Palma Sola

The Youngest and Largest Town IN FLORIDA.

Aug. 1. 1884.

W. S. WARNER & CO.,

PALMA SOLA, FLORIDA,

Yellow Pine & Cypress Lumber Manufacturers

DEALERS IN

Doors, Sash, Blinds and all Building Materials

WHOLESALE DEALERS IN

ICE, HAY, GRAIN, FLOUR, BULK MEATS,

General Merchandise,

General Commission Merchants in Florida Produce.

Local Agents Florida Land & Improvement Co.

Offering in our Agency 80,000 acres selected lands.

Local Land Agents Florida Southern R. R. Co.

400,000 acres of the best pine lands.

Local Agents PALMA SOLA LAND CO.

13,000 acres of the choicest selections of fruit lands in the most tropical part of Florida.

Special terms to settlers in this tract given on application.

Local Agents South Florida R. R. Co.

The De Soto Route to the Gulf Coast.

Local Agents of "The Bonanza Tract."

13,000 acres of choice hammock and sugar cane lands, suited to the production of early vegetables.

CORRESPONDENCE SOLICITED.


TAMPA BAY
Mc GILL'S BAY
TERRACEIA
PASSAGE KEY
PASSAGE KEY INLET
Terracela Pt
BIRD KEY
Intracoastal Bayou
TERRACEIA BAY
CLAM BAR BAYOU
Snead's Pt
MANATEE RIVER
McKay's Pt
Shaw's Pt
Palma Sola Pt
ANNA MARIA OR PALM KEY
GULF OF MEXICO
SARASOTA PASS
PERICO
Perico Bayou
AVENUE
PALMA SOLA
Pt Ogden
Fogarty Pt
Daniels Pt
PALMA SOLA BAY
LONG BOAT INLET
SARASOTA KEY
SARASOTA BAY
PALMA SOLA
FLORIDA.
Part of Tps 34 and 35 South, Range 17 East.
SCALE OF MILES

PALMA SOLA.

THE

YOUNGEST AND LARGEST TOWN

IN

FLORIDA.

NEW YORK:
BROUN & GREEN, STATIONERS.
40 BEAVER STREET.

PALMA SOLA, AUGUST 1, 1884.

The Youngest and Largest Town in Florida.

ITS LOCATION AND ADVANTAGES OF CLIMATE, GEOGRAPHICAL POSITION SOCIETY AND MANUFACTURING INTERESTS, AS ATTRACTIONS FOR THE TOURIST, LAND HUNTER, FLORIDA SETTLER, SPECULATOR, AND FOR THOSE RESIDENTS GENERALLY OF THE FRIGID ZONE NORTH OF FLORIDA WHO FOR THE ATTAINMENT OF GREATER HAPPINESS REALLY SHOULD LIVE HERE.

By a Resident whose Experience Dates from August 16, 1868, to the Present Time.

The traveler by water, coming south in one of the vessels of the Tampa Steamship Company from Cedar Keys, as he enters the fine harbor of Tampa Bay, passing Egmont Lighthouse, sees ahead across nine miles of blue water a cluster of white houses, apparently upon the southeast shore of Tampa Bay, and is told by the ever-present tourist, who has been there before and is pining to give information, that that is *Palma Sola*, the City of the "Lone Palm." From Egmont Lighthouse it appears to be upon the shore of the bay, but as the steamer plows her way through the clear water a large harbor or estuary opens out before him, and it becomes apparent that this city by the Gulf is located upon a body of water, that for beauty of shore line and perfection as a harbor has no equal in Florida. Two miles from the wharves and warehouses now in plain sight the steamer passes the bar buoy, when again our well informed tourist says, "Uncle Sam has just expended $12,000 in dredging this bar,

and this steamer has 12½ feet of water under her at low tide, where formerly there was but nine, making this the deepest harbor channel on the Gulf coast between Pensacola and Key West." Right again, Mr. Tourist, and as our vessel progresses up the Manatee River, or, more properly, Bay, and the eye takes in its mile and more of width and four miles of length, and is told of its uniform depth of three fathoms, the same idea strikes the observer that is striking the projectors of all the railroads to the Gulf Coast, namely, that it is *the* harbor for terminal facilities for their roads. An idea that ere another summer's showers shall have passed over its sparkling waters will result in the building of wharves and warehouses on its shores for the business of the road, that from here sends its passengers by steamers to Key West and Havana.

"Through from New York to Cuba in four and one-half days." Manatee Bay, it should properly be called, for from its mouth as defined by the west end of Snead's Island on the north and Shaw's Point on its south shore to a point seven miles east, the harbor maintains a uniform width of about a mile and a quarter, widening out to a mile and one-half in front of Palma Sola. The tides ebb and flow, the water being pure salt Gulf water, with no fresh water currents or influences at any season of the year. Above and east of this point, seven miles from the mouth, this bay begins to assume some of the characteristics of a fresh water river, rush grass islands, mangrove bushes, etc. Scattered along at about even intervals on the shore are, first, Palma Sola, next Braidentown, then Manatee and Palmetto, all having suitable steamboat landings—Fogartysville and Ellentown, two smaller towns, not being so distinguished as yet. Like the others, however, "great in the future," their inhabitants dream of a business that shall build wharves and draw the commercial navies of the world to their doors. "Palma Sola passengers claim their baggage." The steamer is fast to a long wharf covered by a one-story warehouse and store, entering which we find the most varied assortment of merchandise conceivable. Ship stores, dry goods, furniture, drugs, household utensils, hats and clothing, groceries, jewelry—an imitation in a moderate way of Macy's big Sixth Avenue store. Here the dwellers in Palma Sola and the surrounding country supply their wants, it being a frequently repeated assertion of the proprietors, who also own the saw and

planing mills adjacent, that they build houses and furnish them complete, to the cradle that rocks the baby and the condensed milk that nourishes it, for be it known that in this country with its thousands of cattle ranging the woods at large, milk, the genuine fresh article, is not to be had to drink. A few hundred feet from the wharf and warehouses on a high bluff overlooking Manatee Bay to the east, and across Tampa Bay and the blue waters of the Gulf of Mexico to the west, stands a comfortable but comparatively small hotel, with breezy porches and an air of home comfort about its exterior that is fully realized by the traveler when his room is assigned him, and the neat new furniture and perfect spring beds have for a day or a night been his. Clustered about the hotel are a number of cottages, varying in size to suit the wants of their occupants, most of whom are employees of the mills and other enterprises of the present owners of Palma Sola. So much for a general description of the present appearance of the town that is called on the title page the youngest and largest town in the State. Youngest at this date, being chartered as a town August 1st, 1884, and largest as it contains within its corporate limits over twenty square miles, or a little over 13,000 acres, embracing within its limits Palma Sola Bay and Pereco Islands, and having a shore line on Manatee, Palma Sola and Sarasota Bays over twenty-two miles long.

Its northern boundary, the south bank of Manatee Bay, is in latitude 27° 31′ north and longitude 82° 37′ west.

Referring to the map which accompanies this pamphlet it will be seen that the Palma Sola Company owns the entire peninsula between Sarasota Bay and the Manatee River, of which peninsula it can be safely said that no portion of the State of Florida can be found north of Charlotte Harbor, which is so entirely exempt from the destructive action of frost as this. Looking at the general map of the State, it will be seen that it projects well out from the otherwise straight shore line into the Gulf, and its perfect surrounding of deep salt water bays, whose temperature is always high, gives it a protection from cold winds that is unequaled. Referring to Lieut. Maury's charts of ocean currents, it will be seen that the great Yucatan current, which pours its flood of hot equatorial waters into the Gulf Stream, circles and bends close into the shore at Tampa Bay, diffusing its warm vapors over this favored section. Across, from bay

to bay, upon the east boundary of the corporation, the company has built an impregnable barbed wire fence, which is proof against hogs and cattle, and by an action at the first meeting of its Town Council it is made a misdemeanor and cause of action for damages for a resident of the town to allow stock of any kind to run at large within its limits.

Thus the *town* fences *out* cattle, and each settler is saved the very great and unsatisfactory expense of barricading his individual grounds. The wisdom and value of this general fence is very strikingly endorsed by the statistics of the last census, which shows that the value of fences in our entire State are eight times the value of the stock, and that the cost of maintaining them is something more than double the value of the stock yearly.

Here a little over five and one-half miles of fence extended into deep water in both bays protects with the aid of the ordinance over twenty square miles of land, the subdivisions of which have been carefully and accurately marked by the company with permanent stones at the corners, precluding the possibility of future disputes as to boundaries.

The patents for these lands, having come direct from the State and United States Governments to the present owners by direct cash purchase will be sufficient evidence to the careful buyer that his title will be good. In this part of Florida none of the Spanish grants, which are a fruitful source of litigation on the Eastern Coast, were ever made.

Before buying land and building a home, the settler asks, What can I do to make a living? and, looking around, he finds a large number of people employed in milling with room for many more at fair compensation, opportunities for carrying on merchandise business, good openings for every trade and profession, and, if his tastes are for a "Life on the Ocean Wave," employment is offered in all its occupations. Within the past year a new enterprise has had birth here that now promises to grow to giant proportions. With the establishment of an ice-house it became possible to save and send the fish, with which the waters are literally alive, to the great cities of the South and North. The business was at once opened, and at the close of the first season the ice-packers had profitably shipped many tons of mullet, redfish, sheepshead and pompano.

At this date large packing-houses are in course of construction for the accommodation of a business that, during the coming season, will figure up towards $100,000.

Within forty miles of Palma Sola are the great sponge banks of Florida, from which hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth are annually taken and shipped to New York. The rapid development of the resources of all new countries calls for an unusual amount of hard labor, and it is so particularly the case here that no assurance need be given to any that want work that they can find plenty to do, Up to this date the great difficulty has been with every business enterprise to find labor enough to carry it on.

In answer to the natural question of the intending settler: "What will it cost to get there, and how shall I go?" the following rate sheets are given from New York, and are the same for the Mallory Line, via Fernandina, and the Ocean Steamship Company, via Savannah. By the latter company the traveler will be ticketed via Jacksonville and the St. John's River to Sanford, thence by Tampa and boat to Palma Sola.

PASSENGER RATES BETWEEN NEW YORK AND POINTS ON GULF COAST.

To or From	Straight.		Excursion.
	Cabin.	St'age.	Cabin.
Bayport	31 00	19 25	51 00
Anclote	31 50	19 75	52 00
Clear Water	33 50	21 25	54 00
Braidentown, Tampa, Manatee	36 50	23 25	61 00
Punta Rassa	40 50	24 25	65 00
Palma Sola	36 50	23 25	61 00

Children between 4 and 12 years of age half fare. 150 lbs. baggage free to each adult passenger. Extra baggage 75 cents per 100 lbs. between Fernandina and New York. Usual rates on railroads.

On his household goods and gods the following rate will apply by either line.

THE MALLORY LINES or OCEAN S. S. CO. and SAVANNAH, F. and WESTERN R.R.	RATES PER ONE HUNDRED POUNDS.											PER BBL.		
Rates from New York to	First Class.	Second Class.	Third Class.	Fourth Class.	Fifth Class.	Sixth Class.	Class A, Ties & Baggage.	Class B, bacon pkd in any quantity, bulk meat, C.L. owner's risk of spoiling.	Class C—Flour in Sacks	Class D—Grain, any quantity, Hay, C. L.	Class E, Ale and Beer in wood, owner's risk of leakage & fermentation.	Class H, whisky in wood, value limited to 75 cts. per gal. per 100 lbs.	Class F, Flour Grits and Hominy, in bbls.	Class G, Beef and Pork, salted, in barrels.	Potatoes and other Vegetables.
	1	2	3	4	5	6	A	B	C	D	E	H	F	G	Veg
Palma Sola.....	1 53	131	1 18	75	60	50	75	50	60	45	75	75	90	1 35	90

The following rate sheet gives the cost of getting productions back to the great Northern markets, and will be considered low enough surely:

THROUGH RATES ON VEGETABLES, VIA THE ATLANTIC COAST LINE, IN EFFECT MARCH 25TH, 1884.

FROM	TO	Baltimore.	Washington.	Philadelphia.		New York.		Boston.	Providence.	Richmond.	Petersburg. Portsmouth.
		Per Box	Per Bbl.	Per Box	Per Bbl.	Per Box	Per Bbl.	Per Box	Per Bbl.	Per Box	Per Bbl.
Tampa and Palma Sola.		60	1 10	60	1 10	60	1 10	65	1 25	60	1 10

So much for the expense of reaching Palma Sola. The land for an orange grove can be bought at from $5.00 per acre to $25.00, according to location, the value being varied more by position with regard to the business centre than by the varied qualities of the soil. The rich hammock lands, suitable for the production of early vegetables for the Northern markets, range much higher in values, $20 per acre being about the lowest price at which any could now be bought, and $50 has been paid. These prices may sound high for

wild lands, upon which an expenditure of from $30 to $50 more per acre must be made before they can be cultivated, but a comparison of their net yield with that of the lands of the Northern wheat or corn grower shows that here $200 is taken from an acre where there the average yield may be safely placed at $14. These figures leave nothing more to be said.

The cost of living may be put down at the same figure as in any of the medium sized cities, *less* the expense of rents, fuel, fine clothing and amusements; however large or small a part of the income these items may appropriate can be readily saved at Palma Sola.

The mild climate makes an expensive house unnecessary, fuel is to be had for the expense only of gathering it, and thus far the necessity has not arisen for expenditures that in the city resident's expense account book should properly appear as "paid for keeping up appearances."

Looking the whole field over it will be found that living expenses may be kept very low, while income from the various occupations that may be engaged in can be made large. (That depending here, as elsewhere, upon the individual). No more favorable conditions for success can be found anywhere. The Palma Sola Land Company, owning the entire peninsula, as described on the fifth page, is advertising its lands extensively and offering every possible inducement to intending settlers to locate here. To this end acres of its lands have not been advanced to keep pace with the prices of other adjacent lands that are being sold much higher.

It is the plan of the Company to reinvest the proceeds of all sales of land for some years in the improvement of avenues and streets, planting strawberries, making orange groves, etc.

The Company will also contract with non-residents for the clearing of lands, planting orange groves, and the care of them so long as is necessary. A strong colony from Taunton, Mass., is now improving a large tract in this way under the Company's care, and investors in orange groves, who from any cause cannot give their personal attention to the business, will find this a reliable means of establishing it.

As a possible aid to the selection of an occupation here the following article on Tropical Fruits may prove of interest.

TROPICAL FRUITS IN FLORIDA.

This excellent and reliable little treatise on this subject was prepared by the Florida Land and Improvement Co., and answers so many of the questions put by correspondents that it has been included in this pamphlet. All of the fruits named in it find a place adapted to their growth in Palma Sola, untroubled by the light frosts that sometimes injure them in localities only a little further north. The infinite value of such a location over another where the same conditions do not exist, and where the fruit grower sees the result of his labor of years destroyed in a night, cannot be over-estimated, the relation of the figures being as nought (or worse) to one. This matter of location cannot be too carefully considered by the Florida settler, for on it depends entirely his success or failure. Money spent in carefully and intelligently looking the State over is well expended and results most frequently in the conviction that the Gulf Coast is superior in climate, character of lands, coast harbors and future prospects. This conclusion being reached, the choice of location is narrowed down from the great area of a great state to the narrow limits of the Coast line, Following that line down to Tampa Bay, and particularly to the Manatee River, more conditions are found favorable to certain success in fruit growing and the production of early vegetables than are to be found elsewhere. The facts and figures as given by Dr. Levis in this book are conclusive affirmative evidence for this statement.

ORANGE-CULTURE.

The subject of orange-growing in Florida is one on which we often have inquiries addressed to us, and we therefore give additional facts on the much-debated question of the cost and

profit of orange-growing, for which the United States Department of Agriculture is authority. From barely nothing, in a commercial sense, at the close of the war, the business has grown to be worth over $1,000,000. Measured by the progress of the past, it is destined to become, in a short time, one of the leading industries of the State. Last year there were exported at least 45,000,000 oranges. The business so far has been very successful, and is daily inviting more capital and enterprise. There are already $10,000,000 invested in orange groves in the State, with a field open for the profitable employment of $50,000,000 more. Lands suitable for growing oranges are in abundance at low prices. Orange groves can be found in almost every part of the State, and on all varieties of soil well drained, the groves numbering each from 10 to 10,000 trees. Hardly a family, outside of the cities, but cultivates a greater or less number of orange trees, and many residing in the cities do the same. Some of the largest groves in the State are owned by persons living in the towns, or non-residents. In some of the counties there were raised as high as from 4,000,000 to 6,000,000 of oranges last year; and narrow-gauge railroads are rapidly being built to afford the middle counties facilities for shipping their enormous crops to market. Three such roads have been completed within the past few months, and others are projected, while more are under contemplation. Oranges are shipped by these roads to New York in eighty and ninety hours' time. Within the past few years orange-culture in Florida has attained great perfection. It has reached that position where it is possible to analyze the cost of production. Abundant evidence exists that can be brought forward to show the value and profit in it. For the investment of capital, results have shown that there is not at present any pursuit, where the tilling of the ground is involved, that will yield larger returns with less fluctuation. It is always pleasant to be able to confirm such statements with facts. An extensive orange-grower in Putnam county has kept, from the beginning of his grove, an accurate account of the expenditures and receipts to the close of the thirteenth year, ending in 1879. The number of trees was three hundred. They yielded 442,600 oranges selling for

$7,590, against an expenditure, omitting cost of land, first cost of trees, and interest on the money, of $1,950. This gives receipts over expenditures, $5,640. This is only one instance, but it is as good as many, because it is only one in a very large number. It conclusively demonstrates that orange-culture is not at all transitory, nearly all the obstacles in the path of orange-culture having been removed. The future of the business is still more promising. Florida oranges are conceded to be superior to all others. In point of numbers, compared to the great quantities consumed, they are few, yet by their greater merit they have come to occupy the foremost place in the market. The genial and peculiar soil of Florida, together with the sufficiently warm sun to mature and concentrate the juices without destroying the lively aromatic flavor of the fruit, impart this quality-value nowhere else attainable to such an extent. The field they are yet to occupy is practically illimitable. They are yet to possess our own market, the best in the world. This will be the labor of years, and after a great portion of our orange lands have been brought under cultivation. In 1879 there were 257,000,000 oranges entered at the port of New York from foreign countries. Double the number, at least, were entered at all the other ports, making a grand total of 771,000,000 consumed in and lost on the voyage to this country, in addition to our Florida crop. We cannot predict when the domestic will take the place of the foreign product, but it is inevitable in the course of time. Our inability to supply the demand is the main obstacle. That this will be the ultimate result is clear from another cause, independent, or nearly so, of merit. The liability of loss and damage resulting from uncertainties of a sea voyage, form an important factor in the conduct of the foreign fruit trade, serving to make it extremely hazardous, a circumstance against which dealers do not have to contend in the shipment of Florida oranges. We have railroads leading to all the great markets of America, and when the fruit is transported by water, all facilities are afforded by perfect and commodious steamers. Orange-culture, therefore, may go on indefinitely in Florida, without fear of reaching a general redundance of product. When our own

market is occupied, those of Europe and elsewhere will be open to us. The growing desire everywhere for semi-tropical fruits, which the efforts of producers are trying to satisfy, is unlimited, and therefore efforts in orange-culture can continue to be put forth until this unlimited and independent desire is met—a goal which, perhaps, never can be reached.

To persons of foresight and capital, who are looking to the future rather than the present for remunerative returns, Florida presents, in her orange pursuits, the most extended as well as the most inviting field. But aside from the question of profit, the culture of oranges presents other practical advantages. It is not only a pleasing but an independent occupation. Its pursuit is no dead-level or monotonous exertion, but one that affords scope for the development of an ingenious mind. As to profit, the orange-grower is working under conditions of constantly increasing advantages. Young men, sometimes with little or no capital, are starting every year in the business, often away from communities of old and experienced growers, and have succeeded by dint of tact and industry. In point of regular profits ; in point of an industrious, frugal and cheerful occupation ; in point of a very general desire to become independent ; in point of repressive and adverse influences in other pursuits, they have found orange culture, in its practical working, the most pleasing occupation. Persons who own orange groves in Florida are entirely well satisfied, as a rule, with their investments. A bearing grove is worth a great deal of money, and to purchase one would require a large cash outlay. In ten years' time groves are usually in full bearing—often in less time—and the inducement to plant one is very great.

LEMONS.

The lemon grows well on our sandy soils, and ranks next to the orange in profit. It has the advantage over the orange of coming into bearing sooner. The orange bears in eight to ten years from the seed, while the lemon has fruit in four years, The few fruit-growers who have been far-sighted enough to plant lemon groves, are now reaping the benefit of their foresight. The fruit is quoted, and actually sells for as much as the

orange, and after beginning to bear requires far less care and attention. It is capable of standing nearly as much cold as the orange, but fruits best where the climate is mild. Experiments have demonstrated that the lemon will not produce its like from the seed, while the orange in most instances will. The lemon should be budded. One of the largest fruit-dealers in New York, writing on the lemon, says: "The best lemons we get here are those from Florida, because, in the first place, they are naturally splendid lemons, and in the second place, the distance they have to come is so short that they arrive in perfect condition. I paid two years ago as high as $12.00 a box for Florida lemons. They were of extra fine quality, of course, for there were other Florida lemons sold at the same time for $3.00 and $4.00 per box, but the fact that they could command such a price is an indication of the possibilities before the lemon-growers of Florida. They can practically run out Italy in time if they will only take care in growing, sorting and packing, and send to New York the best lemons. The Florida lemons are packed in boxes holding from 250 to 350 each. They are shipped about November."

One prominent fruit-grower of Orange county, about three years ago, budded from a fine variety of Sicily lemon. This winter he shipped 1,000,000 lemons; next year he will market 3,000,000, with an annual increase thereafter. His lemons are picked and shipped after they mature, and command one dollar a box in advance of the finest imported lemons on the market.

LIMES

There is not a more useful and acceptable fruit grown in the State than the lime. It is produced very successfully on our shell hammock and pine land in the southern counties flourishing best where cold weather never visits. It comes to maturity and bears even sooner than the lemon, having fruit in three years from planting the seed. Limes are attracting considerable attention in the Northern market, where they are esteemed superior to the lemon, containing more acid, and being

better shippers. Some shipments have proved very remunerative, the fruit selling for 30 cents per dozen in quantity.

The "pickled lime" is regarded as one of the best appetizers and anti-bilious tonics known. It is prepared as follows: The lime is plucked, when just ripe, a barrel is filled with them and closed up. Through the bung as much ordinary sea-water is poured upon them as the barrel will hold, and allowed to remain for twenty-four hours, the water is then poured off and replaced by a fresh supply of sea-water, which is allowed to remain another twenty-four hours and then poured of. Fill the barrel a third time in this way with sea-water, close the bung and the limes are then ready for use and shipment as "pickled limes." The lime requires very little cultivation, and is almost entirely exempt from the diseases to which the other members of the citrus family are liable.

CANE.

The soil best adapted to the cultivation of cane is a moist black loam underlaid with clay or marl, large areas of which are found among the prairies owned by this Company in the Kissimmee and Caloosahatchie Valleys, which are pronounced by experienced sugar raisers from Louisiana and Cuba to be unsurpassed in the world. They have an average depth of three feet of rich vegetable mold, with a subsoil of white clay. The cane is planted continuously in drills six feet apart, and yields its largest crop the subsequent years, but requires replanting every seven years for best results. It lives the year round in this section, and "goes to tassel," as the saying is, every year, reaching a length of seventeen feet in a season.

To those who have watched the development of the resources of Florida, it is apparent that sugar is the "king" field product of the State, and with the developments now making it will be but a comparatively short period until a large percentage of the sugar and molasses consumed in the United States will be drawn from the rich soils of the Peninsular State. Of all the districts in the Union adapted to the cultivation of sugar-cane, no region is so favored in soil and climate as Florida—the soil

of the rich bottom lands being admirably fitted to the maturing of cane crops. It is no extravagant statement to say that many hundreds of thousands of acres are here awaiting development. Sugar-cane is grown on the pine-lands with good results, where a little attention is given to cow-penning or fertilizing. The climatic conditions are most favorable in South Florida for the production of the crop ; no danger is to be apprehended from frost, which in these latitudes has never been known to injure the cane crop. Here the cane matures and perfects its seed, even when grown for years on the same land without manure. It is customary to replant sugar-cane every two or three years in the more northern sugar-belts of the country. Sugar-cane readily responds to frequent cultivation and fertilization, however, in the southern portion of this State. It is no uncommon circumstance to see good stands of cane that have rattooned from six to ten years. On the shores of Lake Worth cane was recently seen growing that had not been replanted since the Seminole wars.

The cost of fencing, plowing and planting the first cane crop upon these prairie lands averages about fifty dollars per acre. The soil is inexhaustible, and needs no fertilizer. The net profits the second year easily amount to eighty dollars per acre, and many growers realize much higher profits.

COCOANUTS.

The entire coast line of Monroe county will in a few years become a vast cocoanut grove, both climate and soil being specially adapted to their growth. The prevailing type of country is a low sandy plain or prairie, where the cocoanut is found to grow and thrive luxuriantly, little or no care being required beyond the original planting. Single, scattered trees are to be found all along the coast, where they appear to have sprung spontaneously from seed-nuts which have been washed ashore. Trees are found on the Keys, at Cape Sable and among the islands in Charlotte Harbor; in fact all along the coast range for three hundred miles.

Bearing groves are found throughout the county. Groves

are now bearing upon or near Key West island, at Plantation Key in the reef range, and at Charlotte Harbor. Major Evans has a grove in his garden at Myers, upon the Caloosahatchie, which produces 300 or more nuts per tree annually. He gathers bunches of twenty, twenty-five and even thirty-four nuts each, and trees are blooming and bearing all the year round, and this seems to be the average production of fully developed trees in South Florida.

It is but recently that this industry has received much attention. The cultivation of cocoanuts, like that of pine-apples, is still in its infancy here, but astonishing figures can be shown, considering the brief time which has elapsed since its commencement. Captain Henry Geiger was the pioneer, and his grove at Boca Chica, near Key West, is now bearing—the interest of farmers and enterprising capitalists was soon attracted to this industry, and during the past few years all the available lands in this immediate vicinity have been secured and planted, and the work is still progressing and extending to the mainland with marvelous rapidity. Three hundred and twenty-five thousand trees are now planted and growing within the limits of Monroe county, of which fifty thousand were set out last year. These are mostly upon the line of keys from Cape Florida to Key West. Cocoanut planting became a "boom" and soon reached the Gulf coast, where extensive groves have been planted at Horseman's Key, Caximbas, Horr's Island, Marco, Myers and Charlotte Harbor, and are all doing well, exceeding even the sanguine hopes of their proprietors.

To show the general feeling and future prospect, one gentleman has purchased a tract of land at Caximbas, and contracted for 30,000 seed-nuts; and at the present moment a vessel has just arrived in Key West harbor, with a cargo of 120,000 nuts, to be planted at Biscayne by a colony recently started. This is but an installment, as they are even now negotiating for 30,000 more nuts, and will in all probability not stop short of 200,000 trees. Others are planting largely along the lower Caloosahatchie Valley with a view to equally large transactions, and it is a question of but a very short time when the desolate monotony of these silent and hitherto practically unknown shores

will be supplanted by the tropical beauty and magnificence of an almost continuous cocoanut grove. Nature has done her part and is quietly waiting, and human energy and capital is alone needed for a long time wilderness to spring into active and profitable life. The annual profit on a cocoanut grove may be safely reckoned at $3 per tree, and one hundred trees to the acre. The trees come into bearing at from six to eight years of age.

It is admitted by all experienced growers that the cocoanut does best on a moist, sandy soil near salt water, but they can be raised on land removed from the coast, if salt is applied to the ground around the trees after they become three years old.

They should be planted as follows: Place the ripe nuts about four inches under the soil, and about twenty feet apart. Care should be taken to plant the nut with the end that is attached to the stem downward, as the milk inside of the nut will then cover the eye and germinate the young sprout that produces the tree.

The tree should make its appearance above ground in from six months to one year after planting the seed.

THE BANANA.

The banana is not properly a tree, but a plant of leafy, succulent growth, of the genus *Musa*. The stalk is formed of the stems of the leaves in concentric layers, reaching with its leaves, a height of fifteen or twenty feet, and eight to ten inches in thickness, and contains no woody fibre. From the center comes the first bearing stem, which turns and grows downward. The end has the appearance of an ear of corn with purple shuck. This unfolds one leaf at a time, displaying two rows—eight to twelve each—of tiny, little fruit, with their delicate blossoms, until it attains a length of two or three feet, covered with fruit. The leaves are a marvel for size and appearance, sometimes reaching a length of six feet, and eighteen inches in width, of a glossy pea green. The root is perennial. It is large and fleshy, sometimes of the size of a half bushel measure, from which put forth numerous rootlets, half an inch in diameter. From the main root are constantly springing numerous suckers, which go to

form new plants. This being its mode of propagation, these suckers can be taken off to form a new plantation, or remain, as may be wanted.

There are several varieties of banana, among which is the dwarf. This plant rarely attains a height of more than seven feet, is readily cultivated in the southern portion of the State but is too delicate to be safely propagated in the upper tier of counties. The fruit is noted for its large size and delicate flavor and is in demand. At Lake Worth a plantation of bananas has been successfully cultivated for years.

In a suitable soil, which should be rich and moist, and in a tropical climate, it requires about one year to mature fruit, from the first appearance of the plant. Each stock bears but one bunch of fruit. When it is gathered, the stock is cut down. Ten feet apart is a good distance to plant them. This gives over 400 per acre, and the second year there will be six or eight plants to each hill, and soon occupy most of the ground. After the first year they require but little cultivation, the old stalk and leaves acting as mulch and manure. Under favorable conditions there is no cessation of growth. New plants and ripe fruit are found at all times, and a plantation once started lasts for years.

It is probable that no fruit was ever cultivated that will yield more fruit per acre, or result in greater profit to the owner, where there is a market for it. It is easily and cheaply gathered, requiring no packages, and bears handling and transportation well. Three bunches a year per hill is a fair estimate for the yield of a good plantation. This would give over 1,200 bunches per acre. Many of these will contain over 100 bananas each. It is a favorite food in tropical countries, and always in demand at the seaport towns for shipment. There are some people, no doubt, who live on bananas alone; but it is not probable that any amount of work can be got out of a dozen of that fruit a day. Southern Florida and some of the islands on its coast have proved to be suitable and profitable for the culture of the banana, and instances are mentioned where the receipts have been over $3,000 per year from a single acre, including plants sold.

PINE-APPLE.

The cultivation of this most delicious fruit is becoming one of the leading industries of South Florida.

Fully 300 acres are now under cultivation in Monroe county, and the area is being constantly increased as fast as the land can be cleared and the slips can be procured from which they are propagated. The area devoted to this business in Monroe is confined principally to Key Largo and the adjacent keys, where the enterprise was originally started, but the farmers in Manatee and the mainland of Monroe are now turning their attention to this industry, and large fields have been planted in several of the southern counties. Those already started are reported in excellent condition, and the outlook for rapid increase is exceedingly promising. We cite a few figures which have been obtained from accurate information about Key Largo and vicinity. The shipments of pine-apples to Northern markets have been about as follows: In 1881, 30,000 dozen; in 1882, 75,000 dozen, and last year, 150,000 dozen. An acre of land set out in pine slips will produce 8,000 pine-apples, the average price of which, when ready for shipping, is $1.00 per dozen. The Largo pines are already well known, and those which have been produced upon the mainland demonstrates fully that the pine lands of South Florida are well adapted to the production of strong, healthy plants, and a sweet, fine quality of fruit.

The pine-apple is propagated from slips and suckers; the former are taken from the base of the matured pine-apple—each pine producing from five to seven slips. The suckers grow up from the root of the plant, and after being removed and dried stand shipment very well. An excess of moisture in slips and suckers when shipped in quantity is detrimental: in this condition they are liable to deteriorate. After planting, the slips will produce fruit in from eighteen months to two years. The suckers fruit in one year under favorable conditions. Pine-apples require but little attention; their luxuriant growth soon shades the ground, preventing the growth of weeds and rapid evaporation of moisture.

Experienced growers express themselves fully satisfied with their present success, and are going into the business largely.

RICE.

Both the lowland and upland varieties of this most useful grain are grown successfully and profitably in Florida. On the rich hammock lands of the interior of the State, and the stiff pine lands of the South, upland rice of the best quality is raised by small planters, while the rich valleys of the Kissimmee and Caloosahatchie will produce wonderful yields of the lowland, and this, too, without the irrigation which is regarded so essential to its production in Georgia and South Carolina. It requires a moist soil, is sown in drills, and when kept clear of weeds will produce 30 to 100 bushels of rough rice to the acre. Rice is a standard article of food and is used in many manufacturing processes, and there is certainly no reason why its culture should not become at an early day one of the leading industries of this our "State of marvelous resources."

GUAVAS.

Guavas are grown all over South Florida with little cultivation, and are the peaches of that section. For jellies, jams, pies, and to serve with cream they are the most delicious fruit that grows. When cooked or prepared in any of the ways in which we serve peaches at table one soon grows fond of them, and many people relish them eaten from the bush. In addition to its delicious flavor, the guava is a very healthy fruit.

Little attention is given to the manufacture of "guava jelly," though it is confidently believed that it could be made immensely profitable in the southern counties, as the jelly is highly esteemed the world over. When cold-storage warehouses and refrigerator-cars have been introduced, so that the guava can be sent to Northern markets, the demand will be very great.

SUGAR-APPLE.

This fruit grows on a shrub similar to the guava, and is also very tender and needs some protection from cold. The fruit is a rich yellowish green, and rough on the outside, but it is very rich and sweet, and while it is *sui generis*, it may be compared to a date in taste. This fruit does well south of latitude 28 degrees.

THE MANGO

is a rich and deliciously flavored fruit, larger than an egg, and nearly the same shape. It is a greenish yellow on the outside, and a bright yellow on the inside; the pulp being somewhat fibrous or stringy ; it is best to pare and eat with a very sharp knife. It has a large, oblong, single seed, that is quite a curiosity itself. There are several varieties, some of which are hardier than others and more prolific. It is said that the Persian, or East India variety, is most desirable for this State. They are at home on the sandy soils of South Florida, where they come into bearing in five years from planting the seed. The trees resemble the orange-tree in size and shape. They produce about 2,000 mangoes each, which are principally sold in Southern markets, and bring from $1.00 to $3.00 per hundred.

THE AVOCADO PEAR,

usually called "alligator pear," is a peculiar fruit, native to the West Indies. The fruit is very large, pear-shaped, and has a large, round kernel, or seed, in the center. The fruit, even when mature, is a dark green, sometimes shaded yellow, and the flesh is of the same color. The taste is peculiarly oily and pasty, and one must be educated to a relish for it. It is generally eaten with salt, vinegar and pepper; as a salad, it is highly esteemed. The tree is a model of beauty, and grows to a large size on the shell hammocks and sandy soils of South Florida. It commences bearing five years from the seed. Will produce from 200 to 300 pears when eight years old, which are

readily sold in Key West market at prices ranging from 60 cents to $1.20 per dozen.

The mango and alligator pear are growing and maturing their fruit at Point Pinellas, a peculiarly favored spot just west of Tampa Bay. This point, due to the water protection afforded by the waters of the Gulf, Hillsboro Bay and Tampa Bay, is as tropical in its conditions as points on the mainland one hundred and thirty miles further south, and presents unusual attractions to those desiring an equable climate or a point for tropical fruits and early vegetable cultivation. Shaddocks, grape-fruit, sapadillos, sour-sops, Jamaica apples, pawpaws and dates are all grown to some extent in the southern counties, but there are not enough raised to create a demand in the market.

VEGETABLE GROWING

for Northern markets is destined to become a very important branch of business in the southern counties, on account of climate and soil and nearness to market. We may say, without tedious detail, that any vegetable grown North as a summer vegetable can be produced and shipped from South Florida in any of the winter months. This industry was started in Monroe county in 1877, by a shipment of 16,000 crates of tomatoes to New York through the port of Key West. In 1878 there were 25,000 crates shipped through the same port. The first shipment of vegetables this season was made in December, and consisted of tomatoes and egg-plants in quantity. The tomatoes brought 60 cents a quart, and egg-plants $4.00 per dozen in New York.

In the southern portion of the State, tomatoes, green peas, cucumbers, egg-plant, new potatoes, strawberries, watermelons, etc., may be seen growing side by side and in the same field in the month of December. The completion of new lines of railroad now building, in connection with water transportation, will afford facilities for placing these desirable garden products on the Northern table at a season when there will be no competition, and prices obtained will return a large profit.

CASAVA AND COMPTIE.

Starch and glucose can be more easily and profitably made from the casava and comptie than from any other plants known. But as the comptie could not be so easily, abundantly and profitably raised as the

CASAVA,

the latter would be the general crop. It produces more in weight and bulk to a given area than any other of the root family, often reaching, as we are reliably informed, forty tons to the acre; and this in turn yields a larger percentage of merchantable product than any of the bulbous plants, about 30 per cent. of glucose or syrup, 40 per cent. of starch, and 10 per cent. of the residium tapioca, there being no waste but the thin rind.

As a stock for the manufacture of starch, casava, in cheapness of production and yield per acre, is superior to any other field crop, with the added advantage that the tubers may remain in the ground after maturing and increase in weight very rapidly. About three thousand plants are set to the acre, and it is no unusual circumstance to find roots of thirty to sixty pounds each. The crop may be gathered eight months after planting. There are several million of acres of land strictly adapted to this crop under our control. A company is now planting on the Gulf coast for the purpose of manufacture of glucose.

STOCK RAISING.

It is quite difficult, in the limits of a publication of this character, to discuss the best methods of stock raising.

In all the southern counties are to be found large and small herds of cattle. These run at large through the pine woods, swamps and vast prairies of the Kissimmee and Caloosahatchie valleys, and thrive on the coarse pasturage in a manner quite remarkable and satisfactory to their owners, who "round-up" once a year, mark and brand the young calves, and give little other attention to them.

So little expense attends this sort of stock raising that, notwithstanding the small size of the cattle produced, they prove most profitable for shipment to the Cuban markets. Indeed, the hide and tallow of a five-year-old steer would return a good profit on the cost of his keeping. The cattle are not so large as those grown in Texas, because less attention has been given here to improving the native breeds of stock. The cattle raised in Florida are small, with thick heavy necks and fore parts and narrow loins; but when fat a four-year-old when dressed will weigh from 400 to 500 pounds.

The buyers in the Cuban markets (to which shipments are made to the extent of 50,000 head per year), prefer Florida to Texas beef. The grasses in the southern counties are more nutritious, and seem to impart a more agreeable flavor to the flesh than in the northern part of Florida. That this business pays well has this practical proof: More money has been made in stock raising in South Florida than any other enterprise in the State until quite recently, and a number have thus grown wealthy from their herds. The improving of our breeds of cattle and proper experiments with the grasses which may be grown successfully here, will make stock raising in Florida as general as it is profitable, and will give a value to a vast area in the State now practically a wilderness.

To enumerate in detail the varied crops and products of this country would be beyond the province of this paper. Crops indigenous to all parts of America may be safely grown (excepting in the case of a few of the cereals) with less care and labor in their cultivation and production; besides, in many cases the soil can be replanted the same year. The region represented by our companies presents the advantage of a tropical and semi-tropical climate. It is the region where many of the products of both the temperate and tropical climes may be found growing side by side—where the orange, lemon, lime, guava, fig, etc., and all the garden vegetables may be grown for profit in the open air the year round. It is where cotton, sugar-cane, rice, tobacco and all Southern field crops pay best.

Large orange groves are being set out yearly, and the production from those in bearing returns handsome incomes to their

owners. In this region frost rarely comes, and every fruit, flower, hrub, plant or product that grows in any semi-tropical or tropical region of the world matures or can be produced. Here one may behold trees in rapid and perennial growth, forests and fields spread with a rich vegetation, and roses in full bloom at a period when the Northern States are wrapped in snow.

This is the region in which to seek the benefits of a summer climate during the winter months. Although the winters are so mild, the summers do not bring the tropical heat which might be expected, and parties now permanently residing here, after several years' experience, assert that they do not suffer more in summer than they did in their old homes in the North. Any person accustomed to exposure, North or South, can do ordinary farm work during the summer without fear of ill-effect from the heat. The thermometer rarely rises above ninety degrees.

Official records show the average temperature of Florida to be—summer, seventy-eight; winter, sixty degrees.

The daily ocean breezes in summer modify the heat. The Gulf breeze coming in with the setting sun cools the air at night.

Official sanitary reports, both of scientific bodies and the army, show that Florida stands first in health, although in the reports are included a transient population, many of whom take refuge here as invalids in the lowest stage of disease.

The flow of immigration already so great to the "Far West" is settling in upon these lands, so much more advantageously located for marketing products, and possessing superior adaptability to the profitable pursuit of a pleasing agriculture.

The influx of population will rapidly advance the price of these lands in the hands of the husbandman, and the great variety of adaptation and products, with a ready access to the best markets of the world, will certainly work a large and more certain return for labor and capital than in the frigid regions of the more Northern States.

To complete this pamphlet on Tropical Fruits, the following report of Inspector Bostwick, of the New York Custom House, is appended. The utter fallacy of the idea, which is sometimes expressed, that Florida will overstock the market for oranges, is made very apparent in this article.

FOREIGN GREEN FRUIT.

REVIEW OF THE TRADE DURING THE YEAR 1882.

VARIETIES IMPORTED AND THE AMOUNT OF EACH VARIETY, TOGETHER WITH THE VALUE AND THE DUTY THEREON—INSPECTOR BOSTWICK'S STATISTICS.

In offering to the public the statistical review of the fruit trade at the port of New York for the year 1882, the fourteenth the writer has presented in as many consecutive years, it must be confessed at once that there will not be found therein anything of an unusual character, or anything calculated to specially interest the general reader further than the knowledge of the gradually increasing importance of the trade may do. The traffic is one that possesses its full share of the uncertainties of commercial transactions. The perishable character of the fruit, and the chances of the sea voyage from the tropics are quite enough to account for this uncertainty. It should be stated, however, that the gradually increasing use of steamers in the place of sailing vessels is tending to reduce the chances for loss from the voyage. The trade in Mediterranean fruits for the last year shows a large increase over the trade of the year 1881, and from the detailed exhibit of the trade in green fruits generally, as given herein, we learn that the most of the several kinds of fruit imported have also increased in number in the same time. The importation of bananas has doubled, but a striking offset is offered to this increase in the very notable decrease in the importation of oranges, probably the most commonly used of all the imported fruits. Any deficiency in the

receipt of this fruit seems, however, to have been partially made good from the orange growers of Florida, and perhaps the large supply from this source forms one of the most interesting facts stated in this paper, both on account of its present importance and its suggestions as to the future of the orange trade.

MEDITERRANEAN FRUIT.

The importation of Mediterranean fruit at the port of New York during the year 1882 consists of 120 cargoes by English steamers and 12 cargoes by Italian and Norwegian sailing vessels, and comprised 953,837 boxes and cases of oranges and 1,052,874 boxes of lemons. On comparison of the above with the imports of 1881, the result shows an increase of 3 cargoes by steamers and a decrease of 3 cargoes by sailing vessels. The increase in the number of cargoes is represented by an increase of 134,614 boxes and cases of oranges and 192,633 boxes of lemons, and an increase of 18,049,570 oranges and of 63,568,890 lemons in number. The total number of oranges imported in 1882 was 244,270,290, of which 80,609,195 perished on the voyage, equal to a loss of 33 per cent., and the total number of lemons imported in 1882 was 347,448,420, of which 69,489,684 perished on the voyage, a loss of 20 per cent.

GRAPES.

The importation of grapes comprised 108,797 barrels and 10,667 half barrels, on which there was a loss of 25 per cent. Compared with the imports of 1881, there was an increase of 61,797 barrels and of 667 half barrels.

ORANGES FROM THE WEST INDIES, CENTRAL AND SOUTH AMERICA.

The importation of oranges from the West Indies consisted of 5 full cargoes and of parts of several cargoes of oranges by sailing vessels; and 83,587 barrels of oranges by 111 steamers. Of the above, 52,191 barrels were from Kingston, Jamaica, and comprised 18,446,650 oranges; from Havana, 8,866 barrels, comprising 2,953,763 oranges; from Port Maria, 6,065 barrels, com-

prising 2,120,950 oranges; from Jamaica, 5,029 barrels, comprising 1,760,150 oranges; from Samana, 4,608 barrels, comprising 1,612,800 oranges; from Nassau, 1,924 barrels and 2 cargoes, comprising 1,095,050 oranges; from Dominica, 1 cargo and 1,548 barrels, comprising 669,360 oranges; from Montego Bay, 860 barrels, comprising 300,624 oranges; from Savana La-Mar, 750 barrels, comprising 286,300 oranges; from Trinidad, 334 barrels, comprising 116,900 oranges; from Port Antonio, 728 barrels, comprising 263,800 oranges; from Black River, Montanzas, St. Jago, Aricibo, Port au Prince, Para, Lucia, 694 barrels, comprising 244,000 oranges; from Ponce, P. R., 1 cargo, comprising 273,900 oranges; from Mayaguez, 1 cargo, comprising 483,000 oranges; from Abaco, 1 cargo, comprising 200,000 oranges; from Porto Rico, part cargo, comprising 150,000 oranges; from San Andreas, part cargo, comprising 72,000 oranges; from Baracoa, part cargoes, comprising 75,590 oranges, making a grand total of 31,160,587 oranges, of which 11,217,811 perished on the voyage, a loss of 36 per cent. On comparison of the above with the imports of 1881, the result shows a decrease of 35,910 barrels, and of 13,456,325 oranges; less than the imports of 1881, also a decrease of 4 sailing vessels, and an increase of (approximately) 99 steamers engaged in the trade.

FLORIDA.

