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CAPE SABLE

BY

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THE Cape Sable country has always held a peculiar fascination for me over that of all other parts of Florida. It has seemed to me that Florida being good and southern Florida better it must follow that the extreme southermost tip of the peninsula could only be described in the superlative and I felt that having seen all the better part of Florida I was leaving the best until the last. Not that I deliberately postponed my plan to visit the Cape. That would have been an unnatural thing for me to do, for when enjoying a table-de-hote I always want my desert first, and in thinking of Florida years ago my imagination pictured the extreme south of it as the most desirable from a climatic viewpoint. It is probable that had our geographies pictured that region as habitable, my first destination in this state would have been Cape Sable.

I believe that it is this desire of most people for the extremely best in climate that has resulted in the wonderful growth of the cities of South Florida in the few years since it has been proven to be an habitable region, and that it will naturally follow, when the Cape Sable highway is completed and

people get to see the country as it really is, that its development will be the most rapid and wonderful of any ever seen in this or any other state.

But let us go back to the beginning of our Cape Sable trip, which happened one Thursday evening when at about ten o'clock I boarded a waiting pullman on the sidetrack at Miami and went to sleep with the moonlight flooding my comfortable berth. Being one of those fortunates to whom sleep is a habit not easily broken, the making up of the train and its departure from the station about two o'clock in the morning hardly disturbed me, and I awoke at the porter's gentle suggestion that Long Key, my first destination, was only half an hour away. I found the dressing room already occupied and was pleased to find that our Mr. Bright of Miami was on a business trip to Cape Sable at this fortunate time.

I say "our Mr. Bright" advisedly and in Miami, to whom he belongs, the phrase needs no explanation, for the Bright Brother's farm, an immense tract of land located on the edge of the Everglades only a few miles from the city, is one of the points of interest

that no worth-while investigator is ever allowed to overlook, for here has been demonstrated as nowhere else in Florida, the practical and peculiar advantages of this region for the raising of pure bred stock as a profitable business proposition. His experiments in forage plant and stock breeding here have been of great value to intending settlers and his farm is as valuable, from a sight-seer's viewpoint, as the Deering or other estates, showing not only how money is spent, but also how money can be made right here in tropic Florida.

We found Mr. J. F. Powers with the launch "Magnet" waiting for us at Long Key and that Mr. Jule M. Burguières had arrived on our train and was to be a member of our party to visit the Cape.

Mr. Burguières is an extensive cane planter and sugar mill owner in Louisiana and is looking to South Florida as a field for future operations in this profitable business, recognizing the many advantages it offers over any other section as to climate and fertility, and his visit to the Cape was to satisfy himself as to soil conditions there.

It is Mr. Bright's rule not to break his fast until the mid-day meal, so he did not join us in an excellent breakfast at the famous Long Key fishing camp, but the rest of us fully made up for his neglect of opportunity, and with feelings of great satisfaction boarded the Magnet and were soon on our way across Florida Bay.

The trip across from Long Key to Cape Sable is a delightful little sea voyage (though the water is mostly less than ten feet deep). Navigating the intricate "horseneck shoals", passing Sand Key, where the stolen millions of the pirate Gasparilla are supposed to lie buried, and an occasional glimpse of a sea turtle, shark or other sea mon-

ster made the thirty-odd miles seem short indeed.

East Cape with its fringe of cocoanut trees was soon sighted, and the white club house which was to be our destination came into view.

Mr. Samuel Untermyer, the famous New York lawyer and financier, with a party of friends, was reported on the way to Cape Sable in Mr. Untermyer's big houseboat Nirodha; we were all watching to see if it had preceded us, and were pleased to find that it was safely anchored not far from the shore. The Magnet, drawing but three feet of water, was taken in direct to the club house dock where we landed and made our way to the hospitable club house with its broad verandas facing directly south toward the waters of the Gulf of Mexico.

A unique feature of the club is its separate sleeping rooms built on posts that afford air on all sides. These little houses covered tent-fashion with canvas make wonderfully airy and comfortable apartments.

Soon after our arrival the honking of an automobile horn drew our attention to the prairie and a Ford car came dashing up the trail. Of course, one rather expects to see Fords anywhere, but just having read of William Jennings Bryan and of his presence in Washington on a peace mission, surprise was pardonable I believe, to see him come riding into this camp on the farthest tip of Florida shotgun in hand and surrounded with evidences of his shooting skill. With Mr. Bryan, and who had shared in the sport of duck hunting on Coot Bay, was Mr. Walter R. Comfort of New York. Mrs. Bryan was also with them, but had seemingly devoted her attention to the flora rather than the fauna of this region and her trophies were some fine specimens of cactus and air plants

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that no doubt will add to the beauty and interest of the charming Villa Serena on Biscayne Bay. Adaptability seems to be the Bryan keynote and no matter where they chance to be, whether in the formal social life of the nation's capital, on the rostrum as speakers before vast audiences, as host and hostess in their beautiful Miami home, or roughing it in the wilderness, they are always refreshingly natural, interesting and interested in their surroundings. Notwithstanding our many "offences" during a recent trip with the great commoner (we always carry a camera) he smilingly consented to pose as a nimrod with Mr. Comfort and the thirty-one duck and coot that were victims of their morning's sport. Mrs. Bryan consented to be included in another picture "not for publication" —objecting to her costume. She need have no fear, however, that the broad straw sombrero was not becoming to her, for one of the party, considered a competent authority, remarked privately to us that "Mrs. Bryan must have been a beautiful girl and was now a charming woman."

Soon after our arrival at the club house we had been served an appetizing luncheon and it had been planned on the return of the hunting party with the necessary Ford that we should make a tour of investigation over the broad prairies that stretch for miles from the

club house door. We were all prepared to start as soon as a boat would bring Mr. Samuel Untermeyer, together with other members of the party from the houseboat Nirodha.

With Mr. Untermeyer were his brother, Isaac Untermeyer (a New York capitalist); Francis E. Baker, presiding judge of U. S. Court of Appeals at Chicago; Minor Whitney, vice-president of the United Fruit Co. of New York; Mr. Walter R. Comfort, a large candy and ice cream manufacturer of New York (who makes sixty-five thousand gallons of ice cream a day and uses four million pounds of sugar a year in his various factories); and Mr. Wm. P. Smith, of the law firm of Shutts, Smith & Bowen, of Miami.

Probably never before in the history of the cape had such a distinguished company of men met here each with his own particular enthusiasm for development projects of great magnitude and along lines in which they were individually famous. Their opinions could not but be valuable. Though familiar with farming and soil conditions since boyhood, I waited with great interest to see if my first impressions of this location and soil would be verified and if these men of proven knowledge would agree that here was an opportunity for the greatest development ever attempted in this state of great achievement.

(To be Continued)

NOTE.—The continuation of this article in our next issue will be illustrated with halftones from photographs taken during the trip, and also a map of the region described, drawn by Mr. Livingston, the civil engineer who accompanied the party.

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