to keep score; collapsible rakes to smooth out the tumbled dirt around the stakes. The delicate movements of a celebrated tosser as he hitches up his galluses, spits on his right hand and tests his muscles by sinking to a semi-squatting position and rising upright again, are watched with the keenest interest by large crowds of

sun-hunters. When a horseshoe makes a particularly noteworthy flight, a fusillade of applausive spitting splashes on the sun-baked ground.

There is, of course, an International Horseshoe Club. It is too important an organization to be demeaned with a merely local name, such as the Horseshoe Club of America. Then there are local chapters that indulge in tournaments at which feeling runs high. At West Palm Beach, when I was there, a new pitch was being prepared for the big impending tournament with Lake Worth. An international polo match may get more publicity, but there's more quiet bitterness over a horseshoe tournament—much more. Especially in Florida.

Those who weary of dominoes, checkers, chess and horseshoe pitching are at liberty to cut a bamboo pole and sit in the sun beside one of the countless rivers, streams and inlets that dent the Florida coast. These waters are full of trout, bass, red snapper,

yellowtails, pompano, grunts—silvery and delicious fish so-called because of their noisy and peevish growls and grunts of protest when removed from the water—and many other fish whose eating and fighting qualities would have caused Izaak Walton to swoon with delight.

It's hard to believe that the North, every winter, is full of people who hate northern winters, and of folk who don't know what to do with themselves. If they don't know enough to become sun-hunters, they deserve to suffer.

BOOK THREE

TROPICAL GROWTH

CHAPTER I

OF THE ENTHUSIASM OF ALL GROWING THINGS IN FLORIDA—OF PAW-PAWS AND PROSPECTUSES AND PERFECT THIRTY-FOURS—OF FIENDS IN HUMAN SHAPE—AND OF THE WATCHFULNESS OF THE NATIVES FOR INSULTS

EVERYTHING grows in Florida. That is to say, everything grows in Florida that Florida people want to grow. That is Florida's specialty: growing. Occasionally a few things get out of hand and indulge in some over-enthusiastic growing when Florida people wish that they wouldn't; but for the most part Florida is proud of the remarkable growths that take place within her boundaries. This is particularly true of southern Florida. The superlatives as well as the fish grow to surprising proportions: so do the real-estate advertisements and the avocados. The sun is larger and warmer than in other parts of America; and the

sky—unless the leading Florida authorities are mistaken in their observations—is higher and bluer than elsewhere.

There are only three things that southern Florida has never made any effort to grow. These are mountains, snow-storms and earthquakes. If there were any particular reason for her to grow any of these things, she could probably arrange to pump up a few square miles of ocean floor and pile the sand up into a mountain that would look like a blood relative—say a grandson—of Fujiyama; and she could unquestionably find a way to raise artificial snow-storms that would make Oregon jealous, and earthquakes that would shake out a person's eye-teeth. Since there isn't any reason for them, she specializes on more useful things like paw-paws and prospectuses and perfect thirty-four bathing-girls and what-not, and secures some startling results.

Take Miami, for example. Before taking it, one should understand that there is grave

danger in taking any particular city in Florida to the exclusion of any other city, because all the untaken cities immediately feel slighted and begin to thirst for the heart's blood of the one who did the taking.

Each Florida city or resort is violently jealous of every other resort or city. The residents of Palm Beach speak sneeringly of Miami as being a bit plebeian. The residents of Miami speak compassionately of Palm Beach, as young and pretty girls speak of decaying beauty. St. Petersburg and Tampa and Miami have little of a favorable nature to say concerning one another. They only unite to resist attacks from resorts outside the state, or to say a few tart words about California.

Every little while some fiend in human shape prints a piece in a South Carolina or North Carolina or Georgia paper falsely accusing a Florida city of harboring a few cases of typhoid or scarlet fever, or of being too chilly for winter bathing. Instantly the

Florida people rise to defend the state's fair name; and the low, searing curses that are hurled against the foul detractor are warm enough to singe a hog.

Every little while, too, Florida gets a chance to slip a knife into her hated resort rival, California; and when the chance occurs, the air is filled with a deadly swishing sound, due to the violence with which the knife is inserted.

A snow-storm in California causes Florida newspapers to spread loud and exultant head-lines entirely across their front pages, declaring excitedly: NO LIVES LOST IN CALIFORNIA BLIZZARD. This is the negation of news everywhere except in Florida; but Florida smacks her lips over it with the keenest delight. She emphasizes the blizzard's severity by shrieking that no lives were lost, thus implying that hundreds —nay, thousands—might have been lost save for the merest chance. She is so anxious to have tourists realize that she is

the queen of winter resorts that she is overjoyed when another resort-state is cursed with a phase of Nature that tends to discourage tourists.

There is another grave danger in taking any Florida city as an example. The natives of Florida winter resorts are constantly on the qui vive for slights and insults. They are so much on the qui vive in this respect that there is scarcely room for any one else on it. They occupy practically the entire qui vive.

CHAPTER II

OF HOTEL RATES—OF MOSQUITOES—AND OF THE OUTCRY AGAINST THE SHIPPING BOARD FOR DARING TO MENTION EUROPE

ONE can never tell beforehand what statements, phrases, remarks, words or inflections—or lack of these things—the staunch Floridans will regard as slighting or insulting. Sometimes they become just as fretful if you don't say them as they do if you do say them.

There is the matter of hotel rates, for example: if you tell what they are at the best hotels, all Florida reviles you for frightening tourists away. If you tell what they are at the cheaper hotels, the owners and officials of the best hotels curse you bitterly for representing Florida as a cheap place. Evidently they want you to lie about the hotel rates; but if you do, they will call you a liar.

Then there is the little matter of mosquitoes. Usually there are not mosquitoes along the Florida coastline between the months of November and March, inclusive, because the prevailing winds drive them inland. Occasionally, however, the wind shifts or the atmosphere is unduly affected by the hemisphere or something technical; and the tough, leathery, muscular, hungry Florida mosquitoes are blown down to the shore, where they sink their dagger-like beaks into the soft white flesh of the northern tourists.

It is only occasionally, it should be understood, that such a catastrophe occurs. Occasionally at Palm Beach one is told with hoarse jeering laughter that there are mosquitoes at Miami; but when one gets to Miami he finds no mosquitoes, and is told with cold emphasis that there aren't any in Miami—but that there are many of them at Palm Beach. And so it goes. If one doesn't mention the Palm Beach mosquitoes, one

runs the risk of being viewed with abhorrence by the Miami folk; and if one doesn't mention the Miami mosquitoes, one is apt to be regarded with loathing by the Palm Beach boosters. And if one goes back North and makes any mention whatever of mosquitoes in Florida, he is more than likely to be enthusiastically damned by every Floridan as a vile prevaricator.

Not long ago the Shipping Board in its advertisements emphasized the delights of winter travel in Europe. Instantly the watchful Floridans leaped to their feet with ear-piercing shrieks of protest. A government bureau, they screamed, was taking the money of Florida taxpayers to advertise winter attractions in competition with their own. The entire state had never been so insulted in its life; and the wrathful cries which went forth traveled all the way to Washington and knocked unsightly chips from many of the capital's ivory domes. As a result, the Shipping Board promised to

change its policy, and the touchy Floridans became calmer—though it is difficult for the outsider to see how the Shipping Board can advertise at all in the winter without entering into competition with Florida. But you never can tell. You never can tell. It is about as safe to write about Florida as it would be to kick carelessly at the nubbins on a floating mine.