A passing allusion here to the rapidly increasing production of oranges in Florida may not be thought amiss. The hundreds of thousands (it may be millions) of trees heretofore transplanted are annually arriving at a bearing state, and a large crop of fine oranges the past season has amply rewarded the labor bestowed upon their cultivation. Perseverance and more experience will insure lasting results, so far as the permanence of the fruit growing industry is concerned, and constantly increasing returns to its promoters. The writer predicts that the products of the orange groves of Florida in a single decade will be sufficient to supply the whole United States with an abundance of fine oranges. About 200,000 boxes and barrels of oranges were shipped to this city this season from Florida

and found a ready market, and about 300,000 boxes and barrels of oranges were distributed through the West, South, and Southwest from the same source.

The trade in West India oranges the past year proved both unsatisfactory and unprofitable.

Amongst the principal importers in this city who are engaged in the fruit trade with the Island of Jamaica, and the West Indies generally, are Messrs. Gomez & Pearsall, Mr. Joseph S. Johnson, Messrs. George H. Richardson & Co., Messrs. G. Wessels & Co., Mr. Aubrey G. Hutcheson, Mr. G. de Cordova, Messrs. William Douglass & Son, Mr. R. McD. Kirkland, Mr. Joshua C. Cromwell, Mr. W. M. Hinton, Mr. J. F. Ferrier, Mr. John Marsh and Messrs. C. H. Griffin & Co.

PINEAPPLES.

The importation of pineapples from the West Indies the past year consisted of 30 cargoes by sailing vessels, and 15,033 barrels by 81 steamers. Of the above 12,692 barrels were from Havana, and comprised 568,610 pineapples; from Port Maria, 247 barrels, comprising 10,460 pineapples; from St. Jago, 41 barrels, and 22,596 pineapples in bulk, comprising in all 24,621; from Kingston, 816 barrels, comprising 40,807 pineapples; from Nassau, 2 cargoes and 897 barrels, comprising 229,748 pineapples; from Port Antonio, 163 barrels, comprising 8,150 pineapples and 9,804 in bulk; from Green Turtle Bay, 1 cargo, comprising 31,212 pineapples; from Eleuthera, 5 cargoes, comprising 412,388 pineapples; from Governor's Harbor, 4 cargoes, comprising 212,616 pineapples; from Abaco, 8 cargoes, comprising 468,744 pineapples; from Cat Island, 10 cargoes, comprising 528,672 pineapples; from Montego Bay, Trinidad, Barbadoes, Corn Island (in bulk), and Curacoa, 189 barrels, comprising 9,488 pineapples; making a grand total of 2,555,320 pineapples.

On comparison of the above with the imports of 1881, the result shows a decrease of 3 cargoes by sailing vessels, an increase of 11 steamers engaged in the trade, also, an increase of 1,062 barrels of pineapples, and 499,301 pineapples. The average loss on the above was 20 per cent.

Amongst the principal importers engaged in the trade are Mr. Joseph S. Johnson, Mr. Aubrey G. Hutcheson, and Messrs. Gomez & Pearsall.

Probably few persons in this city are aware of the fact that nearly two millions of pineapples are annually canned or packed at the canning factories of Mr. Joseph S. Johnson at Eleuthera and Harbor Island, in the West Indies, about three-fourths of which find a market in this city and the residue in Europe.

The annual production of pineapples in the State of Florida is gradually on the increase. Four cargoes, aggregating about a quarter of a million of fine pines, of superior quality, were received in this city the last season.

BANANAS.

The importation of bananas (mostly from the West Indies) the past year consisted of 146 cargoes by sailing vessels and cargoes and parts of cargoes by 99 steamers. Of the above, 142 cargoes by sailing vessels and 7 by steamers were from Baracoa, and comprised 388,859 bunches; from Port Antonio, 286,912 bunches by 47 steamers and 4 sailing vessels; from Port Maria, 115,796 bunches by 20 steamers; from Montego Bay, 42,952 bunches by 9 steamers; from Jamaica and Kingston, Samana, Belize (Hon.), Curacoa and Corn Island, 25,017 bunches by 6 steamers; from Colon, 39,140 bunches by 6 steamers; from Port Limon,* 20,994 bunches by 4 steamers; making a grand total of 919,670 bunches of bananas, showing an increase of 495,389 bunches and an importation more than double the number imported in 1881. Of the above 147,227 bunches perished on the voyage, a loss of 16 per cent.

Amongst the principal importers of bananas, in this city, importing mostly from the West Indies, are Messrs. Gomez &

* Since the recent construction of the Costa Rica Railroad, seventy-one miles long, extending from Port Limon to Rio Scucio, through a fertile country abounding in banana plantations, and the recent renewed appreciation by the natives of the importance of the cultivation of the banana, and the present facilities for unloading the fruit directly from the cars along the side of the steamers, largely increased importations of bananas from Port Limon are confidently anticipated in the future.

Pearsall, Messrs. George H. Richardson & Co., Messrs. G. Wessels & Co., Mr. Aubrey, G. Hutcheson, Messrs. Wm. Douglass & Son and Mr. Edgar Tilton.

The reasonable anticipations of the importers of West India bananas the past year were far from being realized. On the contrary a large amount of loss was sustained by those in the banana trade.

ASPINWALL BANANAS.

The importations of bananas from Aspinwall the past year consisted of 68 cargoes per steamer, of which 60 cargoes were imported by "The Frank Brothers Company," comprising 429,987 bunches bananas, and 8 cargoes by Messrs. George H. Richardson & Co., comprising 66,835 bunches, making a total of 496,822 bunches bananas, of which 84,459 bunches perished on the voyage, an average loss of 17 per cent. There was an increase of 7 cargoes, and of 35,861 bunches bananas over the imports of the previous year. The importers engaged in the Aspinwall trade are The Frank Brothers Co., Messrs. George H. Richardson & Co., and Messrs. G. Wessels & Co.

COCOANUTS.

Cocoanuts were imported from the following named places during the year in quantities as follows: From Baracoa, 6,079,-634; San Andreas, 1,863,837; San Blas, 2,048,186; Ruatan, 596,691; Barcelona, 687,344; Aspinwall, 549,000; St. Jago, 520,400; Porto Bello, 460,000; Blewfields, 572,000; Trinidad, 198,258; Montego Bay, 205,700; Port Spain, 144,768; Kingston, 201,725; Boco del Torro, Port Limon, Porto Rico, Port Antonio, La Guayra, Belize, Port au Prince, Greytown, Barbadoes, Corn Island, Curacoa, United States Columbia, Columbo, Aricibo, Maracaibo, Port Maria, Samana, Pernambuco, Guantanimo, Jamaica, Nassau, Progresso, Truxillo, and Cienfuegos, in quantities aggregating 914,365 cocoanuts, making a grand total of 15,041,-507 cocoanuts, which comprised the cargoes and parts of cargoes of 217 sailing vessels and 72 steamers. Of the above, 1,203,320 perished on the voyage, a loss of 8 per cent.

On comparison of the above with the imports of 1881,

the result shows an increase of 4,662,678 cocoanuts over those of 1881.

The principal importers of cocoanuts from Central and South America and Cuba are Messrs. George H. Richardson & Co., Messrs. G. Wessel & Co., Messrs. William Douglass & Son, and Mr. Aubrey G. Hutcheson, and Messrs. Gomez & Pearsall, from Baracoa.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The importations of limes comprised 1,987 barrels, on which there was a loss of 35 per cent.; 25,600 grape fruit, loss 10 per cent.; 1,270 shaddocks, loss 10 per cent.; 74,150 mangoes, loss 50 per cent.; 15,115 plantains, loss 15 per cent.

The value of green fruit entered for consumption at the port of New York from January 1, 1882, to December 31, 1882, is exhibited in the following table:

Varieties of Fruit.	Pr. Ct.	Value.	Amount of Duty.
Oranges and Lemons	20	$3,853,007	$770,601.40
Grapes	20	386.392	77,278.40
Pineapples	20	102,693	20,522.60
Bananas	10	823,227	82,322.70
Limes, Shaddocks, Mangoes, Grape Fruit, Plantains, Sapodillas, Avocado Pears, Guavas, and several other varieties of fruit not specified, under the head of Miscellaneous	10	11,993	1,199.35
Cocoanuts	Free	353,502	.....
Total value and duty		$5,530,734	$951,924.35

A comparison of the value of green fruit imported into New York in 1881 with that, in 1882, shows an increase in value of $1,147,638, and of duty $189,548.36.

The countries and islands from whence the foregoing varieties of fruit were imported are Mexico, Central America, British, French and Danish West Indies, Cuba, San Domingo, Hayti, United States of Colombia, Venezuela, British Guiana, Brazil, England, Scotland, France, Spain, Portugal, Italy and Sicily.

J. H. Bostwick,
U. S. Inspector of Customs.

Burling Slip, New York, April, 1883.

The following paper on the climate of the Gulf Coast of Florida so exactly describes that of Palma Sola that it has been included in this pamphlet with many thanks to the author:

A WINTER CLIMATE FOR INVALIDS—

THE GULF COAST OF FLORIDA.

By R. J. Levis, M. D.

From The Continent.

The season is at hand when those who, like the birds of summer, take annually their flight southward, will be thinking of running away from winter. There are many who seek genial airs and sunlit waters for pleasure only, others to escape from the chilling discomforts of winter; and the great invalid corps, turning its back on cold and death when the leaves fall, makes its pilgrimage to sunny lands.

In the choice of a climate for invalids in general, there are certain health-giving factors which may be summed up as *equability of temperature, purity of atmosphere and comparative dryness.*

I regard it as essential for most invalids that the temperature shall be such that they may be able to remain for an indefinite time out in the open air without discomfort, and to freely permit it to enter their apartments at all hours of the day and night.

The general prevalence of bright, clear, sunny days, with the rarity of cloudiness and a light rainfall, are essentials of a winter health resort for lung diseases. The physiological, and specially the stimulating and eutrophic effects of sunlight on the human

system, are well recognized; but, owing to the in-door habits of invalids, are too little regarded.

The discomfort and depression produced by the prevalence of violent winds are familiar to most conditions of invalidism, and climates of continuous and moderate air-movements are found to be the most desirable.

An atmosphere of varying electric conditions, with the consequent production of ozone, purifying the air and keeping it free from septic germs, is favorable.

A dry soil of sand or gravel, which quickly absorbs and filters away the rainfall from its surface, and does not keep the air moist by evaporation, is an essential of a winter health resort for pulmonary affections.

The salubrious atmosphere from extensive pine forests, with their ozone and antiseptic influences, should incline invalids to the choice of such proximity.

Facility for sea-bathing, at a tolerable temperature throughout the winter, gives occupation and pleasure, and is an important adjuvant in the treatment of some morbid conditions.

As incipient and developing pulmonary tuberculosis, and in many other diseases prevalent among the dwellers in cities, it is essential that there shall be a change of habits from a sedentary to an out-door life, the region for a health resort should be one in which there are abundant opportunities for amusement or for agreeable and profitable work in the open air. In a region of country where open-air amusements can be varied by riding, hunting and sailing, and where the scenery is an attractive blending of vistas of forests and stretches of water, the conditions most favorable to an out-door life will be most happily presented.

The poorly-nourished victim of tuberculosis should not be banished to a land where his diet may be impoverished by the lack of fresh meat and vegetables. If he is where he can add to his fare by the products of his recreations of hunting and fishing, then will good digestion be most likely to wait on appetite.

Agreeable society is an essential of happiness and a preventive of depression of spirits in that class of invalids who are obliged to seek winter quarters away from home. Their associations should not be in a crowded caravansary, where the halls echo with the

sad sound of coughing, and the corridors seem sepulchral with the hoarse voices of sufferers. Far better is it to find companionship with the woodsman or the fisherman, and be entertained by their woodcraft or simple lore of boats, bays and streams.

The ideal winter climate for invalids, embracing perfectly all the essentials and suited to the fancy and caprice of sufferers, may not be found, but it can be approximated in its most important requisites.

It is evident that in Europe and in this country mild or warm climates have of recent years grown most in favor as winter health resorts. In our own land Florida has become the great winter sanitarium for consumptive invalids, for the nervous and debilitated, and for valetudinarians of all degrees, with the prospect of increasing in repute as the merits of some of its most advantageous localities become more generally known. My personal observations of Florida have extended over the regions usually visited by invalids and tourists, and over a domain of wilderness beyond the ready access of travelers. The greater part of the territory of the entire State still remains inaccessible to invalids, and the tide of travel is mostly confined to the great water-course of the St. John's River and vicinity; but the increased developments of railroads and of the coast and interior navigation are about to speedily spread travel over a most attractive sanitary region. That there are portions of Florida much more suited for winter homes than those generally resorted to it is the object of this article to state.

Florida is a land of many waters. It has a coast line of about twelve hundred miles. Its rivers, lakes, everglades and lagoons are numberless. It is estimated that from a fourth to a third of the entire State, varying with the season of the year, is covered by water. To its extensive and peculiar water containings and surroundings is due its unique and wonderfully mild and equable climate. Florida is our nether land, which, as Sidney Lanier wrote, by "its peninsular curve whimsically terminates our country in an interrogation point." It geographically and climatically resembles Italy, but its air is more bland and healthful, and its soil has even a greater range of productiveness.

No known land is exempt from the liability of its inhabitants to pulmonary consumption, but in this country statistics of the last

two decades show that the disease progressively diminishes from our extreme Northern States southward to Florida. The mortality from consumption, as compared with all other causes of death in Florida, is, by the census, but 58 to the 1,000; whilst in the State of Maine it is 258 to the 1,000; Connecticut, 179; Pennsylvania, 142, and South Carolina, 90.

The low consumption mortality of Florida exists, notwithstanding the number of Northern invalids who seek too late its healthy air, only to end their days and add to the normally very low death rate. The best authority on the subject, Dr. Kenworthy, of Jacksonville, who has given much intelligent attention to climate in the cure of consumption and to sanitary statistics in general, believes that the mortality from consumption among the permanent residents of Florida actually does not exceed thirty deaths to the thousand from all causes.

Of the extended seaboard of Florida the Gulf Coast stretches over seven hundred miles. The climate of this coast has, in my opinion, more of the essentials of a good winter resort for invalids than any other of which I know. I make this statement after some personal experience over a large extent of the coast, from much conference with invalids who have happily tested its merits, and from a comparison with the thermometric and hygrometric records of many of the various popular health resorts of the world. The west, or Gulf coast of Florida has a temperature more mild, equable and dry than that of the corresponding Atlantic border. As compared with that of the much-frequented region of the St. John's River, in the winter season it is free from malarious influences, fogs are unknown, and the opportunities and inducements for an out-door life are far greater. Sidney Lanier, the poet, whose failing days were prolonged by a residence in Florida, says that the air of the Gulf Coast is "milder and dryer than on the eastern coast in midwinter; and it is to be greatly hoped that increased facilities for reaching these favorable regions will soon render them practicable to those who now find the journey too trying."

For the agriculturist and the orange-grower, and for the gardener who raises early vegetables for the Northern markets, this coast offers a fertile soil and a climate freer from destructive frosts than any other part of the peninsula. To the capitalist and the

investor for speedy increase in values of lands, it, with the rapid development of railroads now stretching their competing lines to the fertile hummock lands and numerous harbors of this coast region, gives assurance of a flood tide of immigration—

> "The first faint wash of waves where soon
> Shall roll the human sea."

The Gulf Coast has great advantages in its many excellent harbors, and is, in this respect, more favored than the Atlantic border of the peninsula, which, south of the mouth of the St. John's River, has not a single good harbor. The best harbors of the west coast are at Cedar Keys, the Anclote River, Clear Water Harbor, Tampa Bay, Manatee Bay, Palma Sola Bay, Sarasota Bay, Charlotte Harbor and San Carlos Harbor; but there are innumerable inlets, with moderate depths of water, passing in between the thousands of beautiful islands which border the entire coast line. These islands, or keys, are lovely, fertile tracts, mostly in primitive wilderness, capable of high cultivation, with a delightful climate, and their only disadvantage is the liability to partial overflow from the occasional hurricane tides of late summer or early autumn. Residences on them can be safely located only on eminences above the possible reach of the waters, which may rise six or eight feet above the normal level.

The whole of the Gulf Coast, from Cedar Keys southward, is attractive for health- and pleasure-seekers, but the southern limit is sharply defined near the end of the peninsula by a region so inflicted with insect annoyances as to render human existence intolerable. How far southward the coast may be in all respects desirable for winter residences, my explorations have not determined; but from Homosassa down as far as the Ten Thousand Islands, a region included between the twenty-sixth and twenty-eighth degrees of latitude, the invalid will find a winter climate presenting the essentials, as I have stated them, of *equability of temperature, purity of atmosphere and comparative dryness.*

The mean temperature for the five cold months for a period of five years, at the United States Signal Station at Punta Rassa, about two hundred miles south of Cedar Keys and one hundred north of Cape Sable, is shown in the following table:

	November..	December...	January....	February...	March.....	Mean for 5 months..
Punta Rassa.....	69.4	64.6	64.8	66.1	68.8	66.7

Another table shows the maximum and minimum temperatures for the same months in the years 1878 and 1879.

Punta Rassa.	November..	December..	January....	February...	March.....	Mean.....
Maximum.....	83.7	76.2	79.3	79.5	82.6	80.7
Minimum.....	46.7	42.3	46.7	47.5	49.7	46.6

Here is shown a winter temparature which, with its well-known equability, renders out-door life agreeable, and dwelling apartments can always be kept open to the free admission of air. The winter temperature is rarely so low as to require even the open wood-fire. The skies, from sunrise over the tops of the pines and palms to the dip of a red sunset into the warm waters of the Gulf, are almost always bright and blue, checkered only by white flying clouds. The balmy breezes blow mildly and almost without ceasing, excepting during an occasional lull of calm at the sunset hour, so that the advantage to health of continuous and moderate air movements prevails.

As to purity of atmosphere the situation and surroundings are extremely favorable. The breezes blow from either the vast area of waters of the Gulf or from over great forests of pine, palm and cypress, with their ozonizing influences. It is due to these agencies and to the remarkable dryness that an aseptic condition of the atmosphere exists. I have seen venison, game birds and other meats remain for many days, or even for weeks, hanging unprotected in the open air, free from taint, and becoming merely hard and dry without decomposition.

No claim for the sanitary merits of the Gulf Coast of Florida will create so much surprise as that of the comparative dryness of its atmosphere. The natural and popular inference that it has a

moist climate must be from a consideration of its vast traverses and surroundings of water, fresh and salt, and not from the trustworthy reports of the Signal Service or from personal observation. I am not able to give a reasonable explanation of the cause of the remarkable dryness of the atmosphere amidst such a realm of waters; but that the climate of this coast is comparatively dry and bracing can be proved by the records of official observation and attested by the permanent residents of the region. The following table, from official data, of relative humidity of some winter resorts of Europe and America shows particularly well for Punta Rassa, on the Gulf Coast of Florida, during the five cold months:

	Years.....	November.	December..	January....	February...	March.....	Mean for 5 months..
		per ct.	per ct.	per ct.	per ct.	per ct.	per ct.
Mentone and Cannes.....	3	71.8	74.2	72.0	70.7	73.3	72.4
Atlantic City, N. J.....	5	76.9	79.1	80.6	77.3	76.8	78.1
Breckenridge, Minn.....	5	76.9	83.2	76.8	81.8	79.5	79.6
St. Paul, Minn.....	5	70.3	73.5	75 2	70.7	67.1	71.3
Punta Rassa, Fla.....	5	72.7	73.2	74.2	73.7	69.9	72.7
Key West, Fla.....	5	77.1	78.7	78.9	77.2	72.2	76.8
Jacksonville, Fla.....	5	71.7	69.3	70.1	68.5	63.9	68.8

Data supplied by the United States Signal Service prove that during the five cold months the relative humidity of Florida, as taken at a number of widely separated stations of observation, is less than that of what is popularly called the "dry winter climate of Minnesota."

The very small rainfall at Punta Rassa during the five cold months, given in inches and hundredths, from the statistics of the Signal Service, is as follows:

	November..	December..	January....	February...	March.....	Mean for 5 months..
Punta Rassa.....	1.62	1.08	2.31	1.79	.83	1.52

The mean of the maximum and minimum temperatures of the water of the ocean bottom, at Punta Rassa, for the five cold months during five years, from 1878 to 1883, is here shown:

	November..	December...	January....	February...	March.....	
Punta Rassa.....	72.8	67.2	63.6	68.1	73.0	

Such temperatures render sea bathing agreeable throughout the winter and early spring months.

For an attractive out-door life in the winter for invalids I know of no region equaling the Gulf Coast of Florida, with its great bays and harbors for sailing, its wonderful fishing and excellent deer hunting, and the great abundance of feathered game in the forests and on the waters. There is perpetual inducement to spend time in the open air. The sun does not parch, the winds do not chill, and the atmosphere has that indefinable poetic quality called "dreamy." I have felt comfortable in the bracing air when very lightly dressed, and not oppressed when heavily clothed. Sea bathing is agreeable on the shelly or white sandy beaches all through the winter, and I have found the water warmer on the western than on the eastern coast of the peninsula.

The reason that the Gulf Coast has not been more popularly known as a sanitary resort is the want of convenient access and of accommodations for sojourners, but a happy change is at hand. Coasting steamers now run into all of the more important harbors, as those of Anclote, Tampa, Palma Sola and San Carlos; and railroads are rapidly being constructed to reach the towns all along the coast. The want of convenient residences for invalids is now quite overcome, and comfortable accommodations can be had in every village. The hospitality of the people renders the stay genial and social, and it is a common remark, which I have happily verified, that in Florida wherever you see a house you can find a home, for every home seems open to welcome the stranger.

At a most attractive and salubrious location on the high peninsula between Manatee Bay and Sarasota Bay, on the shore of Palma Sola Bay, a beautiful site for villas is being developed, and a large hotel will be ready this winter for the accommodation of health- or pleasure-seeking visitors. This locality can be readily reached by the coasting steamers from Cedar Keys to Palma Sola,

about one hundred miles, or by rail to Tampa via Sanford, thence by daily steamer to Palma Sola. The land here is much elevated, overlooking the Gulf of Mexico, through Palma Sola Bay and Long Boat Inlet. The elevation of this region, which is the highest on the coast, and its extensive water surroundings, render it most favorable for a winter resort, and, indeed, for residence during the entire year. A number of persons from the North are erecting cottages on these shores, so that abundant accommodations will soon be ready for winter visitors to this favorable locality.

To all who would escape from the severity and danger of our Northern winters and seek a mild, equable and comparatively dry climate, free from malarial influences, and where life in the open air is always practicable and agreeable, I commend a journey to the Gulf Coast of Florida.

MANATEE COUNTY.

In the preparation of this pamphlet, which is designed to give the information most frequently asked for by correspondents, the authors have culled liberally from the most reliable sources obtainable, giving due credit for articles which cost their authors much more work than the simple use of the shears which placed them here. The following article on Manatee County, from the pen of Col. John G. Webb, one of the most practical, scientific and successful farmers, will be found to contain many items of interest which apply as well to Palma Sola, which is located on its western side, as to any part of it.

