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A
VOYAGE
IN THE
West Indies:
CONTAINING
VARIOUS OBSERVATIONS MADE DURING A RESIDENCE
IN
BARBADOES,
AND SEVERAL OF THE LEEWARD ISLANDS;
WITH SOME
NOTICES AND ILLUSTRATIONS
RELATIVE TO THE
CITY OF PARAMARABO, IN SURINAM.

WITH ENGRAVINGS.

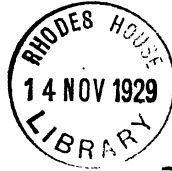
By **JOHN AUGUSTINE WALLER,**
SURGEON, R. N.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR SIR RICHARD PHILLIPS AND Co.
BRIDGE COURT, BRIDGE STREET; AND TO BE HAD OF ALL BOOKSELLERS.

1820.

W. B. Phillips & Co.
Printers, Barbados.



purchased 7 Edmond's

J. and C. Adlard, Printers.
3, Bartholomew Close.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE following pages, which were not originally intended for publication, having afforded gratification to many of the Author's friends, and it being considered that a familiar view of the West India Islands, and of the manners and customs prevailing in them, was a desideratum, he has been induced to lay before the public such particulars as fell within his own observation ; and he trusts that his delineation of these transatlantic regions, and of the manners of their inhabitants, will not be found uninteresting. To have entered into scientific details of natural history would have far exceeded his limits ; and would, in fact, have been only a repetition of what is already to be found in works professedly treating on those subjects : he has therefore confined his observations chiefly to living topics.

A VOYAGE

IN THE

WEST INDIES.

AFTER a passage of six weeks across the Atlantic, about sun-set, on the 14th of April 1807, a signal from the commodore announced the appearance of land a-head; and the island of Barbadoes was, at the same time, descried from the mast-head of our vessel, but at so great a distance, that it could only be perceived, whilst the last rays of the setting sun illumined the western horizon. At any other time, or in any other bearing, it would have been invisible. It is generally believed that this island, on account of its small elevation, cannot be seen at the distance of more than twenty or five-and-twenty miles; but this is an error; as the distance we had to run, after making the land, was not less than fifty or sixty miles. The commodore made the signal to heave-to during the night, that the convoy might collect, and have the advantage of day-light for running into Carlisle Bay. The sensations arising from the sight of land, after traversing an extent of ocean, are at all times agreeable; but when that land is the object of the voyage, and the end of all its dangers and anxieties, the feelings of the mind are only to be conceived by those who have experienced them. A hundred sail of merchant-ships, lying-to under the protection of a frigate, in sight of their intended port, could not fail to furnish another interesting object of contemplation.

The recollection of the chief who led the mariners of Spain across unknown seas, in search of a new world, arose naturally, on the first sight of land, attended with a contrast of the difficulties and fears of the first discoverers, with the facility and expedition which modern commerce has introduced into these voyages. But the satisfaction arising from the completion of a tedious voyage, was damped by the consideration, that no inconsiderable portion of those who were now contemplating the scene with high expectations, were only looking, perhaps, on the tomb which awaited them, and hastening to the unexpected end of their mortal career.

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We had in the convoy a considerable reinforcement for the regiments in the country, as well as a number of young persons destined to fill various civil situations, public and private; their sanguine hopes of fortune and promotion, could not fail to be mingled with dread, at approaching shores so notified for their pestiferous atmosphere. These combined sensations must, in spite of philosophy and hardihood, find their way into the heart of all new comers. To talk however with bravado, on the existing mortality, and make it a subject of mirth, drinking at the same time impious toasts, is what, I am concerned to add, I have frequently witnessed amongst the junior officers on this station.

On the morning of the 15th, at day-light, the whole fleet bore up, and made all sail towards the island. Several ships had run away in the night, contrary to orders, to get first in; and one of them had nearly paid for it with the loss of the vessel, on the reef of rocks to windward. The land, at a distance, has no very attractive appearance, exhibiting nothing but a brown surface to the eye; on a nearer approach, however, it presents a face more agreeable. The windmills and plantations on the heights are the first conspicuous objects; and, when near enough to distinguish them with the naked eye, the novelty of the scenery cannot fail to arrest the undivided attention. The land rises in regular but curious ridges, from the sea-side to the middle of the island, presenting in succession a series of rugged and abrupt elevations of about a hundred feet; then appears a plain of about half a mile in extent, to the foot of another precipice; which singular mode of ascent continues graduating to the highest point in the island. These plains are universally in a high state of cultivation, and contrast agreeably with the black rocky precipices. Every now-and-then, the view is yet more diversified with bold promontories, projected over deep ravines, covered with a thick, dark foliage. In some very romantic spots are discovered the spacious and well-built houses of the planters, shaded by lofty cabbage-trees, and encompassed with a number of negroes' huts and sugar-works.

To enter Carlisle Bay, it is necessary to pass the southernmost point of the island, and haul round a little to the westward; in doing which, the barracks, the military and naval hospitals, &c. present a noble appearance to the spectator from the sea. After rounding the southernmost point, this beautiful bay opens all at once on the view, and certainly seems as if contrived to astonish and delight a stranger, after a long voyage.

At the bottom of the bay stands the town of Bridgetown, which stretches in a continued range almost round it, yet so

concealed by the cocoa-nut-trees on the beach, as to discover only its loftiest buildings. Behind the town the land rises like an amphitheatre, interspersed and decorated with a number of well-built country houses, and affording many specimens of extraordinary and picturesque scenery.

The bay was at this time crowded with ships, as, in addition to our own convoy, there was another just ready to depart for England. This island being to windward of all the rest, the convoys, even those bound to Jamaica, are sure to arrive here first, so that the conflux of ships and of strangers to this port is very considerable,—especially in time of war, as it is likewise the head-quarters and general rendezvous of the army and navy. It seemed now scarcely to afford room enough for the number of ships anchored in it; and indeed, had a gale of wind come on, great damage must have ensued. The depth of the water is very great, and the bottom none of the best for anchoring; many of the ships were riding in thirty fathoms water, and very few in less than sixteen. The water is in general so lucid and transparent, that the rocky bottom is easily discovered, and frequently the anchors of ships lying there.

The living scenery which we had to contemplate, was more interesting and animated, though less grateful to the sense, than that above mentioned. The bay was covered with boats, conveying backwards and forwards the merchants of the place, rowed by their slaves, or else the officers of the men-of-war on the impress service: both which sights are peculiarly hostile to the feelings of an Englishman. A number of slave-ships too, just arrived, were lying close to us, whose owners were taking all possible advantage of the last weeks of their expiring commerce. The poor wretches were going on-shore by hundreds from the slave-ships, in large barges, for the purpose of being exposed to sale. The shore on every side appeared lined with people of colour nearly naked, following their various occupations; for the arrival of the fleet seemed to have been the signal for creating a universal bustle.

About four in the afternoon, I left the ship, in order to go on shore. The landing-place is upon a spacious quay, erected on the banks of a little harbour not more than twenty yards wide, and only capable of admitting small craft. The quay was crowded with natives and strangers, and presented a scene of uncommon activity and business. The buildings upon it have but a mean appearance, including also the whole town, to the eye of an European; indeed, here are no objects to stimulate curiosity, except the living characters which crowd the streets, and most of these are sure to excite nausea and disgust. Hundreds of naked negroes of both sexes, of the most filthy appearance,

from dust and excessive perspiration, are seen in all directions; the men with only a coarse cloth round the middle, (which often appears inadequate to the purpose intended,) and the women with only a short petticoat. These last, in the advanced stages of life, become still more revolting to the sense, especially when to their own natural deformity are added, (which frequently happens,) the loathsome marks of a cutaneous disease common to them. The feet of these people universally present marks of a distemper occasioned by the *chiggers*, a species of minute insect which bury their eggs in the skin. There are to be seen here all the shades of colour, from the shining black of the African, to the slightly-tinged skin of the young female Mustee; but as they improve in colour, they look more respectable, as to their exterior in general, especially the females, who may often be seen very expensively dressed after the European fashion, parading the streets, attended by their slaves, with no small dignity. The white natives of the island fail not, in like manner, to attract the notice of strangers. They are in general tall, slender, and of a sallow, meagre aspect and figure, compared with the ruddy, robust, inhabitants of Europe. Many of them wear large white hats, not unlike an umbrella; and they are for the most part cleanly in their apparel and persons.

In passing through the streets, the ear is every-where stunned by the discordant voices and unintelligible jargon of the negroes; particularly of those who drive the carriages which bring down the sugar in hogsheads from the country. These carriages are drawn by from six to twelve or fourteen half-starved oxen, whose drivers are perpetually quarrelling with each other, and deafening the passengers with their vociferations and the cracking of their whips. Such are the objects that principally attract attention, on first landing in the island of Barbadoes. The town of Bridgetown, as before observed, is every-where ill-built, with crooked and unpaved streets, and a great number of wooden houses. The houses, in general, have small galleries or balconies projecting from their first story, which are very convenient and comfortable to the inhabitants, though so clumsily constructed and painted, as to contribute nothing to the splendour or ornament of the streets.

After passing through the principal streets of Bridgetown, I was conducted to the Naval Hospital, a situation to which I had been appointed. The house which had been appropriated many years to this purpose, was a low, ill-built, small edifice, in a narrow street, into which fifty beds could with difficulty be admitted, and which could never afford the ventilation necessary even for a private house. Every bed in this building was found to be occupied; and, though the yellow-fever

was at this time raging on-board the Dart, the guard-ship in the bay, yet the patients could only be received on-shore, as the casualties by death provided vacant beds for them in the hospital. There was, however, another building erecting, distant about two miles from the town, which was to supersede the use of this inconvenient and unhealthy one.

After having surveyed whatever appeared worthy of observation, I determined on returning to the ship, to pass the night there, with a view also to escape the persecution of the musquitoes, whose piercing stings had already made some impression on my hands and feet. I was anxious also to enjoy the cool air of the bay, which felt peculiarly pleasant, after encountering the heat of the town. We had been but little affected by the heat, previous to our landing; but, in the streets of Bridgetown, the sun's rays, reflected from the white rock on which it is built, overpowered us with an increased degree of heat and adscititious light.

We had been several weeks in the latitude of Barbadoes, but without feeling incommoded by the heat; on the island, however, we found it insupportable till sun-set. The next morning, at day-light, displayed one of the most enchanting prospects my eyes ever beheld. It is at this hour that the West India islands appear in all their glory, and resemble a paradise. The air is then cool and refreshing, and the rising sun seems to exhilarate the whole face of nature, diffusing new life and vigour around. I was uncommonly entertained and astonished with the loveliness of this first West-India morning, nor was the effect produced by it diminished, even after a four years' residence. By nine or ten o'clock, however, the heat augments to a degree scarcely supportable by a new comer, and it continues to rage till within an hour of sun-set, when the temperature again becomes delightful.

On the day after our arrival, the homeward-bound convoy sailed, attended by such of ours as were bound to the neighbouring islands: those intended for Jamaica did not depart till the third day. During their stay, the quay, and the whole town, were incessantly occupied and crowded even to confusion; exhibiting, at the same time, a gratifying picture of the commercial importance of this island. I had now an opportunity of taking a more deliberate view of the town, the interior of which I will endeavour to depict as faithfully as I can; for the first impressions were very different from those excited by the same objects, when become familiar to the eye. A number of shops, filled with European articles of all descriptions, present themselves in all the principal streets; but they do not, as in Europe, regale the eye with the beauties of arrangement, the articles not

being displayed in large and handsome windows, but kept for the most part in the packages in which they arrived, within the shop. It is the practice, on this side the Atlantic, to name every kind of shop a store; and this custom has obtained very generally in the United States, as well as in our West India islands.

The lower part of all the houses in Bridgetown is set apart for commercial purposes, and no pains are taken to ornament their exterior; so that, with the uncouth window-shutters and rough folding-doors, with which they are secured, they have an air of meanness, which fatigues the eye of an Englishman, accustomed to look upon this part of the house as no small decoration to the most splendid streets, both in the capital, and in the principal provincial towns. The inside of these stores is, however, well stocked with almost every article of luxury or convenience which the mother-country produces, and which are sold at a moderate profit as could be expected, considering the distance whence they are brought, and the additional rate of freight to which they are subject, in the time of war.