CHAPTER III

OF PALM TREES—OF VARIETIES OF FISH—AND OF FRUIT AND LIARS AND BARON MUNCHAUSEN

LET us return to the matter of growth in southern Florida. Everything, as has been said, grows there. There are twenty-nine varieties of palm trees; and one can spend an entire week doing nothing but check up palm trees. According to official count there are two hundred and seventy-five different varieties of fish in southern Florida waters—or there were toward the middle of last February. A new variety is discovered every week. Unofficial counters say that there are more than seven hundred varieties. The unofficial ones are probably nearer right than the official ones. There are so many different varieties of fruit that if one attempted to eat every variety in one day, he would unquestionably burst with a

loud majority report. A partial list of fruits which are being successfully raised in Florida's southernmost county, provided by a man with a poor memory, contains avocado—or alligator pear, custard apple, mammea apple, Jamaica apple, rose apple, Bugamot, citron, banana, Barbadoes cherry, chermoyas, cecropia, Surinam cherry, carissa, Jackfruit, lime, lemon, loquat, various sorts of mangoes, fifty-seven different varieties of orange, a number of crosses between oranges and other things, grapefruit, eggfruit, dates, olives, monsterosa deliciosa, papaya, pomegranate, Japanese persimmon, sour sop, sapote, sapodillo, strawberry, tomato. If a Floridan has plenty of time at his disposal, he can think up twenty or thirty more fruits that are fruiting constantly and energetically in southern Florida.

One of the unfortunate features of discussing southern Florida lies in the fact that if one isn't careful, his non-Florida or anti-Florida hearers will suspect him of having

taken money to advertise the state. They will, in short, suspect him of exaggeration when he carelessly mentions the ever-sunny skies and the perfect-thirty-four bathing girls and the amazing growths. The whole subject is fraught with risks. Baron Munchausen would never have been able to work up a reputation as a liar in southern Florida, because his lies weren't much more startling than the things that happen there every day. But if the Baron had sandwiched a few Florida facts among his lies and had tried them out on his neighbors some evening after his second gallon of Dortmunder beer, they would have slapped one another on the back and rolled around in their chairs with tears of mirth pouring down their cheeks, and assured one another between their spasmodic gasps and groans of merriment that there never would be anybody in the world who would be able to tell such downright ridiculous, preposterous, side-splitting, hair-raising lies as the Baron.

CHAPTER IV

OF MIAMI AND OF TROPICAL GROWTH—OF THE GROWING OF A SHINGLE INTO A BUNGALOW—OF THE POPULATION OF MIAMI IN 1980—AND OF THE PRONUNCIATION OF MIAMI

TAKE Miami, for example. In 1896 Miami consisted of two small dwellings and a storehouse. Sometimes as many as ten Seminole Indians would be seen in the vicinity of these buildings at one time, and the occupants of the dwellings would scarcely be able to sleep that night because of their excitement at seeing such a throng of people.

In 1910, Miami had a population of 5,471. In 1920 there were about 30,000 people living there. In 1922 there were 40,000. That's the way things go in Florida. Once let a thing get a foothold, and it grows so rapidly that the general effect is more that of an explosion than a growth.

Grass grows with such enthusiasm in Miami that one can't merely plant seed and let it grow. If one did that the grass would come in so thick that it would choke itself. What one does is to plant the seed and then, when the seed has sprouted, transplant the spears of grass so that they're six inches apart.

Tree culture is very simple. A small piece of wood the size of a toothpick is stuck in moist sand. At the end of four years the toothpick has grown into a hibiscus bush twenty feet high and twenty feet across. The publisher of the leading Miami paper declares that in some sections of the city the soil is so fertile that if a shingle is planted in it before sun-up, it will grow into a fully equipped bungalow by nightfall. Other fish stories will be taken up in another place.

Miami surges ahead so rapidly that none of its citizens dares to stand still for a moment in order to watch it grow for fear that

Photograph by F. A. Robinson

Scientists skilled in the use of the slide rule have estimated that up to and including April 1, 1922, 1,672,889

Photograph by W. A. Fishbaugh

One of Miami's many beautiful public schools.

Photograph by W. A. Fishbaugh

Private yachts and house-boats tied up at the foot of Miami's principal shopping street.

he'll be left so far behind that he'll never catch up. If he makes a prediction, he makes a running prediction; never a standing prediction. If he sells a piece of land—and it's as natural for a Miami citizen to sell a piece of land as it is for him to have coffee for breakfast—he is very likely to name a price that the land will reach to-morrow instead of the price that it has reached to-day. He is always moving ahead of the city.

The population of Miami has increased four hundred and forty per cent. in the last ten years. Therefore the Miami people figure that it will easily increase another four hundred and forty per cent. in the next ten years. They claim that the city's population in 1925 will be one hundred thousand, and that in 1930 it will be two hundred thousand. Proceeding at that rate, its population in 1950 will be five million; and by 1980 practically every one in North America will be pushing and crowding in his effort to squeeze into the city.

It is, of course, quite obvious to the effete and blasé northerner that the claims made by the Miami folk show that there are some screws loose on their claimers. The Miami people, however, say that the northern people don't know how to adjust their views to a rapidly growing city—that they stand still to look at it; and that while they are looking, the city grows out of focus. They prove their theory by the following anecdote:

A short time ago the telephone company sent down estimators to look at Miami and estimate its population in another ten years, in order that the company might be able to install the proper-sized telephone switchboard. The estimators looked, made careful estimates, and reported that the population would be one hundred thousand in ten years' time. The telephone company burst into loud howls of derision. "You're crazy!" it cried to the estimators. "Who ever told you that you could estimate?

Somebody must be paying you to boost the place! Get out of the way and let us send down some regular estimators!" So the company sent down some new estimators; and these estimators in turn looked over the ground and did some careful estimating. They then returned and reported that the population in ten years' time would be one hundred and twenty thousand. The telephone company, without more ado, installed a switchboard based on that estimate. But the Miami people claim that the estimators were making stationary estimates, and that the difference between the estimates of the first and the second estimators was merely due to the fact that the city had moved forward between their visits. If they had known how to place themselves *en rapport,* so to speak, with the city and move forward with it, both of them would have estimated that the population would be two hundred thousand in ten years' time.

At any rate, the real-estate operations in

Miami—and the word Miami, by the way, is pronounced My-amma by every one except the uncultured folk who insist on pronouncing it as spelled—the real-estate operations in Miami are on a scale that will provide building lots for twenty million people by 1930.

CHAPTER V

OF REAL-ESTATE DEALERS—OF THE LARGE HANDSOME SALESMEN—OF NOISY AUCTIONS—OF ABSOLUTE AND UNABSOLUTE AUCTIONS—AND OF PRICES FOR EVERY POCKETBOOK

THE exact number of real-estate dealers in Miami is not known. Practically every one over eighteen years of age dabbles in real-estate at one time or another. Almost every one owns a lot somewhere that he is anxious to get rid of, although it is unanimously admitted by the owners that every lot in Miami will double in value in a year's time. Almost every other doorway along Miami's crowded streets shelters a real-estate firm; and whole coveys of real-estate firms are frequently sheltered in buildings that would be considered small by a family of three people.

