

Jim was indignant. The turtle, he said, was one of his finest specimens. At last, though, he agreed to sacrifice it, provided I invited him to the dinner.

The turtle's meat was ground and baked in its shell, with its delicious succulence bubbling through pie-crust rosettes.

And then, after all that agony of preparation, and its final mouth-watering perfection, the President did not come to dinner! I was told later by someone close to him that Mrs. Harding had not been pleased with my Scheherazade performance as a teller of stories to her distinguished husband.

At any rate, the President of the United States drove over to The Shadows the next morning like any remorseful neighbor and brought me a bag of quail. He said pointedly, "I'm terribly sorry I couldn't come, but I am sure you will understand."

This was in 1920, and the President's visit added greatly to the growing fame of Miami Beach.

The dream city was at last complete. The United States census allotted it a permanent population of 644 persons that year. It was all Carl had said it would be. It was paradise risen from swampland. It was "the only play city in the world."

XIV. Sales Campaigner

THE FLAMBOYANT 'twenties were opening before real estate began to move. Miami Beach started selling in 1920, slowly but in the right way. Much of it was vacant land. Some was plain sand. But most of it sold in single lots.

When Pete Chase made the first sale of any size he telephoned Carl at The Shadows. He said, excitedly, "Mr. Fisher, that woman I been working on has bought the lot—twenty thousand dollars!"

"Gee-sus, that's great! Is she there?" asked Carl. "Bring her over and we'll open up a bottle of champagne."

He did not want Miami Beach to be the exclusive playground of millionaires. He wanted a family city with pleasant homes, but knowing the value of famous names to a new community, he concentrated during those first years upon the distinguished and the wealthy. They, he knew, would bring the others.

He gathered around him a group of high-pressure real-estate salesmen. With them, as with many others, the adage would hold: "Every man Carl Fisher touches on the shoulder becomes a millionaire." Those who had the courage to work beside Carl in the early days of his Beach frontier became the leaders of the new city.

He picked his men in strange ways. He could forgive them anything but disloyalty. Once he took back into his employ a branch manager who had absconded with a large sum, simply because Carl felt the man's disloyalty had been to the man himself and not to the organization.

Heading the sales' staff was Pete Chase, who in early days had waited for customers under the umbrella. Pete was not a real-estate man, nor even a salesman, when Carl met him first in