Area, 4,680 square miles; 2,995,200 acres. Population in 1860, 834; in 1870, 1,931; in 1880, 3,544. Number of public schools, 44; school lands unsold, 86,772 acres; scholars of school age, 1,285; whites, 1,243; colored, 42; attendance, 571; number of acres improved land, 1,993. Horses and mules, 855; cattle, 53,273; sheep, 1,329; hogs, 8,892. Assessed value of property in 1881, $899,556.

Manatee county is mostly situated between the 27th and 28th parallels of latitude, a little of it extending below the 27th, and it cannot be successfully disputed that it embraces the most southern

body of desirable land of much extent in Florida, for, except the islands on the coast below it and a narrow strip on both banks of the Caloosahatchie, only a few miles below, if not within our boundary, and the Lake Worth region in Dade county—of no great extent—I do not know of any very choice locations south of it.

In considering the desirableness of any region as a residence, there are many considerations that enter into a reasonable estimate. In a general way they may be referred to under the following heads, viz.: 1st, Climate; 2d, Soil; 3d, Character of the Inhabitants; 4th, Accessibility.

If a man is seeking for a cold climate he will look elsewhere than in Florida, and if he is seeking a warm and almost frostless one he will be likely to go as far south, even in Florida, as he can get, provided always that the climate in other respects is inviting. He will ask: "Is the climate healthful?" I answer that there is no healthier region in Florida, and I doubt whether there is in the United States. I resided in the county for several years before there was more than one doctor in it, and I don't think that he got rich very fast, though an excellent and scientific physician. There are now in the county just four practicing physicians, and two of them are engaged in mercantile business, and one of those two also edits and publishes a newspaper. The truth is our people are not often very sick, and many things which come under the cognizance of a doctor in other States are got along without his assistance here, and apparently just as well.

I think the most material feature of our county is the size of the families. Children do not seem to be born here to die, but to live, and yet I do not think our people live well, or pay any attention to speak of to the laws of health. It is from such facts as these that I draw my conclusions as to the comparative healthfulness of our climate.

Another feature of a climate is the presence or absence of noxious insects. Let us examine that question. Away from the coast mosquito-bars are the exception, but I think that during a part of every summer people would study their comfort if they provided their beds with them. It is a curious fact that the presence of mosquitoes in large numbers depends upon excessive draughts. In a

normal condition of things, when the ponds do not dry up, the fish, of which the ponds are always full, destroy the wrigglers, and mosquitoes are only produced in such wet places as are destitute of fish. But when the ponds, as they are sometimes, are completely dried up, and are again filled by the rains, and before they get stocked with fish, the wrigglers flourish, with no enemies to keep them down, and generate mosquitoes in countless millions. But the fish reappear from some unknown hiding places, and in a few weeks restock the ponds with young fish and the mosquitoes disappear.

On the coast, while they are never as numerous as they are sometimes in the interior, they are more persistent, though scarcely noticeable except in July, August and September. But the draining (and sometimes this is a simple affair) of the sand flats, where the tide and rain make brackish water, makes a great difference with them. Sand fleas are just as bad, and no worse than in light sandy soils anywhere where dogs and hogs are allowed to run in and under the house. House-flies need never be seen in any well-regulated house, or, rather, house with properly-regulated surroundings.

We have the large rattlesnake, not exactly the same species found North and West, and away from the coast the ground-rattlesnake, and in about sloughs several varieties of the moccasin, and we have a variety of harmless snakes, some of which make war upon the venomous kinds. No white man here ever thinks of destroying a harmless snake, or ever fails to kill a harmful one.

The next question of climate is temperature. I could give yearly and monthly means, but I will not, but prefer to say generally that our short winter in Manatee county is much like the first half of October, minus the rains of that season, in Central New York and New England. It is now more than four years since I observed any frost at my place on Sarasota Bay, or the thermometer below 38, and I think that has been the case only on one morning. It has been forty several times during four years and somewhere about forty-five three or four times during each winter. The early part of the year is usually dry and almost continuously pleasant, and just right as to temperature. About the first of July the weather begins to be showery and becomes hot.

The thermometer rarely rises above ninety, but then it rarely falls below eighty, and until about the first of October this condition of things continues. But even during our summer months, to a man who can afford to desist from labor, the climate is quite as agreeable as the summer of the North. As to the question whether a white man can labor out of doors in a South Florida summer, I can only answer that I have labored consecutively and severely for the last fourteen summers at almost every kind of out-door work. And farm labor is not less essential here in the summer than elsewhere. There are only about one hundred blacks in Manatee county, and it would be absurd to suppose that they do all the summer work for the county. But the value of the climate consists in this: That crops may be produced the whole year round.

Now let us look at the question of soil. We have some rich lands in our county—as fertile as can be found anywhere. One tract on the Manatee River comprises not less than 6,000 acres, and there is a large body equally fertile on the opposite or south side of the river. Smaller hummocks and rich bay-heads are scattered over the county everywhere. The keys or islands lining the shores often have good land, and always a climate free from frost. But if Manatee county consisted of rich alluvial soil like the rich valleys of the North, it would be so unhealthy that all its fertility would be useless. But most of the soil is naturally poor, through flat dry and flat wet to shallow ponds, deep ponds and sloughs, hundreds of thousands of acres prairies and some river bottoms. The high, rolling pine woods make the best orange land, but the flatwoods make the best farms, for while we suffer from two extremes, wet and dry, we suffer most from the extreme of too dry, and it is then that the flatwoods show their superiority. The prairie lands appear fertile, but they have not yet been tried. I believe they are some of our very best lands.

Suppose a stranger comes in from the North or West and buys a tract of pine woods or prairie. He must first decide upon his house. A palmetto-leaf hut is the cheapest and every way the meanest. Then comes the log house, which is cheap if not altogether comfortable. On the coast the concrete house may be built by the most unskilled labor, and, when completed, is a wholly comfortable and not expensive house. Lumber is worth about $16 per

thousand feet at the saw-mills. His chimney, and every house needs one for comfort in winter, is made, away from the coast, of sticks plastered with clay; on the coast, of rock laid in mortar. His cheapest fence will be plain No. 11 galvanized wire; two strands will keep out cattle. Posts should be ten feet apart, of lightwood, and will not cost much. A ditch should be dug around the fence and the earth thrown under the wires, and then a log laid along the ridge. This completes the fence and makes a hog and cattle-proof fence. The ditch keeps off fire, and with a suitable outlet keeps off water from adjacent overflowing lands. Why not use rails? Because near the coast the pines will not split, and the pines of the interior will not last as rails more than five years. The fence I have described can be built at a cost not to exceed fifty cents a rod. Then comes clearing. To clear away the palmetto will not cost over $10 per acre; much land can be cleared for half that. The trees are simply deadened, and the land in August planted to sweet potatoes and partly in cow-peas. These last are to be turned under before they die in November or December, and in February planted to sweet potatoes. This is the great renovating crop. All weeds and grasses are "listed in" with the hoe and plow into the ridges, and sweet potatoes planted anywhere from August till November, and dug when the proprietor sees fit. He digs them only when they are wanted.

The settler should lose no time in providing himself with pigs, and even if he has to buy corn to feed them they will pay in the manure they will manufacture. There are other sources of garden manure that will suggest themselves to the economical and tidy housekeeper, that, for the sake of health and exemption from house-flies, should not be neglected. There are times when fastidiousness "o'releaps itself." There is also a manure manufactured from the wastes of the fisheries that is valuable.

But the great source of manure in Florida is now and always will be muck from the sea coast or ponds. There are various ways of preparing it. My method is by heat. Make a pile of lightwood and cover it with muck, except a breathing hole in the top. Heat it like a coal-pit or tar-kiln. When the wood is burned up the muck will be converted into manure.

But with all this labor of manure-making can he also make

money ? By gardening, if near transportation, yes. Manatee county is beginning to show her ability to furnish the North with early vegetables. The business has hardly begun. So far the North has refused to buy our sweet-potatoes, which are so much superior to those they are accustomed to, and at the same time so different that they need to learn to eat them under a new name perhaps. A little well-directed effort will remove this prejudice, and if once removed a new and immense source of revenue will be opened up to us.

It will be noticed that I have said nothing of the orange or its kindred. I have done so because I have been addressing plain people. Only a capitalist can afford to create an orange or lime grove. The plain farmer will gradually produce one. It will be to him a branch of his farming instead of his sole employment, and considered in this light it will pay. Nor have I alluded to the banana. The stranger can have but slight conception of the luxuriance of growth and magnitude of yield of this plant. The most profitable kind, the African, is best cultivated in rich ponds, bedded up high and drained. As the herbaceous tree produces a bunch and the bunch ripens, the tree dies ; but many shoots spring up to take its place. These, except one, can be transplanted, and before a year they will bear. I have seen four hundred bananas on a single shoot at one time, and the shoots need not be over ten feet apart. The market for these bananas is constantly increasing, but if the settler never sold one he would be the gainer for it.

YACHTING ON THE GULF.

DOWN THE COAST IN THE SCHOONER MALLORY.

AN ARTIC NIGHT AT CEDAR KEYS—SAILING INTO SUMMER WEATHER—THE FIRST GAME—PALMA SOLA.

"Oh, wad sum power the giftie gie us,
To see oursels as others see us."

Burns.

The following letters, cut from the New York Sunday *Times*, of April and May, '84, give so pleasant a picture of Palma Sola and its surroundings, as seen by their special correspondent, W. Drysdale, that they are given entire. This gentleman was so happily impressed with the location that he selected a home where a horde of newspaper men will enjoy with him the pleasures of winter life on Manatee Bay. When a New York newspaper man fails to find the best thing in life, and get them, too, it's of little use for others to seek them. His experiences—hunting, fishing, and boating—make a part of the every-day life of the resident here, boats being oftener used for travel and transportation than teams.

The fact that Florida, and especially this part of it, is attracting attention that is as world-wide as the circulation of the Sunday *Times*, is evident from the fact that hundreds of letters were received from all quarters of the States, Canada, and England, referring to the *Times* correspondence from Palma Sola, and asking for further information. To the *Times*, and especially "W. D.," Palma Sola is indebted for more than "honorable mention," full appreciation of which will be made evident upon his return.

PALMA SOLA, Fla., Feb. 13.—In wandering aimlessly about the streets of Cedar Keys in search of my friends with the yacht, and afterwards in despair haunting the piers with the idle hope that I might find their vessel without even knowing her name, I came across a trim little schooner yacht, so much neater and shapelier than any of the others, so much cleaner and brighter in her paint, so much more taut and ship-shape in her rigging, she looked as if she might belong to a party of New York pleasure seekers. And so indeed she did. She was the yacht Mallory, preparing for a fortnight's cruise down the Gulf coast to that paradise of the fisherman and the sportsman—Charlotte Harbor. Anything more pleasant than such an excursion as this it would be difficult to imagine—making a dash out of New York in the worst of the cold season, coming rapidly southward by rail and finding at Cedar Keys this fine schooner yacht equipped and provisioned in a way that would have answered for a transatlantic voyage. And three gentlemen, Mr. Henry Gaullieur, Mr. Barnet Phillips, and Mr. Turcas, had settled upon the most enjoyable thing in the world for a winter trip, and were ready to get into the region of perpetual summer without delay.

Three o'clock having been fixed upon for the sailing hour, we all went up to the Suwanee House to dinner. And when the viands came in, served upon something like a score of dishes for each person, we gave ourselves up for lost. One member of the party, who has had unlimited experience with hotel dinners, said he had always found that the more dishes that were served the poorer was the dinner. When there were only two or three dishes they were likely to be good and well cooked, but when there were a dozen they were pretty sure to be bad. This dinner in the Suwanee was no exception to the rule. There were plenty of dishes, such as they were, and they were very good what there was of them. But even a New York dinner at that moment would hardly have tempted us, for we were full of the vexation of having a truck-load of trunks and satchels taken to the yacht, and of collecting the thousand and one things that can only be gathered together at the last moment. The obliging landlord promised us that the porter should have a truck in front of the hotel for our trunks in half an hour; it could not

possibly be there sooner, but it should not be a minute later. So we started out for the stores again to see what else we could find that might possibly be useful in such a voyage. When the time was about half expired we returned to the hotel to see after our baggage, and were told by the landlord, with a show of pride at his punctuality, that our trunks were gone.

"Gone!" exclaimed one member of the party, aghast. "Impossible! Why, my trunk was not packed."

"I can't help that," said the landlord, "the trunks are gone. They went about ten minutes ago."

The unpacked member hurried up stairs to see what had happened to his baggage, and found indisputable evidence that the porter, in his zeal to be on time, had packed his trunk for him and hustled it off to the yacht. He had not thought it worth while to put in the few stray hair-brushes, whisp brooms, and other toilet articles that were scattered about the room, but all the larger articles were gone. Mr. Gaullieur gathered up the fragments, which in this instance did not make 12 basketsful, but only one little bundle, done up in a newspaper, and we started for the yacht, the landlord declaring as we went out that the porter never had done such a thing as pack a guest's trunk before, and that he would see that he would never do it again. This was a noble resolve on the landlord's part, and I trust he will carry it out.

When we reached the yacht, at precisely 3 o'clock, we found the shipping agent, the captain, the crew, the cook, two or three porters, and a little army of hangers-on about the wharf, all making frantic efforts to get the last of the provisions and other necessaries on board. That is, each one was trying vainly to get somebody else to do something, and nobody was doing anything worth talking about except the shipping agent, who was a New-Englander, and had more energy than a dozen of the natives. Two or three little things were still lacking, and we could not well start without them—the water, for instance. Now, water was the last thing that any one in our party would have waited for, but the cook declared he could not get along without it, and we had to take some aboard. Then there was a sailor missing and the agent said he was too good a man to lose,

and we had to wait for him. One stray article after another kept arriving till nearly dark, the water was taken aboard another sailor was found, and we were all ready to be off. But just at this happy moment the wind died out and the captain said there was no possible chance of our getting out of the harbor before morning. Considering what an undertaking it was to get everything together, the commander of the expedition decided to run no more risks, but to keep the party aboard the yacht all night and make an early start in the morning. So with the bow and stern securely tied up to the wharf we had a chance in the early hours of the evening to look into the mysteries of the lockers and closets and fo'castles and cubbies that were scattered all about us. And what an outfit for a pleasure trip we gazed upon! What cans of meat, what baskets of bread, what stores of everything good to eat; what company files and regiments of bottles, containing, no doubt, Apollinaris and soda; what boxes of cigars; what pillows stuffed with choice brands of smoking tobacco; what varieties of pipes; what countless little devices for making a fortnight's cruise pleasant! It reminds me of Robinson Crusoe after he had made a successful trip to his wonderful wreck, and returned to the island loaded down with everything the heart could desire. I doubt whether a vessel ever went out of port for so short a cruise so wonderfully provisioned. There was only one thing lacking, in my opinion, as we lay in harbor at Cedar Keys that night. This was a gale of wind that would drive us a few thousand miles away, down to the west coast of Peru, for instance, or into the mouth of the Amazon, and wreck us on any distant but friendly coast, that we might gather together the remains, and live for months upon them without thought of coming back to civilization. But no gale came, nor any wind at all, and we lay quietly by the wharf all night.

As we were in mild and sunny Florida, of course we expected reasonably comfortable weather. But for that first night of our journey we were mistaken. The wind had been chilly enough in the afternoon, but as soon as the sun went down it was absolutely cold. Although we all had heavy clothes and plenty of blankets, we suffered more from the cold that night aboard the yacht than we would have in New York in a room

without a fire. There was no way to keep the cold wind out and blankets seemed to have no effect upon it. A glass of water stood upon the cabin table, and when I got up in the middle of the night, preferring to sit up and shiver rather than lie still and freeze, I found myself watching this glass of water to see whether it would not take on a coating of ice. Of course, it was not cold enough to freeze, but it was a miserable kind of cold that went through all the clothing you could put on, and made everybody and everything uncomfortable. Although no one in the party acknowledged to having passed a night of misery, yet I noticed that within five minutes after we heard the cook starting a fire in his gallery we were all upon deck hugging his little cooking pen in the most abject manner. He used cedar chips for fuel, and the smoke of a thousand lead pencils came out of the galley pipe and nearly suffocated us. But we were all so nearly frozen that no amount of smoke could have driven us away from the fire.

We were a jolly pleasure party, hugging the galley fire before daylight, choked with the aromatic cedar-wood smoke, and all chilled to the marrow. Soon after daylight the sun gave some signs of coming up, and we watched for it with the greatest anxiety. I don't remember ever looking for the sun's coming up with any great concern before, but this morning we all looked upon him as our best friend, and when, after just showing his head, he disappeared temporarily in a bank of mist, our spirits fell almost as low as the thermometer was. Pretty soon, however, he began to give us a little heat, and our arctic night on the Gulf coast was over. There was a fine breeze blowing, and we made good time out among the Cedar Keys, out past the lead-pencil works, out of the harbor entirely, out into the Gulf. Then we had a free course and a fair wind for our sail of 200 miles down the coast. It was still too chilly to come out on deck without heavy overcoats, and we kept in the shelter of the cabin as much as possible. We were too far out from the coast to see much of it, but near enough to feel easy over its presence. All morning going down the coast we occupied ourselves chiefly with trying to keep warm, and with wondering how it happened that Cedar Keys was so much colder than New-York.

All four of us had traveled a good many hundreds of miles in search of warm weather, and so far we had made a disastrous failure of it. But about 1 o'clock on our first afternoon out we found it. It came so suddenly it almost seemed as if there were a sharp line drawn from east to west, with cold weather to the north of it and warm weather to the south of it. We were all up on deck shortly after dinner lying in sheltered sunny places smoking our pipes, when somebody discovered it was warm enough to go without our overcoats. Within five minutes all the overcoats were shed and fired in a wintry heap down on the cabin floor. In the next half hour another layer of coats had to follow. We had reached summer land at last after many tribulations. Suddenly the shelter we wanted was from the sun instead of from the wind. We stretched out on the cabin roof, leaned against the masts, or lounged anywhere about the decks without fear of being frost-bitten. The party were well supplied with guns, and as the air was full of gulls, pelicans, and blue heron, we had an occasional shot without any great results. That night we passed in comfort, and early in the morning one of the sailors called us up to see how neatly we had been provided with a breakfast. Our yawl was towed astern with a long line, and in the night a large Spanish mackerel had jumped into it and was waiting for the frying-pan. He was plump and of course fresh, and made us a delicious breakfast. Before noon we reached Clearwater Harbor, where the captain of the yacht lived, and he was anxious to go ashore and see his family. So we came to an anchor, and two of the party went ashore with their rifles in search of game. They came back later, bringing a blue heron, a duck, and a sensational report of a number of wildcat tracks along the shore. This heron and the duck were the first blood, and they made the party long for gore; so the greater part of the afternoon was spent in the cabin operating a lot of little machines that prepared the cartridge shells for business. If our yacht had been captured she might easily have been taken for a privateer schooner fitted out by the dynamiters to assist Ireland. There were enough cartridges aboard to kill every deer in the State of Florida, and powder and shot and bullets enough to supply

an army. We worked faithfully all afternoon with the mysterious little machines, some of which were for ramming the powder and shot into the cartridge shells, and others for trimming down and rounding off the ends. When this little job was finished we had something like five or six bushels of loaded cartridges. About 3 o'clock in the afternoon we reached the mouth of Tampa Bay and went inside past the Egmont Lighthouse. This left us a run of about 15 miles across Tampa Bay to Palma Sola, the first stopping place for the party, and the end of my journey in the yacht. As I had to spend a night there I was interested to know what sort of a place Palma Sola was, and made some inquiries among the crew.

"Well," said one of the sailors, "I can hardly tell you just how large it is. It is smaller than New York, but bigger than no place at all. There are about a dozen houses there, one of which is a good little hotel, one an ice-house, and one Warner's store. The hotel is not very large, but it is one of the best ones on this side of Florida, and you will like it."

Presently, having crossed Tampa Bay, we found ourselves at the mouth of a broad river. On the right a long sandy point extended into the bay. Almost on the point was a little settlement of palmetto houses, which, the sailors told us, were used by fishermen. On the left was a long island, and near the middle of this island, in the front yard of an unoccupied house, was a very large and beautiful date palm tree.

"The name of this place, you know," said one of the sailors, "is Palma Sola, and that is the Spanish for solitary palm. There is the solitary palm on that island." Things were beginning to look a little tropical; the weather was delightfully warm; the shores were shaded with palmetto trees; there was a big palm tree in sight, and the name of the river reminded us forcibly of the sea monster after which it is named. The water was clearer than any we had theretofore seen. The bottom was a pure white sand, and the whole scene was one of summer. As we rounded the point Palma Sola came in sight. First, there was a large brown building, which we took to be the hotel, but which the sailors said was the ice-house; then the hotel showed up, and the church and a lot of residences, and

the great Warner's store, about which we had heard so much from the sailors, for it was said to contain a little of everything under the sun. We found as we drew nearer a large wharf in front of the store, but a steamship lay there, and we were compelled to anchor out in the harbor close to the wreck of an old vessel and directly in front of the hotel. The little hotel looked so clean and inviting that as I had to spend 24 hours there waiting for a steamer for Key West, I took courage to invite my yachting friends to come ashore and eat supper with me, which they did. Of our long walk before dark around curious and interesting Palma Sola, of our breaking big clusters of oysters off the roots of mangrove trees and eating them, of the great supper of fried clams and stewed oysters and fresh fish and fresh vegetables prepared for us in the hotel, and of the comfortable room with the snow-white bed where I was to stay one night, but did in fact stay a fortnight, I shall have something to say next week. W. D.

UNDER THE SOLITARY PALM.

A NEARER VIEW OF A UNIQUE FLORIDA TOWN.

PALMA SOLA ON A SUNDAY AFTERNOON—ROBINSON CRUSOE HOUSES—THE ALLIGATOR BAYOU AND THE OYSTER TREES.