Some of the firms keep impressive-looking salesmen standing just outside of the

building in which the firms do business. These salesmen are large, handsome men for the most part, strikingly dressed in white trousers, pearl gray sack coats, white shoes, white belts, white neckties and straw hats tilted knowingly toward the right ear. If one stops for a moment to admire a window display which shows automobiles, diamonds and tax-exempt bonds sprouting from the super-fertile soil of land that is on sale within at one thousand dollars an acre, one of the salesmen is very apt to come up behind him and tempt him with honeyed words. It is almost futile to struggle against these salesmen. Unless one possesses an iron will, he will weakly permit himself to be coaxed within the portals of the office, where he will spend the better part of an hour looking at meaningless maps and hearing large sums of money mentioned with the utmost carelessness and disrespect.

Other real-estate firms constantly carry on selling campaigns that strongly resemble

—in noise, at least—the return of the Twenty-seventh Division from the War. They resort to brass bands, numbers of sight-seeing automobiles, silver-tongued orators to cajole the crowd, and advertisements that inflame the acquisitive spirit of every beholder. When newcomers see a monster parade of automobiles, headed by a blaring band, swinging through the streets of Miami, they usually think, in their innocence, that a three-ring circus has come to town. As a matter of fact, it is only the firm of Yammer & Yawp taking a mob of prospects out to its daily auction sale of lots at Rubber Plant Park.

Skilled and expensive real-estate auctioneers are imported from California and New York—auctioneers capable of selling refrigerating machines to inhabitants of the Arctic Circle. People are lured to the auctions by free lunches, by distribution of souvenirs, by the giving away of automobiles. "We give away," advertises one sub-

division owner, "a new Ford car each Monday or its equivalent in cash, and other valuable gifts daily for the duration of the sale. And we will entertain those who attend the sales with Any Amusements We Are Able To Provide." The exact meaning of the last phrase is shrouded in mystery, but it makes its appeal to those who read between the lines.

"Remember," shouts another firm, "Remember, We Are Giving Away Absolutely Gratis a Sedan to the Person Holding the Lucky Number—Get Your Free Ticket Now." "Auction! Auction! Auction!" bawls another. "Beautiful and useful souvenirs and prizes to be given away." "Come ride in our busses and win our free prizes," coaxes another.

Early in 1922 the real-estate firms which disposed of their land by auction were vociferating passionately that their auctions were bona fide, that they were "legitimate and sound," that they were "without re-

serve," that they were absolute. "Absolute auctions" was the watchword of the hour. The inference was, of course, that a number of auction sales had been held that were not absolute. "One Thousand Dollars Reward," stated one firm in a dignified but bean-spilling manner, "will be paid for the proof of any buy-bidder at any of our sales. The opportunity of opportunities to buy a piece of the richest garden and fruit land in southern Florida. Remember, you make the price and every lot put up will positively be sold to the highest and best bidder without limit or reserve."

This was what had been happening: Real-estate firms had advertised auctions, put up lots for sale, and, when those in attendance languidly refused to bid more than six or seven dollars for a lot, used professional buyers to make phony bids in order either to run up the price or get the lots off the market. It is possible that such a thing will never happen again, now that real-estate

firms have the habit of advertising absolute auctions—possible, but scarcely probable. With five or six auctions being held each day, and with large numbers of unattractive lots being offered to stolid middle-westerners who have come more for the free lunch and the automobile ride than for the real-estate, it is inevitable that some lots will go for about one dollar and seventy-five cents if everything is left in the hands of the legitimate prospects. Common sense tells us that no real-estate dealer could stand such a blow without emitting raucous shrieks of pain, no matter how persuasively and convincingly he may chatter about absolute auctions.

Some of the real-estate dealers allow customers to buy land on terms that would attract even Trotsky, who doesn't believe in that sort of thing. Four-hundred-dollar lots in one subdivision can be had for twenty dollars cash and ten dollars a month, with no interest or taxes for a year. In

another subdivision, one-thousand-two-hundred-and-fifty-dollar lots sell for one hundred dollars cash and twenty-five dollars a month until twenty per cent. of the principal has been paid, after which the buyer can sink back and refrain from paying any more on his principal for seven and a half years. A firm advertises island water-front lots at five thousand seven hundred and fifty dollars a lot, the terms being "seven hundred and fifty cash; balance five hundred every six months; no interest first year; no taxes till spring 1925."

CHAPTER VI

OF SUBDIVISIONS, WISE AND OTHERWISE—OF LANDSCAPE ATROCITIES—OF SMALL FARMS AND FARMERS—AND OF FASCINATING STRAWBERRY AND TOMATO STATISTICS

SUBDIVISIONS extend out of Miami in all directions—up the coast and down the coast and inland and out into the bay in the shape of islands. Palm Beach is seventy-five miles north of Miami; and there are almost enough subdivisions along that seventy-five mile stretch to provide homes for a million people.

Some of the subdivisions are beautiful and some of them are horrible. Some have been thoroughly cleared of the tangled jungle of palmettos and other scrub that makes a total mess of all undeveloped Florida land; and flawless roads and pavements have been constructed, water mains put in, and gas, water and electricity provided.

Restrictions are imposed in some of the good ones: homes costing less than four thousand can not be built on certain lots, while on other lots they must cost at least fifteen thousand.

Other subdivisions are laid out purely and simply, as the saying goes, for the purpose of separating the sucker from his money. The streets are half-laid, the location is vile, and the shacks that are run up on the crowded lots are little better than the marsh-huts of Revere Beach and Coney Island to which poverty-stricken city dwellers of Boston and New York frequently repaired during the heated terms of the early 'eighties.

On top of these depressing spectacles, many of which may some day be partly obscured in tropical verdure, certain enterprising citizens of Miami have added to Florida's scenic beauties by lining the roadsides with blatant sign-boards setting forth the delights of garages, restaurants, cloth-

ing emporia and similar enterprises. Not content with building self-sustaining sign-boards which protrude gauntly and repulsively from the flat landscape and convince the newcomer that he is approaching a slum-city, they have nailed countless numbers of huge yellow monstrosities to the palms and fruit-trees along the highways—signs that have no influence on any one except the lover of beauty, and which only serve to fill him with contempt for people who can permit the few natural beauties of their surroundings to be so befouled. In the North one expects to find—as he does find—a plague of sign-boards, and hideous summer resorts whose predominant features are those of the awful and tasteless 'eighties. In the new South, however, which lures tourists with honeyed words and promises of every sort of beauty, the erecting of roadside sign-boards should be viewed with as much disgust and loathing as grapefruit-stealing or murder—both of

which crimes fall under somewhat the same head in Miami.

Spreading through and beyond the subdivisions are the orange and grapefruit groves, and the truck gardens and vegetable farms. Oranges and grapefruit are so common in southern Florida that grapefruit are served free in many of the hotels; while many other hotels keep large bowls of free oranges alongside the ice-water tank. So far as is known, these are the only things that one has a chance of getting for nothing in Florida hotels.

There are hundreds of three-acre and five-acre farms owned by northerners who didn't like winter, and ran away from it with one or two thousand dollars in their pockets. Many of these little farmers not only manage to make both ends meet, but even salt away comfortable bank rolls. One little town near Miami shipped sixty-one thousand quarts of strawberries to northern cities during the first six weeks of the 1922

season, and the growers' share of the spoils was fifty cents a quart. The wise strawberry farmers, who plant their land to velvet beans during the summer and plow them under in September, and otherwise indulge in the clever tricks of the trade, get some very snappy results. One of the best strawberry farmers near Miami had four and one-tenth acres of land planted to strawberries in 1921. His first berries came in on December twentieth, and he picked twice a week until July fifteenth. The total yield of his four and one-tenth acres was 41,059 quarts, his average price for each quart was forty-five cents, and his gross sales amounted to slightly over eighteen thousand five hundred dollars. His total expenses were a little over six thousand dollars.

