

## LIVISTONA CHINENSIS NATURALIZED IN FLORIDA

EILEEN H. BUTTS

A striking stand of naturalized Chinese fan palms (*Livistona chinensis*) grows along the swampy margin of Lake Crescent in old Hubbard Park at Crescent City, Florida, the former winter home of Bela Hubbard of Detroit. The naturalized palms are represented by a fair number of quite large trees and a great many much younger and smaller ones. Crescent City, the site of this remarkable incidence, is in north central Florida about twenty miles south of Palatka.

The palms were introduced to Florida about eighty years ago when the estate was being developed by my uncle, Henry Guernsey Hubbard, the son of Bela. A celebrated entomologist and naturalist of that era, Henry Hubbard died of tuberculosis while still a young man, before the turn of the century—but not before he had traveled far and wide in search of rare plants for Hubbard Park. These he established in slat houses and protected areas until foreign landscape men designed the extensive gardens which became the eventual source of many of the fine old specimens of palms, camellias, cycads, *etc.*, one finds today in the dooryards of many homes for miles around Crescent City.

There must be now well over a hundred *Livistona chinensis* in the naturalized group, one of which was the original and is perhaps forty feet tall. The moist, very rich black hammock soil of the long and narrow swamp bordering Lake Crescent is lapped at all times at this point by waves that are not always gentle; for, although a large lake twenty-eight miles long by three wide, it is a shallow body of water. Here the *livistonas* have grown happily intermingled

with cypress, southern magnolia, sweetgum, *etc.*, and have also established themselves just beyond the margins of the swamp.

The freeze of 1958 discolored some of the palm foliage but did not appreciably retard growth. Apparently the situation is ideal. The stand would now be very much larger and a veritable jungle of *livistonas* had not so many people gone there for seedlings during the past seventy years. Hubbard Park, however, was never in any way commercialized.

In photographs of Henry Hubbard's slat houses, made about seventy years ago, one can identify a good many kinds of palms in their infancy. How many of them were his own introductions to the United States it is now impossible to state, lacking his notes.

---

## IN AND OUT OF THE PALM GARDEN

*No one knows what hash is.*

—AMBROSE BIERCE

In the preceding issue of *PRINCIPES* there appeared a few paragraphs under the somber title "Notes of a Palmo-ophile." Already this sounds to the paragrapher just a shade snooty for a text not hidebound by the dignity demanded of technical writings, and the new title above represents a closer descent to this terrestrial orb. But whether such a series of notes, under one title or another, will become a regular department in this journal, is first of all up to the editor and is further subject to the exigencies of publication. The notes do skip about somewhat disconcertingly, but that is all one can expect from fragments. Sometimes edible hash is just as disconcerting as the verbal kind, yet there are those who actually manage to eat it and survive. Besides, if taken with a ration of palm oil, these notes should