

three or four feet, enter the water and take root ; from the part above water others proceed and take a similar stride, and in this way they often travel twenty or thirty yards from the parent stem. Seaweeds and drift-wood become entangled among the stems, and very soon a permanent island is formed. Such islands are generally found under the lee of the Keys.

“But the greater number, if not all the Keys, rest upon a foundation of corals. At Sand Key, large rugged masses of dead coral are seen bordering the Key on the windward side, and rising above low water ; similar masses may be seen at Sambo Key, and at other places along the outer reef. But the Keys within this barrier present better opportunities for studying the foundation upon which they rest. At Key Vacca, corals rise to a height of four feet above high water, and present not the slightest evidence of disturbance, beyond the upward movement which raised them to their present position. The rocky mass of coral along the margin of the Key is undermined by the waves, and otherwise worn into singularly rugged shapes, with sharp projecting points. Even at some distance from the water, bunches of coral project above the surface wherever the overlying sand is washed away.

“On Bahia-honda similar appearances are presented, where the coral rocks extend seaward ; on the lee of the island a long sand-bank is thrown up, and a lagoon of considerable extent is formed, in which the mangrove-tree is seen striding about in the soft mud. This island was washed in two by the last hurricane, and the channel formed has three feet of water at low tide. In the shallow water off many of the Keys, very beautiful patches of Algæ, interspersed with living corals, are seen within six or eight inches of the surface. Off Indian and Plantation Keys, dark knobs of coral are visible upon the white mud of the bottom, which render the navigation amongst these Keys dangerous. On lower Matacumba I traced the rugged coral rocks for a mile in extent ; I also found them on Conch Key, as I did indeed on nearly every island that I examined, where a section could be found on the shore, from which the overlying sands were washed.”