More than eight thousand acres are planted to tomatoes in the vicinity of Miami, and nearly five hundred thousand crates were shipped north during the 1921 season. These tomatoes bring the growers about

three dollars a crate, of which about a dollar and seventy-five cents must be charged off to fertilizer, labor, hauling and crating. The life of a tomato farmer is not a happy one, for the crop is very sensitive to wet weather. It is also very sensitive to dry weather. The slightest nip of frost also puts a severe crimp in it. Some of the tomato farmers say that the plant is so sensitive that if a man cusses or chews tobacco in its vicinity, it will refuse to bear. In spite of all this, there are plenty of tomato-lovers to plant tomatoes every winter, and some of them have made fortunes out of this popular fruit—or vegetable.

CHAPTER VII

OF THE SUSPICIOUS STORIES CONCERNING THE MANGO—OF THE PET MANGO OF THE MIAMIANS —AND OF ITS SUPERIORITY TO OTHER THINGS

THE cupidity of farmers who are sick of northern winters is easily aroused by prices obtained for the best varieties of mangoes. "Their rich, spicy flavor, tempting fragrance and beautiful coloring," say the Miami prospecti, "make them one of the most tempting table desserts that can be imagined." Miami, it appears, has a monopoly on this fruit, and the catalogues rub in the bad news by adding that "this monopoly is not only confined to the cultivation, but also to the exquisite joy of eating it, as very few find their way to the northern markets, the local demand far exceeding the supply." One reads that the choicest varieties "readily sell in the northern mar-

kets for from one dollar to one dollar and fifty cents each," thus confirming the skeptical northerner in the belief of the late P. T. Barnum that there was one born every minute. The weak spot in this argument is not visible offhand to the doubting Thomases from the North who spend the winter in Florida. The mango ripens in summer—in June and July—so the winter visitors can not sink their teeth in the widely advertised fruit. Consequently they always feel sure that there is some good reason why the Florida people prefer the exquisite joy of eating the mango to the even more exquisite joy of shaking down their northern brothers for one dollar and fifty cents per mango.

Strangely enough, there is no Ethiopian concealed anywhere in the mango woodpile, although any one who aspires to become a mango-grower may have his first fine enthusiasm dashed by the fact that mango trees don't begin bearing until five to seven years after they have been set out; and seven

years is a long time to wait, especially if one is hunting for quick returns.

The mango in its finest form, however, is worth waiting seven years for. The mango with which northerners are familiar is a small, mottled, unhealthy-looking fruit about the size of a large lemon. The interior is partly mushy and partly stringy, and it gets tangled up in the teeth in a most annoying manner. The general effect obtained from dallying with it is that the mango is a total loss. The pet mango of the Miamians is a very different proposition. It is known as the Hayden mango, and is about the size of a large coconut. When ripe it is rosy red all over, and has the fragrance of a flower. It is a baffling fruit to open, as its seed is about the size and shape of the cuttle-bone used as an aid to canaries' digestions. The unskilled mango eater will frequently wreck an entire mango trying to worry it open gently; but he eventually learns that one

must wring its neck in a brutal manner to get the best results.

The meat of the Hayden mango is sweeter than that of any other fruit I know; and it has a peculiar and delicious taste and aroma of pine forests. Years ago my grandfather, in the spring of the year, would go prowling through the New Hampshire woods; and on his return he would bring with him a lard-pail full of the tender, slippery, fragrant inner lining of the bark of pine trees, locally known as "slyver." This was always seized with delighted acclaim by the entire family and wolfed down greedily because of its delicious piney taste. The Hayden mango has the same piney taste raised to the thirty-third or master's degree. One Hayden mango makes an ample dessert for two people; and I have not found that the Miamians are averse to selling them, or that the prices are as high as the catalogues claim. Packages of six Hayden mangoes have been

sent to me repeatedly from Miami by parcel post at three dollars a half dozen.

The Miami catalogues are a trifle wild when they start raving about the exquisite joy of eating a mango that costs a dollar and a half; but if one can get a good Hayden mango for half a dollar, it will probably strike him as being considerably better than such ordinary matters as oatmeal gruel, baked beans, suet pudding, griddle cakes, fried bananas, bread pudding, or a poke in the eye with a pointed stick.

CHAPTER VIII

OF THE EVERGLADES AND OF THE TWO SEASONS OBTAINING IN THAT DAMP LOCALITY—AND OF GRASS, FANCY AND OTHERWISE

OFF to the west of Miami lie the Everglades, first made famous by the Seminole War, when the United States Army spent upward of fifteen years trying to chase the Seminoles out of the Everglades but seldom saw more than three Seminoles at one time. The Everglades, not so long ago, was an enormous shallow lake eight thousand square miles in area, dotted with half-submerged islands out of which grew giant whiskered live oaks and countless varieties of tropical plants. The alligator basked in its shadowed streams; and the graceful panther lurked among the undergrowth, constantly ready to emit a bloodcurdling scream calculated to make the hardiest in-

truder think longingly of home and mother. Exploration was made almost impossible by a saw-toothed grass which grew throughout the Everglades and extended several feet above the water, so that the person who tried to force his way through it would cut everything to shreds up to and including his eyebrows. People talked for years of draining the Everglades; but such talk was usually received with screams of laughter that rivaled the yells of the Everglades panthers.

Several years ago the State of Florida settled down in earnest to the systematic draining of the Everglades. Canals were cut, giant locks were installed to control the water level, and the land was cleared. Thousands of acres are being reclaimed each year, settlers are moving in constantly, and the reclaimed land is yielding vegetables and fruits of a size and quality to make a Maine farmer shake his head dubiously and wonder whether that last batch of licker that the sheriff sent him had affected his eyes. The

soil is a rich black muck which has resulted from centuries of decaying vegetation; and anything that will grow will grow about twice as large and twice as rapidly in the Everglades as it will anywhere else. There used to be only two seasons in the Everglades—wet and wetter; but now there is a dry season; and in the course of a few years, when the fruit-trees begin to bear, the Everglades alone will be in a position to supply every northern city throughout the winter with all the newfangled and oldfangled fruits and vegetables that can be desired.

The thousands of farmers who have retired from active farming and are occupying their winters by absorbing the sun in Miami and pitching horseshoes in Royal Palm Park become fearfully excited over the various varieties of grass that are raised in the Everglade lands. Grass is not a thing that one would expect to mention at any length in a casual dissertation on a winter resort; but the excessive wonderment

over it on the part of the horseshoe pitchers requires some mention of grass. It appears that some of the grasses that have come in thick enough to get themselves talked about are Para, Bermuda, Rhodes, Natal, Sudan, St. Lucia, St. Augustine, Napier, Broom, sage, Guatemalan, panicum, crab grass, maiden cane, Billion Dollar grass and several others. There seems to be everything but just plain grass. The chief idea of the farmers seems to be that with all this grass, the Florida stock raisers can have evergreen pasturage, and cattle can be fed on about a third of the space that they need in the North.

