

caught with our hands in the shallows at low tide, and immense oysters we pried from the rocks.

We did not realize how severe the hurricane had been. Nor did we know that many boats had gone down in it, and that the *Eph* was reported lost. Newspapers everywhere were carrying the headlines: "Carl G. Fisher and Bride Lost on Gulf of Mexico"—"Millionaire's Yacht Goes Down in Hurricane."

Ten days later, oyster fishermen found us and helped us get a winch to pull the *Eph* back into the water. At Mobile we read the newspapers containing flattering and, to me, revealing accounts of our lives, particularly Carl's. Carl and I knew we had better rush back to Indianapolis and pacify our "bereaved families."

Carl made all arrangements to ship the *Eph* north on a flatcar, but at the last minute he found that a bridge en route was too low to allow its passage under. It was then John Levi said, "You go on home. Hell, I'll drive her round the Gulf of Mexico and you come back and join me in Jacksonville for the trip north."

We went home for a flying trip to reassure Carl's mother and mine, and for two weeks Carl anxiously awaited news from John and the *Eph*. Then one day a telegram, thirteen words, came from John. Innocent-sounding it was, but this short message would change not only our own lives, but the lives of hundreds of thousands of others. The wire read:

ARRIVED SAFELY. MIAMI PRETTY LITTLE TOWN. WHY NOT
MEET ME HERE INSTEAD JACKSONVILLE? JOHN.

So we met John in Miami, arriving at the dirty, drab Florida East Coast railway station, which description fits it even today. It was a beautiful February morning in 1910.

Carl and I were enchanted with the jasmine-scented Miami moonlight and the soft warm air. Carl bought two lots on Biscayne Bay, where we planned building our winter home. To seal the bargain until the papers could be prepared, Carl made a cash payment. The morning the *Eph* nosed out of the narrow Miami River on our way north, a short red-faced man, gesticulating wildly on the near-by dock of the Royal Palm Hotel, was shouting out to us through a megaphone: