

# A RICH ESTATE IN FRANCE

## ONCE A MARSHY WASTE

**T**HERE is a large tract of country on the southwestern coast of France, extending for 240 miles from Cape Guane at the mouth of the Gironde to where the River Adour flows into the Atlantic, which to the majority of tourists is practically unknown owing to its isolated position far away from the beaten-track. At one time it was composed of bare, wild, shifting sandhills, which were at the mercy of every Atlantic storm. Today, by reason of the vast forests of sea-pines, which now cover this wonderful territory, they have become stationary. The hungry sea no longer works its will upon them, but instead a series of salt-lakes have been formed, which, enclosed in an exquisite setting of sombre verdure, sparkle like gems in the rays of the southern sun.

To appreciate thoroughly the severe beauty of this rarely-visited part of France, one must quit the main road and wander through the silent woods, where the aromatic perfume of the pines mingles with the scent of the ocean breeze, or stay awhile in the picturesque hamlets and villages, which are scattered at random in the forest clearings. To watch from the 'dunes' the setting sun slowly vanish beneath the waste of waters, transforming beach, sea, and forest into glory of crimson and gold, is a sight not easily forgotten. The starting point for a motor tour through the 'Cote D'Argent' is Bordeaux. The main roads are quite good, the by-roads practicable but sandy, the going in places rough,

which necessitates slow progress. The first day's run from Bordeaux to Arcachon, by way of Lacanau and Ares, where a halt is made for lunch at the delightful rural restaurant of Mere Barsac, is exceedingly pretty,

pin. In former days, when getting about was difficult owing to the marshy nature of the soil, the shepherds used to follow their flocks, mounted on high stilts, but they are rarely, if ever to be seen nowadays.

Passing through Sanguinet, on the eastern point of the Cazaux salt-lake, famous for its fishing, the car leaves the highway leading to Parentis, which is in bad condition, and follows that of Biscarosse, skirting the marsh of the same name, an overflow of Cazaux. The principal attraction at Parentis is the descent



The keen business sense of the French nation in respect to forest management is nowhere better illustrated than in the thorough organization of their forest service. The picture shows a Chief Ranger's house in the Gironde district. The uniforming of the Rangers and their supervisors has a decided effect upon efficiency, and a modified application of this feature has been frequently suggested for the Canadian forest services.

the road leading through the pine-woods the entire distance, affording occasional peeps of the sand-hills and sea. After a night's rest at Arcachon and a ramble through the town, the journey is continued through the forest, traversing the famous 'Landes' district, with its sandy paths, its solitude broken here and there by foresters' huts, nestling amid the

of the lovely stream of Sainte-Eulalie, which is one of the marvels of the 'Landes.' Unfortunately, it can only be accomplished in Canadian canoes and one should be a good swimmer, in case of an upset.

After leaving Parentis the road becomes very sandy and continues so, all the way to Mimizan-les-Bains, where a halt is made for the night. Mimizan boasts of two good hotels, by no means luxurious, but clean and comfortable. There is no Casino, but a splendid beach, excellent sea-fishing, and bathing. After a leisurely morning spent by the sea, or in rambling through the woods, a late start is made after lunch for Leon, passing through Contis-les-Bains, noted for its light-house and superb panorama. On arriving at Leon for the night's stop do not fail to engage a boat overnight for the trip down the Huchet River the next morning.

The Huchet is one of the wonders of picturesque France. An early start should be made so as to return in good time for lunch. One should be under way not later than seven o'clock. It takes nearly half an hour



A cleared space in the Gironde forest area of France acting as a fire guard.