This, of course, is important if true; but the average person who comes to Miami is not interested in grass except as something on which to play golf or sit. What he wants is usually holiday relaxation and plenty of it; and if that's what he wants, he can get so much of it in and near Miami that one week of complete relaxation must usually be followed by two weeks of recuperation.

CHAPTER IX

OF THE OLD MIAMI AND THE NEW MIAMI—OF DIFFERENCES BETWEEN MIAMI BEACH AND PALM BEACH—OF THE SCENIC POSSIBILITIES IN FLOATING COCONUTS AND THE ACTIVITIES OF JOHN S. COLLINS

THE people who knew Miami prior to 1918 have in their minds an entirely different place from the Miami of to-day. The old Miami was a city first and a winter resort afterward. This statement will, of course, offend the touchy Miami folk; but it is true none the less. It was—and is—a hustling, bustling, booming, noisy city with about one automobile for each seven-eighths of an inhabitant, and with perpetual warmth and sunshine. In the long run, however, the big-money tourists don't want to go to a hustling, bustling, rapidly growing city for their winter holidays, even though the city may boast perpetual warmth and sunshine.

What they want is clean air and plenty of sun and sky, and a complete change from the scenery to which they are accustomed in their northern cities, and a surcease from all noises except the noises they make themselves—which are frequently much louder than the ordinary noises of a city. For that reason Palm Beach was in a class by itself. The big-money tourists went to Palm Beach. Miami got a smattering of them, but a very small smattering. Palm Beach sneered at Miami Beach and called it "the Coney Island of Florida."

That, however, was prior to 1918. To-day Miami has been augmented by Miami Beach; and eventually Miami Beach will nose out ahead of Palm Beach and get all the youngsters and live wires who like to be on the jump from eight in the morning until three and four and five o'clock the next morning—with occasional busy evenings which will keep them up until six or seven in the morning. Palm Beach folk still sneer

Photograph by F. A. Robinson

The outdoor swimming pool on a private estate in Miami.

Any January morning at Miami Beach.

A January afternoon tea-dance on the shore of Biscayne Bay.

at Miami Beach and still, according to their ancient custom, call it the Coney Island of Florida. But it isn't the Coney Island of Florida; and Palm Beach is frightened for the first time in years—frightened that the wealthy tourists will desert the endless corridors of her hotels and the continuous clothes-changing and the eternal chatter and twaddle of society and near-society and the lifeless air of Bradley's Roulette Emporium, and get down to Miami, where there's something doing every minute, and where people go into dinner in golf clothes without getting a hard look from the head waiter.

The story of Miami Beach is a remarkable one and without it Miami would scarcely be able to get out gaudy prospectuses with pictures of beautifully shaped ladies in red one-piece bathing suits on the covers. This is the way of it:

Miami's palm-shaded streets run down to the shores of Biscayne Bay, which is a strip of water some seven miles long and

between two and three miles wide. Between the bay and the ocean is a long narrow tongue of land, not much over a mile in width at its widest point. Prior to 1913, ninety-nine per cent. of this narrow tongue of land was a worthless jungle. The man who owned it is said to have bought it for twelve thousand dollars. The only way of reaching it was by ferry boat, and there was nothing on it in the line of a winter resort except a bathing shack on the beach at the extreme tip, to which a few tourists occasionally repaired when the urge for sea bathing became almost too intense to be endured.

A persistent attempt had been made to utilize the natural advantages of this narrow tongue of sand and jungle. In 1884 some New Jersey business men essayed to plant coconuts on it in sufficient quantities to make the venture profitable. There were no railroads, and it could only be reached by boat. Three shiploads of coconuts were brought from the island of Trinidad. The

ships were anchored off the tongue of land; and when the wind blew toward the shore, the coconuts were dumped overboard to float to land. Three hundred and thirty-four thousand coconuts were sent ashore by the promoters of this scheme. They cost five cents apiece in Trinidad, and the freight figured up to six cents apiece. The venture became so costly that the promoters hunted around for more capital and succeeded in interesting a New Jersey fruit-grower named John S. Collins. As a commercial proposition, the coconut planting was a complete failure. But as a flyer in landscape architecture, it was a great success; for the entire ocean-front of the tongue of land was fringed with beautiful coconut palms.

The original coconut planters dropped out as their failure became apparent. Collins and one other man hung on to their narrow and apparently worthless piece of land. In the center of it was some high ground on which Collins conceived the idea of starting

a grove of avocados, better known as alligator pears. The avocado shuns frost as an Epworth Leaguer shuns cocktails; and since there is no frost worthy of the name on the tongue of land because of its water-protection on both sides, Collins figured that avocado culture could be made to pay. He was right; and his avocado grove is now the largest in the world. The speed with which he worked, however, didn't meet the approval of his one remaining partner; so Collins bought him out, becoming the sole owner of the narrow sand-spit with the avocado grove down its backbone.

It then began to dawn on Collins, who was seventy-four years old and therefore able to see a good many things that younger men overlooked, that his sand-spit was a pleasant place on which to live during the winter and summer too, but that he probably couldn't persuade people to live there until he made it possible for people to get there. Consequently he conceived the idea of building a

wooden bridge two and one-half miles in length—the longest vehicle bridge in the world—between Miami and the sand-spit.

The bridge was started in July, 1912; and, as has always been customary in the early developments of Florida, his friends, attorneys and bankers almost had heart-failure over his wild scheme. They prophesied enthusiastically that in about two years' time he would be standing at the Miami end of his unfinished bridge, begging for nickels with which to get a square meal. The population of Miami at that time was about seven thousand five hundred.

At one time, late in 1912, the amateur prophets were looking gloomily at Collins and saying proudly to each other: "Well, I told him so!" The bridge was such a tremendous undertaking that the Collins money began to pinch out; and no local talent could be found to advance any sum larger than nine dollars on the chance of making a success out of the bridge or the sand-spit.

CHAPTER X

OF THE ARRIVAL OF CARL FISHER IN MIAMI—OF FISHER'S FEVERISH IMAGINATION AND VIOLENT DREAMS—OF THE DESPAIR OF FISHER'S FRIENDS —AND OF THE EVOLUTION OF A JUNGLE

EARLY in 1913 a wealthy Indianapolis business man named Carl G. Fisher came to Miami for his health. Fisher, from the days when he used to be a news butcher on Indiana trains, was able to see the possibilities in things which every one else regarded as impossibilities. He had always plunged heavily on his beliefs while his friends and acquaintances stood on the side-lines and told one another what a shame it was that Carl had gone bugs. One of his plunges had been the big Indianapolis Speedway—a gigantic structure which does all its business, pays its expenses and makes its profits on one day out of the year.

Collins, unable to complete his bridge

alone, went to Fisher and asked him for assistance. Fisher, with his ever-present willingness to take a chance, supplied Collins with the necessary funds to finish the job, taking in return a large and unprepossessing slice of the long, narrow, jungle-grown sand-spit that shut Miami off from the sea. He immediately began to take a passionate interest in that desolate piece of real estate. In his feverish mind's eye he saw it covered with the greatest winter resort of modern times—with acres of beautiful homes, and hotels bowered in towering palms and scarlet-flowered hibiscus; with polo fields and golf links and tennis courts and ice-rinks: with lagoons and canals and artificial islands and Venetian gondolas: with casinos and bath-houses and outdoor swimming pools that would outdo anything in America or Europe.