Although the private buildings of this town can supply few objects of gratification to the stranger, there are some public edifices which do honour to the colony. The church of St. Michael is a spacious and elegant structure: its interior strikes with an air of magnificence which one would hardly expect to find here. The other considerable public buildings, are the Court-house and Gaol, the Freemasons' Hall, and the Government House, which last stands a little out of the town. These are all large and well-built, but have nothing particular in them to merit a more detailed description. There are a number of taverns in the town, all of which are kept by mulatto women, who are possessed of considerable property, both in houses and slaves. Nor can they well fail to amass large fortunes, as their houses are generally filled with strangers, who must submit to the most exorbitant charges for every article of eating and drinking, as well as for the accommodation of lodging and washing. These taverns are besides houses of debauchery, a number of young women of colour being always procurable in them for the purposes of prostitution; but this I shall have occasion to treat of more at large, when investigating the state of morals of the inhabitants in general. The reader may form some idea of the expenses of living in these inns, when informed that seven dollars per day may be reckoned a very moderate expenditure, and but few can live within that sum. Private lodgings are often very difficult to be had, but such is the hospitality of the richer merchants and inhabitants, that strangers of respectability, and especially of rank, are seldom obliged to remain long in a

tavern. Their houses, servants, and horses, are tendered with a degree of liberality, that never fails to excite respect and admiration. This hospitality is, however, too much confined to those who stand least in need of it: that is, to strangers of property or of high rank, or to such as are about to fill some important situations in the country. The essentials of this virtue are certainly inherent in the nature of the inhabitants, but the impossibility of extending its benefits to the immense number of strangers who visit the colony, will ever operate as a clog to it.

On entering upon the discharge of my duties, my first care was to provide a private lodging, which I fortunately obtained in the first instance. The price of provisions of every kind being extremely high, the rate of boarding and lodging is here in proportion; but I was favoured with an opportunity of living in a regular family, at a rate which must be considered as very moderate, being charged for my board and lodging only 12*l.* currency per annum. This is just 9*l.* of our money, and it furnished me with all the regular meals, but no wine; which last article may almost pass here for one of the necessaries of life. At this time, the price was a dollar a-bottle. It here may be necessary to give the reader some notices, relative to the currency of the country. A hundred pounds of sterling money is reckoned at one-third more than its real value, consequently makes 133*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* currency; and, in order to reduce any sum of current money to sterling, one-fourth must be deducted: by the same rule, to ascertain the current value of any sum sterling, one third of the sum must be added. The money most current here, is the Spanish silver coin and the Portuguese gold: the coinage of any country, however, will be taken, especially gold, which is valued according to its weight, so that each separate piece is generally wrapt up in paper, with the weight and current value marked on the outside. The pieces thus marked pass frequently through a number of hands, without farther examination; and, although this method appears to furnish constant facilities for fraud, I have never heard of an instance of any person suffering by it.

The Spanish dollar is the principal circulating medium of this country, and that in which payments are commonly made. Its current value is six shillings and three-pence. The smaller divisions of it are called bits, ten of which in this island make a dollar; in some other islands I have observed the dollar to be divided into twelve bits. Counterfeit coin is here extremely rare. I never saw any specimens myself, but they have, it seems, been occasionally introduced. It must, as I conceive, be a matter of difficulty and danger to circulate base coin to any amount in a small island, where the means of detection are so

expeditious and easy. Besides the Spanish dollars, a few other silver pieces are current, as the American dollar, and the old French crown, which passes for something more than the Spanish dollar. British coin of any kind is extremely scarce. The Portuguese gold coins are familiarly denominated *Joes*, being a contraction for *Johannes*, the name of the King of Portugal, whose head is generally found on the coin. The value of these pieces is so various, that it is not easy to fix any precise standard for it, as it depends on the weight; the term itself, however, has a determined meaning, and whenever it is mentioned as the price of a commodity, it means seven dollars and four bits; and the inhabitants often reckon in this manner when the sum is large, telling you the number of *Joes* instead of dollars: this is not a little embarrassing to a stranger, and is far from being easy to themselves. The Spanish doubloon is likewise frequently met with here, as well as the minor divisions of it; but it is by no means in such abundance as the Portuguese coinage. The doubloon, a most beautiful coin, is worth sixteen dollars, and is regularly subdivided into halves, quarters, eighths, and sixteenths, all of which are of gold.

The above statement may be sufficient for the information of strangers; and I shall only observe further, that it holds good only in relation to the island of Barbadoes: the currency of the other islands is differently regulated. In almost all that I have visited, I have found the dollar reckoned at nine shillings.

I shall now proceed to make some observations on the manner of living amongst the inhabitants. Provisions of every kind are not only very dear, but for the most part are very bad. There is no flesh-meat that can be considered as tolerable eating, except mutton, and that is greatly inferior to the same meat in Europe: the flesh of the goat is frequently superior to that of the sheep, and the young kid furnishes the most delicate viand that the country produces. The consumption of poultry is considerable; and the more so, on account of the little variety of meat and its inferior quality. The fowls are in general very poor, but the turkies are tolerably good, and will often fetch accordingly, eight or nine dollars a-piece. There are likewise a great number of Guinea fowls, which are excellent eating. Fish of various kinds are very plentiful, and tolerably cheap. Turtle, however, is scarce and dear, being always brought here from some of the other colonies. All animals for food are generally killed in the morning, for dinner the same day, the climate not allowing of much longer keeping. The bread here is very indifferent, as the flour, which is imported from America, is generally more or less injured, either by the climate or the insects. As there is no yeast in the country, the bread is fer-

mented with leaven, and sometimes by a preparation of sugar; in either case, it will only keep good about four-and-twenty hours. The above are the usual articles of diet; to which may be added Madeira wine, the common beverage of all who can procure it. There are likewise various other wines which might be thought more congenial to the climate, but Madeira is the ordinary drink in all the English colonies; and an immense annual consumption of it is made in this island.

The breakfast here generally consists of fish and fowls, with chocolate, tea, or coffee. Instead of bread, a yam, or plantain roasted and buttered, especially the first of these, is always preferred. It is a large root, very much resembling the briony; the inside of it is white and mealy; there are several different kinds, but the white yam of Barbadoes is esteemed by far the best. This is roasted in wood embers, when the inside is all scooped out, a piece of butter inserted, and the inside again replaced; the whole is then again put to the fire, till the butter has diffused itself through the whole mass, in which state it is brought to table. The plantain, a fruit shaped something like a cucumber, when roasted and buttered, is a sort of substitute for bread, but it will not bear comparison with the yam; its pulp not being mealy, is not penetrated by the butter, and it sits heavy on the stomach. Beside the yam and plantain, the potatoe, brought from England, frequently makes its appearance on the breakfast-table. This is always toasted and buttered, having been previously boiled. With these articles a substantial breakfast is made about eight o'clock in the morning. Three o'clock in the afternoon appears to be the hour of dinner amongst all classes of the inhabitants; this is the hottest time of the day, and by no means well selected for sitting down to a hot dinner, for the most part highly seasoned with capsicums, and to be washed down with copious libations of powerful Madeira. After dinner, a desert of fruits, together with the wine, occupies the time till between five and six o'clock, the only time, except in the morning early, that a person can ride or walk out with any satisfaction: it is of course devoted to the promenade.

However unpleasant the town of Bridgetown may be, there can be nothing more agreeable than its environs. The scenery is so totally novel to one who has never been between the Tropics, that it looks at first like the effect of enchantment. The numerous avenues of cocoa-nut trees, the hedges of the *cactus* or prickly pear, with long rows of lofty cabbage-trees, are the objects that most attract, and stamp a feature on the landscape perfectly unique. Some of the habitations near the town, as before observed, are most romantically situated: the buildings are mostly of wood, but superior taste and elegance are displayed in their

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construction. They are generally surrounded with galleries of from six to twelve feet in breadth, and mostly painted green, as well as the *jalousies*, which here occupy the place of glass windows, and are in fact much more commodious. They are also better adapted to the climate, as they open and shut something like Venetian blinds, so as to admit both light and air, without exposing the family to the observation of passengers. The roofs are not a little remarkable, being covered with shingles, painted of a slate-colour, and extending not only over the building, but also over the galleries. The houses therefore may be properly considered as pavilions; and, being almost all situated in some sequestered spot, and well shaded by cocoa-nut, orange, lime, and other fruit trees, their effect is grateful and imposing.

What contributes greatly to the picturesque appearance of these country residences, is the curious inequality of the ground. What has been said of Jamaica seems equally applicable to all these islands. A gentleman, on being asked to give a description of its physical appearance, took a sheet of paper, and pressing it up into a ball in his hands, he afterwards expanded it, and then threw it carelessly on the table. Such is the apparent confusion of the ground in all these islands, that they seem like large and small masses of rock thrown promiscuously together, and covered with a profusion of vegetation, with here and there the original black rock protruding through its green drapery. The *contour* is bold and majestic, exhibiting sometimes a perpendicular cliff, at others a tremendous overhanging mass, not infrequently excavated underneath to considerable depths.

Although we do not find in this island those stupendous mountainous masses which the other islands exhibit, it contains, nevertheless, all the minor sublimities of a mountainous country, especially on its eastern and northern sides. Its dark and deep ravines, with their perpendicular sides covered with wood, its insulated peaks, lofty precipices, and bold projecting promontories, cannot be said to hide their heads in the clouds, yet are they sufficiently elevated to produce in the mind of sensibility, that impression of awe mingled with enthusiasm, which the contemplation of nature's magnificent scenery must ever excite.

I never have heard, nor have I accurately measured, the height of the most elevated point in the island; but, if we compute it by comparison with other known heights, we may rate it about a thousand feet. The southern extremity, where the capital of Barbadoes is situated, has no elevation above two or three hundred feet, and the land continually rises in terraces or platforms, one higher than the other, with an ascent extremely abrupt, and in numerous places altogether inaccessible. The farther

you advance into the interior, the more novel and irregular the face of the country becomes, till you arrive in the centre, when the eye is regaled with such varieties as yield perhaps to none.

Before I commence a description of this enchanting spot, I shall first take some notice of the objects, both vegetable and animal, that most prominently invite the curiosity of a stranger. The form of the cocoa-nut tree is, no doubt, familiar to most readers; but I have some collateral remarks to offer that may not be so. Beside their beauty and their grateful shade, the cocoa-trees produce great profit to their owners, as they begin to bear fruit before they are half grown, and never cease to do so all the year round: and in this island the nuts will ever command a very good price in the market. It is valued chiefly on account of the liquor it contains, previous to the formation of the nut, when it is in the greatest abundance, and has the finest flavour. In tropical countries, nothing can be more delicious to the thirsty traveller than this wholesome beverage: in preparing it, the natives frequently add a small quantity of brandy and sugar. When the nut is completely formed, the liquor is not so palatable, and in this state it is never drank. The trees are generally planted in avenues, so as to constitute a most delectable shade: near the town, the prospect is enlivened by a great number of these avenues, many of them stretching more than a mile in length.

I was greatly amused, in my walks here, with the prodigious numbers of lizards of all colours and sizes that are continually seen running up the trunks of the cocoa-trees, and always in a spiral direction. These little animals are not only beautiful in their colour, but elegant in their conformation; for the most part green, tinged with azure and gold. Their agility is not a little surprising; and they are so tame, as to allow themselves to be handled with impunity. Every tree and shrub swarms with them: their food is insects, which, but for these animals, would almost render the country uninhabitable. Like theameleon, they have a power of changing their colour, and I have seen them, when frightened, become almost black.

Next to the cocoa-nut trees, the most prominent object is the mountain cabbage-tree. This majestic plant is usually found near the mansions of the planters, and here indeed it furnishes a decoration, than which nothing can be imagined more opposite. It grows to the height of sixty feet, with a strait conical trunk, free from branches or unevenness to the top, where it expands into a most extensive umbrella, with its vast ramifications of leaves above twenty feet in length. The upper part of the trunk, for about twelve or fifteen feet, is of a gay green colour, with a smooth polished surface; this it is which

supports the umbrella, and the fine spreading fruit called (I know not why) the *cabbage*. Little use, however, is made of it in Barbadoes, where the tree is by no means very abundant, and the difficulty of obtaining the fruit is considerable, on account of the immense height, and the smoothness of the bark, especially towards the top.

The tamarind-tree, with its thorny trunk, is very abundant in the vicinity of Bridgetown; and a few specimens are seen here and there of the gigantic silk cotton-tree. Along the beach appear also frequent avenues of the manchineal, of a towering height and bulk, with apples of a most tempting appearance and smell, very much resembling the golden pippin. These lie scattered by thousands on the ground; but the uncautious stranger will pay dear for his curiosity in tasting the fruit, whose acrid and morbid juice produces instant excoriation and inflammation in the mouth and throat, and wherever it touches. Even water falling from the leaves after a shower of rain, will blister the skin of those who happen to take shelter under them: this I have often witnessed.

In all the environs of the town there are numerous plantations of the plantain, this being an article of very great consumption; it is a vegetable that must naturally occupy the attention of the stranger, as there is nothing analogous to it in Britain. It rises to the height of ten or twelve feet, with a tolerably thick stem, but which, in fact, is nothing more than the convolution of its own leaves, without any solid or woody substance. The leaves, which spread out at the top like those of the cocoa-nut tree, and have an agreeable effect, are of a dark-green colour, and, on the upper side, remarkably smooth and shining; they are very large and broad, and are in use for various purposes: amongst others, that of dressing blisters and ulcers. The fruit of the plantain forms the principal food of the negroes, and is also much eaten by the whites. There is another species, though not easily distinguished by a stranger, called the banana: it is considered here as a very delicious fruit.

The plantations of Indian corn are very numerous throughout the island, as the consumption of it is considerable among the negroes. There are also plantations of cotton; but it does not appear to be cultivated here to any great extent. This plant is very beautiful, both when in blossom and after the pods are burst. It is not unlike the English currant-bush, but grows to a larger size; the flowers are yellow, large, and splendid, and, as the trees are all planted in straight lines, both the eye and the fancy are gratified. The habitations are mostly surrounded with a great number of fruit-trees, particularly oranges, lemons, limes, and shaddocks. These last are uncommonly tempting; the

magnitude of the fruit, and its fine golden colour, shining through the green foliage, combined with the fragrant smell exhaling from the leaves and blossoms, renders it a treat both to the palate and to the senses.

Fruit however, in general, is very dear throughout the island, as but few comparatively grow it merely for the purposes of sale. An additional feature of interest among these groves, is the groups of naked negro children of both sexes, running about in all directions. The females seldom put on any article of clothing till three or four years old, nor do the males before ten, and sometimes later. The newly-imported negroes too, of whatever age or sex, are seen going about with no other covering than a handkerchief round the waist; and even this slight appendage seems evidently to incommode them.

The *tout ensemble* of this scenery creates an undescrivable sensation in the breast of an European spectator, placed as it were in a new world, with not a single tree or plant whose aspect and character he has any knowledge of. The birds and animals are also new to him; and the human beings, seen in the greatest numbers; look like the inhabitants of another planet.

At almost every step, the passenger's path is crossed by animals here called land-crabs, which are perpetually escaping into some of the innumerable cavities with which the ground is perforated. A gloomy idea is associated with the appearance of these animals, as they fill the mind with uneasy reflections, as to the uncertainty of life in these pestiferous regions. It is well known, that the mortal remains of those who fall victims to the endemic diseases of this country, serve to fatten these voracious animals. They are nevertheless eaten by the natives, and accounted a great delicacy; but, by the richer and luxurious, they are previously fattened for some time on less revolting fare. Europeans find it almost impossible to overcome the disgust excited by the consideration here stated, so as to feed upon this hideous animal.

The stranger never fails to experience some fresh accession of amusement from every fresh excursion he makes into the country; but it is only on horseback that these excursions can be made with satisfaction, or even with safety. I have sometimes taken long walks, but always found myself oppressed and languid from fatigue and excessive perspiration, and a head-ach or something worse has generally been the consequence. A ride of twenty miles is here a very great exertion, and but seldom attempted.

As the population of Barbadoes is very great, the island is every-where cultivated; not a spot is to be seen that is not

turned to some account. The principal article of culture is the sugar-cane, and the best and most extensive tracts are allotted to this purpose. The whole process of this important article of produce must necessarily engage the attention of a stranger; but this has been so frequently described, that few readers can be deemed unacquainted with it. My intention in these few pages being only to attempt to convey to the reader such impressions of pleasure or surprise as the sight of new objects excited, I shall avoid all those descriptions which require elaborate investigation.

I proceed, in the next place, to give some account of an expedition into the interior of the island, which I undertook, in company with a few friends, shortly after my arrival. Let me premise, that very great was the gratification I received from the contemplation of nature's lovely scenes, and from the friendly hospitality of persons till then totally unknown to me.

We started on horseback, four in number, at day-light in the morning, on a delightful road along the western coast of the island, where the surface, though level, displayed some new feature of beauty at almost every turn. As we advanced to the northward, the land on our right became every mile more lofty and more wild, but with still increasing interest. At the distance of about ten miles from Bridgetown we arrived at a considerable village by the sea-side, with a neat church, and a number of very handsome houses. After passing this village, we quitted the sea-side, and began to ascend; and now a diversity of landscape opened upon us in a manner more and more affecting and unexpected. At one time, a vast hollow, whose steep sides would in England be deemed impracticable to descend on horseback, leads you down into recesses where the sun's rays cannot penetrate, and, after winding through the sinuosities of its deep and cool bottom, you begin again to ascend an almost perpendicular height, where the sun's scorching rays are felt with all their force; till having gained the summit, the sea-breeze again wafts its exhilarating influence over the exhausted frame. Were it not for this constant source of coolness, these islands would be scarcely habitable; but so invigorating is the benignant gale, especially on the high grounds, that it is scarcely possible to imagine what a luxury it yields to a person sitting or lying upon some elevated situation. This enjoyment we realized in a very superior degree, on arriving at the estate where we purposed taking breakfast and dinner.

Although our coming was unexpected, we had but a very few minutes to wait for a sumptuous breakfast, which was served up in the eastern gallery, open to the trade-wind, and com-

manding an extensive view of the interior of the island. The houses belonging to these estates are generally built on the most elevated part of them. This I presume is done principally with an eye to the advantageous position of the windmills; but it contributes besides very materially to the pleasantness and picturesque beauty of the circumjacent landscape. It is gratifying and consolatory to see with what extraordinary pleasure visitors are entertained at these habitations: it is considered as an honour conferred on the family for a stranger to pay them an unexpected visit; and that heart must be cold and insensible, that can partake of, and reflect on, such genuine benevolence, without experiencing some of those feelings that embellish and illustrate human nature. The plan we had concerted required the attendance of our host as a guide, with servants, and cattle to relieve our own. These wants were speedily supplied; and, after leaving orders for a dinner to be prepared against our return, our host set out with us, all on fresh horses of his own providing. Our object was to take a view of an estate called Mount Pleasant, this being the most elevated spot in the whole island, except a bold peak called Mount Hilloughby, which is in the immediate vicinity.

We ascended by a most interesting road to this estate, which is one of the most considerable in Barbadoes: it appears to great advantage at a distance, and has very much the appearance of an English gentleman's country-seat. The ascent on the western side is tolerably easy, and the traveller, in that direction, cannot anticipate the scene that bursts suddenly upon the view on gaining the top of the ridge. I had never yet surveyed any of those enchanting landscapes that are so numerous in the Antilles, and was unprepared to meet the impression which this spectacle made upon me, such as I shall never forget. We found ourselves all at once on the brink of a precipice, and at our feet a valley of considerable extent bounded by the Eastern Ocean, (for the sea is here seen on both sides); the whole picture far surpassing the richest colouring that my imagination could have created. Although every part of the ground before us was much lower than that on which we stood, it still possessed all that chaos of mingled objects which I have alluded to above. We here looked down into dark dells and capacious ravines crossing the valley in all directions; here we beheld hills of the most fantastic form; every-where overshadowed with wood, whilst the level ground at our feet afforded numberless samples of the industry and wealth of the planters. Their mansions were rendered conspicuous on every height, by the tall cabbage-trees and windmills grouped around them. I could have willingly loitered here a few hours, to contemplate this fas-

cinating panorama ; but we had also to descend into the valley, to reconnoitre more nearly some of its most interesting details.

The district I have just noticed has received the name of Scotland, and has a parish-church dedicated to St. Andrew. Whether it received this name from the grotesque wildness of its scenery assimilating it to the Caledonian, I know not ; but if the first settlers here were Scotch, they doubtless paid a most respectful compliment to their country, by conferring its name on this terrestrial paradise.

We had now to dive down into the ravine which in a few moments concealed from our view all the beauties of the surrounding scenery. But here the botanist might reap an ample harvest ; for the lavish hand of nature had completely concealed the soil by her luxuriant vegetation. Our road lay through a wood of extremely lofty trees, and our attention was much engrossed by the number and variety of climbing plants, which, ascending to the highest branches, form curtains of such extent and beauty, as no human skill could pretend to vie with. These plants were all covered with blossoms of the most diversified colours, and so thickly studded, that in many places several square yards might be perceived at a height of from forty to sixty feet, where, from the continuity of the blossoms, no other object was visible ; and, at that distance from the eye, a regularly-painted surface of exquisite beauty was eminently conspicuous.

At the bottom of the valley, the heights from which we had descended presented, in their turn, another *coup d'œil* ; the ascent on this side being exceedingly steep and abrupt ; here also, the romantic peak of Mount Hilloughby appears to great advantage.

Our route lay next through the district where Barbadoes tar (a bituminous substance well known here) is found in astonishing abundance. The manner of its production is truly curious ; for it appears to occupy the space between the soil and the rock which it covers. An extraordinary consequence of this is, that the soil, with all that grows upon it, including even the buildings and sugar-works, are subject to remove from their situations and descend into the nearest valley. This circumstance, unaccountable as it may be thought, is strictly within the limits of truth. We had observed some cabbage-trees of an unusual conformation ; these, we were assured, had removed to the distance of at least a quarter of a mile from their original site on a neighbouring hill, where had formerly been the house of a planter. These trees had the vestiges of roots about six feet above the soil on which they stand, so as to have all the appearance of being placed on the top of posts.

There is a singular colonial law still in force, and originally made in consequence of this almost unexampled phenomenon, the justice of which I could never comprehend. It enacts, that, if a field of canes, or a whole estate, shall move from its situation into the precincts of another estate, the whole produce shall become the property of the person into whose premises it has moved. The reason assigned is, that the crops of the individual on whose lands the moving ground shall come, are *ipso facto* overwhelmed and destroyed. But is not the person whose estate has thus run away, the greatest sufferer, having nothing but the bare rock left? A few years indeed will suffice to repair the mischief; but, in the meantime, the damage and inconvenience must be severely felt.

We called at the house of a planter who had been forty years resident on the spot, and who had three times been at the expense of erecting a house and offices, (which are very considerable,) in consequence of this moving of the land. The house in which he then lived was by no means splendid, being only one story high, and that so low, that the thatch on the roof might be reached from the ground; it was, however, of great length, as the apartments were all in a line with one another. This planter, who was a native of Wales, received us with great cordiality; he pointed out to us the situation of his two former habitations, and the trees that had been carried away along with the soil. The spot he had last chosen was well secured against the recurrence of any similar accident, as his cottage was built in a hollow, and rested against a large mass of rock, the natural excavations of which contributed to furnish him with some very convenient storehouses.