Palma Sola, Fla., Feb. 20.—The wreck of an old steamer her ribs and part of her boiler exposed, lies about 200 yards from shore directly in front of the Palma Sola Hotel. When they told me here it was "talked of" blowing the hulk to pieces because of its unsightliness, I remembered a Coney Island landlord saying to me once that he would give $1,000 to have a wrecked vessel on the beach in front of his hotel for an attraction. A wreck always adds to the beauty of a marine view, and this one makes a romantic foreground for a handsome tropical landscape. Our yacht, the Mallory, came to anchor between the wreck and the wharf in front of the hotel, and in a few minutes we were all ashore. Mr. Scott, the landlord, immediately took possession of my big trunk and started it on its journey to the hotel on a wheelbarrow. As the trunk was about four sizes larger than the barrow, and as the path along the wharf was exceedingly narrow, I watched with great interest to see the trunk and the barrow and perhaps the landlord go overboard, but there was no such catastrophe. It was Sunday afternoon, and all Palma Sola was out in its best clothes. The entire population, numbering, when nobody is away on a visit, as many as 50 or 60 people, were on the wharf to watch the steamer, the yacht, or any other exciting thing they could find. Going into

the hotel and examining the register, the first name we came across was a familiar one—"George W. Curtis, New York." We jumped at the conclusion, of course, that we had come upon the editor of *Harper's Weekly* here in the wilds of Florida, but it was another Curtis. There was too much outside that was new and pretty for us to stay in doors before dark. The landlord assigned me to a corner room on the ground floor, with windows overlooking the Manatee River, Tampa Bay, and the Egmont Lighthouse. After two rough nights in sleeping cars, followed by two nights of tossing on the Gulf, the neat little chamber with its snowy bed and furniture of white ash impressed me as such a fairy-bower that I had to call the yachtsmen in to look at it, and then we started out to see the sights. In landing we had noticed a curious place to the left, or westward, and in that direction we walked. The Palma Sola wharf is on a point jutting to the eastward, and immediately above it the river widens out into a little bay, whose shore sweeps around with a graceful curve, showing a beach of pure white sand. A few hundred yards from the hotel the bay spreads itself out into the back country, through a narrow opening half concealed with mangrove trees, and makes a long, narrow bayou, where vegetation is heavy, where fish are plenty, and where alligators on warm afternoons come out and sit on the banks and discuss the tariff question. Along the low sandy shore, between the hotel and the mouth of the bayou, we found a regular Robinson Crusoe settlement, and we went and reveled in it like a lot of school-boys. But I need not apologize for this, for old Robinson is still an intimate friend of mine, and we often spend a rainy evening together. With his exciting adventures, his quaint sayings, and the charm of his old-fashioned style, I find him altogether a better companion under the evening lamp than the artistic modern novel. This is not peculiar to me, but is the case with most men, if they would be honest enough to own it. The three yachtsmen were at once taken with the curious place, and I know it was because it reminded them of Robinson Crusoe's settlement, though they did not say so. There were five or six tiny little houses, built to suit the climate, the walls made of boards, or palmetto leaves, or anything that came

handy, with occasionally one wall omitted entirely, where there did not seem to be any particular use for it; with sometimes an old sail laid over the roof to keep out the rain, with a little fire, often built in the back yard, and the lady of the manor cooking the family supper there. Little houses, some of them not more than 12 feet square; cosy houses, all built under the shade of palm trees of the palmetto variety of trees of some other sort. All the doors and windows open (there is no glass in the windows); children playing in and about them; older people of both sexes sitting about the doors smoking their pipes; a quiet, peaceful little settlement, that in the warm sunset glow looks to us frost-nipped Northerners like Adam's family in Eden, but in reduced circumstances. On one side of the road this little cluster of houses, on the other side the river, with its white sandy beach, and on the sand lying all sorts of little boats, right side up and wrong side up, mantled and dismantled, some with sails and some without; some propped up on one side, as if they had a colic; some high and dry on shore; some full of fish, some of oysters, and, scattered about everywhere, nets and seines and all the paraphernalia of the fisherman. For in these little houses live the fishermen of Palma Sola, and the oysterman, and their neighbors, the shoemaker, the boat-builder, and the painter. A few steps beyond the small houses, which are embowered in green leaves, the road led to a long and narrow wooden bridge. Near the eastern end of the bridge, before we came to it, we found the shore covered with mangrove bushes, and as it was low tide and the roots of the bushes were covered with small oysters we stopped to wonder at them and to eat some of the oysters. They are called mangrove oysters, and are very small, but very sweet. We found some stones and knocked off a few cubic feet of the oysters, and opened them with our knives. The larger ones of them tasted very much like our Shrewsbury, only sweeter. They grow on the roots and lower branches of the mangrove trees in clusters, and you have only to break off a piece of the root to secure a cluster of half a bushel or more. After leaving the oyster trees we went on a few steps further and stopped to admire the scenery. The long wooden bridge I have mentioned spanned one arm of the bayou. On the left,

across the mouth of the bayou, was a narrow wooden footbridge, several hundred feet long, giving access to a number of fine houses that line the river-bank. A short distance further up another narrow wooden footbridge spanned the bayou. As we walked out on one of these little bridges we saw thousands of fish in the water, great and small, but, as it was Sunday, of course we could not undertake to catch any of them. It was too late in the day for alligators, but we saw a number of places on the banks where they had mashed down the tall grass and bushes. The bottom of the lagoon was covered with dark colored weed, which made the water look black as ink, and if alligators know a good place when they see it hundreds of them go in there to rest. The vegetation was very dense, everything green, and palmetto palms were abundant. It was a sight we could have enjoyed for hours if it had not been so near supper time. But we were growing hungry and started back for the hotel, our hearts full of the glories of nature and our shoes full of Florida sand. If we were interested by what we saw we furnished an equal amount of amusement to the natives and their children, who were struck "all of a heap" by the hunting and sailoring costumes worn by our yachtsmen. And indeed I could not wonder at their astonishment, for when a New Yorker gets himself up for a hunting expedition game and natives alike have to quail before him.

When we reached the hotel again supper was not quite ready, and we occupied some of the chairs on the front piazza, watching the sun gild the water for miles up the Manatee River and enjoying the delicious warm air. The table in the public-room was covered with newspapers, and we looked for news from home. I picked up an illustrated paper several weeks old and found two lines under the heading of "Deaths of the Week," that carried me far away from Florida, back to old New York.

"Dr. John B. Wood, ex-President of the New York Press Club."

The warm midwinter sun, just sinking to rest in the waves of Tampa Bay, lost all its brilliancy. The drooping palmetto trees, their green foliage suddenly turned black, changed into

weeping willows. The bright-plumed birds, instead of joyful songs, chirped bits of funeral dirges. What floats from yonder staff—a flag? No, a strip of crape. What rides there by the wharf—a boat? No, a coffin. And this elevated spot of ground by the walk is not a flower-bed but a grave. Two lines of finest print thus change the landscape. Two lines take me from this Eden-spot of Florida back, quickly back, to frozen New York. I see my friend of many years ago carried mournfully to the tomb. I see those mild and loving eyes, in life the cause of so much joy and so much suffering, forever closed in death. I see our mutual friends mourning by the open grave. I see one of the kindest, the gentlest, the noblest of all God's noble creatures hidden from sight, and covered with clay. I feel the stricken widow's heart sink, as the clods fall upon the coffin. My own heart sinks as if in sympathy. I am back in my old chair in a New York newspaper office, hearing words of encouragement and cheer from those gentle lips. Those loving hands I see once more dealing out alms to the homeless and friendless. That tender heart throbs once more, as I have often known it to, at some tale of want and distress. That silent tongue once more is giving new life and new heart to some almost disheartened worker. The jovial smile plays once more upon the lips. Once more the half-blind eyes twinkle with love and good nature. Ah! Dr. Wood, my old-time friend, if nature had made all mankind like you, where would newspapers get their paragraphs of crime, of avarice, of anything mean or wrong? And am I never to shake that warm hand again, never again to hear that loving voice? Once only, doctor, do you inspire an unholy thought, when I grow jealous to think that I must share my love and my sorrow with a thousand other writers of the younger generation. 'Tis but a brief adieu I bid thee, gentlest of friends, if I can so carry myself as to merit a share in the reward prepared for such as thou! Dr. Wood—not that part which was of clay, and is buried, but that part which was of love and goodness, and is in heaven—I was reading about you only yesterday. Though I may never meet you more on earth, gentle, loving Dr. Wood; kind, compassionate, merciful; though the awful silent river for a brief time rolls between us,

yet listen to what I was reading about you, only yesterday, Dr. Wood:

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God."

There was something quieting and restful in that beautiful Sunday evening twilight, after our unpleasant experiences further north. The guests in the hotel numbered only three or four besides ourselves, and at supper, which was soon ready, we were favored with seats at the table with our landlord and his family. It seemed like the first real meal we had had for weeks. Perhaps it was because of our unsuccessful efforts to find something worth eating in other Southern hotels; perhaps the sea trip had sharpened our appetites; but, at any rate, that first supper in the Palma Sola hotel seemed better than sitting down to a feast at Delmonico's. All the luxuries of Southern Florida were there—great big clams, beautifully fried; the sweetest of oysters from Sarasota, served raw; an abundance of fresh vegetables just out of the garden; fresh, ripe Florida oranges, and a great dish of guava jelly, home made, from Manatee County guavas. We let no edible thing escape, and after supper returned to the portico to watch the moon come up and smoke our pipes. Presently the yachtsmen returned so their vessel to be ready for a start at daylight; and half an hour later the captain came ashore bearing me a message from them—a box crammed full of cigars and smoking tobacco and a flask containing a sovereign remedy for cramps and indigestion. This was doubly welcome, for the tobacco obtainable in Palma Sola is strikingly different from that found in Havana, and Manatee County is such a strong temperance place the nearest cholera medicine to be had is in Tampa, 30 miles away.

Early to bed and early to rise is the proper thing for Florida, where there is not much entertainment in the evening, but where early morning is always beautiful. I was out on the piazza soon after daylight, in time to see the sun come up out of the river. In the fortnight that I have spent in Palma Sola I have not missed this sight once. The early hands in the

neigboring saw mill were just beginning to gather, for a day's work here is from sunrise to sunset. There were some signs of life aboard the yacht, and as I sat on the piazza in the light of the rising sun I saw the anchor raised and the mainsail hoisted. Ten minutes later the Mallory was under way again, and with a parting wave of the handkerchief to the party, who by this time were up on deck, I watched her round the point. When the breakfast bell rang she was only a little white spot out on Tampa Bay. It does not take long to become acquainted in a small place like Palma Sola with so few boarders in the hotel; and perhaps my stock of tobacco and cholera medicine, judiciously administered, helped bring about that desirable end —for when you are far away from a big city, a man with an open pouch and an uncorked bottle is a man to be cultivated, I was soon on good terms with Mr. Curtis, who if he was not the editor of *Harper's Weekly*, was prime authority on all sorts of Florida fishing, the owner of a row-boat and a great assortment of fishing tackle, an ardent lover of a fragrant pipe, and in every way a first-rate companion. He gave me such glowing accounts of the fishing, the sailing, the alligator-shooting, and the sports of the place in general, and I was so well pleased with the Palma Sola hotel that I determined to spend at least a few days here and let the steamer go on to Key West without me. And now, after having been here two weeks, and having tramped, and rowed, and sailed, and steamed all over the land and the waters hereabout, I am so well acquainted with the Manatee River, with Terra Ceia Bay, with Snead's Island, with the neighboring towns of Manatee, Fogartyville, and Palmetto, and with the big alligator bayou, so cut in the hands with fishing-lines, so tanned with the warm Florida sun, I feel altogether like a native Floridian.

Palma Sola is so different from any other place under the sun, and withal so quiet and so pleasant and inviting, it is worthy of description. It is a new town, even for Florida, where cities of a year's growth stand almost side by side with ancient St. Augustine. About 200 miles down the Gulf coast from Cedar Keys is Tampa Bay. This is a large body of water, four or five times as large as New York Bay, with a string of

islands nearly shutting it off from the Gulf. Going up the south shore of Tampa Bay, three or four miles from the Gulf, the Manatee River is reached. This river is 25 or 30 miles long, and for the first 15 or 16 miles it is more a bay than a river, being from one to two miles broad, with a strong tide. Then the river narrows down into a little stream, full of alligators and fresh water fish. Palma Sola is on the side of the river nearest the Gulf, and about a mile from the river's mouth. The little bay in the river at this point makes an excellent harbor, with water of sufficient depth for the largest vessels. It is only a few years since there were no buildings at all at Palma Sola. Now there is a large store, one of the best in Florida; a good wharf, an immense ice-house, a big saw-mill, a hotel, a church, a school-house, and a number of handsome dwellings, nearly, if not quite all, belonging to Mr. W. S. Warner, the father and founder of the place, the postmaster, land agent, steamship agent, and general factotum. Mr. Warner, a New Englander by birth, but for many years a resident of this part of Florida, saw the natural advantages of the place, bought a large tract of the land, and founded Palma Sola. He has put in some hard strokes of work, and now is reaping his reward, by seeing his big store doing a flourishing business, his saw-mill eating up all the logs it can get hold of, and at least one steamer at his wharf nearly every day. His residence is one of the line houses fronting on the Manatee River, between the river and the bayou. There are three or four of these houses in a row, and they are all occupied by Warners. I tried one day to make a list of the Warner brothers, but at last had to give it up. One of them owns a good-sized steamboat, the Erie, which does a good business in collecting the garden produce raised hereabout in large quantities, and carrying it to Tampa, whence it is shipped by rail to New York. Another brother owns and sails a beautiful yacht, the Mischief, and carries out excursion parties. Mr. Warner has made a heroic fight against being called "captain," and I think he is about the only man in Manatee County who is not "captain" of something or other, if it is only an oyster-sloop. No, there is one other man over on Terra Ceia Bay who is not a captain. He

is a judge. The vessels of the Tampa Steamship Company touch at Palma Sola three times a week, and those of the "opposition line" at about the same intervals, so there is hardly a day without communication with the rest of the world. Just across the river from Palma Sola is Snead's Island, a long, narrow strip of land, which is cut off from the mainland by Terra Ceia Bay. This bay connects with Tampa Bay by a broad inlet, and with the Manatee River by a narrow channel known as "the cut-off," and it is a regular young paradise for a sportsman or a fisherman, and probably as beautiful a little piece of water as there is in the world. It is full of small mangrove islands that look like little green domes set down in the water, and on any day in the year you can sail through it and see from one million to a million and a half (by the census of 1880) of ducks, pelicans, and blue heron. There is some fine land for gardening on the shores of this bay, mostly in the hands of Northern men, and many of the early tomatoes we eat in New York, and early watermelons and other vegetables come from here, though we don't know it. These gardeners have far larger heads, to my mind, than the people who come down here to raise oranges. Tomatoes and potatoes are not so romantic, but they are much more profitable. In this climate vegetables can be ripened in any month of the year, and rates to New York are not high. Perhaps it is the preponderance of Northern people here that makes the place seem so homelike. The Warners, as I have said, are New-Englanders. Mr. Scott, who keeps the hotel is from "Terry Hut," and I think about nine men out of every ten within a radius of five miles are from somewhere in the North. But they vote the Democratic ticket with great unanimity, and you could count the Republicans on your fingers. There has to be something, I suppose, to keep the place from being perfect, and a Democratic majority is good for this purpose. With its glorious climate, its perfect healthfulness, its abundance of fruits and other good things, and its exceptionally good society for such a new country, Palma Sola might be mistaken for the Garden of Eden; only one could hardly imagine the Eden district coming in with a Democratic majority. A new-comer here is always sure at

least of "a good living," unless he gets too lazy to go fishing. With fish hustling each other's shoulders in the water; with oysters growing on the trees; with fruits growing wild; with birds coming up to the back door and making friendly calls, a man could hardly starve here if he tried. It is a great temptation to branch off and write something about the fishing in and around the Manatee River, but I have a great collection of fishing and alligator shooting experiences to tell and must save them for another time. One of the great attractions of this part of Florida, and indeed its very greatest after its climate and its healthfulness, is the fact of its being out of the usual routes of winter travel. The "tourist" does not get here. Our dear friend with weak lungs and a consumption bottle is nowhere to be seen. You can go about all day in a flannel shirt and eat your dinner without brushing your hair, which is a great blessing. No doubt the New York invalid will find it out in time, but at present he alternately shivers and roasts at Jacksonville, and occupies his spare moments, when he is not telling his intimate friends the latest news from Lung Valley, in trying to find something tropical. The west coast of Florida is about as little known as any part of the United States. I felt almost like a discoverer when I landed at Palma Sola, but others had been here before me; unfortunately I even found that a fellow-townsman of mine in New Jersey, Mr. J. M. Atwater, of Crawford, owned several large tracts on the banks of the Manatee; Mr. J. H. Hobbs, a Virginia capitalist, from Wheeling, also owns some land here. The Florida land boom has not yet reached the Gulf coast, but it is creeping over. Last fall it got to Tampa, 30 miles from here, when the railroad was completed to that place. When it does come, and some New Yorkers come over here and break the way, people will wonder why they didn't come here long ago, and it will be a cold day for the St. John's River bonanzas. The soil is not as good here as it is along the St. John's. There is no use of any land-owner contesting this fact. But everybody who is acquainted with tropical countries know that rich soil means fever and sickness, and that sandy soil is a guarantee of healthfulness. This rule holds good throughout the entire West Indies. Cuba,

Jamaica, and a narrow strip of Mexico lying along the Gulf have as rich soils as any countries in the world, and they are full of deadly fevers. The only healthy West India islands are the rocky and comparatively sterile ones. There are spots of rich soil here sufficient for gardening and orange groves, good pieces of "hammock land," as the natives call it, but the great bulk of the soil is sandy. There is plenty of health here, and consequently happiness. You get up before sunrise, you go to bed soon after dark, you go to the table every time with the appetite of a shark, and you wonder what in the world it is that makes you feel so well. I never saw or heard of this country till two weeks ago. It may be a disgrace either to my old schoolmasters or to me, but I don't think that until two weeks ago I had ever even heard the name of Palma Sola, or Charlotte Harbor. It was good fortune (and the yacht Mallory) that brought me here, for after visiting nearly all the warm countries frequented by Americans—Cuba, Mexico, Bermuda, Yucatan, Texas, Louisiana, and many of the smaller West India islands —I like the west coast of Florida best of all.

W. D.

THE FISHING IN FLORIDA.

EXPLORATIONS ON A DESERT ISLAND.

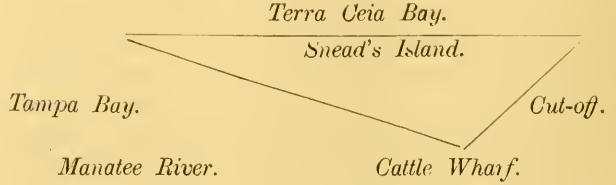
THE CHARGE OF THE FRIGHTENED FIDDLERS—A DESPERATE ENCOUNTER WITH A SHEEPSHEAD—INDIAN MOUNDS AND PALMETTO HOUSES.

PALMA SOLA, Fla., Feb. 23.—Somewhere in the dim past I remember a schoolmaster telling me that knowledge is of two kinds—that which you have and that which you know where to get. On the same principle boats are of two kinds—those that you have and those that you know where to borrow. By this generous rule our fleet at Palma Sola consists of three boats. First, there is Mr. Curtis's little skiff, very sharp and narrow, barely large enough to carry one fat man or two lean ones; Landlord Scott's boat, that on moonlight evenings sometimes carries a good round dozen of passengers up the river on a picnic, and Mr. Warner's row-boat, large but light and very easily handled. One of these three is always to be obtained, and there is never any lack of boats. A man might as well be out on the plains without a horse as to be in Palma Sola without a boat. The river is the great highway leading to every place worth going to, and all communication is by water. This is a very different state of affairs from what it would be in the North, where ice would obstruct the way through half the year; for here on Christmas morning, or any other morning, if rowing proves too warm you can roll overboard and take a swim. A new-comer is naturally a little timid about swimming among the sharks and alligators, which are supposed to inhabit the waters; but the peaceable habits of these beasts are shown by

the fact that the natives bathe in the deepest water without being harmed. On my first morning in Manatee County I borrowed Mr. Curtis's little boat and pulled over to have a look at Snead's Island, just across the river, and as this was the first of my excursions by water around Palma Sola, and as each trip offered many novel features of its own that must not be confounded with any other trip, I will set them out in chapters by themselves, like the seven voyages of Sindbad the Sailor. For I am surrounded with such an atmosphere of sheepshead, row-boats, alligators, and trolling-lines it will require the greatest care to keep them from getting all in a tangle.

AMONG THE FIDDLERS.

Shirt, trousers, and hat are all the clothes a man wants to go fishing in here in the middle of winter, and the thinner they are the better. With garments that will not be injured by being wet, and with pantaloons rolled up above the knees, the fisherman is ready for business, for Florida waters are full of sand bars, and it is often necessary to step out of the boat and pull her along. Snead's Island is about two miles long and perhaps half a mile wide in the broadest part. You could make a very good outline of it by setting down on the top of a triangle so as to mash it out of shape, and flatten down the point. One end of the island, a sharp, sandy point, projects into Tampa Bay. The other end, also a sharp point, is at the "cut-off," which connects Terra Ceia Bay and the Manatee River. A little to the right of the middle the island widens into a third point, which projects into the river. Terra Ceia Bay is behind the island and the Manatee River is in front of it. But three lines will make a map of it which will tell the story better than words :



Along the entire front of the island, from Tampa Bay to the cut-off, is a white-sand beach, with a fringe of shells beautiful to look at and grand for bathing purposes. At the point where the cattle wharf is the water is so deep that the largest ships can go up to it. From the wharf to the cut-off the shore is lined with a thick growth of mangrove trees, with only here and there a little opening. I headed my boat for the cattle wharf, which is directly opposite Palma Sola, the river here being about a mile wide, and then paddled along shore, enjoying the dark-green mangrove trees, the white-sand bottom under the clear water, and the occasional wreck of a schooner or oyster boat half buried in the beach. I came upon a place where there was an opening among the trees, disclosing a broad strip of land covered with scrub palmettoes, and beyond this a cluster of tall pines, each tree long and straight enough to make a flag-staff. Here I determined to land, to have a look at the island, and headed my boat for the shore. When she was 20 or 30 feet from the beach her nose ran into the sand, and I had to step out and shove her along. But that didn't matter, for my shoes and stockings were under the stern seat, and the water was warm and pleasant. Tying the painter to the descending branch of a mangrove tree, I made my way carefully through the trees to a strip of smooth sand that lay beyond, exercising great skill in dodging the sharp shells that lay all about and the pointed ends of mangrove sprouts, not more than three inches high, that were growing everywhere. There was not a house nor a living being in sight—nothing to be seen but mangroves, palmettoes, pines and sand, with occasionally a bunch of oysters sticking to the roots of a tree down at the water's edge. It was such a jungle that I involuntarily picked up a stick to defend myself against any stray tigers or panthers that might come along, and started up the coast barefooted to have a look at the soil. I found it principally sand, with a rich topping of decayed vegetable matter sufficient to make it productive.

I was just about to return to the boat to continue my voyage when I was startled by a rustling in the creeping plants through which I was walking. One hears so many snake stories in

Florida my first thought was of them; but there was no snake in sight. The rushing, however, continued and grew louder. It was like a flock of frightened birds trying to make their way through a thicket, but there were no birds in sight. The noise came nearer to me, and I ran out to the strip of sand that lay between the bushes and the mangrove trees. I was hardly there before the cause of the racket came along to, crossed the sand, and made for the roots of the mangroves. It was an army of black bugs, each from an inch to two inches long and half as wide. They were so thick that the ground was black with them, for they were black, or nearly black, with thick legs, and traveled over the ground about as fast as a man could run. There were millions and millions of them; I might say billions, and then not come within a few millions of the true number. But there were so many at any rate that they shook all the bushes, and made a noise like a rustling wind. I was freshly out of Arkansaw, where I had spent a considerable portion of my time in dodging the deadly tarantulas, and these beasts looked very much like them, so I thought of tarantulas. I was barefooted, and they were crawling over my feet. With great deliberation I concluded to leave that part of the country. Under the circumstances I consider half a second "great deliberation," and at the end of that time I made my first deliberate and dignified move, which was a jump of about 15 feet, and then calmly walked the rest of the way down to the beach, seven or eight feet to the step, walking over and crushing a few thousand of the little wretches every time I put down a foot. The black space covered by the beasts was at least a quarter of an acre in extent, and I fooled away no time in getting out of it and reaching the beach. The bugs were frightened to death by the noise I had been making in the bushes and were trying their level best to reach their holes among the roots of the mangrove trees; and I was scared by the bugs; so with mutually trying to get away from each other we had a lively time. If I had had shoes on I think I might possibly have staid and made a fight of it. But being barefooted in the bushes makes a man timid here among the spiders and snakes and 'gators.