He let himself go with the utmost enthusiasm, and kept his imagination working on a twenty-two-hour day. His friends

gave up all hope for him. "Poor Fisher!" they murmured privately behind his back. "Poor Fisher has gone completely loco. We must make arrangements to put him away quietly."

After he had dreamed a few of his more violent dreams, he went out to the sand-spit to look it over more carefully and decide definitely where to put a few of the hotels and casinos. Around its shores he found a solid wall of mangroves whose interlaced roots rose several feet out of the water in such a confused and slimy jumble that any appreciable progress through them was a matter of hours. So he got a gang of twelve negroes and set them to work hacking a hole all the way through this jungle. Beyond the mangrove swamp was a solidly interlaced growth of cabbage palms and palmettos through which no human being could force a passage without tearing his clothes and his skin to shreds. The palm and palmetto growth filled every part of

his property except the shores—and the shores were overgrown with mangroves.

Greatly cheered and stimulated by these obstacles, he promptly set to work on his scheme to build, almost overnight, America's greatest winter resort. Starting at the extreme tip of the tongue, his gangs of laborers cleared off the mangroves, cabbage palms, palmettos and other scrub. They found bear in it, and panther and countless numbers of smaller animals, and quail by the thousands. Then along the edges of the tongue they built high cement bulkheads. As the bulkheads were finished, dredgers pumped sand and water out of Biscayne Bay and inside the bulkheads. The water ran off, but the sand remained and turned the swamps and marshes into solid land. This work required dredging crews of one hundred and fifty men, three pumping boats, two digging boats, from ten to fifteen barges, five supply boats, two oil tugs, two anchor boats and an eighteen-inch pipe line

over a mile in length. For eight months the pay roll was four thousand dollars a day, and Fisher's friends daily became more insistent that he be locked up where he could no longer throw his money into the Atlantic Ocean.

Canals and inland waterways were dug so that future residents might have easy access to all portions of the resort by yacht, house-boat and motor-boat. Palms, hibiscus and tropical plants and vines slowly crept along in the rear of the dredging operations. Fifty acres were turned into polo fields. Three hundred and twenty-five acres were set aside for golf courses. Three excellent golf courses were made, two at a cost of two hundred thousand dollars apiece, and one at a cost of a quarter million.

To-day, the tongue of land that was an impenetrable jungle in 1913 and a waste of sand in 1917, has become the city of Miami Beach. Its value has grown from twelve thousand to twenty million. There may be

some to question the latter figure; but the accessed value of Miami Beach property in 1921 was $5,540,112; and unimproved property was being assessed at one-quarter of its valuation, while improved property was being assessed at one-tenth of its valuation. It has a frontage of six miles on the ocean, seven miles on Biscayne Bay, and sixteen miles on inland waterways and canals—though a Miami Beach enthusiast would no more think of listing Miami Beach property in miles than a jeweler would think of listing diamonds in quarts. It is too precious. He lists it in feet, and tells you that the frontage on inland waterways is eighty-five thousand feet. In a few years, if he progresses in the future as he has in the past, he'll probably be listing it in inches.

CHAPTER XI

OF EXPENSIVE EXPENSES AND HEATED ICE-RINKS—OF LILY ON LILY THAT O'ERPLACE THE SEA—AND OF THE BONEHEADEDNESS OF MOST OF THE HUMAN RACE

In 1913 Miami Beach was an impenetrable jungle on a sand-spit and a swamp. In 1922 many a water-front lot was being sold for double the price that was paid for the original jungle not so many years ago.

In place of the sand and the swamp and the jungle there are over forty miles of street and roads, lined with palms and shrubs. Several hotels have been built, the largest of which—the Flamingo—looks exactly like a grain elevator and has the reputation of being the most expensive winter resort hotel in the world. As a matter of fact, it is no more expensive than the big Palm Beach hotels—although that is sufficiently expensive to send the cold shivers

up and down the spine of the person who hasn't become thoroughly hardened to money-spending. Two people can have a nice room with bath and all the food they want—in reason—for forty dollars a day. They can also have free oranges, which somehow seems to remove some of the numbing pain from the impact of the bill against the brain. There is no particular reason why it should, as one can easily drown himself in the juice from a dollar's worth of oranges.

There are a score and more of apartment-houses, and three hundred and fifty private residences ranging from unconsciously simple little ten-thousand-dollar bungalows up to artfully simple little two-hundred-thousand-dollar cottages.

Within another six years, according to the more sane and conservative Miami Beach predicters, there will be six or seven more hotels at Miami Beach, all larger than the Flamingo. Fisher has another modest

caravansary planned which is to have an ice-rink, covered tennis courts and a tanbark horse-show enclosure on the roof. Unless his friends lock him up, he is sure to carry out his plans—which will probably be as highly successful as his past ventures.

A few of his friends no longer fear for his sanity. His former business partner in Indianapolis, James A. Allison, has even helped the good work along by building and stocking at Miami Beach an aquarium that rivals the great aquariums of Monaco, Naples, Honolulu and Manila. A great many of his friends, however, still shake their heads pityingly when they hear mention of hotels with ice-rinks on the roof.

The dredging operations which had transferred sand from the bottom of Biscayne Bay to the top of Miami Beach had left several unsightly mud banks protruding a few inches from the surface of the bay. Fisher surrounded these mud banks with bulkheads and pumped more mud into them.

The result was seven beautiful islands, most of which are already shaded by palm groves and dotted with simple but beautiful homes costing about thirty dollars a square inch. They are easy of access, since they are connected with the mainland or the causeway.

Some Miami people have likened these islands to lilies which o'erlace the sea, after the fashion of Senator Lodge quoting from Browning in an attempt to explain the islands of the Pacific to a concourse of hard-boiled hearers; but Palm Beach folk, with that peculiar jealousy evinced by the residents of one Florida resort toward everything in a rival Florida resort, say that they look more like floating flapjacks. The truth, of course, lies between; and when they are covered with masses of tropical foliage, there will be nothing flapjackish about them. One of the islands, together with an obelisk rising from its center, was constructed as a memorial to Henry M. Flagler, without whose vision and foresight Florida would

probably only be known as the place that Florida Water was named after. One of the largest islands has an area of sixty acres. A mile of bulkhead, with bulkheading at twelve dollars a foot, was necessary in its construction, and its total cost was half a million dollars.

The inability of ninety per cent. of the human race to see how a thing is going to look when finished has cost the human race a large amount of money at Miami Beach. Not long ago, for example, an effort was made to sell a new house for sixteen thousand dollars. It stood on new flat land, however, and there were no trees or shrubs around it. Everybody who saw it refused to buy it; so three thousand five hundred dollars was spent in planting grass, palms and flowers and adding walks and a boathouse. When this had been done, the house sold instantly for thirty thousand dollars to one of the men who had refused to pay sixteen thousand for it the preceding year.