The natives agree in opinion, that this bituminous substance is the proper physical cause of these migrations, and the thing appears very probable, for the following reason: Wherever there is a hollow, it is only necessary to make a small hole, and it will instantly be filled with it. The method of collecting the bitumen for commerce, is by drawing it from the surface of the ponds, which are covered with it, and the source seems unexhaustible, as the print of the horses' feet in the soil are quickly filled with it. There is another object of curiosity in this district which we went to visit: the natives give it the name of the "burning spring." I had heard much of this phenomenon, but could form no satisfactory notions of it till I had an opportunity of seeing it. In the midst of the wood which we traversed, there is by the road-side a hole in the ground, nearly circular, of about two feet in diameter and one in depth. This hole is generally filled with water in a state of ebullition; it may be ascribed to a gas which escapes in considerable quantity

from the earth, so inflammable, as to take fire on applying a candle or a lighted paper to the surface of the water. It will continue burning, with a strong flame, until extinguished by blowing it out, or smothering it. A negro woman residing in a neighbouring cottage, conducted us to the spot, but the hole at the time was perfectly dry, from want of rain. This defect she supplied by fetching water from a pond. The water immediately appeared in a state of ebullition, without any increase of temperature; and, on applying a lighted paper, the whole took fire, and burned with a strong flame. The gas appeared to be of the same kind as that burned in the streets of London, but I could not make my companions comprehend the principle of it, till I had filled two bottles with it, (which our slaves were carrying;) and, on our return to our host's habitation, immersing one of them in a bucket of water, and drawing out the cork; when all the phenomena they had before witnessed were repeated.

We made an extensive circuit over the island, through the most singular country I ever beheld; and, though in the middle of the day, under a vertical sun, we suffered much less from the heat than we should have done in walking through the streets of Bridgetown. At length we returned to our hospitable mansion, well qualified to do justice to the ample repast prepared for us. I enquired concerning the salubrity of this part of the island; and it seems, that the inhabitants here have had as great a dread of the yellow-fever as we have in England, and know as little about it. If I had been known to have come from the Naval Hospital, they would, I suppose, have been afraid to receive me. This disease is in fact confined to the low lands near the sea.

In the course of this ride, I noticed for the first time a custom very prevalent here, and which to a European appears ridiculous. The negro slaves that accompanied us, took hold of our horses' tails, to keep up with us. This is frequent all over the West Indies; and I have been surprised to see how fast and how far they would travel, thus assisted. We returned from this tour by moonlight, and arrived at Bridgetown at a very late hour, after having rode more than forty miles; which, in this country, is an uncommonly laborious effort.

In different excursions which I made into the interior, from time to time, I continually found fresh reasons to be delighted, both with the country and the hospitality of its inhabitants; for I never witnessed a single instance of deficiency, in this respect, in any one individual. When riding near the dwelling of the planters, I have been frequently stopped on the road by negroes, who invited me, in their master's name, to come to the

house and take some refreshment. I have afterwards found that this invitation was a mere matter of course, the master knowing nothing of it till my arrival, when the slave would be highly commended for his vigilance and attention.

I have placed this virtue of the natives in the front of their moral character, and I wish the reader to keep it in mind, that, when I come to speak of their failings, he may recur to this specimen of their Christian "charity covering a multitude of sins." It is not to be wondered at, that persons born and brought up in a small island, half of which they have probably never seen, should have but very inadequate ideas of what is passing in the greater theatres of human life. I have always been more astonished at what they did know, than at what they did not: but a people brought up amongst slaves, must necessarily possess no inconsiderable quantum of both pride and sloth. From their infancy, they are accustomed to have children of colour submitted to their will, and they cannot understand that the blacks are their fellow-creatures. They are at a loss to comprehend the policy that shall put an end to the importation, nor can they conceive how they are to exist without them.

I was consulting a Barbadian lady when I first went to keep house by myself, who took a great deal of pains to convince me that I could not, (though a single man,) do with less than twelve or fourteen slaves. She insisted much upon the latter number, as she herself kept eighteen, (the smallest number she could possibly have,) her family consisting only of her husband, herself, and one child. I had, however, taken a very different view of the subject; and, with one negro, contrived to live very comfortably. Accustomed from their childhood to command, these people have no notion of doing any thing for themselves, and of course they grow up in habits of indolence. All who can afford it, send a coloured child with their own children to school, where it is accustomed to be kicked and pinched by its young master or mistress, just as caprice may dictate. It is usual here to make over to a child, almost at its birth, a slave of the same sex and age; which circumstance the former soon gets to learn; and, though there frequently exists a kind of mutual sympathetic affection, yet a constant tyranny is exercised by the young Creole, who is hereby brought up with lofty notions of superiority over the coloured race. Yet the natives cohabit with people of colour at a very early age; and I have observed many instances of their being perfectly captivated by their mulatto mistresses, who thus obtain their freedom, and that of their children, from the master who cohabits with them.

I am concerned to bear testimony to the immorality which prevails in this respect, and to detract from the high character

which I would gladly assign to the female part of the community. They are doubtless as chaste and virtuous as those of any part of the globe, but they have been accustomed to witness incontinency in almost all their acquaintance of the other sex, and frequently in their father and brothers, who openly keep their mulatto mistresses; so that it is not accounted in the slightest degree infamous; nay, it would excite much more surprise in a Creole lady, that a man should be without one of these mistresses, than that he should have one. Although the coloured people are thus regarded as a distinct species, they are often treated with great kindness, yet it is of that description which we shew to a pet animal. It must be from some such kind of feeling, that females who have a just idea of morality in themselves, and who would express a similar indignation with our own countrywomen, at the seduction of a white female, manifest a total apathy at the most indecent debauchery amongst women of colour. A very respectable matron, who had shewn a kind of motherly affection for a young friend of mine who came over to settle here as a merchant, advised him in the most serious manner to look out for a young mulatto or Mustee girl for his housekeeper, urging that it would greatly increase his domestic comforts and diminish his expenses; and, in addition to this, she hinted very delicately, that, by being confined to one object, his health and reputation would be better secured, than by the promiscuous libertinism to which she seemed to consider every young man as habitually addicted. I am assured, that the lady in question would have shuddered at the idea of giving the least encouragement to libertinism in persons considered to be of her own species; but such is the force of education, and such the dangerous consequence of familiarity with vice.

In the family where I lodged, a respectable lady, (a virgin, between fifty and sixty,) was regretting to the company at dinner, that a young female slave, whom she had let out for several months, was about to return, as she would lose twelve dollars a month, the price of her hire, and besides, be at the expense of maintaining her. After dinner, I made enquiry respecting the subject of hiring slaves, and learned that the one in question had been let out to an officer in the garrison, with whom she had been living as a mistress, and that her return was occasioned only by his being ordered to another island. An intimation was annexed, that if I had any wish for her, the good lady would probably abate something of her demand. I felt extremely shocked at the idea of so strange a traffic; but I found, a few days after, this very slave publicly advertised, in the *Bridgetown Gazette*, in the following curious terms: "To let,

a **SEMPSTRESS**, a well-looking mulatto girl, seventeen years of age, an excellent hand at her needle, &c. To prevent needless application,—terms twelve dollars per month. Apply, &c.” I had previously noticed advertisements of this description, and I believe that few weeks pass without them: they are, however, frequently intended only for the purposes literally expressed.

In displaying this sample of the morals of the people, I may be thought rigidly severe, or to have selected instances of rare occurrence; this, however, is not the case. I must do this justice to the females of this country, to add, that they possess, with an uncommon degree of personal beauty, the most amiable dispositions, and even accomplishments, which a stranger would never expect at such a distance from the European schools. The want of delicacy, which the instances given above seem to imply, may be traced to two causes, the unblushing immorality of the men, and the unfortunate circumstance of living amongst slaves. Flagrant acts of immorality amongst the women are in a manner unknown, and the shameful trials for *crim. con.* so common in Britain, are seldom heard of here.

From the same source (being attended by slaves instead of servants) arises another unpleasant trait in the character of both sexes,—that supreme indolence so conspicuous in all the inhabitants of these islands. The climate, no doubt, contributes much to their habits; but if there were no slaves, they would undoubtedly evince greater elasticity. The men will often sit with their legs on the table, and I have sometimes even caught the ladies in this posture, though it has been always from inadvertence; but the more usual way is, to have them laid up in a chair. This state of inaction is, I believe, conducive to health in the torrid zone; and it is probable that the difference which exists, as to the liability of being attacked by the fever, between the Europeans and the natives, may be ascribed in a great measure to the extreme mobility of the former, who are as much averse to quiescence as the latter are to motion. The physical consequences of this mental and corporeal *inertia* are, a moist cool skin, of remarkable softness in the females, a moderate and regular pulse, a freedom from thirst, so troublesome to the Europeans, and an exemption from the teasing bites of musquitoes and other troublesome insects.

I never saw in any country such beautiful children; and they preserve this beauty, in general, till after the age of puberty, which, among the whites, may be computed at fourteen in the males, and a year earlier for the females. The youth of both sexes possess a reasonable proportion of vivacity and good-nature; and, though torpid in some respects during the day,

they will dance with great animation, through the principal part of the night.

As I remained a whole year in the colony, I did not lose the opportunity of observing the variations of the weather through the different seasons. The reader must be aware that, in the 13th degree of latitude, there can be but little difference throughout the year, as to the length of the day and night; nor is there any thing like that diversity of temperature which the temperate climates afford. The wet and the dry seasons form the prominent distinctions; but the degrees of heat by the thermometer differ very little. These follow the course of the sun, which twice in the year passes over the zenith; in the month of April, while travelling towards the tropic of Cancer, and again in August, on returning to the southern tropic. The heat begins to be greatest as the sun returns from Cancer, in June, when the rainy season sets-in; and this, indeed, is the most disagreeable part of the year. The rains increase daily, and fall in torrents, with a tremendous rushing sound, which is heard for some time previous to the arrival of the storm, (for it would ill convey the idea of one of these falls of rain, to call them showers,) and by a person out of doors they may be easily foreseen and avoided. During the three months that follow, there are frequent, and sometimes tremendous, thunderstorms. One of these, in the month of July, during my stay, continued nearly twenty-four hours: it was the most awful explosion I ever witnessed, being repeated from two in the morning till the same hour in the afternoon, without one moment of cessation; it came not in regular claps, but in one incessant roar, during all those hours; whilst the lightning was so rapid, so vivid, and uninterrupted, that a person might very well have seen to read or write in a dark room. By the rain which fell during this time, the ravines were all converted into roaring torrents, and in many places formed sublime cataracts. As the rain begins to abate in August, it is succeeded by that awful season, when one of the most dreadful visitations from heaven known on the face of the globe may be expected;—I mean the hurricane season,

Barbadoes had been nearly thirty years (since 1780) without any serious disaster of this kind; but so deeply impressed is the remembrance of this last upon all the old inhabitants, that they shudder with horror at the very mention of it, and hundreds who never bow the knee to their Creator all the rest of the year, appear in solemn procession, at their respective churches, on its anniversary: it is, in fact, observed as a solemn fast throughout the island. On the above occasion, the town of Bridgetown was entirely destroyed, nor could the site of the

houses be ascertained without difficulty, as it was for many hours occupied by the sea: the damage sustained was incalculable, and the number of lives lost never accurately known. This is always a season of anxiety; for there is no day or night from the beginning of August to the latter end of October, in which one of these calamitous inflictions might not occur. I shall hereafter endeavour to furnish a more ample description of one which I witnessed.

- But this season is not to be dreaded for hurricanes alone; for now the fevers of the country begin to show their yellow fangs, and fortunate is the European who can escape their gripe. During my residence in this island (in 1807) they raged with unusual fury; and not Europeans only, but great numbers of the natives fell victims to them. In the months of October and November, nothing was to be seen but funerals and mourning families; and, as usual, the army and navy suffered most.

One melancholy instance I cannot pass over unnoticed, which occurred during my stay. A fleet of ships from Europe arrived during the worst period of this fever, and brought strong reinforcements for the different regiments in the colonies. All the officers are generally landed here, whether their corps be here or not, this being the general head-quarters. Amongst these gallant youths, several never reached their destination; but the one I refer to, was young in the service, and the only officer destined for his particular corps. He had arrived in a transport without any other officer on-board, and landed at Barbadoes, having no acquaintance with those who had come out in the fleet. On being quartered in the barracks, he experienced the hospitality which is so predominant in these islands, and received an invitation to dinner from one of the regimental messes. As is usual with new comers and young officers, he made copious libations of excellent Madeira wine. He retired at a late hour to his solitary barrack-room, where he had placed his bedding, &c. and to which, being a perfect stranger, he had invited no one. Amongst the number of new faces in the garrison, this young gentleman was forgotten or overlooked, till three days after, when search was made for him, to convey to him some order relative to his future embarkation. Miserable to relate! he was found in his barrack-room, stretched out lifeless on the floor, though not quite cold; and the black vomit, which covered the apartment and the clothes, testified too plainly how the deceased had come by his death. How painful must have been the feelings of this unfortunate youth, during the last two days of his existence! oppressed with raging thirst, and, in his lonely situation, needing every assistance which the sick-bed requires.

