

with souvenirs—ornaments and jewelry of alligator's teeth, coral and seabeans; sea-shells in their natural and polished state; palmetto products, wood carvings and canes, and every other thing of strange and grotesque fashion. It was the age of souvenirs and the tourists bought them freely.

Florida even then was America's playground, for this was some time before California appeared as a competitor. The only drawback was getting here and H. B. Plant was the first to hear the cry.

The Orange Industry

Orange trees were planted by the early settlers of the lower St. Johns country years before the thought of putting the business on a commercial basis arose. Orange trees, grown from seed, were planted around the homes more especially for ornamentation and the fruit for home consumption. By 1835 a number of small groves had come into bearing when the severest freeze ever known in Florida (February, 1835) "destroyed the trees so completely that every one was disgusted". However, "in 1838-39-40, a widespread orange craze broke out along the lower St. Johns, but the fever was killed out by an insect". No further attempt at orange culture was made until after the War Between the States.

Between 1868 and 1873, quite a number of wealthy Northern men came to Florida and developed estates on the St. Johns River as winter homes. Most of them planted orange trees and some set out extensive groves. Among these was Frederick DeBary, who afterward established the DeBary Line of river steamboats famous in its day. A succession of favorable winters enabled these trees to come into bearing without setback and in the period 1879-81 the orange industry along both sides of the St. Johns had grown to considerable proportions. The means of transportation of the fruit was out of Jacksonville by the line of railroad to Live Oak, thence in a roundabout way under conditions of great uncertainty and delay; or by small steamer to Savannah or Charleston.

The first direct line of railroad from the North was the "Waycross Short Line", built in 1881 by H. B. Plant. At the riverfront terminus east of the present Broad Street viaduct a spur was run out on a wharf where fruit was loaded directly into the cars from the river boats; this was an advantage that