

**A WINTER IN FLORIDA: OR,  
OBSERVATIONS ON THE SOIL,  
CLIMATE, AND PRODUCTS OF  
OUR SEMI-TROPICAL STATE**

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A winter in Florida: or, Observations on the soil, climate, and products of our semi-tropical state  
by Ledyard Bill

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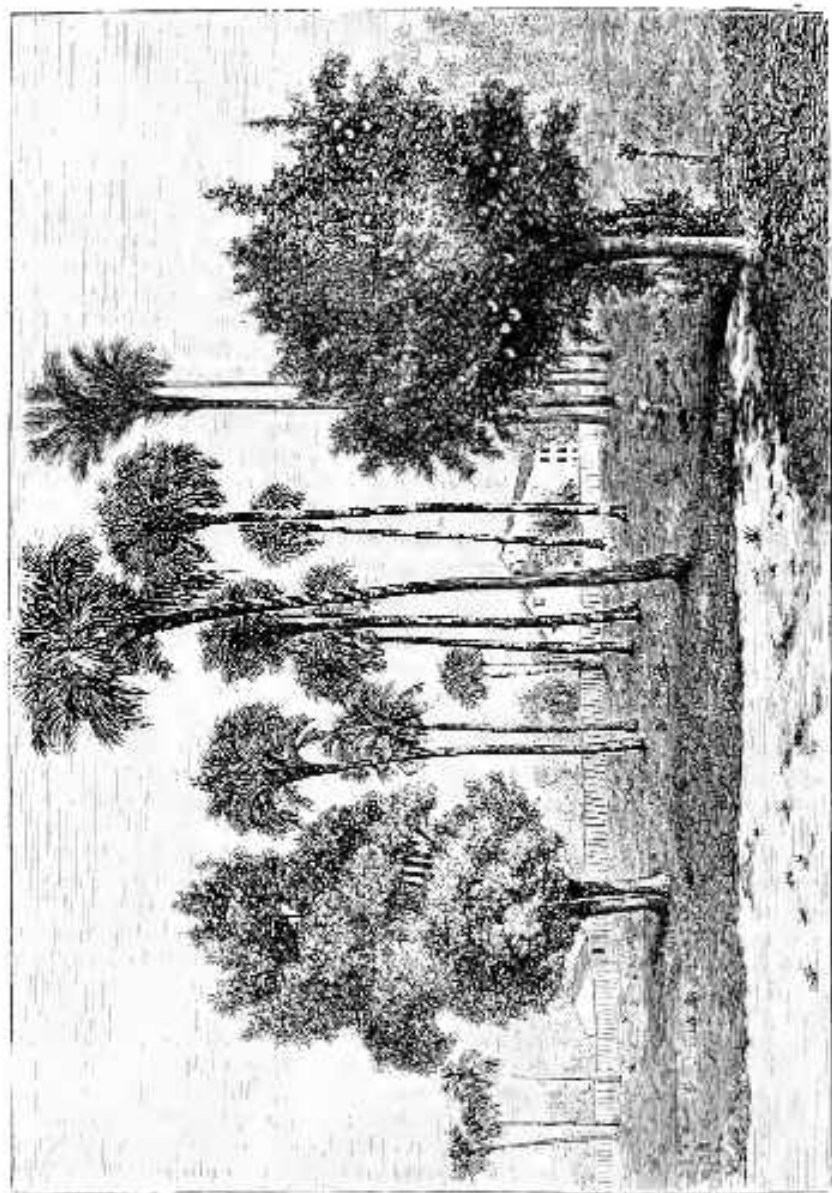
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**LEDYARD BILL**

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OUR SEMI-TROPICAL STATE**





THE MAGNOLIA, PALM, AND WILD ORANGE

A  
WINTER  
IN  
FLORIDA;

OR,

OBSERVATIONS ON THE SOIL, CLIMATE, AND PRODUCTS OF OUR  
SEMI-TROPICAL STATE; WITH SKETCHES OF THE PRIN-  
CIPAL TOWNS AND CITIES IN EASTERN FLORIDA.

TO WHICH IS ADDED

A BRIEF HISTORICAL SUMMARY;

TOGETHER WITH

HINTS TO THE TOURIST, INVALID, AND SPORTSMAN.

By LEDYARD BILL.

ILLUSTRATED.

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SECOND EDITION.

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C. I. R.,  
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## PREFACE.

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THE tour of which this volume is the record was an unforeseen one, the sudden illness of a friend having been the occasion of our visit to Florida.

Diligent inquiry brought to light no work on the State, whereby we might be guided. Beyond several historical summaries, given the public a quarter of a century since, there was absolutely nothing worthy of mention; and even these were valueless except to the historical student, anxious only to know its colonial history and status up to the period of its acquisition



by the United States. To in some measure supply this deficiency has been the object of our labors.

Florida is the oldest settled portion of the Union, notwithstanding which it is the most of a wilderness. Especially is this true of the eastern half, which was the portion visited by us, and to which we have in the main confined ourselves.

The history of the State is renowned, from its first settlement to its annexation, for its many battles and conquests, in which the victors of to-day were among the vanquished on the morrow; and thus its masters alternated for centuries, leaving little else behind them than vestiges of their occupation. But, since our Government has held possession, much has been accomplished in material prosperity and in increase of population: still, three-fourths of the land

is apparently as wild and unoccupied as ever.

Within, however, the past few years, Florida has attracted considerable attention as a winter resort for invalids and pleasure-seekers. It is, practically, the only strip of tropical land within our boundaries, and the only State where the invalid can find an equable and mild temperature through the greater portion of the year. Visitors to the State are already numbered by thousands, and each year since the war has witnessed a rapid increase.

The St. John's, whose source is in the everglades of central and southern Florida, running due north for two hundred miles, then abruptly turning eastward to the ocean, is in many respects the most remarkable river in North America. To the sportsman it presents opportunities such as no other

offers, while the pleasure-seeker is amply repaid in viewing its unusual beauties.

The capabilities of the State in an agricultural point of view are unbounded. The growth of coffee, cotton, and cane, as also indigo, and not unlikely tea, together with the production of wine, is likely to form an important chapter in her future history; but the thing above all others in which Florida is certainly destined to excel her sister States is in early fruit-growing and marketing. The climate is favorable for most of the tropical fruits, as also for those grown in more northern latitudes. The soil, too, is admirably adapted to their rapid and early maturity. Already a large share of attention is given this department of agriculture, both from the native and immigrant population; and we hear, that, in the matter of oranges alone, over half a million trees