I have witnessed several instances of this peculiar species of distress; for, wherever the patient is taken ill, there he wishes to lie, as the only thing he covets is rest and drink. I could hardly expect to escape the clutches of this devastating monster, as my duty was complicated and laborious, from the number of medical officers who also fell victims to it. Indeed, I had my turn; for, after going to bed in apparently perfect health, I awoke in the morning before five o'clock, in a situation imminently dangerous; the symptoms advanced with rapidity, and in forty-eight hours, the balance of life and death hung suspended over me: but Providence turned the scale in my favour. This, however, was not till after a small portion of the black vomit in the basin had directed the prognosis of my physician to the alternative of despair.

The fever continued to rage till December, when the winds, which, during the hurricane season, blow from all quarters of the compass,* resumed their usual eastern station, and began to blow steadily. As the sun begins to return from the south towards the equator, the trade-wind always fixes itself to the northward of east, and blows strong and cool, wafting on its wings the seeds of life and health. The appropriate name of the *Doctor* has been given to this auspicious wind; for, at its approach, the pestilence retires, and the languid convalescents inhale new spirit and vigour. The climate of this island becomes then for two months (January and February) salubrious and delightful; the tropical fruits are in maturity, and all nature feels the cheering influence of this heavenly breeze. When the sun reaches the equator, in March, the wind comes round by degrees towards the south-east; the heat consequently increases, till the rainy season again sets-in, when it is at its greatest height. In the intervals of the rain, the force of the sun is intolerable, particularly when the trade-wind begins to fail.

I have noticed the circumstance of the uniform length of the days, from six in the morning to six in the evening, but it may not be amiss to observe, that the new comer to these islands will feel himself surprised at the sudden disappearance of light on the setting of the sun, there being little or no twilight, and in less than a quarter of an hour it becomes quite dark.

No sooner is this darkness established, than the ear is saluted with a loud, shrill, piercing noise, that may be heard not only over the island, but even to some distance at sea. This proceeds from myriads of grasshoppers dispersed over the country, and it continues a great part of the night. I know not what unaccountable

* The reader is aware that, between the tropics, the wind blows constantly from the same quarter (the east); during the greatest part of the year.

prepossession has attributed this clamour to the lizards; for most strangers go away with that notion. But nothing can be more erroneous, for lizards have not the power of emitting the smallest sound; whereas one of these grasshoppers, which are not more than three inches in length, confined in a room, would deafen any person by its sonorous note. I have been often disturbed by them in the country, getting into my bed-room; for, the moment the candle was extinguished, they set up such a din, as would set at defiance the most earnest propensity to sleep. There is no remedy, unless the animal should voluntarily retire, but to procure a light and search for it; nor is this search very easy, for the creature is silent the moment the light appears, and shifts his quarters; nor, while there is any light, will he discover himself by his note. But if by a mistaken supposition, after a thorough search, that he has gone out through the *jalousies*, the votary of Morpheus should again retire to a fallacious rest and extinguish his light, he will quickly learn that he must expect no repose till, having renewed the search, he succeeds either in securing or driving out his troublesome inmate. These insects are some of them of a beautiful green colour, and resemble the same species in our own country, except in having large wings, which assist them greatly in their leaps, which are from ten to twenty yards; and enable them, as in England, to alter the line of their direction. They make, however, but an imperfect use of these wings, since they frequently cannot help striking persons passing along the road.

These however are not the most grievous annoyances in this country, as they are only occasional and accidental visitors: but the truly formidable intruders, (to the new comer especially,) though more minute in bulk, are a lasting and serious evil;—I mean the mosquitoes. The bite of these diminutive insects is attended with so excessive an itching, that you cannot sleep, and scratching the part affected will produce more serious consequences: inflammation, and, not unfrequently, ulceration. I have seen many individuals suffer greatly from the mosquitoes, which are far more troublesome than the bugs; and of these last there is no deficiency.

Whilst speaking of nuisances, the cock-roach must not be omitted: this hideous and fetid insect thrusts itself not only into the bed-room, but into the dishes at table, particularly in the rainy season. The smell which they excite is most offensive. I was recommended to a singular method of preventing their intrusion during the night, which was to secure one of them by a piece of thread fastened to a pin stuck in the bolster: the continual fluttering of the insect round the pin will deter the others from approaching. This indeed answered the purpose, but the

buzzing of the creature all night, was in itself no small nuisance.

There is another species of cock-roach very frequent here, and more disgusting in appearance than the preceding, but less obtrusive; these are called *knockers*, on account of the noise they make in the night, not unlike a person's knocking gently on a table with his knuckles. It is a kind of rap, with respect to the number and time of its pulsations, resembling that given by a footman at the hall-door, on the arrival of the carriage; not loud enough, however, to wake out of sleep, though sufficient to prevent the sleep of any one not acquainted with the cause. It seems to be a kind of signal between the sexes, as I have constantly perceived two pretty near each other on this occasion, but I never was able to discover by what physical apparatus the knocking was produced.

Amongst other formidable obnoxious insects, the centipede deserves to be recorded. Most readers are acquainted with the form of this insect, and with the venom of its bite; I shall only add that no house can be said to be altogether free from them. Like all other insects, they abound most in the rainy season, and come out of their holes in the night. Having been bitten by them, I can affirm with confidence, that their powers of molestation have been greatly overrated, as they do not exceed those of a wasp in the mother-country. An officer in the house where I was, walking in the gallery one evening, accidentally laid his hand on one of these insects, which instantly bit him on the finger. He came into the drawing-room smarting with the pain, and highly indignant at the impudence of the insect. He took me into the gallery, to convince me that he had only laid his hand gently on the rail, and was bitten. To exemplify the fact more minutely, he placed the other hand on the same spot, when, to his astonishment, the centipede, who remained at his post, gave him another specimen of his audacity, by biting that also.

But there is another annoyance much more formidable, though not very common here;—I mean the scorpion. I once amputated the leg of a seaman who was stung on the toe by one, but so deadly was the venom, that it spread rapidly through the whole frame. The muscles of the leg and thigh made up a mass of putrefaction, nor could any distinction of them be perceived. I had made the first incision a little above the knee, with the hope of preserving the poor fellow's life, but the gangrene having extended still further, I was obliged to begin the operation again considerably higher; all, however, was useless; and he died within eight or ten hours. There must, I conceive, have been something singular or morbid in this man's blood or con-

stitution, as the above is the only instance I ever heard of, wherein the sting of the scorpion has proved fatal.

A stranger in this country can scarcely help shewing symptoms of horror at the appearance and figure of the enormous spiders which it produces: they are, however, perfectly harmless, and are suffered to remain undisturbed, as they are the natural enemy of the centipede. Amongst the numerous species of lizards, there is one much dreaded by the inhabitants, though the smallest of them all, on account of a very singular property it possesses. If this little animal (for it frequently is not more than two or three inches in length), happen to fall upon any part of the human body, it instantly fastens upon the skin, and that in such a manner, as to resist all attempts to remove it entire. It seems to do this from fright; but the fright of the person upon whom it has so fastened, is commonly not less than that of the animal itself. They can only remove it by cutting off the fore feet with a pair of scissors.

The ants of this country may be reckoned among its nuisances: their numbers are incredible, and no place is secure from them. Their ingenuity and industry are not a little surprising. I have often watched their motions with great interest. Frequently have I seen them carrying off a piece of meat or some dead insect or reptile, whose weight must have been ten times that of all their collected force. If they can carry it away, they never eat any part of it till they have removed the whole; but, if prevented by any obstacle, they proceed to devour it on the spot. A dead cock-roach they carry off with ease; and I have seen them even move a small lizard. But the sagacity of these marauders exceeds their strength, and well digested must be the contrivance that can elude their depredations. It is customary to put sugar, and other articles they are fond of, into a plate full of water, so as to insulate the vessel. This presents an insuperable barrier for the time; but their ingenuity soon suggests the means of overcoming this difficulty. I have observed them to drag straws and other light substances to the windward-side of the dish or plate, when the chances are in favour of one or more of them being blown into it, so as to form a sort of bridge, by means of which they may arrive at the object of their search. Although not more than a dozen are seen employed on this service, yet, no sooner is the communication established, than hundreds are found to take advantage of it. These minute insects are the best dissectors in the world: they will, in the course of a night, leave a most beautiful skeleton of a large lizard, without a grain of flesh upon the bones.

Although it is not my intention to descant on the natural his-

tory of this country, I wish to notice such particulars as principally attract the attention of the stranger. Amongst these, the humming-bird deservedly obtains a distinguished place: nothing can be more beautiful than its plumage, or more elegant than its form. There is a shrub in this island called the *Barbadoes' pride*, one of the most beautiful vegetable productions that can anywhere be seen: it is much cultivated here, near the houses of the rich. Its superb flowers are trumpet-shaped; and the elegant little bird just mentioned, is continually seen, with its long beak inserted into the blossoms, hovering in the air, and, by the rapid motion of its wings, producing a humming kind of sound. The colour of this bird is a dark-green; the splendour of which, and the elegance of its form, transcend all conception. They frequently fly into houses, especially if any favourite plants are kept there; but they soon die, if confined.

I cannot pass over without noticing here a very singular insect, which is everywhere to be seen, so that it is difficult to keep a house clear of them. The inhabitants call them the *mason-bee*, and with great propriety; for they collect mud and clay, and therewith construct a kind of nest on the ceiling of the room, in which they deposit their eggs: but such is their sagacity, that they fix upon the spots where the eggs of the large spider above-mentioned are found. When they have completed their masonry, leaving a small hole to go in and out, they deposit their own eggs, and then close-up the orifice. This nest, when finished, is about the size of a hen's egg, and is the entire production of two insects not larger than an English wasp, who complete their work in the space of two or three days. The young spiders form the natural food of this insect at first; but, when strong enough, they will eat their way through the side of the nest, and soon set to work about raising one for themselves.

The animals and plants here noticed are common to all the West-India Islands, although I have arranged them under the description of Barbadoes. On being appointed to a ship, I had opportunities, in the course of a short time, of visiting most of the Leeward Islands; and I think the journal which I kept during a cruize of three months, will be found to convey some miscellaneous information, that will be interesting to the general reader. I have given it just as it was written down on the spot, every evening, during my excursion.

JOURNAL.

1808.

April 16th.—Was appointed, from the Royal Naval Hospital at Barbadoes, to be surgeon of his Majesty's sloop Nimrod, then lying in Carlisle-bay, R. Bouchier, esq. commander.

Friday, 22.—Being ready for sea, and ordered to cruize in the Mona Passage, between Porto Rico and St. Domingo, weighed at sun-set, in company with his Majesty's sloop Cherub, and stood towards Martinique.

Sunday, 24.—Had a view of the south-east end of Martinique, with the Diamond-rock at a distance; the country very beautifully diversified with hills and vales, highly cultivated; many of the estates, as in Barbadoes, very romantically situated.

Monday, 25.—Off the north end of Martinique. The land very high and picturesque, but the country appears rather barren. A very remarkable rock is to be observed at a great distance from the land: it is very conspicuous, and resembles a sail so much, as to be easily mistaken for one at a few miles distance.

Tuesday, 26.—Becalmed all day off the Saints, a cluster of small islands belonging to the French: Guadaloupe and Dominica in sight. Went in chace of, and spoke, his Majesty's brig Woolverine, and were informed of an action having been fought there the day before, between two French men-of-war brigs and his Majesty's sloop Goree; in which the Goree received considerable damage, as well as the brigs, which ran into the Saints.

Wednesday, 27.—A breeze sprung up early this morning, and we made all sail to the westward, sincerely wishing to fall-in with the French brigs. At noon, saw Santa-Cruz, at a great distance. Towards evening strong breezes came on, and brought us within sight of Porto Rico. We stood close in towards its south-east extremity, and were soon gratified with a close view of this most beautiful country. It is impossible to convey any idea of the scenery by description. The lofty mountains are thickly covered with wood, even to their summits; and on their sloping sides are presented the richest variety of forest-scenery I ever witnessed. A few scattered huts appeared here and there through the shrubbery, and in one of the bays we observed a small town. We stood out again at sun-set, and encountered a very heavy gale of wind during the night.