CHAPTER XII

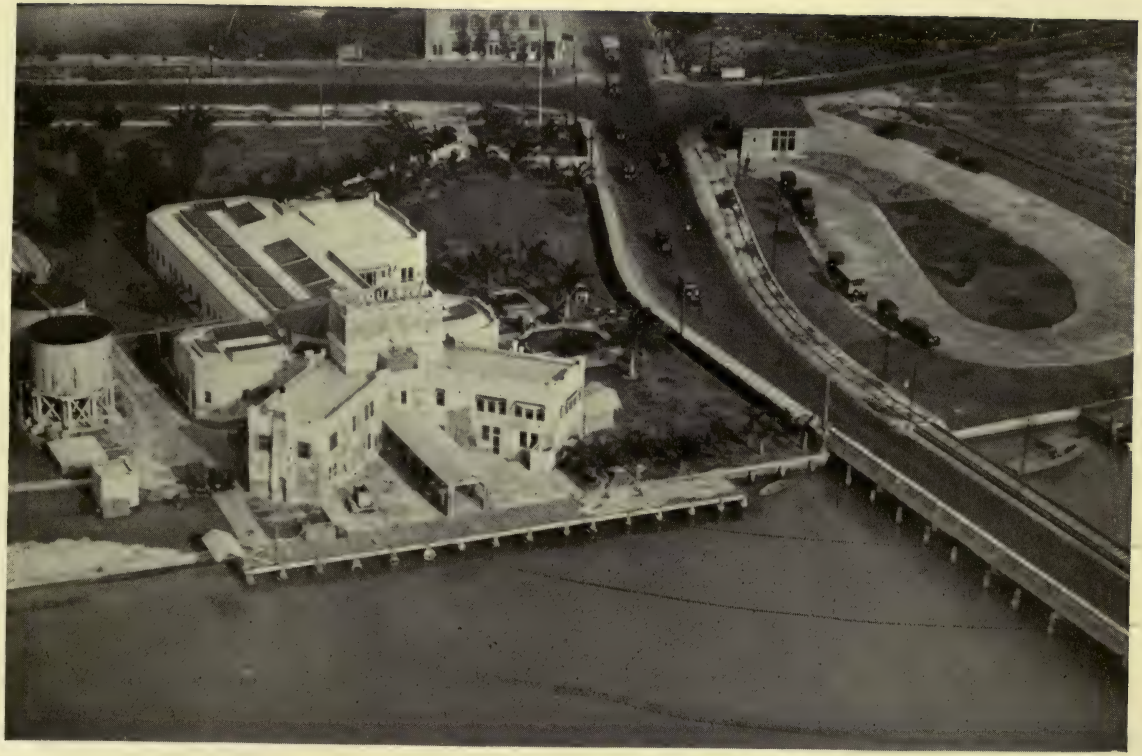
OF ONE-PIECE AND TWO-FIFTHS-PIECE BATHING SUITS —OF THE HONORABLE WILLIAM JENNINGS BRYAN AND HIS ACTIVITIES—OF BOOTLEGGERS—OF THE SANCTIMONIOUS HAIG AND HAIG BOYS—AND OF RUM IN GENERAL

MIAMI and Miami Beach are now connected by a curving concrete causeway three and a half miles long. New and spacious as it is, it is often too small to accommodate the thousands of automobiles that hasten out to Miami Beach on hot Sunday afternoons in mid-winter in order that their occupants may obtain an eyeful, as the saying goes, of the bathing crowds. The prudish element hasn't yet been able to make its influence felt at Miami Beach to any noticeable extent. The one-piece bathing suit is heavily displayed by engaging young women, and there are also large numbers of bathing suits which appear to be

one-half-piece or even two-fifths-piece. The latter variety of bathing suit is never worn with stockings; for no stockings—so far as is known—have yet been made long enough to reach to the hips. A striking effect is frequently obtained by the wearers of these two-fifths-piece bathing suits when they stroll out on the beach in short, hip-length capes which hang open negligently at the throat. One sees nothing below the cape but several square yards of flesh, and nothing above the cape but several square feet of flesh. It is a sight that gives one pause. When one sees it for the first time, he feels that he ought to hunt up a life-saver sometime later in the day and ask him to go and speak to the young woman and tell her that she has come out without her two-fifths-piece bathing suit. But one soon becomes accustomed to seeing such things—so accustomed, in fact, that one feels disappointed if he doesn't see them.

The Honorable William Jennings Bryan

The site of the Flamingo Hotel, Miami Beach (at top) in 1912; (in middle) in 1917; and (at bottom) in 1922.



The Miami Beach Aquarium.

has a home in Miami, and was devoting most of his time during the winter of 1922 to assuring his large and enthusiastic audiences that the doctrine of evolution, hitherto accepted as proved by every reputable scientist because of the overwhelming mass of supporting evidence, is no more worthy of credence than the story of Cinderella and the little Glass Slipper; that, in fact, it is as harmful to the young and impressionable as an unexpurgated set of Burton's *Arabian Nights*. The citizens of Miami Beach were highly delighted with Mr. Bryan's anti-evolution activities—not because they have anything against evolution, but because they like to see Mr. Bryan interested in something that will keep him from trying to make his neighbors conform to his ideas of right, and, by so doing, spoiling the bathing-hour. In fact, a committee of Miami Beachers was thinking of waiting on Mr. Bryan when he had finished shooting holes in Darwin, Hux-

ley, Wallace, Herbert Spencer and other distinguished scientists, and urging him to attack the disgusting and contemptible theory that the earth is a globe or sphere, and to come out strong for a flat earth.

There are no wheel-chairs in Miami Beach, as there are in Palm Beach. The hotels tried to interest their guests in wheel-chairs, but the guests would have none of them. They are successful at Palm Beach because the Palm Beachers find them useful things in which to kill time. But at Miami Beach one has no time for time-killing. There is something doing every minute. There is golf and tennis and polo and bathing and dancing and seeing the bootlegger, or rushing over to town to see a movie or an orange grove or another bootlegger or something, and if one tried to get around in a wheel-chair, he'd come down with nervous prostration in a couple of days.

The bootleggers are very active in Miami; and the Miami bootlegger is a very superior

sort of bootlegger. He comes around to his patrons each day with long lists of wet goods and the prices, and gives the names of prominent bankers as references for his reliability. The prices seem pleasingly low to northerners who have been paying one hundred and twenty dollars a case for stuff that is only fit for cleaning the nicotine out of pipe stems. The bootleggers get their wares in Bimini, which is a small island only a few miles off the Florida coast. It is a British island, but the British officials evidently haven't any idea of assisting the United States to enforce her laws. One of the leading Scotch distillers stated contemptuously when I was in Scotland a little over a year ago that it would allow none of its product to be sold to a nation of hypocrites—meaning America. A good percentage of the stuff in Bimini, however, is Haig & Haig, and it was the Haig & Haig people that made the pleasant observation about the nation of hypocrites.

The past record of all distillers has proved conclusively that they would sell to anybody that had the price—hypocrite, murderer, wife-beater, degenerate or sot; and Haig & Haig are no better than the rest of them.

All this Haig & Haig comes over to Florida, where it is not esteemed very highly because it was apparently turned out of the distillery in a hurry for the American trade. The Miami bootleggers recommend Lawson Scotch to their friends rather than Haig & Haig; for they say that the Haig & Haig is too green—whatever that means. The universal bootlegging price for Scotch whisky in Miami is fifty dollars a case.* The bootleggers buy it for twenty-four dollars a case in Bimini. The taxicab men at the big hotels retail the stuff to the hotel guests at ten dollars a bottle or one hundred and twenty dollars a case, which makes a very nice profit for them. Gin can be bought—from the bootleggers, not from the taxicab

*February, 1922, quotations.

agents—for thirty dollars and forty dollars a case; while the most expensive liquid refreshment is absinthe, which comes as high as sixty-five dollars a case.