After rowing up into the "cut-off," and finding it very

narrow and tortuous, lined with mangrove trees, their roots covered with oysters, and with wild ducks and blue heron in great abundance, I pulled up on the shore, around another point, and discovered a romantic little house in the midst of the palmettos, almost hidden in the verdure. It was evidently a fisherman's place, and I was thinking of paying it a visit, when I saw two or three naked children in swimming, which so shocked me that I headed the boat for home and soon reached the hotel. Of course, I had to find Mr. Curtis, and tell him of my encounter with the bugs.

"Why," said he "they are fiddlers—fiddler crabs. They're just what I've been looking for; the best bait in the world. I know there must be sheepshead around that old cattle wharf. Suppose we go and get some fiddlers this afternoon, and try for the sheepshead."

"Agreed."

UNDER THE CATTLE WHARF.

Provided with a light wooden box, with a cover hung on leather hinges, we started immediately after dinner for my newly discovered fiddler ground, Mr. Curtis in his little skiff and I in Landlord Scott's boat. The fiddlers were not out in such large numbers as in the morning, but still there were plenty of them, and we soon had enough. We first put a quantity of moist sand in the box, and then "scooped" up the beasts with our hands wherever we could find them. They are harmless enough, except that if they catch your hand just right they can give you a pretty hard pinch with their principal claw, and in handling single specimens you have to pick them up with thumb and forefinger in such a way as to hold their claws down, like holding a bird across the back and pinioning his wings. When we had enough for the afternoon's use we started for the cattle wharf and were soon there, wind and tide being in our favor. We pulled our boats up on the sandy beach, got out our lines and went out to the end of the wharf, which is soon to be replaced by a new one, being shaky with age and the spiles incrusted with barnacles. To a new

hand at the business picking up the fiddlers to bait the hooks was not nice work at first. They look like dirty young lobsters, and are not at all inviting, but it soon became easy enough, and we let our lines drop among the sunken spiles. It was soon evident that our sinkers were not heavy enough to combat the strong tide, and we pulled a lot of rusty spikes out of the rotten wharf, and tied them to some of the lines. After two or three minutes of anxious expectancy Mr. Curtis pulled in a beautiful sheepshead, weighing four or five pounds. This feat he followed soon after by catching a channel bass, not less than 2 feet in length. All this time my line was hanging in the water like a broken fiddle-string, and not a fish came near it. I put on a cheerful face and said something about its being "my turn next," but inwardly I felt sure that my old fishing luck would stick to me, and that I would have all the expectation and my partner all the fish. Presently I got into my boat and rowed out among the spiles, and braced the boat between two of them, to give the fish every chance in the world to eat my fiddler. But they spurned him, and I had not even a bite. Mr. Curtis had bite after bite and soon pulled in another sheepshead. Half an hour had passed and I had never a nibble, and was disgusted and tied my line to one of the posts and rowed up the beach to have a swim. This took at least half an hour, and when I got back Mr. Curtis had four sheepsheads and the channel bass. I was envious, but still disgusted, and started to pull in my line. It pulled hard. I gave it a jerk, thinking the hook was caught in one of the posts, and felt it give. I could hardly believe it, but there was certainly a fish on the hook. When he came to the surface he proved to be a fine big sheepshead, not less than a five-pounder, and the biggest we had seen yet. I hoisted him out of the water and he fought like a tiger. I had him in the bottom of the boat once and he got up and fought me again, and I think would certainly have got away, but I put out my left hand and grabbed him. Sheepshead, as you may know, have a row of "spines" along their back that they raise when excited and that are as sharp as needles. He set these to work at me and gave me a series of cuts across the hand that I still carry and

that soon covered me with blood. I pulled him back into the boat, but it was still a pretty even battle till I got hold of a small piece of board that lay in the bottom of the boat and pounded him over the nose with it till he took no more interest in fiddlers. Even after this he continued to fight me, and I had to pull up one of the seats and lay it on top of him and sit down on it. Ten minutes afterward, when I uncovered him to inquire after his health, he fought me again, though his nose was all battered in and he must have had a sprained wrist. Fishermen who like to catch "gamey" fish will be fully satisfied with these Florida sheepshead.

The capture of this big fellow was, of course, an encouragement to me, and I brought down more fiddlers and kept at work. At last I had "struck my gait," for I could not get my hook baited fast enough. It was no sooner in the water than some big sheepshead seized it and I pulled him in, and they all fought me just like the first one. I was barefooted and could not put my foot on them to hold them, but I made a practice of battering them over the nose with my board as fast as they came in and then covering them with the seat and sitting on them. They took our fiddlers very fast, and, at length, we ran out of bait and had to go home to supper. When we wound up our lines Mr. Curtis had 11 sheepshead and 1 channel bass, and I had 9 sheepshead—the sheepshead averaging from three to five pounds each. More than satisfied with the afternoon's work, we took a drink and started for home ; not out of the traditional flask that fishermen are supposed to carry, but out of the "water-monkey," full of pure spring water. The water-monkey is a very useful tropical institution, something like a big earthen jug, but slightly different in shape, and nobody goes out for a day's boating without one. You put your "monkey" in a shady place, where the breeze can strike it, and the water keeps as cool as if just out of the spring. If you are thoughtful you put a few lumps of sugar in your pocket from the hotel sugar-bowl, and as you can stop almost anywhere and pick fresh limes, you have all the materials for the most refreshing drink to be made on a hot day. Our 20 sheepshead supplied the hotel table for several days, though we all ate

largely of them, for the sheepshead is the most delicious fish caught in any water, with the possible exception of the pompano.

That evening, I fear, we made a slight crack in the truth. All the stay-at-home guests in the hotel were astonished at what they called "our luck" (we called it our skill), and wanted to know where we caught them. But we had discovered a fine fishing-ground and were not disposed to take the public into our confidence, so we told them "over in Terra Ceia Bay," "in the Cut Off," and in a dozen places we had not visited. But these answers did them just as well as the truth and gratified their curiosity. Then followed a grand finale for such a day's sport—a hearty supper, two pipes, and nine hours of sound sleep.

AT PALMETTO POINT.

Palmetto Point is a place not to be found on the maps. The point is there, just where the Manatee River runs into Tampa Bay, on the side nearest the Gulf; but it has no name and I have given it this name because there are on the point several palmetto houses, used by the fishermen who draw their seines there. We were told about these palmetto houses at the hotel, and one morning Mr. Curtis and I started out to visit them—he in his skiff and I in Mr. Warner's row-boat. Just around the point from the fishery, facing on Tampa Bay, is a very large Indian shell mound, where curious shells and pieces of Indian stoneware are found, and we could go to both places at the same time. We passed on the way down my own private bathing ground, which I claim by right of discovery. This is a smooth, sloping beach of beautiful white sand not 200 yards from the hotel, so nicely protected by a high bluff that you can go there at any hour of any day in the year and enjoy a bath in the greatest privacy, with the warm sun beating down upon you, and have the water any depth you want it, from 2 inches to 50 feet. We went around the point first, past the fishery, and landed at the shell mound and climbed the steep part to its top. It is 30 or 40 feet high, built entirely of shells that have lain here so long that the outer ones have crumbled to

pieces, and the whole surface is covered with [illegible]. Like all the other shell mounds, it has a large [illegible] out of its summit. These shell mounds are counted among the curiosities of Florida. There are large numbers of them throughout the State, and a great many in Manatee County. Opinions differ as to what they are, and how they got here. They vary in size from a few feet in diameter to a quarter of an acre, and from 10 to 40 feet in height. They are made of oyster shells, clam shells, conch shells, and the shells of all the water-drinking beasts that frequent these waters. Some people think they were washed up by the eddying tides; but Mr. Warner, who has given some attention to the matter, gave me an explanation of them that seems very reasonable. He pointed out the curious fact that every conch shell in the mounds has a small hole drilled in its side in just about the same position as if it had been made to draw the animal out of his shell. His theory is that the Indians gathered at these places on state occasions to hold their feasts, and that these shells are the remains. I have not heard of anything of interest being found in them beyond a few arrow-heads and some rude bits of Indian pottery. I am carefully saving a curious arrow-head we picked up on the beach made out of an enormous shark's tooth, which from long exposure to the air and water has turned into a substance resembling stone. It is reasonable to think that the Indians had some good way of getting the conch out of his shell, for it is no easy matter. The modern way is to stick a fish-hook in the animal and hang him to the limb of a tree. As his muscles weaken he comes out inch by inch, and the process takes two or three days. It is a cruel practice, and takes a hard-hearted person to do it. I know a lady who found a handsome conch-shell on the beach, with the living animal inside of it, and hung him up to a lime tree in the back yard. In the evening she went out to look at him, and he was just beginning to come out. She went to bed and dreamed that the conch had got out of his shell and was crawling up on the bed to bite her. This so alarmed her that she went out in the middle of the night, took out the hook and threw the conch overboard, and a fine story that conch had to tell his companions when he got back,

but of course none of them would believe him. However, whether the Indians opened the oysters and killed the conchs, or whether the conchs killed the Indians and ate the oysters, or the clams ate the conchs and killed the oysters, the mounds are here just the same, and they are almost the only high points in this part of Florida. This one near Palmetto Point is just at the water's edge, and a high tide frequently washes out peculiar shells and bits of queer Indian pottery. From the quantity of broken Indian jugs found in all these mounds, I think the Indians after finishing their feasts must have wound up with a grand spree and broken all their crockery. There is a fine view of Tampa Bay and the Egmont Lighthouse from this large mound, and all the steamers that go into Palma Sola have to go directly by it. While Mr. Curtis was admiring the mound and looking for shells I took my boat and went down the coast, out toward the Gulf. I rowed past a large number of mangrove islands, almost around to Palma Sola Bay. The water was so clear I could see thousands of fish, and there were enough birds around to start a museum. Some of them were of great size, and they were all so tame that I could row almost up to them as they sat on the water without frightening them. One old fellow in particular was so big that at first I thought he was a hogshead floating, and so tame that I was within a dozen yards of him before he took wing. He was fully as large as four big turkeys put together, and looked something like a man with wings, only his nose was rather too large, being something like 8 or 10 inches long. I rowed back to the mound and joined Mr. Curtis, and together we visited Palmetto Point, where the palmetto houses are. There are four of these buildings, each as large as an ordinary house, and all built entirely of palmetto—roof and walls—without a nail in any of them. The fishermen use them for drying, cleaning, and curing houses, and very good houses they make. To build such a house the builder goes into the woods and cuts such poles as he wants, of a length to suit his building, and ties them together with cords, making a frame-work to hang his palmettoes on. The palmetto leaves are then tied in place, layer upon layer, like shingles, making a thatch that no rain can beat through nor no heat or cold can penetrate.

Such a house cost just the price of the cord and the labor, and lasts 15 or 20 years. Each of these houses had a smooth, white, sand floor, and any one of them would make a comfortable dwelling. In front of them, at the point, the bank runs down so suddenly that a ship drawing 20 feet of water could come up within six feet of the shore. When we reached home again after a long pull against a strong head wind we were just in time for dinner, and just in time to meet Mr. Warner with an invitation to go up the river with him next day in his steam launch to shoot alligators—an invitation that of course we gladly accepted. W. D.

AMONG THE ALLIGATORS.

TWENTY-FIVE MILES UP THE MANATEE RIVER.

Palma Sola, Fla., Feb. 25.—I had long desired to see a real live and lively alligator. Not a puny orphan, such as one sometimes sees shedding tears in an aquarium; nor down-hearted beasts like those in the tank at the New Orleans Spanish Fort; but an alligator on his native heath, looking for prey. They had been promised in the trip down the Red River, but the weather was too cold, and there was not one in sight. Then they told us that the bayou at Palma Sola was a great place for them, and we looked expectantly behind every bush, but without results. This trip with Mr. Warner in his steam-launch Alice, however, was to be up the Manatee River, "right into the alligator country." We might even see and kill a manatee, or sea-cow, though the chances of this were somewhat doubtful, as it is 10 years or more since one has been killed here. But alligators were to be so thick "you can't throw a stone against the bank without hitting one, Sir!" And this was true enough; not because of the number of alligators, but because there are no stones in this part of the world. I could not fairly realize this queer fact till the day that Mr. Curtis and I were fishing off the cattle wharf. Our sinkers were too light, and I volunteered to go ashore and get some stones. But I searched the beach in vain; there was not even a pebble—nothing but shells and sand. Mr. Warner was about to make a trip to his lumber camp at Fort Hamer, 15 miles or so up the river, and intended afterwards to go still further up the stream, and he kindly invited all the guests in the hotel to go with him. We numbered just eight in the hotel at that time, including three ladies. There were Mr.

and Mrs. Curtis, a young gentleman waiting for a chance to get to Sarasota, and a Mr. Ingersoll and his party of two ladies and a colored man servant, from somewhere in the Northwest. Mr. Ingersoll had arrived at the hotel a few days before with such a stock of tents and sheet-iron stoves and trunks and gun cases, and fishing-tackle, he looked like a May moving in New York. He had chartered a boat at Cedar Keys, and was waiting for it to come along and take him and his party down the coast to Sarasota, or Charlotte Harbor, or anywhere the wind listed—"anywhere, by —," as he eloquently expressed it, "where the weather's warm!" He had just come out of a temperature of 20° below zero in the North, and was not yet thawed out, so he still wore an overcoat and gloves; while the rest of us were sweltering in the thinnest linen. Mr. Ingersoll is a character, and this is my excuse for making public property of him, and trying to photograph him—a character of a kind you never meet at the fashionable resorts on the St. John's, and run across only seldom here on the wilder west coast. He is a leviathan, to begin with; weighing somewhere in the neighborhood of 300, and is always careful about trusting his weight in a small boat. He had not been here 12 hours before he had all the mechanics in the place at work for him, adding to his stock of camping materials. The carpenter was chartered to make him a fish-trap and a lot of tent-pins, the sail-maker to make him a new tent, and the blacksmith to make him a shark hook, with a chain 6 feet long. He stored his property in a little building near the hotel, and, from a moment's visit to the place yesterday, I can remember a large tent with iron-bound poles, three trunks, a sheet iron stove, a lot of camp stools, three guns, and several large boxes. There were also the remains of a Dutch oven, which had been broken in transit, and this accident nearly broke Mr. Ingersoll's heart. He set out one morning to find another, and scoured the whole country, and at last came back with one—a second hand one, which he had bought at some farm house. His man told me that this assortment of goods was only a few odd bits selected from a large roomful of hunting and camping equipage, and it was currently reported that the total result of his nine winters of shooting in Florida was one tame duck, but

this may have been a libel. His enthusiasm, at any rate, is in proportion to his weight, and he started on the alligator trip with a rifle and a trolling line, and half a bushel of crackers for lunch. But they did better for us than this at the hotel, and put up a substantial dinner; and by 10 o'clock in the morning we were off. The deck of the launch was about six feet below the level of the wharf, and perhaps the liveliest part of the day's sport was seeing Mr. Ingersoll get aboard. It reminded me of the old school-book story of the elephant crossing a bridge—putting one foot on it carefully first, shaking it, and then drawing back and shaking his head. Mr. Ingersoll was sure at first that the Alice would not support his weight; then he was satisfied that he never could get down to her, and at last he gritted his teeth and swung himself carefully over the edge of the wharf.

"Now four or five of you," he shouted, "get down there astern, while I drop on the forward deck."

We obeyed his instructions, and he came safely aboard and we were off. The Alice is a handsome little launch, drawing 4 or 5 feet of water, with a cabin and a cockpit aft, the engine and boiler amidships, and the pilot-house in a sort of well, with a roof over it, so that the man at the wheel stands on a level several feet lower than the deck. In front of this is a small forward deck. We steamed up the river without incident past Braidentown, Fogartyville and Manatee, and reached Fort Hamer, where we were to make a stop, without seeing any alligators. Mr. Curtis and Mr. Ingersoll put out a trolling line, but up to this point did not catch any fish. At Fort Hamer several men were watching for us on the river bank, among them the foreman of the loggers, who had come down from the camp several miles in the interior, and thus saved us considerable delay. I looked around for the fort, but saw nothing of it. There was not a building of any kind in sight. Upon making inquiries I learned that the fort disappeared many years ago, soon after the close of the Indian wars, and that its title now sticks to the place only by courtesy. This is the case with all the Florida forts, so I hear. Looking on the Florida map you see a large number of little crosses scattered about the State

and each cross is supposed to represent a fort. But the forts, like the Indians, have disappeared, and there is nothing left but their names. As we were about to re-embark at Fort Hamer, to continue our journey, Mr. Warner sniffed the air and said that there was either a rattlesnake or an alligator about, as he smelled the peculiar musky scent that attaches to both. But we saw neither, and went on. Above Fort Hamer the Manatee River narrows down into a little stream and the water looks black. As the sun had now been up long enough to make the ground warm we were told that we might expect to see alligators at any minute. I stationed myself on the forward deck armed with a large 38-calibre revolver, and I had to lie down flat, so that the pilot could see over me. In the pilot-house with Mr. Warner were Mr. Ingersoll's two ladies, who were enjoying the novelty of the scenery. We were hardly a mile above the fort before Mr. Warner shouted:

"There's an alligator on the right bank!"

Sure enough, there he sat, a big fellow, sunning himself among the tall grass, which he had trampled down. We were too far from him to expect to hit him with a revolver, but I dropped a ball over in his direction, and he lost no time in slipping into the water. We were close to the left bank, and in a minute more I saw an immense fellow there, directly opposite us, not more than 20 feet away. Even at this short range I had not much hope of hitting him in any vulnerable part with a revolver, but thought I might tickle him a little. Only by putting a ball into one of his eyes or directly behind one of his front legs could I hope to kill him. But I let fly on general principles and had better luck than I expected. The 'gator rolled half over, recovered himself and slid off the bank into the water. He headed directly for the launch, and in less than five seconds was within three or four feet of us. The two ladies in the pilot-house thought he intended to climb aboard, and indeed it did look very much like it. They set up a scream that was enough to frighten an alligator to death and made a scramble for the door on the opposite side, where, in trying to get through both together, they stuck, and the sudden shifting of cargo nearly capsized the launch. The

alligator, when his slimy head was nearly against the boat's side, let himself sink and disappeared and we saw him no more. From this time forward, all the way up the river, alligators were quite as thick as we had been told. There was some sport in firing at them and making the big rascals get up and run, even with slim chances of hitting them. At a very moderate estimate we saw two or three hundred alligators on this trip. Most of them were very large ones and looked as if they could make a brave fight. It is a common saying that they will run away from a white man, but stay and fight a negro; how much truth there may be in it I do not know. The natives here seem to have no fear of them, but when they come in the way take a fence-rail or a club and drive them off. There is hardly anything to keep them from multiplying, for people do not take the trouble to kill them, except such visitors as go out and shoot them for fun. Some tender-hearted people who have never seen an alligator may think it cruel fun to go out and shoot them uselessly. But if they should see one they would change their minds. Just as everybody hates a snake, or as sailors hate sharks, so there is a natural feeling against alligators; and the first thought upon seeing one is to kill him; unless, indeed, you are a little timid and first think of getting away from him. They look very much like big snakes; and I venture to say that even Mr. Henry Bergh, sailing up the Manatee River with a rifle in his hands, would blaze away at the first 'gator he saw.

I had the alligator field all to myself, for just as we got into the thickest of them the fish began to bite, and all the other gentlemen gave their attention to trolling. We had only two lines along, but these two kept the other three gentlemen busy, for the fish bit as fast as they could get the lines out, and in a short time the cock-pit was so full of them the fishermen had to stand up on the seats. They were fine large fish, locally known as "Jacks." I do not know their proper name, but they were from two to two and a half feet long, weighing from four to eight pounds each, with a forked tail looking very much like that of a mackerel. It was no easy work hauling in such big fellows, and before long all the fishermen were complaining

of sore hands. I had already put my hands in such a condition that nothing could make them worse, having worn them into holes with pulling in fish and hacked and hewed them with knives, so I was able to listen to these complaints with the air of a veteran, merely giving the same humane advice that was given me, to wash each fresh cut in salt water "to take the poison out." This, of course, smarts so that it keeps a man dancing a hornpipe for half an hour. As we approached Manatee on the homeward trip we saw a flock of ducks sitting on the water. Mr. Warner headed the boat for them and Mr. Ingersoll brought out his shot-gun. The latter was already in a state of enthusiastic excitement over the fishing, and he hoped to add a new leaf to his laurel wreath by bringing down a duck. He immediately went through the interesting performance usual to city sportsmen. The gun was in a heavy leather case, which had to be unstrapped. Then it was in several pieces, which had to be put together. The cartridges were in another case, which also had to be unstrapped, and by the time he had looked down the barrel to see that no eels or snakes had crawled in, examined the hammer, and put in the cartridge, the ducks might have been a mile away if they had known anything. But they were foolish ducks, or perhaps they knew Mr. Ingersoll, and had confidence in his inability to hit them, so they sat still. The boat continued to approach them, and he fired before they rose, and then they took the hint and flew away, every one of them. Mr. Ingersoll was explaining that he knew they were out of range, when one of them unexpectedly dropped, and we went over to it and gathered it in. The young man, who was on his way to Sarasota whispered to me that there never was a bigger surprised man in the world than Mr. Ingersoll when that duck dropped; but he wiped his gun with great complacency, and put it away with the air of a man who has done his whole duty. The sun was well down by this time, and we reached home by moonlight and went into the store and got two large gunny bags to carry the fish up to the hotel. It took four men to carry them. This is not a fish story, but solid truth.