Thursday, 28.—Continued to blow hard all day; weather very thick, land scarcely visible. Stood off and on.

Friday, 29.—Weather clearer, but still strong breezes; bore up, and stood to the west. Saw a schooner and sloop coming down upon us before the wind, with all sail set; hauled our wind immediately, and went in chace. Left the Cherub in the chace, being a heavy sailer. We had previously agreed to share prize-money together during the cruize. Towards evening lost sight of the schooner; weather very thick. Gained considerably upon the sloop. At sun-set, she came to an anchor under the land, but soon after weighed again. Continued the chace till we lost sight of her in the dark. Very squally during the night.

Saturday, 30.—About 10 A. M. again gained sight of the sloop about three miles to windward, and went in chace. She stood close in shore, and we pursued her with the greatest eagerness, not without hazard, as the coast was unknown to us; but her appearance was altogether so suspicious, that we did not entertain the least doubt of her being a prize, and began to fancy her freighted with dollars. After a chace of a little more than two hours, we were within gun-shot, and gave a hint, by means of one of our bow-chasers, that we wished her to heave-to. Our intentions were understood, for we saw him instantly back his topsail, and lie-to. We were not, however, satisfied to stand so close in as was necessary to board him; but, by another shot, sent just a-head of him, intimated that we wished him to come out. He instantly complied; and, to our great disappointment, we discovered that he had hoisted English colours. We nevertheless boarded, hoping she might prove a smuggler. The master, with all his officers and papers, were sent on-board the Nimrod, and the vessel searched. By her papers, it appeared that she was a privateer, cleared out from Tortola, to carry one gun and ten men, but had on-board four guns and thirty-one men; on which account we thought proper to detain her, and take her with us down to the commodore (Cherub), who had appointed the rendezvous at Cape Roxo. The privateer was likewise bound for the same station, but we nevertheless took her in tow. We learned from the master of this vessel, that they were in search of two Spanish feluccas, of which they had received information, and that they had already chased one; that he expected to find one or both of them in Ponce-bay, a small harbour to leeward.

After having towed the sloop several hours, some of the officers proposed to the captain to send in boats at night to Ponce-bay, and cut out whatever they might find. This proposal was immediately acceded to, and a boat was dispatched to the sloop, in tow for a pilot. We soon found one very willing and eager to undertake the task: he informed us that we were certain of

finding small vessels always in the bay, and appeared very confident that one or both the feluccas were there at that moment. We therefore made all sail towards the Dead-man's Chest, a rock so-called, from its singular shape, which lies about three leagues from the main-land, and nearly a-breast of the bay where we wished to go. This rock, when seen from a distance, appears a flat surface, almost level with the surface of the water; but, on a nearer approach, it assumes a regular shape, which has been compared, by one of the Spanish fathers who first visited the country, to a table with a coffin lying upon it; whence it has its name, in Spanish *el Casa di Muerti*, which means nothing more than a coffin, but, literally translated, is the Dead-man's chest, its present English name. The idea is gloomy, but the resemblance appeared to me very striking. We passed within half a cable's-length of its southern extremity, and came to anchor very near it on its western side, just after sun-set. A competition now took place between the men and officers volunteering for the service of the night, to go into the bay, and cut out whatever might be found in it, and very great expectations were formed of success. The entrance of this little harbour is defended by a fort of four guns; and, that danger past, there was nothing else to fear. The officers appointed to conduct the enterprize were, Mr. Fitzpatrick, the first lieutenant, and Mr. Clarence, the purser, in the yawl, with the pilot; Mr. Stevenson, master, in the gig; the only boats we had: a small boat from the privateer followed, with Mr. Edwards, master's mate; in all about twenty men, armed with muskets, pistols, and cutlasses. Thus equipped, they left the ship about nine o'clock, leaving us in great anxiety for the event.

We learned from the pilot, that the whole of the south coast of Porto Rico is very safe of access, and that the dangers are all visible. The country is very thinly inhabited, and there are a number of excellent harbours for small vessels. The privateer frequently sent boats ashore, and purchased stock from the natives, which is very cheap and plentiful. The whole island, which is one hundred miles long, is one immense forest, and abounds with wild cattle, hogs, goats, &c.

At day-light the next morning, we were all anxiety for the fate of our boats, when Mr. Edwards, who had been in the privateer's boat, came along-side, and informed us that he had parted company from the yawl and gig in the middle of the night, and, not being able to find them again, had returned to the ship: he had seen no shipping or boats of any kind. This information did not in the least relieve our uneasiness: a large fire had been seen ashore in the middle watch, and some of the men asserted that they heard the firing of musquetry. Mr.

Edwards was accordingly dispatched on-board the privateer, to desire them to get immediately under-weigh, and stand close in-shore, to look for the boats; and likewise to examine all the small bays, to look for any vessels that might be lying at anchor.

At sun-rise, we hailed the most delightful prospect imaginable: the ship was lying close to the Dead-chest, which had assumed a less sombrous appearance than that of a coffin. It is, in fact, a very beautiful hill, covered with wood to its top; abounds with wild goats, which we could see from the ship climbing the precipices, and with a great variety of tropical birds. On the other side, we were gratified with the view of the lofty summits of the mountains of Porto Rico, peeping above the clouds, whilst their umbrageous sloping sides, looking towards the rising sun, presented an endless variety of the most animated scenery. We could not but regret that so large and fine an island should be so badly cultivated and inhabited; for scarcely one-third part of it can be said to be either one or the other. It was not till eight o'clock that our boats were discovered from the mast-head, pulling in-shore, six or seven miles to leeward. At nine we got the ship under-weigh, and stood down towards the boats, which reached us between ten and eleven.

By the report of Lieutenant Fitzpatrick, it appeared, that they had gone straight to their place of destination, and had examined the bay of Ponce; but not a vessel of any description was to be found in it. On entering the bay, the yawl grounded just under the four-gun battery, and within twenty yards of the mouths of the guns. The Spaniards, however, were so comfortably asleep, that the accident was never known to them. After having finished their examination here, they proceeded to another bay, about six miles to leeward, defended by a battery of six guns; which they likewise passed without being discovered. Their success here, however, was no better than at Ponce; not a vessel of any description was to be seen. The boats would now have returned, but that the small boat belonging to the privateer was missing, and their delay was occasioned by the search for her. Mr. Stevenson in the gig, pulling along-shore, discovered the remains of a fire in the wood, not far from the beach; and, supposing the small boat might have landed there, and have lighted a fire, went ashore at the spot, and found that it was a small hut for the drying of fish, and that some of the natives had left the fire burning all night. He now hoped that, by increasing the fire, it might serve as a direction to Mr. Edwards; and accordingly we heaped-up materials together, which were the dried blossoms of the cocoa-nut, and

set them on fire. The flames spread so rapidly, that, in spite of all their efforts, they quickly communicated to the hut, and afterwards to the neighbouring bushes.

The boats at day-light continued their search, boarded several of the fishing-boats, and spoke with some of the natives; but could gain no intelligence of their companion. The Spaniards appeared to be tolerably friendly, and sold some trifling articles to our officers.

We now continued to run down the coast, at the distance of about two miles. On passing the small battery at Ponce-bay, the Spaniards, to give us some idea of their bravery, fired one gun at us, and we observed a very great bustle at their fort; but passed on, without taking any notice of their fire, not a little chagrined at finding no vessels in their harbours. Some of the fishermen informed our pilot that a felucca had sailed from Ponce two days before, and they believed she was still in a bay to leeward. We here parted with our privateer, which we had detained, and continued our course along-shore to the westward. We were frequently becalmed after noon, and frequently were assailed by sudden gusts of wind, from three or four different points of the compass, in the space of five minutes; sometimes from two different points at the same moment. About two o'clock, the mountains of Porto Rico presented a scene truly sublime: their summits were buried in black clouds, while the rain poured in torrents down their sides; and vivid flashes of lightning broke incessantly through the black gloom; to increase the awfulness of the scene. The vallies, in the meantime, reverberated the deep and tremendous peals of thunder, which rolled without intermission on the mountain-tops. This grand landscape we contemplated at the distance of three or four miles; while we enjoyed, at the same time, a bright unclouded sun, an ocean as smooth as glass, and an atmosphere not agitated by the least breath of wind. The privateer was at the same moment encountering a very heavy squall, not two miles from us;—a phenomenon pretty common between the tropics. This spectacle continued more than an hour, when another very surprising phenomenon attracted our attention:—it was a water-spout. I had never been able to conceive before how a water-spout was formed, but had now an excellent opportunity of observing it from its very commencement. It began close alongside the ship by a whirlwind, which put the water into a rapid circular motion, forming a whirlpool, with a deep depression in its centre like a well: the diameter of its vortex appeared to me to be about eight yards. On the circumference of the well the water began to be elevated, at first slowly, and, as it were, in foam; but, having gained an elevation

of eight or ten feet, it rose rapidly to eighty or a hundred feet, presenting the appearance of a round tower, as big as an ordinary church-steeple whose walls are whirled round with inconceivable rapidity. The whole moved on very swiftly, sometimes in one direction and sometimes in another. It sometimes disappeared, then formed again instantaneously. We had just got a gun ready to fire into it, when the whole fabric fell down, and we saw it no more.

We now discovered a sail a-head of us, which proved to be the Cherub: we accordingly made sail down to her, and joined her about seven o'clock.

May 2d.—Continued coasting along to the westward. About 10 *a. m.* were off Guanico, a small harbour in a bay of that name, where it was possible that the felucca we were in search of might lie. The commodore was anxious to examine the harbour; but, being all unacquainted with the coast, we did not know how far we might go with safety. Mr. Stevenson, the master, was ordered to go in a boat, and take soundings near the shore; and I requested permission to accompany him, offering at the same time to go into the harbour and take a plan of it. This request was complied with; and our boat was accordingly armed, that, if any vessel should be found in the harbour, we might board her and bring her out. After providing ourselves with the necessary apparatus for taking plans, we proceeded towards the shore. We soon found the entrance of the harbour, between two lofty bluff points, a passage of less than a quarter of a mile in breadth. The land appeared delightfully pleasant as we approached it: the mountains, as in the other parts of the island, were covered with wood, but in the same wild uncultivated state as when first discovered by Columbus. After taking proper soundings in the bay, we entered the passage that leads into the harbour. It was about half-a-mile in length, and bounded on each side by lofty hills, which formed a truly romantic prospect. This led us into a basin of smooth water, about four miles in circumference, surrounded with high mountains, and defended from every wind; but not a vessel of any description could we discover. We now proceeded to the shore, where we observed some Spaniards in the bushes watching us; but, as we could only perceive four of them, we landed without fear. They approached us seemingly with great caution, and saluted us very politely in Spanish, standing without their hats, which we desired them to put on. Their appearance, notwithstanding their polite mode of accosting us, was a little suspicious, as they were all armed with swords; and I understood from the only one who had the courage to speak to us, that they were sentries.

on guard. We thought it very probable that they had fire-arms concealed in the bushes, as well as more men; and, as we were going to employ our men in cutting wood for the ship's use, we desired them to take their arms on shore. At the sight of our fire-arms, three out of the four Spaniards vanished: the fourth, who was the leader of them, I detained, assuring him that we had no hostile-intention. Another boat was now coming with Captains Ravenshaw and Bouchier from the two ships; and I wished to get all the information I could from this Spaniard.

Though the spot where we were was so admirably adapted by nature for navigation and commerce, having a harbour which our ships could have entered with ease and safety, and where a hundred sail of shipping might securely ride, yet not a house of any kind could be seen, unless a small open hut on the beach may deserve such a name. The Spaniard assured us that his house was four miles distant; but that, I believe, was only to deter us from going to it. I have no doubt but there are many huts in the woods close to the water-side, but so concealed by the bushes, that we could not see them; and we did not wish to explore the woods any farther than was necessary for cutting down what we wanted for the ship, as we knew the Spaniards were not to be trusted. We had also observed several fishing-canoes upon the sand, which convinced us there were more inhabitants. After questioning the Spaniard as we thought proper, and finding we could gain little intelligence from him, and neither poultry nor any kind of provision, we let him go, and sat down to partake of some refreshment that we had brought on-shore. After this, the captains returned to their ships, leaving us to complete our observations and our wooding. While the men were employed in cutting their wood, I penetrated a little into the bushes, and discovered a beaten track, where I could perceive the footsteps of horses, and believe it was the road to the town of Guanico, which the Spaniard assured us was eight miles distant; but I think it could not be above two or three.

