

FLORIDA EVERGLADES

In a Letter to Mr. John T. Walton Mr. J. E. Mattocks Tells of His Investigating Trip to the Everglades of Florida.

Mr. J. E. Mattocks in a recent letter to Mr. John T. Walton, of Asheville says: "Complying with your request, I take great pleasure in submitting you a statement of the results of my investigation of the Florida Fruit Lands Company's property in the Everglades of Florida.

I find that on the 20th day of April, 1903, the State of Florida received, from the National Government, a patent for these lands. This was an act of Congress providing that all the overflowed lands in the State of Florida, at that time unsold, be granted to said State. In the latter part of 1908 the Florida Fruit Lands Company acquired 182,000 acres of this land with the view of draining and colonizing the same.

To my mind, no section of the United States is less understood than the famous Everglades. It consists of a level tract of approximately three million acres in southern Florida, surrounded by a rim of coral formation, from three to six miles wide. This rim extends around the entire Eastern, Western and Southern borders of the State. A little north of the center of this tract is Lake Okechobee, a lake of fresh water, abounding in fish, and forming the lowest part of the Everglades. This lake is twenty-one feet eight inches higher than sea level. A canal has been made connecting it with the head waters of the Caloosahatchee River, thereby affording transportation from the lake to the Gulf Coast. Five other canals are now being dredged from the East coast through the Florida Fruit Lands Company's property to this lake. These canals are being made by the State in connection with the above mentioned company. The State has a drainage fund approximating \$2,000,000. It will be augmented each year by a tax of five cents an acre for drainage purposes. This gigantic scheme of reclaiming probably the richest farming lands in the world, is the product of the fertile brain of Ex Governor N. B. Broward. Governor Broward undoubtedly understands the Everglades better than any man living to-day. He saw that the undertaking was entirely feasible and, in spite of the once almost fierce antagonism, he has succeeded in converting the entire State to his view.

It was my good fortune to be a member of the Governor's party on a trip from Fort Lauderdale to where one of the big dredges was at work, sixteen miles in the Everglades, and about the central point of the Florida Fruit Lands Company's holdings. This was made in a motor boat up one of the big canals. It was doubly instructive as I had the benefit of the explanations of both Governor Broward and that most affable gentleman, Mr. H. Russell Wray, Vice-president of the Florida Fruit Land Company. These canals are sixty feet wide, and fifteen feet deep, with a very perceptible current. As the trip was made in a motorboat, it was very easy to see the nature of the soil through which

the cut had been made. I found this to vary from two and a half to three feet at the beginning of the canal, to from twelve to fifteen feet at the point where the dredge is now working, and I am told that the further in the Everglades one goes, the deeper is the soil. It is composed of a black muck or loam, and is probably as rich a soil as can be found anywhere on earth. Underlying this loam is a stratum of marl, from four to six inches deep; itself a fertilizer. Beneath this marl is a layer of white sand and beneath the sand a coral rock which composes the foundation of the entire State.

The Everglades are covered with a growth known as sawgrass, from three to four feet high, in the places we visited, and a few small clumps of bushes. These clumps vary in size from twenty feet in diameter to possibly a half mile. I gathered that not exceeding three per cent. of the area is covered with this growth. This entire section, during the wet season, is covered with a thin layer of water, flowing either toward the lake or away from it, as the lake is above or below normal. I had often heard that this water was pure and wholesome to drink. I made a trial of this and found the statement to be true.

I visited experimental farms along this canal, and found various crops growing, and in excellent condition. The land through which the dredging has been done is drained, and therefore reclaimed. I was assured that if the larger canals were not sufficient to drain the land, that laterals would be dug at sufficient distances apart, and this process continued until the results was accomplished. This method will practically put transportation to the door of every man who lives in this area.

Although my visit was made at a time of the year that would correspond with the month of June in this latitude I did not find the heat excessive, but on the contrary, the air was very pleasant. A steady breeze blows constantly over the Everglades. There is never any frost in this section. The vegetation is intensely tropical, and anything can be grown here successfully that grows in any other part of the country.

I find this reclamation work will be completed, with reference to the Florida Fruit Lands Company, during the latter part of next year, 1910, also the entire Everglades will virtually be reclaimed within ten years.

