

## MY FIRST TRIP TO FLORIDA

On the afternoon of February 1st, 1882, I left Dexter, Missouri, for the practically unknown land of Florida, just because I had a month to roam over some part of these United States and Florida was least known of any other section- being in the deep Southland and therefore a little mysterious. I spent the night going to St. Louis for a good starting point. I started for Mobile, Alabama, the next day and was way down in Mississippi the morning of the third, Our train stopped at Artesia, Mississippi, for breakfast and I paid the enormous price of "six-bits" for that meal. They said "seventy-five cents", but I had spent three terms in college and knew they meant "six-bits" in Missouri parlance.

When I arrived at Mobile, expecting to get a boat from that point to Tampa, Florida, as the line was shown on all the maps, I learned there had been no boat on that line for two years and probably would not be for two years to come. I took in Mobile and saw some of their famous shell roads and learned what the horseman's idea of trotting speed meant when he said his horse could make "two-forty" on a shell road. Saturday the fourth I headed for Jacksonville, Florida, by rail for I was determined to go to Florida; however, I stayed over at Montgomery, Alabama, for Sunday as it was considered wicked to read Sunday newspapers or travel on the railroad cart on Sunday.

Sunday morning I followed a bunch of dressed-up people to a church. When we entered, the man at the door said it was time for services to commence and locked the door behind us. There I learned my first lesson in Catholic reverence for God's house and worship of the Creator. In the afternoon I stood on the spot where Jeff Davis took the oath of