We did not perceive any fruit-trees growing in the part of the wood where we were, but were informed by the Spaniard that there were plenty up the country. In the woods we saw parrots, some wild doves of a beautiful pluinage, and a number of very handsome small birds; as also a great many lizards, and particularly the large species which the Spaniards call guana. They are very terrific in their aspect and appearance, much resembling a young erocodile, from two to four feet long; they move with amazing swiftness, but are perfectly harmless. The inhabitants eat them, and consider them as a great delicacy. The parrots are likewise commonly eaten: they are the large green species. The natives that we spoke with would not sup-

ply us with any single article, either of curiosity or provision; and I was apprehensive that they had only disappeared, to collect a greater number, and attack us from the woods, where they might have done us considerable mischief, without much risk on their part. From these considerations, we hastened to complete our survey, and returned to the ship.

Tuesday, 3d.—Came to an anchor off Cape Roxo. The Cherub parted company, to go on a cruise to the southward, and we prepared to send away our yawl, in company with a pinnace from the Cherub, to cruise in the Mona Passage for eight days, putting a brass six-pounder in her bow, to command respect.

Wednesday, 4th.—About nine o'clock, the yawl left the ship, under the command of Lieutenant Browne, and Mr. Clarence, purser, in the pinnace, equipped and victualled for eight days.

Thursday, 5th.—Employed in painting the ship.

Sunday, 8th.—Chased and boarded a schooner, which proved to be English, from Curaçoa, bound to Antigua. The master was brought on-board, and found, to his astonishment, that he had mistaken the south-west end of Porto Rico for the island of Santa Cruz, a distance of more than a hundred miles to leeward of his reckoning. This intelligence was not much relished, as his cargo consisted chiefly of asses, and their fodder was nearly expended, which he was going to replenish at Santa Cruz. It is to be feared that many of them would die of hunger before they could reach that place.

In the afternoon spoke the Galatea frigate, who informed us that they had fallen in with our boats, who had chased them, and fired muskets at them, supposing the ship to be a merchantman. We learned likewise from them, that five boats belonging to the Melampus and two other ships, had been sent into a Spanish harbour in the Mona Passage, to cut out some vessels they saw there, but miscarried, with the loss of the first-lieutenant, a marine officer of the Melampus, and nine men killed by the fire from the batteries.

Monday, 9th.—Fell in again with the Cherub, and learned that she had been chasing a French schooner privateer, and that the crew, in attempting to run her ashore, had been prevented by the Cherub's launch, which was cutting wood. The French, after firing one or two swivels, left their vessel, which was taken possession of and manned by the Cherub. She is called La Vaillante, and was armed with only swivels and musquetoons. Every soul on-board had abandoned her, except a sick man, who died next day; and no papers of any kind could be found in her but the signal-book, from which we learned the name of the vessel; and, what was more important, obtained possession

of a code of signals, which may be of service hereafter, as they appear to be of general use among the privateers. An order was likewise found in the signal-book from the master of the port of Basse Terré, Guadaloupe, by which we found her name to be La Vaillante, Capitain Dubois. There were likewise the signal-flags of another schooner called La Bien Aimée. The schooner now serves as a tender for the two ships.

Wednesday, 11th.—Being as far to windward as the Dead-chest, we bore up for Cape Roxo, to look out for our boats. Chased and spoke an English schooner from Curaçoa, bound to Tortola.

Thursday, 12th.—At eight this morning our boats came alongside, having completed their eight days' cruise. Though they had effected nothing, they brought us tolerably correct information as to the country, its inhabitants, its harbours, &c. It appears that, on the first day of their cruise, they fell in with the English sloop privateer which we had been in company with before, and, attended by a boat's crew from them, had gone on shore. They found a number of Spanish huts near the spot where they landed, whose inhabitants fled at their approach: it seems, they have been often plundered by boats from the different men-of-war; and they are naturally great cowards. Our boats' crews proceeded to shoot the bullocks which run wild in the woods, and are found in great numbers every-where in the island; and, having killed as many as served their purpose, returned to their boats, without any interruption from the Spaniards. In a subsequent attempt, however, of the same kind, some Spaniards, armed and mounted, attacked and fired upon them, and drove them to the beach. They then pursued their course to the northward, along the west end of the island, going ashore occasionally for a supply of provisions, but sleeping always in their boats. In one place, standing too close in-shore in the evening, they were fired at, and an alarm was given, by sounding horns, to the neighbouring inhabitants. They observed two barks and a felucca at anchor in a bay called Margarie, defended by a battery of eight guns. It was here that the boats of the *Melampus* had met with such ill success a few days before; and our boats being informed of the circumstance, did not think proper to attempt any thing more than sounding in the channel, which runs within a very extensive reef. Having finished their observations, they proceeded round the north-west end of Porto Rico, and, being short of water, hoisted a flag of truce, and went ashore. The commandant of this place received them very politely, took them to his house, and gave the officers who landed a dinner. He was a planter, and appeared to hold some colonial command in the

neighbourhood where he lived, as a number of armed Spaniards assembled at his house on seeing the boats, most of them mounted, and some of them very elegantly caparisoned. There was at the house a negro girl, who spoke a little English, and served for an interpreter. After they had dined, the commandant informed our officers that he wished them to depart, as he was every moment in expectation of the captain-general, as he styled him, and it would not be advisable for them to be seen on shore. On returning to their boats, they observed some Spaniards in the bushes deliberately taking aim at them with their muskets; this they pointed out to the Spaniards in company with them, who instantly made a signal to them not to fire, and they disappeared. On arriving at their boats, they found the generous commandant had sent them down a fat goat and some milk. Taking leave of the Spaniards, they shaped their course to the southward, and landed on the island of Zaccheo, uninhabited, and distant about four miles from the main-land. Here they found a number of goats and no disturbance from the Spaniards, which proved very desirable to our men, who began to feel harassed, from being constantly night and day in the boats. After remaining a night on the island, they continued their course to the southward, to fall in with the ship, making observations on the coast as they went along, going ashore occasionally for bullocks and calves for their own use, and sometimes plundering the fishing-boats for fish, and water, which was growing very short; it being very difficult to procure any on the coast.

Friday, 13th.—At 4 p. m. came to anchor close to the Dead-chest, not more than a quarter of a mile from the shore. We had stood within a cable's-length of the beach before we let go the anchor. Went ashore in the evening, and found the whole island covered with an almost impenetrable thicket: a lofty and beautiful hill rose on the weather-side of the island, which we felt a great desire to explore, as we knew it to abound in goats, and fixed on the next morning for our excursion. Saw a number of shells on the shore, but none in a good state of preservation.

Saturday, 14th.—Landed again on the Dead-chest at daylight, and supposing the foot of the mountain not to be a quarter of a mile from us, we resolved on going through the thicket. There were three of us in company, Capt. Bouchier, Mr. Clarence the purser, and myself; and taking two men, with hatchets and cutlasses, we began to cut our way through the thicket. We soon found that we had not very accurately estimated the difficulties attending our enterprise: after cutting away the bushes, and pushing through them, at the expense of

our skin, for above an hour, we found ourselves apparently as far as ever from the mountain. This not a little disheartened us, as we were excessively fatigued by the exertion we had undergone; having to carry heavy muskets and cartridge-boxes, and to exert ourselves very much in cutting away and pushing through the bushes. We nevertheless continued our exertions, and presently had the satisfaction to hear the surge beating upon the rocks, which appeared to be almost under our feet. This sound was tremendous, but it afforded us no small satisfaction, as we found that we were near the sea on the opposite side of the island; so, collecting all our strength, we cut our way through to it. We found now a very good path along the sea-side to the foot of the mountain, but Capt. Bourchier was so fatigued, that he resolved to go no farther. I was no less fatigued, but anxious to see the top of the mountain. I prevailed on the purser to accompany me, and to attempt the ascent. We selected the bed of a torrent as the most proper place, and began to ascend over large masses of rock which lay loose on the side of the precipice, and threatened to roll down with us, if we ventured upon them. However, we arrived without accident to an eminence about half-way up the mountain; and, as our difficulties increased, I could not prevail on the purser to proceed any further, and indeed so great was our fatigue, that I do not believe we could possibly have accomplished our purpose. A head-ache too, which now began to grow violent upon me, made me decide on returning: on our way back, however, we did not return through the woods, as we had come, but went round the beach,—a much easier march, though somewhat farther. On coming to the place where we landed, we found the captain bathing, and accompanied him to a small detached island, forming the extreme point of the Dead-chest, and separated from the rest by a reef of rocks, covered with the water. This appears at a distance like a green field; on landing, we found it covered with samphire, and abounding in a great variety of birds: among others, we observed a great number of pelicans, and shot at some of them flying, but without success, as we had only musket-balls. After gathering a few corals and shells on the shore, we returned on-board to breakfast, not a little fatigued by our excursion. A party of men were on shore, cutting wood for the ship, which duty being completed, we weighed, and made sail again for Cape Roxo.

About 4 p. m. saw a schooner to the southward, and went in chase, casting off the pinnace belonging to the Cherub, which was towing astern, putting a midshipman and six men in her, to keep her in-shore for the night. After a chase of three hours, in which we gained considerably on the schooner, we lost sight

of her all at once, it growing very dark; and suppose she took-in all her sails to deceive us: she had every appearance of being an enemy.

Sunday, 15th.—Our boat returned on-board this morning, informing us that two men had been left on shore, and could not be found. The boat was dispatched ashore again after them, but returned without success; it appeared afterwards, that they had deserted.

Monday, 16th.—Observed a boat filled with water, and hove-to, to fetch it on-board; it appeared to be a merchantman's boat, and to have been some time in the water. On bailing out the water, we found a number of small fish at the bottom; these had attracted a score of dolphins, which were playing round the boat, and continued to follow it. We instantly got out lines and hooks baited with the small fish, and, in less than half-an-hour, four fine dolphins were hauled on-board. The dolphin, when dying, exhibits such a spectacle as cannot well be imagined; the rapid succession of brilliant colours that takes place, is astonishing and delightful. The most striking are the gold and silver colours, which succeed to one another about the head of the fish; they exceed the finest gilding I have ever seen. The purple of the fins is likewise superior to any colours we can prepare by art. The fish itself is about 3 or 4 feet long, and very good eating; they frequently leap out of the water; and it is truly amusing to watch them, while in pursuit of their prey.

Tuesday, 17th.—At midnight, descried a sail on the weather-beam, which, from her appearance, we took to be the Cherub: after sailing in company with her about half-an-hour, observed her to tack and make more sail. We tacked too, and made sail enough to keep up with her. We discovered her to be a two-masted vessel, and this made us think she might be one of the French men-of-war brigs we were daily expecting to see enter the Mona Passage, and which we had been all this time cruising to intercept. The hands were immediately turned up to quarters, and every preparation made to give them a polite reception. After an hour's chase, we saw the stranger lying-to a-head of us, within pistol-shot, and apparently prepared to receive us warmly. Our guns were primed, the men at their quarters, and nothing but the word of command wanted, to have sent a volley of destruction on-board the vessel, when, on coming up with her, we discovered her to be a schooner of a suspicious appearance; and knowing that a Spanish privateer answering to that description, armed with 14 guns, and well manned, was cruising in those seas, we still kept our formidable position, supposing she might fire a broadside into us,

before she could discover the superiority of our force. We hailed her, and hove-to under her quarter; she answered with hesitation, and apparently was much confused. After being asked whence she came and whither bound, she at last answered from La Guyara to Trinidad. This absurd answer was given in such a manner, as convinced us she was a foreigner, and an enemy. It is so rare to meet with any thing but privateers, that we had no doubt of her being one, and accordingly we manned and armed two boats; in a few minutes they were a-board of her, the marines being drawn up, on the poop, to cover the boarders, in case of resistance. Lieut. Browne was the officer who boarded her; and he presently informed us, to our great joy, that she was a Spanish schooner, with a cargo of hides, cocoa, and indigo. The prisoners were immediately sent on-board the Nimrod, and we found her to be the Esther schooner, cleared out from La Guyara, and bound to Teneriffe. Neither the officers nor men appeared disconcerted at this sudden reverse of fortune. When our officers boarded them, the captain and mate were lying very coolly on the top of their companions, smoking segars.