Tourists who plan to bring back a wee nip of Scotch with them from Florida should be very careful to carry the bottles in their hand luggage. Many trunks are opened on the way up, evidently by members of the train crews, and all alcoholic stimulants carefully abstracted. Nothing else is touched. A friend of mine took three metal hot-water bottles to Florida with him so that he could bring Scotch back in them. These bottles were encased in pretty pink flannel wrappers. He filled them with Scotch as planned; but when he reached Washington again, he found that his trunk had been opened and the bottles removed. The pink flannel wrappers were left behind, and nothing else had been touched.

There seems to be an idea in the North that rum-running from Bimini and Cuba to

the Florida coast can be easily stopped by Prohibition agents. This is a mistaken idea; for the rum-runner has several hundred miles of uninhabited coastline and keys on which to land his cargo. It was among these keys that the most notorious pirates of the early days concealed their vessels and their treasure, and eluded pursuit for years. It would be as easy to catch a rum-runner among the Florida keys as to locate a red ant in the Hippodrome.

Any Prohibition enforcement agent that didn't have lead in his shoes and a daub of mud in both eyes, however, could easily get the goods on twenty or thirty Miami bootleggers in a day.

One good result of comparatively cheap whisky in Miami is the apparently total disappearance of beer-making and other home-brewing activities. There seems to be no market for hops, malt, prunes, raisins or wash-boilers—which would seem to make Miami an unusually healthy city in which to live.

CHAPTER XIII

OF FLORIDA FISHING—OF THE TIGERISH BARRACUDA AND THE SURPRISED-LOOKING DOLPIN—OF THE UNCONVENTIONAL HABITS OF THE WHIP-RAY AND THE VARYING ESTIMATES OF CAP'N CHARLEY THOMPSON—AND OF THE CONSERVATIVE RAVING OF THE MIAMI PROSPECTUSES

THE Florida keys drip down from the end of the peninsula on which Miami beach is built, and would doubtless be compared by Senator Lodge or the late Robert Browning to a necklace of jade and gold, or to mango on mango that o'erlace the sea, or something similarly poetic. Among, between and around these keys is found the greatest fishing in the world. Florida fishing is about as much like the ordinary conception of fishing as prize-fighting is like fox-trotting. Instead of sitting contemplatively over a rod and reel with a pipe in his mouth and a dreamy look in his eyes, and occasionally snaking a small fish out of the water in a

leisurely manner, the Florida fisherman crouches over his rod with taut muscles and enters knock-down and drag-out fights with bundles of concentrated energy that leave him as sore and limp and blistered as though he had been wrestling with the Twentieth Century Limited.

Speedy motor-boats slip away from Miami landing-stages and reach the fishing grounds in an hour. Over the reefs, on whose rocky peaks lie the skeletons of many an ancient wreck, wait the barracuda, sometimes known as the tigers of the sea. They are long, slim, silvery fish, rather like enormous pickerel, and their jaws are set with heavy dog-teeth. They average between four and five feet in length; and as the fisherman sits in the stern of a motor-boat with his bait spinning along thirty yards astern, he can see the barracuda following, following along behind the bait like a thin gray shadow. The barracuda is always there and always hungry; so when all other

game fish fail, the fishermen turn to him. When he finally decides to take the bait, he takes it with such vigor that the fisherman feels that a steamer trunk has fallen on the tip of his rod. The rods are stiff as iron and the big reels have drags on them that would stop a race-horse in a hundred yards; so the average barracuda seldom fights more than ten minutes. All game fish, of course, are caught by trolling from the back of a motor-boat traveling from six to ten miles an hour.

Out a little farther toward the gulf stream are the golden dolphins, thin and surprised-looking fish, much smaller than the barracuda, but better fighters. There, too, is the husky amberjack, that fights for twenty minutes and more in spite of the heavy drag on the reel. The prettiest welter-weight fighter of the Florida waters is the sailfish, a blue and silver torpedo, five and six and seven feet in length, with a spear for a nose and a lateen sail for a dor-

sal fin. He is a finicky striker; and when he is at the bait one feels only a slight jar. The lightness of the touch usually means sailfish; and when it comes, the fisherman releases his drag and lets his line run out fifteen or twenty or even thirty feet. Then he snaps the drag back into place and hoists his rod with a mighty heave without further inquiry. Frequently the sailfish is at the end of the line, in which case the fun begins —the sensation being about the same as holding a bucking bronco at the end of a fifty-yard rope. If an amateur is holding the rod, the end of the thirty or forty-five minute fight finds him calling in a weak and trembling voice for a large drink of varnish or some similar restorative, and he spends the remainder of the trip pricking and caressing the blisters on his hands.

Farther out in the gulf stream are the kings of the heavy-weight scrappers—tuna; while between the keys and the mainland are the giant tarpon. These fish will fight

for two, three and even four hours; and if, in their leapings to shake the hooks from their mouths they chance to fall in the boat, there is never any room for any one else.

The spectacles that one sees in these Florida waters are enough to make Izaak Walton take the pledge.

During one day's fishing which I had off the keys with President James Allison of the Miami Aquarium and Cap'n Charley Thompson, champion tarpon-tracker of Biscayne Bay, a whip-ray twenty feet from wing to wing shot thirty feet into the air just ahead of our boat, falling back into the water with a crash that must have been heard a mile in every direction. Cap'n Thompson declared that this violent leaping was due to the fact that the whip-ray frequently feeds on clams. When he has gathered a bushel of clams into his stomach, he leaps high in the air and descends on his stomach. The resultant crash breaks all the clamshells and permits the ray to digest the

clams. This doesn't sound exactly right, but one should be careful about disbelieving any of these Florida stories. A little later a giant marlin or spear fish plunged out of the water among our three lines when each line had a dolphin fighting busily at its end. Cap'n Thompson estimated his weight at four hundred pounds, but three hours later he was estimating it at seven hundred pounds. At the end of the afternoon, when the lines were being reeled in preparatory to starting home, an eight-foot shark surged up from nowhere and removed my bait from beneath my hand. Fortunately, he removed the hook with it, and a few minutes later he was lashed fast to the stern of the boat, making a hurried trip back to Miami—where Director Louis Mowbray of the Aquarium spent a happy hour removing pilot fish and parasites from his nose and gills and tongue.

One can never tell what is going to turn up in Florida waters. The prospectuses of

both winter and summer resorts usually lay it on a little too thick. The Miami prospectuses always sound very much too much. Starting with the bathing-girls on the front cover and ending with the proud fisherman on the back cover, they always look a little too perfect. The phrasing, too, seems a trifle sappy and fat-headed. "It's June in Miami," these prospectuses declare, "where winter is turned to summer." They seem to rave over-wildly. "Miami welcomes you with the smile of the tropics," rave these bits of passionate literature, "and the warmth of the unclouded sun is instilled in the hospitality of the greeting that awaits you here. Leave winter behind, fling care to the icy winds, come to Miami and play at being eternally young again. Here in Nature's most alluring out-of-doors playground, under azure skies, amid fronded palms and riotous flowers, with song of bird, balmy air, and the benediction of glorious sunshine, find health, happiness and contentment."

It seems like raving before you've been there. But after you've been there you recognize that the bathing girls and the fish are as advertised. As for the prospectuses, they don't seem so violent after all. In fact, they seem pretty conservative.

THE END