

The little Quaker, John Collins, rocking away on his porch facing the sea, watched unfold this beauty beyond all his dreams. Its glory was complete when he told Carl with gentle happiness: "I'm ninety years old. I think that's a wonderful age."

It was a blossoming land. Not a sidewalk or a street marred its parklike beauty. Six months before, a ribbon of white sand had dazzled the eyes; now a wide ribbon of green was studded with gemlike flowers. "The Aladdin touch," people began saying; and, "More of Carl Fisher's magic." The criticism and carping died.

The Hoosiers back home were the first to share the excitement of Carl's latest vision. The *Indianapolis News*, in February, 1915, carried this item: "Mr. Fisher, head of the Indianapolis Motor Speedway, is establishing a great resort for winter sports across Biscayne Bay from Miami! He has thrown a great deal of money into the sand heap on the key which he purchased, but he is asking help from no one. As a matter of fact, it will prove in the end a profitable venture, in the opinion of those friends of Mr. Fisher who have visited the place."

Carl had spent millions, and the building had not yet started on this city lifted from the bottom of Biscayne Bay. He told John Levi: "Let's get busy. Let's lay out some streets and get this city going."

XII. Pioneers in Paradise

OUR FLOWERY tropical paradise took on the appearance of an exotic American frontier as the actual building of Miami Beach was started. Derricks, cranes, mule and horse teams and steam shovels appeared under the newly planted palms. Skeleton frames of wood and steel lifted against the clear Florida sky. In this new flowering land small armies of engineers, carpenters, plumbers and painters began building the first houses and the first larger buildings of the dream city on Biscayne Bay. The men who had come with Carl from Indianapolis grew lonely and discontented, and he brought their families down from the Hoosier city and built cottages for them—lovely little storybook houses set among scarlet, cinnamon and magenta bougainvillaea.

Barges weighted with crushed coral rock to crown the newly laid-out streets moved heavily across the bay and through the canal. Transporting the building material on land presented new problems, so Carl built a narrow-gauge railway to carry men, materials, tools and soil. It was just one mile long. Carl solemnly sent passes for his midget line to presidents of all the big railroads in the United States. Many, amused, reciprocated with passes for their lines. A great deal of good-natured publicity followed. This was the opening wedge in "the most amazing publicity program in history."

Carl began the Miami Beach campaign with three-page newspaper advertisements in which he announced that, having built sea walls, cleared the land of mangroves and filled in the snake-infested swamps, he was preparing to lay out streets and build luxurious hotels, business stores, offices, banks, theaters, schools