One day soon after the alligator hunt Mr. Curtis and I or-

ganized an excursion to Egmont Key, to visit the light-house. The Key is 10 or 12 miles away, about the centre of the mouth of Tampa Bay, and we chartered a good-sized sloop, manned by a jolly old Welsh tar with a very red face. The party consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Curtis, Mrs. Scott, our landlady, and myself. Such a move as this in picnicking is worth the genius of Jay Gould, for, by taking your landlady along, you at once "make yourself solid" with the hotel, and need have no fear of a vacuum in the lunch-basket. With a great water-monkey full of cool water, a good store of limes and sugar, and a fat basket just full of pies and sandwiches, eggs and tarts, guava jelly and light biscuits, to say nothing of a little "filling-in" of crackers and cheese; with a good boat, a good crew, a fair wind, and a bright, sunshiny day, we had everything to make us happy. The boat had no cabin, but a large cock-pit, and some old sails spread on the floor of this made us comfortable seats. The wind, indeed, was a little too fresh, blowing so hard that we received several warnings that we had better not start. But we were in for it and bound to go; so Landlord Scott's boat was hitched behind for a tender, and we set sail. I flatter myself that it was I who insisted upon taking the small boat along, somewhat contrary to the desires of the rest of the party; for, as it turned out, the row-boat was all that saved us from having to spend the night upon the briny deep. We started for the mouth of the river at a lively rate, and began to think we were going to get a wetting outside, but while we were talking about it the wind suddenly died out and left us drifting lazily into Tampa Bay. Within five minutes the weather changed from a stiff breeze into almost a dead calm. Our jolly old tar told us there was no use trying to reach Egmont Light; that it would take us all day to get there, with no telling when we would get back. But couldn't we go somewhere else? This is one of the beauties always attending a trip in a sail-boat. Very likely you won't get to the place you start for, but you can go somewhere else. Wherever the wind directs, that must be your destination. Some of the party had never been in Terra Ceia Bay, and the rest of us wanted to see more of it, and we asked the tar whether he

could take us there. Yes, he thought he could beat into Terra Ceia Bay, and immediately set about it. It was slow work, making our way into it, and seemed to me to occupy five or six hours, though it really was not more than an hour or two. The time seemed so long, not because drifting before this light breeze and lounging on the warm sails and puffing at a pipe was not pleasant, but because I had a longing eye on the dinner-basket. I proposed at one point that we should eat, but the rest of the party scorned such a proposition, and the ladies said we ought not to eat "before we were in Terra Ceia Bay, anyhow." So I waited patiently for the old ship to drift into our dining-room. When she did at last get there our appetites were up to the razor-edge stage, and we enjoyed the boiled eggs and the beautiful scenery together. Terra Ceia Bay is a peculiar piece of water, suddenly spreading out into a broad lake, as suddenly contracting into a narrow channel, and then widening out again. At the end of it nearest Tampa Bay its shores are lined with broad belts of mangrove trees, whose foliage is so thick and green that they look like beautifully sloping lawns. The whole bay is dotted with mangrove islands, each island a dark green dome. I have never seen anything like it anywhere, and its very novelty makes it attractive. It is somewhat as if all the Thousand Islands in the St. Lawrence were covered with thick green foliage. You sail up before an apparently unbroken line of these islands, and it looks as if you were going straight ashore, but your bold navigator finds an opening, takes the boat through it, and you are in another big bay, larger than the first, and have to make another such manœuvre to get out of it, and unexpectedly find yourself in a third open place; so you keep along for miles. Luckily for us we were not lost in this part of the bay, as we soon afterward were in a part we were better acquainted with, or we might yet be subsisting on mangrove oysters and palmetto cabbages, and I doubt whether we would ever have found our way out. We sailed on, very slowly and comfortably, till we were near what I should take to be the upper end of the bay, within sight of a number of houses on the shore. The sailor

told us who lived in them, and said that one of the places belonged to Howard & Kennedy, who recently bought some land here, and began market-gardening on a large scale. We all had some curiosity to see a Florida market-garden, and it was unanimously decided to pay Messrs. Howard & Kennedy a visit. The wind had come up again into something like its former glory, and when we dropped anchor in front of the place there were white-caps on the beach. We saw before us a handsome place, with a long stretch of fencing, a comfortable dwelling-house, and down by the water a novelty that at once attracted our attention—a roof of palmetto thatch, supported at the corners by four large palmetto trees, and without walls. In this climate such a house answers every purpose for a barn, or any out-building, and is at once cheap, durable, and handsome. There were a number of small boats at anchor in front of the place, and what we could see of it from the water made us all anxious to pay it a visit. We embarked in our row-boat—we four passengers—and were soon disappointed to find that we could not approach within 50 yards of the shore on account of the shallow water. It was out of the question to carry the two ladies over this gap; so, after trying in vain to find deep water at several places, we were compelled to give it up, and went back to the sloop. When we reached her we found her hard and fast aground. But our gallant crew did not mind a little thing like this; he quietly stepped overboard into water nearly waist deep, shoved the sloop further away from shore, and helped us aboard. As we were 10 or 15 miles away from home, and the afternoon was rapidly wearing itself away, we voted to start for Palma Sola, but this was a matter entirely beyond our reach. The second spurt of wind had died out, and we were once more becalmed. There was indeed enough breeze left to carry us along at the rate of about a mile an hour, but this was tedious work, and bade fair to keep us out till late at night. In an hour or two, after we had progressed a mile or two, I grew tired of such monotonous business, and stepped into the skiff and started off alone for a row. The sun was just about to set, and millions and millions of birds that occupy cheap lodgings on the islands of Terra Ceia Bay were

taking the rapid transit line for home. I should be almost afraid to say anything definite about the numbers of birds I saw, ducks, gulls, herons and many kinds that were strange to me, for it might strain the reader's imagination after the true fish stories I have told. But it is no exaggeration, at any rate, to say that there were a thousand times as many as all the rest I ever saw in my life. They came home in long strings, V shaped, so long that sometimes the ends of the V were lost in the horizon. In one of these rows I counted 700 birds, but as there were still several miles more of them I gave it up. There was a curious-looking bit of shore, not far away, lined with big palmetto trees, and I rowed over to it. As the sun went down entirely, and darkness began to make itself visible, the drum-fish came out of their lairs and played their melancholy tunes under my boat's bottom. They sounded, at least, as if they were under the boat, but I was not able to make them out. As the darkness increased their sound was so funereal that it almost frightened me. They are well named, for nothing could better describe their noise than to say that it sounds like a big bass drum struck under water. I don't know whether it was the same fish following my boat, but imagined that it was, and he kept good time with me, letting me take about three strokes, and then coming in with his bass "boom." Occasionally some other drum-fish would join in, but generally my own private drummer had the field to himself. I had noticed, while it was lighter, that a long narrow fish of a peculiar shape was following the stern of my boat. I had struck at him several times with an oar, but he merely dodged, and continued to follow me. The water, too, was becoming phosphorescent in the dark, and at every stroke my oars splashed fire. So with the knowledge that the long, narrow fish was keeping up his surveillance over me, with the drums beating under my boat, and the water in a blaze on both sides, I confess that I felt more comfortable to head my skiff for the sloop; I didn't know but the next thing might be a water-spout or a great whirlpool, there seemed to be so many strange creatures in these Florida waters. The fish that followed by boat looked suspiciously like the "pilot fish" that precedes a shark. Getting

back to the sloop just before dark I found the party in no wise alarmed, which rather surprised me, for our situation was awkward. Not that we were in any danger, but our friends in the hotel would be mourning for us. The ladies said there was no hurry, that there would be a breeze presently, so we finished the provisions in the dinner-basket, and sang a song. By that time it was genuinely dark, and the ladies began to feel uneasy. About 15 stars were out, but there was no moon. We were 12 or 15 miles from home by the way we had come, and about 3 miles by going through the "cut-off." But whether we could find the cut-off on such a dark night and pick it out from among the hundreds of false bays and inlets along the shore was a very open question. Failing to find the cut-off, we might also lose the sloop, and then we would be in a fine fix. We resolved, at all events, to take to the boat.

[I notice that writers for the weekly story papers always break off in an interesting place, and this week I must follow their illustrious example, for this letter is already far too long, and our night ride on Terra Ceia Bay is one of my pet stories, and I am going not to spoil it by cutting it off short.] W. D.

LOST ON TERRA CEIA BAY.

AN IMPROMPTU STUDY OF ASTRONOMY.

STARS WANDERING ABOUT THE SKY—HUNTING THE CUT-OFF—FISHING BY TORCHLIGHT—A VISIT TO TAMPA.

TAMPA, Fla., March 4.—We were on Terra Ceia Bay, becalmed, with a sloop and a skiff, and a very dark night had just settled down upon us. Once or twice the moon made a feeble effort to shine, but each time a bank of clouds drifted over it; perhaps a dozen stars were visible. Having determined to leave the sloop under the charge of our sailor and strike for home with the row-boat, we made preparations to start, and I was appointed navigating officer. I accepted the post with some misgivings, for it was no easy matter to find the "cut-off" on a dark night. People familiar with the Northern waters will think that, knowing the general direction, we ought to find it without trouble; but here the shores are different. Terra Ceia Bay is fringed with a thousand little bays and inlets, and each of these is heavily lined with mangrove trees, so that they all look alike. One of the small bays opens into the cut-off, and that one we had to find. If we went too far into a false channel there was a very strong likelihood that it would take us hours to find our way out again. The nearest inhabited shore was about two miles off, and there a feeble light occasionally glimmered—one solitary light, on a beach that we knew, although we could not see it, to be three or four miles long. I asked our sailor what light that was.

"That," said he, "is at old Joe Franklin's. The safest way will be for you to go straight to that shore, and then follow along the beach until you come to the cut-off. You'll never find it if you go right toward it."

The light on shore was very feeble, and occasionally we lost it entirely. I asked the sailor whether he had a lantern aboard, and he said he had. He could not leave his sloop, but had to stay with her all night, wherever he anchored. He said, however, that he was used to staying in her alone, and would not mind having his passengers leave him. I insisted upon having the lantern lighted and hoisted at the mast-head, so that whatever happened we could find our way back to the sloop. Anybody who can row a boat knows that it is impossible to keep one in a straight line at night without something for a guide, and we had no desire to spend the night rowing around in a circle. The light on shore disappeared so often it seemed likely to go out altogether, and I looked about for something else to use for a guide. Happy thought! there were the dozen stars. So many ships have been guided safe into port by them they ought surely to do a good turn to our little row-boat. But I was under a great disadvantage in trying to steer a boat by the stars, for I knew nothing whatever about astromomy, and had to invent an entire new system of my own, even to giving names to the stars, my celestial education being confined to the Dipper and the Southern Cross. By great good luck I found three trump stars almost in a straight line, and that line pointing direct from the sloop to the light on shore. What could be easier than to follow that line? I immediately named the three stars Venus, Adonis, and Gibraltar, (which I consider very neat and appropriate names), and we stepped into the boat, having first given the deserted sailor nearly all the tobacco we had and left him a supply of matches.

"Now," said Mr. Curtis to the crew, "tell us once more the exact direction of the cut-off from the sloop, will you?"

The old tar stood up on the forward deck, leaning far over, holding on to the stay, and, without saying a word, answered by pointing his hand, thus :

We left him standing so, and put off into the darkness, Mr. Curtis and I at the oars. The direction he gave us was northwest, as nearly as I could make it out. But our objective point was Joe Franklin's, where the light was, and thitherward we headed the

boat. I had a grand chart before me, composed of objects both celestial and terrestrial, very much like this :

* *The Sloop.*

* *Venus.*

* *Adonis.*

* *Gibraltar.*

*

The Light on Shore.

"How beautifully Heaven has arranged things for us navigators," I thought, "to put stars in a straight line like that. Wonder I never thought of guiding myself by them before. Why, nobody could miss his way with such a row of lanterns as that in the sky!" But I was young and fresh in the astronomical business then ; I have less faith in it now. We "rowed the boat lightly, love, over the sea," though she might have gone even more lightly if our two lady passengers had been a trifle thinner. To enliven us up a bit, we tried to start a song; but no two of us knew the same tune, and we gave it up. It was a dead still night, just such a time as the prowling drum-fish like for a stroll, and they gave us more music than we wanted. It was melancholy music, and made us wish ourselves in front of the supper table in the Palma Sola Hotel. They made a continual din in our ears, with their loud "boom," "boom," "boom." The water was full of the little insects or whatever it is that makes phosphorus, and our oars made waves of fire with every stroke. It seemed very solemn and impressive, this ride through utter darkness. One of the ladies said it was a very solemn thing to be alone thus with the Creator ; and the sacrilegious Mr. Curtis said it was deucedly more solemn to be alone without the Creator, as we seemed to be just then. However, we pulled on and on, half a mile or so, and then I took another observation, and found there had just been a celestial earthquake. The stars were all knocked out of place. My nice straight line was broken into fragments, and the stars, the sloop, and Joe Franklin's window were utterly and hopelessly mixed. Here was the beautiful chart I had to steer by on the second observation :

* *Venus.*

* *Gibraltar.*

* *Adonis.*

* *The Sloop.* * *Joe Franklin's.*

It was alarming to think how the stars had been jumbled up. I didn't mind it so much for ourselves, because the worst that was likely to happen to us was a night in a rowboat; but so many ships at sea were depending upon their being stationary and orderly there was no telling what disasters might be caused. If these three are what they call fixed stars they're very badly fixed. They put us out of our course and left us all at sea. A minute after this second observation, and before we had entirely recovered from the astonishment it caused, Joe Franklin's light disappeared, and we determined to make a bold stroke direct for the cut-off, without trying to reach the other shore. Guided only by the light at the sloop's masthead, we pulled for the cut-off, thought we had found it, rowed some distance up a little inlet, and found we were in the wrong place. We backed out, tried another inlet, and found we had made another mistake. We were lucky enough each time to be able to find our way back to the bay, but these set-backs discouraged us. "Why not land on this shore, and go to the nearest house?" perhaps somebody would ask. Because the nearest house on that side was miles and miles away, with impossibilities of mangrove swamps and pine barrens between. Tired of hunting in this wild fashion for the cut-off, we concluded to make another effort to reach Joe Franklin's, where we could at least find shelter, and perhaps procure a guide. Joe Franklin is an old colored chap who is said to have passed his hundredth birthday, and who lives with his wife (of nearly equal age) in a beautifully romantic palmetto house, surrounded by gardens and orange groves, on the back shore of Snead's Island, facing on Terra Ceia Bay. When we were once more out on the open waters of the bay, clear of the mangroves and the dark shadows of the towering palmettoes, I took another observation. Three times and out; never again will I undertake to guide anything by the stars, for I have no more faith in them; they have basely deceived me. The three planets had got up close together, as if they were holding a convention, and Joe Franklin's and the sloop were completely reversed, after this fashion:

* *Joe Franklin's.*

** *The three stars.*

* *The sloop.*

We could distinguish Joe Franklin's light from that on the sloop, because Franklin's had grown much larger and was a deeper red. For a moment, but only for a moment, we thought of pulling back to the sloop and giving it up. But we changed our minds, set up the battle-cry of "Joe Franklin's or a watery grave," and steered for the aged darky's light. We had not gone far when one of the ladies sitting in the stern seat, being able to see ahead, exclaimed:

"Why, Joe Franklin's house is moving down the beach!"

We all looked around, and so it was. The light, which was, we thought, in the window of the palmetto house, was moving down the beach and coming nearer to us. None of us were much surprised. Under ordinary circumstances we might have been; but after the way we had seen the stars shuffled about the mere moving of a small house was nothing remarkable. We continued to pull for the light, which still kept approaching us; and presently we were delighted to hear voices. They sounded like the music of the angels, and brought our courage up 50 per cent. in a minute. If Old Joe Franklin's house was moving off, somebody at any rate was in it. Louder and louder the voices grew, nearer and nearer the light came, growing every minute, till at last it was close enough for us to see that it was a great flaming torch held in the bow of a boat, and that the two occupants of the boat were spearing fish. So romantic was the scene, and so beautiful the sight, this torch lighting up the two fishermen and their boat, making a circle of light like the glare from a magic-lantern, that we enjoyed it for some time before we hailed them. They were coming in our direction, and not a minute passed but they speared one or two big fish.

"Hello-o-o!" we shouted to them; "will you tell us the way to the cut-off?"

"Just the opposite way from what you're going," one of the fishermen replied. "We're going through it, and you'd better follow us."

We followed them very willingly at an easy pace, they spearing fish all the way across the bay, for we had managed to get to the wrong side, of course, and were further away from home than when we started. At length we reached the cut-off, the fishermen

went up the river and we went down, we bade them good night, and we were soon in Palma Sola, devouring everything in the hotel pantry. As we sat on the front piazza an hour later the sound of a shrill whistle came across the water. It was our deserted sailor over on Terra Ceia Bay, blowing a great conch shell to let us know that he was still alive.

As my advent in Palma Sola was unprepared for, so my exit from it was unexpected. One of the steamers of the Tampa Company usually arrived there on Sunday afternoon and lay till Monday evening on her way to Key West. Last Sunday afternoon the steamer T. J. Cochran arrived, and went on up to Manatee to discharge and take on freight. As she was coming down the river the Alabama, of the same line, came in, and the two vessels met nearly opposite Mr. Warner's house just above the Palma Sola wharf. The Alabama signaled the Cochran to come alongside and both boats stopped. As we watched them from the front of the Palma Sola store, and as minutes grew into quarter hours and quarters into full hours, we began to wonder why they lay there so long. When we saw the Cochran send the end of a stout hawser over to the Alabama, and saw both vessels start their engines at full speed, we knew that the Alabama was aground. The wind and tide had drifted her around upon a flat, and she was hard and fast. "Served her jolly well right," was the opinion of everybody who saw her, for the two steamers had approached each other in midstream rather than have the delay and expense of going up to the wharf, when they wanted to transfer some portion of their cargo; and this was only in accordance with the usual careful management of the Tampa Steamship Company. The Cochran tugged away for an hour or two without effect, and then came down to the Palma Sola wharf to wait for the tide to rise and to unload some of her cargo. I went aboard to inquire when she would leave for Key West, and was given the startling information that it would be necessary to get aboard at once, as the Cochran, after pulling the Alabama out of the sand, would proceed to Tampa, and sail thence for Key West, but would not stop at Palma Sola on her way out; so, for Key West passengers, it was "all aboard." The distance from Palma Sola to Key West is something like 175 miles, but by this very neat and accommodating arrangement of the steamship company, it was

necessary to add a journey of 70 miles to Tampa and back. But there was no help for it, for this line has a monopoly of the west coast traffic, so I had my baggage put aboard the Cochran, and bid a reluctant adieu to Palma Sola and her good people. The Cochran steamed up the river again to the Alabama, passed her another line, and began anew the work of trying to pull her off. There were only two or three passengers aboard, and we were consoled with the information that the Cochran "would not start for a week unless she got the Alabama off." By great good luck the Alabama "came off" just before dark, and the Cochran started for Tampa. As it is just possible that some other unlucky New Yorker may be compelled to travel down the Gulf in one of the vessels of the Tampa Steamship Company, I will try to give a brief description of the T. J. Cochran, so that he will know what to expect. Upon taking hold of some loose rope and climbing aboard, as you usually have to do, you find yourself on the main deck, which is just far enough from the upper deck to allow a very short man to stand upright. A man of any reasonable height, when he goes to his berth or crawls in to his meals, has to hump his shoulders like a camel, and keep his chin well down on his chest. This fine specimen of marine architecture is of between 300 and 400 tons burden, and is very appropriately painted black. There is a general appearance and smell as if her decks and rails were greased every morning with whale-oil. The cabin passengers and the crew eat together, and the captain occasionally comes down to a meal, and sours the condensed milk with his austere and dyspeptic countenance. I very much regret that I have lost the card on which I wrote the name of this agreeable seaman, the captain of the Cochran, for it would give me pleasure to serve him up on the half-shell with all due solemnity. But nameless as he is, I confidently recommend him for the surliest, most unaccommodating officer that ever shuffled over a greasy deck. The purser and all the rest of the officers are good fellows, and they made such apologies as they dared for the remarkable conduct of the captain, who, they said, is a Norwegian, and does not know the customs of the country. There were several New Yorkers aboard, afterward, and it is very largely at their solicitation that I waste so much trouble on this captain; they all offered to wager large sums that he is the surliest man in the world, but there were no takers.

Monday morning found us at the head of Tampa Bay, at anchor, about two miles out of Tampa. The object in going so far out of the way was to lay in a supply of wood for the furnaces, for wood can be bought a few cents a cord cheaper at Tampa than at Palma Sola. The sun began to shine with a blaze like a blast-furnace, and all the tar and paint about the ship turned into liquid. Before 9 o'clock in the morning the decks blistered the feet of whoever walked over them. I was deliberating whether I should stay on board and be broiled or drop overboard and be gobbled by a shark, when the accommodating purser came to me and said:

"The captain is going ashore in the yawl. Don't you want to go up and see something of Tampa?"

All the desire I had to see Tampa would have rattled around in the eye of a needle, but the trip offered a chance of escape from the heat of the ship, and I went. The animated lump of tar and oakum that bore the captain's uniform and I occupied the stern seat, and two sailors rowed us. I immediately opened up an animated conversation with the captain. I asked him some question about Tampa, and he replied:

"Umph."

I ventured some other little remark, and again he answered:

"Umph."

The sailors looked at each other slyly, and wanted to smile. Presently we reached the mouth of the little creek on which Tampa stands, and went up past the beautiful spot lately vacated by the Government, where the barracks used to be. This place faces the bay, and has on it a small old-fashioned house, surrounded by immense trees. The Government abandoned the property for some reason or other, leaving it open for settlement under the homestead act, and half of Tampa has been fighting for it ever since, to see who shall have the plum. We were soon alongside of a rickety old wharf and made a landing by the side of a big steamboat, which proved to be an old New York acquaintance, the Eliza Hancox. The captain and his men went up the street to Miller & Henderson's store, to see about supplies for the steamer, and I sauntered along after them and went into the store, too. Miller & Henderson own the Tampa Steamship Line, a big store in Tampa, and up to this time they have practically owned the central part of the

west coast of Florida, through controlling its transportation facilities. But now that Tampa has a railroad the monopoly is broken. The railroad was opened on the very day that I reached Tampa, and everybody who owns a square inch of land is wild over the increased value of his property. Knots of men were down on their knees and haunches on the sidewalks making diagrams of their "property" and telling how much they had already been offered for their lots, and how much they expected to realize on them. There was a regular "boom" in real estate, as far as sellers were concerned, but I did not see any excited men rushing around looking for a chance to buy. It will be easy to draw a picture of Tampa. Take any little New Jersey town with 2,000 or 3,000 inhabitants and sand six inches deep in every street; put a few orange and lemon trees in the front yards, and you have Tampa. Only the temperature of the New Jersey town in August Tampa has in January and February. The heat wilted me down, the merciless sand filled my shoes, and I longed for a comfortable place to sit down and rest, but longed in vain, for the principal hotel is like a barn, and a barn that has not been cleaned for some months. There is said to be a very good hotel two or three miles out of town, built for winter visitors, but I did not go to it. I went into a drug store to make some trifling purchase, and was told by the jeweler, who occupied the other side of the room, that the druggist had gone out, and that I could get what I wanted in about an hour. I walked over the town as much as the intense heat and the deep sand would permit, and saw many cozy homesteads, surrounded by handsome yards, with plenty of oranges growing and shady nooks of verandas; some curious four-horse wagons, just in from the country, driven by equally curious natives; a great lot of Florida darkies, born with a genius for leaning against the shady side of a house and chewing tobacco. The captain's boat was not to go back to the Cochran till 8 o'clock in the evening, and before I had been in Tampa an hour I began to wonder how I could get back to the ship—which might be hot, but could not possibly be as hot as the town. Fortunately, the purser's boat, loaded with provisions, went out to the ship at 3 o'clock, and I went with her. I was in Tampa just five hours; next time I come I will not care to stay more than four hours and a half. W. D.

