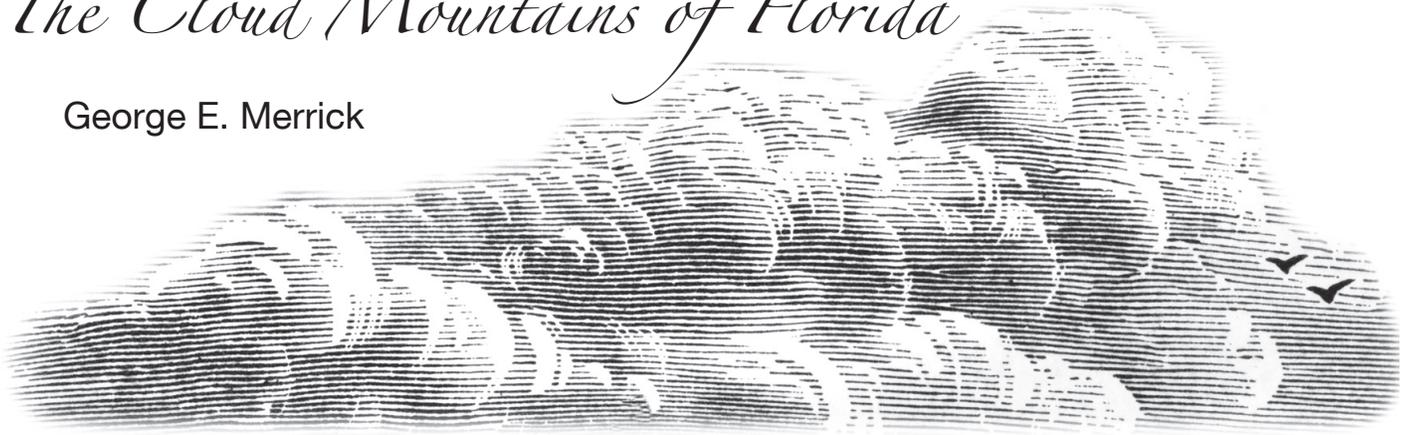


The Cloud Mountains of Florida

George E. Merrick



To the south lie the magical mountains,
That half circling the horizon rise;
The mystical, magical, faraway mountains,—
In the depth of the tropical skies.

They are fairer than mountains are ever
In the lands of a gloomier sun;
Their peaks,—like visions mirage-like,—forever—
Are as goals that may never be won.

Like the mountains of enchanted story;
Or the pictured Delectable range,—
They are clothed in a tremulous glamorous glory
Through wondrous virginal change.

In the morn,—faint dim in the azure—
As a mind-haunting dream-thought they lie;
Elusive, intangible,—trance-born,—they measure
An infinite depth in the sky.

'Neath the spell of the tropical beaming,
Their dream-merging tracings upon,
—As impelled by a pulsing supernal,—their seeming
Is nearer, mysteriously drawn.

Ever fairer, and nearer, and clearer,
—Like a dream coming consciously true,—
As from out a fairy-like wonderful mirror,
Their peak-lines emerge from the blue.

And at last o'er the shimmering fountains,
Lying sparkling and gleaming between,
Rise the clear-imaged heights of the magical mountains
All encloded in a glamorous sheen.

As I gaze on their mystical splendor,
From the palm-grove beside of the sea;
I glimpse of a land where the fancy may enter
But never the spirit may be.

Of a land where the colors are golden,
And of snowy and heavenly white;
Where the lustrous dreaming in which it is holden
Never is darkened with the shadings of night.

But radiant for always—and ever,
In pure supernatural rays;
Fleecy white always blending with golden,—forever,
Through changeless monotonous days.