In order to gain a better understanding of what the reclamation of the Everglades will mean, it will be necessary to give a brief description of what was alluded to at the beginning of this article, as the rim surrounding the state of Florida. This is, at present, the habitable portion of that part of the state, south of the center. Here the coral rock, that has been spoken of as underlying the Everglades, comes very near to the surface. None of the rich Everglades soil is found here, yet it is of sufficient fertility to produce enough vegetables and fruit to load three hundred cars a week south of, and at Miami. This seems almost incredible to one who has not seen the conditions. Miami is the principle town in Southern Florida. It is within six miles of the nearest point of the Florida Fruit Lands Company's holdings. It is thirteen years old, has a summer population of 8000, and a winter population of prob-

ably 15000. It has all the modern conveniences of an up-to-date town. It fronts Biscayne Bay, through which the National Government is now dredging a deep water channel to connect Miami with the ocean.

The roads are perfect, being made of coral rock, at a cost not exceeding \$500 per mile.

If this section can produce such a great abundance of fruit and vegetables, and build such good towns in so short a time, it simply staggers the imagination, when one compares it with what the results will be from the Everglades, with its depth and fertility of soil.

I find the people industrious and enterprising, the climate mild and pleasant, the section healthful, and malaria practically unknown. I saw very few mosquitoes, and then only during one evening. I am told that mosquitoes are unknown in the Everglades.

Summing up, it must be conceded that Florida has four essentials that will make it unsurpassed as a farming, and fruit-growing section. When this reclamation is completed, it will have the soil; it now has the climate, progressive citizenship, and the transportation facilities. This letter will be greatly augmented, as colonization proceeds, and other railroad systems build their lines down into the state. I believe it is safe to predict that in ten years Florida will be the richest agricultural state in the Union. With kind regards, I beg to remain,

Very truly yours,
J. E. MATTOCKS.

The Corner in Wheat.

Charlotte Chronicle.

The prediction has been made by one of our exchanges that the price of flour will go as high as \$9 a barrel. Such a rise, while it would add still further to the already high cost of living, would not cause much surprise. It has already been forced up to \$7. The situation confronts the laboring man and the man on a salary thus becomes even more of a problem, for the high cost of all commodities has made living a problem. One of the direct causes of this rise in flour is a corner in wheat, and the conditions are quite intelligently summed up by The Newbern Journal, which says that out in Chicago, for months, a gentleman named Patten, has been buying millions of bushels of wheat. Mr. Patten does not run a flour mill. He is a speculator in futures. He does not buy wheat to sell to any consumer, but buys futures in order to make those who sell him futures, settle at some price that will yield Mr. Patten what he wants in profits. Mr. Patten disclaims any wish to force up prices of wheat and yet he buys millions of speculative futures, bread knows nothing about, and yet which the ignorant consumer of wheat has to pay increased price for his loaf of bread, because speculators can force wheat prices to heights only touched during war times, or when famine prevails.

This speculative craze in wheat will last until one of two things happens, the outside suckers will come and take Patten's futures, and go down to ruin with the load, or some unforeseen event will force the Patten crowd to get rid of their speculative holdings as best they may. But while the craze lasts, the innocent bread consumer must be forced to pay famine prices for his daily loaf of bread. One firm in New York City, heavy dealers in grain, has been forced to suspend, and this is a sign, judging from previous corners in grain, of the beginning of the end, when the crash must come. If only speculators had to suffer, it would be enough, but speculative corners in consumptive commodities, unsettle all kinds of trade conditions, and cause unnatural situations to arise.

Surprises Wife and Her Admirer.

Altoona, Pa., April 18.—Edward Russel, aged twenty-six was shot late last night by J. E. Craig, who surprised Russel and Mrs. Craig together in the latter's home in this city. Russel died in the hospital today. Craig, who is twenty-five years of age, is a locomotive fireman in the Pennsylvania railroad yards here. For some time he has suspected his wife, the information coming from his brother, who boards with the couple. Last night the husband went to work as usual, but at 9 o'clock returned and finding his wife had gone out, hid in an upper room. About midnight Mrs. Craig returned home, accompanied by Russel and another young man and woman. Mrs. Craig put her three-year-old daughter to bed and then joined her companions in the parlor. A few minutes later Craig slipped down stairs and hearing voices in the unlighted parlor, went in and found Russel in Mrs. Craig's company. After Craig had shot Russel he sent his brother for a physician and remained with the injured man until the police and ambulance arrived. He was then arrested.