PALMA SOLA—FLORIDA.

Editor of the Florida Agriculturist:

Within a few months, Braidentown and Sarasota have both been heard from, but I see nothing from Palma Sola. If no one else will sing its praises I must needs do it myself.

Three years ago, where the village of Palma Sola now stands, it was, literally, a "howling wilderness." Then Messrs. Warner & Beach awoke to the fact that it was a beautiful site for a town, and presto, change, it is transformed. First began the erection of a large saw-mill, and naturally cottages for the workhands followed. Settlers began to pour in. The cottages were soon filled. Others had to be built. Then to supply the rapidly growing town, Mr. Warner erected a fine store. For weeks before it was opened we heard of nothing else. We feasted, in imagination, while listening to the accounts of the stock of groceries constantly arriving, and when the grand opening day came no one was disappointed. Everything was on a mammoth scale. But alas! for human hopes. In a few days the news flew through the country that Warner had burned out, and everything was lost. It was only too true. The store and wharf on which it stood had burned to the water's edge. Things uninjured by the fire were destroyed by the water into which they dropped. A new engine destined for the saw-mill, and which was in the warehouse, was also destroyed. No insurance. But fearful as the loss was, Palma Sola never flinched. Mr. Warner does not know the meaning of the word fail. In less than a month a new stock arrived and was put into a temporary building. Then, like the fabled Phœnix, a new store rose from the ashes of the old one. If possible, a better stock than the first one was put into this new venture. So much for the founding of the tiny city 'yclept Palma Sola. As for the location, "like a jewel on a maiden's breast," lies Palma Sola on the bank of the Manatee. Only two miles from the mouth of the river, it is plainly to be seen from Tampa Bay, and a more beautiful picture was never painted. In the background, the "forest primeval," the stately pine trees of the South. On the neck of the land extending into the river is the mill. From the mill an immense steamboat wharf extends out into the river, and on the end of this wharf is the

store, postoffice and warehouse. Back of the mill lies Palma Sola, a collection of pretty little cottages, some gothic, others simply box houses, so popular in California and Florida. All are snowy white as paint and whitewash can make them. In the center of the village—I should have written—is a large hotel, erected by Mr. Warner, and run by Mr. L. G. Jenness, the well-known hotel man —himself the proprietor of a magnificent summer hotel at Scroon Lake, Orange County, New York; his name is a guarantee that everything possible will be done for the comfort of the guests of the house. Who that has sojourned South will fail to remember the genial host of the Suwannee House in Cedar Keys, and the Russell House in Key West, both of which hotels have been under Mr. Jenness's management? The hotel itself is a large, square, frame building, furnished in the daintiest style imaginable. The view from the upper windows is simply magnificent. From the north and west windows, Egmont Key Light is plainly to be seen; looking eastward, the Manatee, one catches glimpses of Fogartyville, Braidentown, Manatee and Palmetto. The river is continually dotted with sails and tiny boats. From the south windows can be seen the piney woods. The hunting and fishing in the vicinity is very fine. Boats of all descriptions, from a schooner-rig to rowboat, can be obtained from the boat livery of the Hammatt Bros. In the distance, across the bayou, lies San Terre, the home of W. S. Warner, a house in the gothic style of architecture, surrounded by grounds of unsurpassing beauty, and a fine orange grove. At the foot of the beautiful lawn is the wharf, at the end of which lies a perfect float of pleasure boats belonging to the house, noticeable among which is the steam yacht "Alice," used occasionally in towing a raft of logs from the extensive log camps run by the mill, far up the river and adjacent creeks. I have no time to describe other homes here, but there are many beautiful ones.

To those wanting homes in South Florida, I say come and look at our little city before settling elsewhere. To the wealthy it offers many attractions. No more beautiful locations can be found anywhere for the erection of handsome homes. Land can be bought in any quantity from a city lot to a thousand acres. Mr. Warner is the agent for the Disston Land Company, and has already sold thousands of acres of land, and there are ninety thou-

sand more to be sold. To the poor man, Palma Sola offers as many attractions as the wealthy. There is work for all classes and ages, for mill hands, lumbermen, laborers, carpenters, blacksmiths, cabinet-makers, wheelwrights, for every one save physicians; we have no use for them. Wages are from $1.25 to $2.50 per day. Board can be obtained for from 40 to 50 cents per day. Houses can be rented for from $3.00 to $8.00 per month. Warner & Co. give employment to all who apply. Everything which is necessary for comfort can be obtained from the store—hardware, tinware, dry goods, furniture, groceries, jewelry, toys, everything in fact from a steamboat to a clothespin. The saw-mill is constantly turning out fine lumber, sash, shingles, doors, blinds, etc. An Episcopalian Church and a school-house are to be the next improvements. "Dost like the picture?" BOHEMIENNE.

The following article, cut from the Jacksonville *Times-Union*, will interest the Northern hotel keepers looking for statistics on Florida business. It will be understood that this record represents but a small part of the Tourist travel into the State, and is only valuable as showing the increase in the seasons named. During the season of 1883-84 the records of the railroads entering Jacksonville show the arrival of 130,000 tourists, to which might be added fully 20 per cent. for an estimate of the arrivals by the steamers and railroad lines terminating at other points in the State. When it is considered that $200 is probably a moderate estimate of the average expenditure of each one of this pleasure-seeking crowd we can well understand the activity of all business interests during the time this money is flowing in.

The Lelands, of hotel fame, have had these figures in view for some years, and Warren Leland, Jr., of the Ocean House, Long Branch, has secured a location at Palma Sola for the erection of a winter resort. The prediction is a safe one, based as it is upon the natural attractions of the place, that he will make this the "Long Branch" of Florida.

THE HOTEL BUSINESS.

An Increase of 8,281 Visitors Over the Season Last Year.

Below we give, by actual count, the total number of arrivals at the various hotels in this city keeping registers for the seasons of 1882-3 and 1883-4, including the months of October, November, December, January, February, March and April, of each year. From this report it will be seen that for each month during the season just closed there has been an increase in the number of arrivals, the total increase for the season over that of 1882-3 being 8,281. Some of the largest hotels show a falling off, and others an increase. The falling off of the number of Everett arrivals can be attributed to the decrease of the transient business caused by the close connection of the boats with the trains and the fact that that hotel closed at least two weeks earlier than last season. The falling off at the

Carleton is attributed to the fact that a restaurant has been run in connection with that hotel. and, unlike previous years, hundreds of persons took meals at the restaurant during the season without registering their names. We were unable to get the arrivals at the Carleton for the months of April, 1883-4, for the reason that the proprietors have gone North and left their register locked up in their safe, but this will not make a difference of more than five hundred for either month. Below will be found the table giving the number of arrivals at each hotel for the months specified :

HOTEL.	Season of 1882 and 1883.							
	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	March.	April.	Total.
Carleton	.....	191	654	1,988	1,262	1,287	.....	5,382
Duval	.....	.....	329	334	574	586	40	1,863
Everett	.....	627	1,264	1,405	1,883	2,262	813	8,194
Elmwood	.....	.....	416	386	425	387	288	1,903
Grand View	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	191	191
Jacksonville	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....
Mattair	322	326	395	422	401	418	353	2,637
St. James	.....	.....	682	1,072	1,694	2,158	678	6,284
St. Marks	638	755	481	653	697	487	685	4,396
Sunnyside	.....	.....	.....	199	372	521	134	1,127
St. Johns	164	336	230	284	281	203	164	1,662
Tremont	.....	.....	.....	1,500	854	293	393	2,540
Windsor	.....	.....	.....	342	1,408	2,129	721	460
Totals	1,124	2,235	4,451	8,586	9,351	10,572	4,460	40,779

HOTEL.	Season of 1883 and 1884.							
	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	March.	April.	Total.
Carleton	.....	198	518	943	1,138	1,148	.....	3,945
Duval	.....	.....	902	685	718	700	610	3,515
Everett	.....	474	903	1,402	1,847	2,056	266	6,948
Elmwood	283	364	360	413	391	265	443	2,600
Grand View	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	.....	1,695	1,698
Jacksonville	.....	73	578	612	716	485	396	2,860
Mattair	265	382	375	372	313	261	247	2,215
St. James	.....	.....	606	1,305	1,909	2,285	600	6,675
St. Marks	666	643	491	613	618	582	590	4,293
Sunnyside	196	502	588	615	512	569	401	3,383
St. Johns	183	309	218	326	308	218	179	1,706
Tremont	.....	.....	.....	2,280	653	795	690	4,418
Windsor	.....	.....	.....	397	1,266	2,170	1,024	4,857
Totals	1,593	2,985	5,539	9,852	10,385	11,604	7,141	49,060
Totals of above months in 1882-3..	1,124	2,235	4,451	8,586	9,351	10,572	4,460	40,779
Monthly and total increase of the past season of 1883-84.....	469	700	1,088	1,266	1,034	1,032	2,681	8,281

WINDSOR HOTEL.

Arrivals at the Windsor Hotel for the season ending May 1st, 1884, classified by States: New York 1,953, Pennsylvania 572, Massachusetts 402, Illinois 215, Ohio 152, New Jersey 151, Florida 209, District of Columbia 55, Virginia 49, California 23, New Hampshire 30, Georgia 92, Maryland 84, Minnesota 48, Delaware 16, Vermont 33, South Carolina 20, Wisconsin 42, Tennessee 38, Connecticut 141, Maine 39, Kentucky 52, North Carolina 19, Rhode Island 84, Alabama 8, Missouri 41, Texas 6, Indiana 22, Mississippi 4, Michigan 56, Oregon 10, Dakota 5, Iowa 26, Wyoming 1, Utah 3, Mexico 1, Louisiana 7, Montana 4, Colorado 20, Arkansas 2, Kansas 4, West Virginia 2, Nevada 1, England 53, Canada 35, Ireland 15, Scotland 7, Nova Scotia 10, Austria 2, Germany 1, Italy 1, France 1—total 4,857.

Departures classified by railroads and boats for the season ending May 1st, 1884: Cygnus 543, Sylvester 208, DeBary Line 142, Glen 172, Mail boat 12, Georgia 1, Water Lily 6, Arlington boat 1, Margaret 14, Hancock 26, Mabel 2, Florida 6, Merrimac 2, to Mayport 2, Port Royal 7, City of Palatka 80, Yacht Pratt 1, Yacht Ileen 3, Yacht Ryder 1, S., F. and W. Railway 2,251, F. C. and W. Railway 311, J. and St. A. Railway 483, F. and J. Railway 28, Florida Transit 10, J., T. and K. W. 144—total 4,857.

FROM

METEOROLOGICAL REPORT.

Abstract Covering a Period of Twelve Years.

AN OFFICIAL STATEMENT OF THE CONDITION OF THE WEATHER IN FLORIDA AS RECORDED IN THE SIGNAL OFFICE IN JACKSONVILLE AND WASHINGTON, ETC.

Below will be found a complete report of the weather in this city, as observed by the United States Signal Observer for the past twelve years. The report was prepared for the *Times-Union* by Sergeant J. W. Smith, the Observer in charge of the office here, and afterwards sent to the office of the Chief Signal Officer in Washington, where it was compared with the original records of this office on file there and corrected.

THERMOMETER—Maximum, Minimum and Mean.

1872.			1873.			1874.			1875.			1876.			1877.		
Max	Min.	Mean.	Max.	Min.	Mean.	Max.	Min.	Mean.	Max.	Min.	Mean.	Max.	Min.	Mean.	Max.	Min.	Mean.
78	28	50.6	78	24	51.9	77	35	59.4	80	40	56.2	80	30	58.7	80	31	56.7
79	33	53.9	79	38	59.0	81	37	58.6	82	32	55.2	83	36	59.6	75	37	55.8
82	42	59.0	82	31	59.0	87	37	65.9	85	40	64.1	82	31	59.8	81	36	60.6
90	56	68.5	89	52	69.1	91	42	69.9	86	44	66.5	88	47	68.4	85	45	67.7
96	57	78.1	94	64	75.4	98	52	75.4	94	52	74.9	95	54	76.0	96	48	73.9
100	70	81.0	96	64	80.1	99	68	80.6	99	62	79.9	99	66	80.8	99	63	81.6
103	75	80.8	96	74	83.2	93	69	80 0	101	70	84.7	101	71	83.3	100.5	68	82.1
99	74	80.9	95	74	81.3	100	66	78.8	95	66	79.3	98	70	82.3	95	70	81.0
92	78	77.5	95	70	78.1	92	56	77 3	98	59	77.5	97	66	79.1	96	67	79.1
86	46	67.8	83	40	66.2	86	49	69.0	86	43	66.1	83	43	65.7	85	50	71.6
81	31	56.5	83	30	58.9	83	40	64 0	84	43	64.2	82	36	58.6	84	31	62.0
78	27	50.1	79	32	55.9	79	35	58.6	81	28	57.4	71	24	48.4	74	29	56.9
		67.1			68.1			69.4			68.8			68.4			69.1

1878.			1879.			1880.			1881.			1882.			1883.		
Max.	Min.	Mean.	Max.	Min.	Mean.	Max.	Min.	Mean.	Max.	Min.	Mean.	Max.	Min.	Mean.	Max.	Min.	Mean.
74	33	52.6	80	25	53.4	77	45	62.0	72	33	52.7	78	32	62.5	76	29	57.9
74	32	56.5	79	35	54.5	81	42	60.9	78	34	57.9	79	38	61.7	83	40	64.3
86	30	65.3	86	44	64.0	86	43	68.1	88	39	59.5	88	47	66.6	79	40	60
87	50	71.2	88	39	67.9	91	42	70.9	80	37	67.2	85	56	70.9	88	52	70.1
98.5	55	78.2	91	60	73.8	95	58	74.0	98	63	75.8	89.5	54	74.5	89.5	54	73
96	66	80.6	96	62	79.4	100.5	69	82.1	99	66	82.5	95.5	65	81.1	95.0	68	80.9
97	62	83.3	101	68	83.1	97	70	82.7	99	70	83.7	94	71	80 9	98	69	84.1
98.5	68	82.8	96	68	80.9	96.6	70	84.1	96	70	81.5	96	69	81.6	94.5	70.5	80.8
92	67	77.9	90	61	76.3	91	62	76.6	94	69	79.6	94	65	77.8	90.5	62.5	76 5
85	46	69.2	86	52	73.2	85	46	68.7	88	54	74.6	86	51	72.6	92.0	59.0	74.2
80	41	61.2	83	34.5	73.0	82	39	61.2	83	32	65.6	80	38	60.0	83	43	63.3
74	27	52.5	79	36	62.2	78	19	53.6	79	41	61.4	76	28	54.2	78.0	30.5	60.5
		69.4			69.3			70.2			70.2			70.4			70

War Department,
Office of the Chief Signal Officer,
Washington, D. C., January 16, 1883.

Statement showing the mean, maximum, minimum and water temperatures; the precipitation, in inches and hundredths, and the mean relative humidity, at Punta Rassa, Florida, for each month from the commencement of observations to December, 1882. (Compiled from the records on file at the office of the Chief Signal Officer, U. S. Army, Washington, D. C.)

PUNTA RASSA, FLORIDA.—MEAN MONTHLY TEMPERATURES.

(Computed from the three Telegraphic Observations.)

Year.....	January...	February..	March....	April.....	May.....	June.....	July.....	August....	September	October...	November.	December.	Means.....
1871									80.2	77.2	71.6	65.7	
1872	61.5	62.8	68.0	76.3	78.0	81.0	80.3	81.3	79.8	73.7	67.8	62.7	72 8
1873	61.6	66.0	64.7	72.6	79.3	81.0	81.1	80.2	80 0	72.0	66.2	65.2	72.5
1874	62.9	68.7	71.3	73.7	75 9	79.4	80.7	81.2	78 8	74.2	70.1	65.5	73.5
1875	69.6	65.9	70.6	70.0	76.5	79.1	80.9	79.5	80.8	74.5	73.3	66.6	73.9
1876	67.1	68.7	67.9	72.5	75.6	80.4	80.4	81.4	80.8	74.5	66.6	59.9	73.0
1877	65 5	64.4	66.7	70.9	75.5	81.7	82.6	82.1	81.9	77.3	69.6	64.1	73.5
1878	60.0	63.5	69.8	74.6	78.4	81.5	82.5	83.0	80.1	75 2	69.1	61.5	73.3
1879	61.7	63.3	69.4	70.8	75.7	79.1	81.1	80.9	78.8	76.8	69.2	70.2	73.1
1880	67.9	68.2	72.5	73.4	75.8	80.2	81.8	80.3	80.0	74.9	72.9	62.7	74.2
1881	64.5	65.2	64.9	69.5	76.3	81.7	82.9	80.6	79.9	77.2	72.1	67.7	73.5
1882	67.9	67.9	70.8	75.4	76.7	80.5	80.4	80.8	79.6	76.3	67.1	62.6	73.8
Mns.	64.6	65.9	68.8	72.7	76.7	80.5	81.3	81.0	80.1	75.3	69.6	64.5	73.4

Note.—The daily means are obtained by dividing the sum of the readings at the three telegraphic observations by three; the monthly means by dividing the sum of the daily means by the number of days in the month.

MAXIMUM TEMPERATURES.

Year	January...	February..	March.....	April.....	May.....	June.....	July	August....	September.	October....	November.	December.	
1872	77	78.5	81	87	92	91	92	92	92	88	83	80	
1873	80	79	81	88	90	94	93	92	89	88	83	81	
1874	79	84	85	87	90	91	91	91	91	85	82	80	
1875	80	80	83.5	82	86	89	91.1	91	90	89	85	81	
1876	81.5	81	81.8	84	90	92	92	92	91	89.5	82.5	75	
1877	80	77	80.5	83	85	93	93	92	92	89	87	78	
1878	74	75	84	84	89	92	91	92	90	88	81	76	
1879	78	79	81	85	89	91	92	92	90	89	84	80	
1880	80	79	84	86	98	93	92	91	91	88	83	81	
1881	30	78	82	86	89	92	92	91	91	89	86	82.5	
1882	80	81	83.5	85	90	91	91.5	92	90	87	84	78	

MINIMUM TEMPERATURES.

Year.....	January...	February..	March.....	April.....	May.....	June.....	July.....	August....	September	October...	November	December
1871									72	69	50.5	43
1872	39	46	50	68	65	71	72	71	71	58	37	35
1873	37	47	38	55	63	72	69	71	72	57	42	40
1874	42	50	55	55	59	70	70	71	67	64	50	49
1875	51.2	43	50	66.5	62	69	69	70.5	69.5	55.5	51.5	42
1876	42	51	44	56	61	70	67	72	69.5	55	48	34
1877	40.5	46.5	50	55,5	62	68	75	75	70	64	42	41
1878	42	48	50	62	64	72	73	73	69	54	48	38
1879	33	44	55	48	64	68	70	72	71	63	46	56
1880	53	52	49	53	65	67	69	70	67	57	49	39
1881	45	46	49	46	65	71.5	73	70	71	66	46	48
1882	42	49	57	64	64	68	70.5	72	70	60	45	36

MEAN OF THE MAXIMUM AND MINIMUM TEMPERATURES OF THE WATER AT THE OCEAN BOTTOM AT PUNTA RASSA, FLORIDA, FOR THE MONTHS NAMED.

Average depth of the water at the place where observations are taken is 11.9 feet.

Year.....	January...	February.	March	April.....	May.....	June.....	July	August....	September	October...	November	December.
1878	60.5	*	74.5	76.0	83.0	88.0	87.5	86.5	85.0	†	71.5	64.5
1879	62.0	66.0	72.0	75.0	81.0	85.0	86.5	85.0	84.0	78.0	71.0	70.5
1880	*	70.5	74.0	76.5	*	85.5	88.0	83.5	83.0	78.0	76.0	66.5
1881	64.5	66.0	70.0	73.5	81.0	86.0	87.5	84.8	85.6	80.6	73.6	68.8
1882	67.4	70.0	74.4	79.0	81.8	85.3	86.5	88.0	85.5	80.3	72.1	65.6

* Record incomplete.
† Thermometer broken.

PRECIPITATION.—(IN INCHES AND HUNDREDTHS).

Year	January...	February.	March	April.....	May.....	June.....	July.....	August....	September.	October...	November	December.	Annual Amount.
1871									15.49	1.80	0.98	2.68	
1872	2.64	2.71	0.69	1.54	2.88	7.16	8.68	4.08	15.14	2.82	0.53	1.87	
1873	6.84	0.48	1.59	3.58	9.89	5.21	5.13	9.85	9.13	3.90	2.83	1.57	60.00
1874	2.05	2.50	0.08	0.41	1.27	11.94	8.06	5.11	4.73	0.09	1.21	0.71	38.16
1875	0.84	0.03	0.70	4.59	2.07	3.33	5.33	12.49	6.99	2.08	1.00	1.26	40.71
1876	0.04	0.51	1.35	0.88	2.73	4.34	16.95	5.19	4.07	5.25	2.56	0.47	44.34
1877	1.53	2.89	0.84	1.09	4.38	1.26	6.59	8.33	4.86	1.99	4.30	0.93	38.99
1878	4.03	7.41	2.24	4.05	5.06	4.75	9.58	3.95	8.77	0.56	0.34	1.07	51.81
1879	0.31	2.11	0.14	0.63	1.42	3.22	6.21	12.75	13.78	4.85	0.35	0.52	46.29
1880	3.22	1.26	0.03	0.55	5.32	2.45	3.76	8.55	2.50	8.10	1.81	1.98	39.53
1881	4.02	0.52	1.18	0.54	3.13	2.53	3.60	7.28	7.20	1.58	0.80	1.22	33.60
1882	0.30	0.20	0.15	3.59	2.51	8.46	5.58	3.62	4.12	3.90	1.04	1.10	34.57
Me'n	2.35	1.87	0.82	1.95	3.70	4.97	7.22	7.88	7.43	3.08	1.48	1.28	42.61

MEAN RELATIVE HUMIDITY.—(FROM THE THREE TELEGRAPHIC OBSERVATIONS.

Year	January ..	February..	March	April	May.....	June.....	July	August....	September	October...	November.	December.
1873	79	75	74	73	74	75	76	78	80	73	74	78
1874	77	80	72	72	71	78	77	76	77	72	77	77
1875	83	77	73	67	74	74	76	79	78	76	81	74
1876	75	76	71	75	74	77	79	77	77	77	73	78
1877	73	76	70	69	70	67	71	74	72	74	75	71
1878	78	74	74	73	70	77	79	77	77	70	70	69
1879	72.7	70.6	70.4	66.7	70.9	72 5	74.8	78.1	81.8	78.3	71.4	78.6
1880	77.3	77.2	71.0	70.7	74.8	75.8	72.9	77.0	75.0	74.0	81.0	74.1
1881	79.0	72.0	69.0	72.0	70.0	72.0	73.1	76 9	78.2	73.9	75.4	76.2
1882	76.3	72.9	69.4	73.8	70.5	73.7	77.1	77.1	76.7	76.2	71.9	77.5
Mean.	77.2	175.1	71.7								75	75

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