Child Burned to Death in a Barn.

Salisbury Dispatch, 19th, to Charlotte News.

A most heart rending accident occurred on the Lincolnton road, about four and a half miles west of this place, today, when James, the little 4-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. C. J. Carriker, was burned to death in a barn which he is supposed to have set on fire while playing in the loft.

Mr. Carriker is the proprietor of a store on this road, and he and his wife were there when the fire was discovered. It seems that the child came into the store and asked his mother for some candy, which she gave him, and then went to the barn to play.

Some time later it was discovered that the barn was on fire but it was not known the child was in it until the mother saw his body fall from the hay loft to the red-hot embers on the stable floor. The body was quickly gotten out but was so badly burned as to be almost unrecognizable.

Sues Seaboard Receivers.

Charlotte Observer.

Lucy Auston through her next friend, Robert Grier, has brought suit in Superior Court against Messrs. S. Davis, Warfield, R. Lancaster, Williams and E. C. Duncan, receivers for the Seaboard Air Line. It is alleged that the plaintiff, who is a child of tender years, was put off by a Seaboard conductor some time ago at Matthews, or some neighboring station, about 5 o'clock in the morning, on the ground that she was of full age, while riding on a half ticket. It is said that she was unaccompanied and besides this, that the conductor overstepped his rights in passing judgment on her age under the circumstances.—Charlotte Observer.

Mrs. Theo. F. Kluttz Dead.

Charlotte Chronicle.

Salisbury, April 26.—Mrs. Theo. F. Kluttz, wife of former Congressman Kluttz, and a sister of Mr. J. P. Caldwell, editor of The Charlotte Observer, died this morning at 5 o'clock, in a local sanatorium, after a brief illness.

Mrs. Kluttz was born in Statesville in 1848 and was married to Mr. Kluttz in 1873. She was a leader in social, literary and church circles and was loved by the entire community.

Surviving the deceased, besides Mr. Kluttz, are two sons, Theo. F. Kluttz, Jr., associate editor of The Observer, and State Senator Whitehead Kluttz, and two daughters.



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RESOLVED,

1st—That we will continue to buy our hides;

RESOLVED,

2nd—That we will tan our own Leather;

RESOLVED,

3rd—That we will make better goods.

RESOLVED,

4th—That we cut out all talk about competitors and stick more closely to our own business.

RESOLVED,

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CORN PLANTERS

BUY THE RIGHT KIND:

"The Daisy"

Rival Gordon Plows

Call and See Them

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Robbers Secure Over \$3,000.

San Francisco, April 17.—James M. Thompson, vice-president of Thompson Bridge Company, on entering his office today with a sack containing \$3,200, was confronted by two masked men, one of whom shot him through the chest, inflicting a serious wound. The men escaped with the money, but were captured.

Mr. Thompson had just drawn the money from the bank of California and when he entered the office he discovered his bookkeeper tied to a chair. On turning his head Thompson was confronted by the masked men who promptly fired upon him. Then grabbing up the sack, the men made a dash for a buggy nearby, which one of the robbers entered, while the other made his escape.

The fleeing man was pursued by policemen in an automobile and finally was captured.

KARL JANSEN TO BE IN LENOIR.

Karl Jansen, the Scandinavian impersonator and humorist will appear at the Graded School next Tuesday night, April 27th. You should go out and enjoy an evening of rare pleasure with this wonderful man from the "Land of the Midnight Sun." Seats 15, 25 and 35 cents.

The Gastonia correspondent to the Charlotte Observer says:

"Tuesday night the auditorium of Central graded school was nearly full when Karl Jansen, the Swedish impersonator and entertainer, appeared on the stage. Mr. Jansen entertained his crowd well. As an impersonator he excels. His descriptions of life as it is lived in his native country, Norway and Sweden, the Land of the Midnight Sun, is excellent and proves especially interesting to an audience here."