Wednesday, 18th.—Went on-board and examined the prize; she proved to be a very fine vessel, copper-bottomed and fastened; found in her cabin some good wine and sweetmeats, with various serviceable articles for the mess; also a few Spanish charts, &c.

Among her papers were found some government dispatches, and many private letters. On looking over the invoice, the captain pointed out a list of articles amounting to 1000 dollars, remarking with some emphasis, "These were mine;" then, shaking his head, he observed very coolly, "It was the fortune of war;" and took no farther notice of the affair.

At noon, saw a schooner off Cape Roxo: went in chace, and came up with her in two hours; she proved to be the tender of the Start brig, which had been cruising sometime in the Mona Passage.

Thursday, 19th.—Weather perfectly calm; punished three men for plundering the prize, and three for other offences.

For many nights past we had observed different explosions of thunder and lightning on the mountains in-shore, which never affected us, at the distance of three or four miles. They come on immediately after sun-set, and continue till about eight o'clock. In the inland part of the island (Porto Rico), they are never twenty-four hours without a thunder-storm.

Saturday, 21st.—Fell in again with the Cherub; she had been down to Saint Domingo, in chace, but had taken nothing. Continued cruising off Cape Roxo.

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Sunday, 22d.—At day-light, the Cherub made a signal for an enemy; and, on standing in-shore, we saw a brig coming down before the wind. Finding we were in chace of her, she ran withinside a very extensive and dangerous reef of coral rocks, where our ships could not follow her; and, about seven *a.m.* we observed her run on shore. Our men were at quarters, supposing her to be a man-of-war; but, on approaching nearer, found her to be a privateer, under French colours. Our boats were immediately manned and armed, and proceeded to attack her, under the command of Lieut. Fitzpatrick. The ship, in the meantime, came to anchor off the reef. The passage through the rocks was both difficult and dangerous; and, as soon as the boats were abreast of the brig, she opened a fire upon them; this was returned from the ship, which was at anchor within gun-shot, and, having soon silenced her fire, obliged the Spaniards to quit her. The boats were now approaching close, and had likewise opened a fire upon her. They quickly took to their boat, after spiking their own guns, and taking away as much of their property as the time would allow. She was immediately taken possession of; and, on examining her hold, was found to be loaded up to the hatches with cocoa, stowed in bulk. She was armed with two very long guns six-pounders, four howitzers, and a great number of musketoons. One of the boats went a-shore, to push for the brig's boat, which the Spaniards perceiving, immediately fled, carrying away what they could; the rest fell into our hands. From the manner of her being armed, there was no doubt of her being a letter-of-marque. Not a single paper of consequence fell into our hands, except the log-book, by which it appeared that she had sailed from Cumano on the Spanish main, and was bound for Barcelona in Europe. As we had observed a number of musquets to be fired on both sides, as well as the broadside from the brig, we supposed some of our men might be wounded. I was therefore dispatched in a boat, to render assistance, if necessary. Captains Bouchier and Ravenshaw likewise went on-board the prize, to consult on the best method to get her off the ground, and, what was more difficult, to get her out of the reef. We were not a little pleased, on arriving on-board, that none of our men had received any injury from the enemy's fire, and that the prize was more valuable than we expected. I never before saw a ship of any description so filthy and disagreeable; we were almost suffocated with garlick; how the Spaniards could live in such a beastly condition, is to me unaccountable, when they might have added so much to their own comfort by a due regard to cleanliness. Before they left the brig, they had taken the pains to scuttle her under the bows; but, as this was disco-

tered by our men, the leak was quickly stopped. We now began to attempt to get her off, by carrying out an anchor abaft, and heaving with all our force upon the hawser; this not succeeding, we got out another anchor forward, hove upon both hawsers, first upon one and then on the other, and several hours were employed this way to no purpose. We then proceeded to lighten her, by getting out her guns, anchors, &c. On lowering one of the long guns into the prize's boat, where there was already an anchor, the weight of the gun sent the whole to the bottom; by which accident, we lost a boat, an anchor, and a gun. The vessel, however, was so much lightened, that she now began to move, but soon stuck fast again. We had now recourse to another expedient, which was making the men run alternately from one side of the deck to the other, by which means the vessel was kept in a constant rocking motion, and a strong breeze springing up from the land at the same time, we had, at length, the satisfaction of seeing her make way through the water at the rate of four knots. We welcomed her with hearty cheers, and, in about ten minutes, brought her up in four fathom water. The most laborious part of our task was now completed, but the most dangerous was still to come; which was, to conduct her through such a tremendous reef of rocks, where we with difficulty found a passage for our boats. After giving our men a quarter of an hour to refresh, as they had been employed from day-light till four o'clock, we proceeded to an undertaking, in which we were all interested, as we might lose in a moment what we had attained with much toil, and not without danger; for, if the Spaniards had possessed a grain of spirit, they might have done us a world of mischief, without any risk to themselves. We were, in fact, within pistol-shot of the shore, which was covered with wood, and by no means thinly inhabited. The little privateer schooner, our prize, had come in to our assistance; and she, with two boats, one of which I had charge of, was sent a-head, to sound and search for the best passage through the rocks; the other boats were employed in towing the prize out. On coming to the first reef, we with difficulty found a passage wide enough for the brig, with a great number of windings, obliging her to bear up for one rock, then luff again instantly to weather another; and thus she proceeded, the boats pointing out to her the rocks, which were all under water. The schooner, leading through the passage, passed the same in about half-an-hour, though not without touching the bottom once or twice. We had now, to get out the way we intended, two miles to tow her, right in the wind's eye; after which, there was another extensive reef to pass, and the passage still more intricate than

the one we had already cleared. This task was extremely arduous; and, notwithstanding all the exertions our boats could make, she would not move a foot to windward, but continued going astern, till very near on the reef she had already passed. We had now but one resource, which was, to bear up and go before the wind, running all hazards. If no passage could be found, our prize and all our labour would have been lost. However, we made sail upon the brig, the boats still going a-head, and giving indication of every danger. After running about five miles, with sunken rocks on every side, we at length found ourselves, to our great joy, in deep water, and out of danger, though about four or five miles to leeward of our ships. The Cherub, who had continued all this time under-way, bore up, and run down to us; and we went on-board, to partake of a hearty dinner with Captain Ravenshaw, not a little fatigued with our exertions, and well pleased to see the fortunate result.

Monday, 23d.—Parted company with the Cherub, and proceeded towards the island of St. Thomas, with our prizes. At 4 p.m. the brig made a signal of distress, and we bore down, and spoke her. We were afraid she had sprung a leak, as it was blowing a gale of wind; but found, on hailing her, that a man had fallen from her main-yard. I was immediately ordered to go on-board; and, though it blew pretty hard, and the sea was running very high, we effected it in a small boat, not without danger. I found the poor fellow senseless, with his skull fractured, and likewise his thigh: with some difficulty we got him into the boat, and conveyed him on-board the Nimrod, where I examined his head, and, finding the injury very serious, performed the operation of trepanning him, but without success, for the poor fellow died in about half-an-hour after the operation.

Two vessels had been discovered coming down before the wind about sun-set; but, as we did not choose to part company with our prizes, we did not go in chace. About nine o'clock they were discovered again, bearing down upon us, in a very cool and determined manner. They were not seen, as the night was dark, till very close to us; and, on being discovered, the hands were turned-up to quarters, and the ship prepared for action. Their not bearing down to us till after dark, had a suspicious appearance; and, when we got a clear sight of them, we found one to be a very large brig, and the other a ship. The brig first came up with us, and we hailed her. In reply to our question, "What brig is that?" the answer was, "His Majesty's brig Herald; heave-to, or I'll fire into you." Knowing that his Majesty had no brig of that name, it increased our suspicions; and, as she passed very hastily by us, we went

about, and hovered between the two vessels. In the mean time, the brig fired a shot at one of our schooners, to bring her to. A hasty officer would probably have left all further explanation to his guns; but Captain Bouchier resolved to be thoroughly satisfied of their being an enemy, before he began an engagement. We hailed her then repeatedly, threatening to give her a broadside, if she did not give more explicit answers. As her answers were still evasive, we fired one gun at her, which produced the desired effect; and we learned that they were English West-Indiamen, having a letter-of-marque, and bound to Jamaica. A boat was sent on-board the brig, to press some of her men; and the master brought his papers on-board us. Five men were pressed out of the brig; but, as the master remonstrated very warmly with Captain Bouchier to have them returned, we returned him three, and left them to continue their course.

Wednesday, 25th.—At 4 *p.m.* the Spanish schooner, which we had now in tow, hailed, and informed us that a man had fallen from the main-yard. I was dispatched on-board; and found the poor fellow with his left arm fractured, and much bruised in various parts of his body: brought him on-board the *Nimrod*. He was the messmate and countryman of the poor man killed on Monday on-board the brig; both of them Swedes. However, no danger is apprehended for his life.

Saturday, 28th.—About 10 *a.m.* passed the west end of the island of Santa Cruz. Its appearance from the sea is truly beautiful: every spot of ground in a high state of cultivation, so that it has been deservedly called the Garden of the West-Indies. In the centre of a large bay at this end of the island, appears the town of Fredericstadt; not very spacious, but seemingly with a number of good buildings, and many of them very large. The estates in the neighbourhood of the town are laid-out with great care, and evince no small degree of taste. One, to the northward of it, is particularly worthy of notice; neatness and elegance predominating, such as we rarely meet with in the West Indies. The buildings are arranged with the nicest regularity: the negro-huts, in particular, which are very numerous, and much larger and handsomer than any I have ever seen, are disposed in four lines on a rising ground, in such a manner that not one of them is concealed: they have altogether the air of neat European cottages. Could we but imagine them to be the residence of a free and happy peasantry, the scene might be contemplated with pleasure; but the iron hand of slavery throws a gloomy shade over the most enchanting prospects of these regions. Where we would gladly imagine the tranquil retreat of innocence and virtue, we meet only a herd of the human species reduced to the most abject state of misery, considered,

even by themselves, as an inferior order of beings in the scale of Creation!

About 4 p. m. anchored outside the harbour of St. Thomas, and went on-shore to the town, situated at the bottom of a deep bay, surrounded with lofty hills. It presents a noble kind of amphitheatre, viewing it from the sea, as the mountains rise almost perpendicularly at the back of the town, and are cultivated to their very summits. The aspect of the town itself, when you are ashore, is not so attractive: it is excessively hot, as the wind is intercepted by the hills with which it is surrounded; and, having lately suffered by two extensive conflagrations, it exhibits a ruinous appearance, ungrateful to the eye. The principal merchants have rebuilt their houses and stores with brick and stone, and in such a manner as to resist the invasion of fire; but the thick stone walls, and doors covered with plates of iron or copper, have an uncouth and heavy appearance, in a country where we constantly look for the lightest possible architecture.

Sunday, 29th.—At six this morning the ship weighed, and ran down to Black-rock about eight or ten miles to leeward of the harbour of St. Thomas. Being ashore at the town, I followed the ship, after breakfast, in a small four-oared cutter, and found her anchored in a deep bay, watering. The watering-place is at the bottom of an uncultivated valley or gulley, above which the mountain rises to a great height, almost perpendicular.

The valley and sides of the mountain are covered with an immense variety of trees and shrubs, some of them uncommonly beautiful. Among the rest, the aloes attracted attention: they were very numerous, and most of them in blossom. Some of the species I had never seen before: they were very large, and the leaves of a bright-scarlet colour; the blossoms, which grow to the height of about five feet, are yellow and white. There is another species here, with a yellow blossom, growing to the height of twenty feet: they would be considered as very great curiosities in an English hot-house, and they are, doubtless, the most magnificent plants I have ever seen. The tree called the *snake-wood* grows here in great profusion: it is a very superb shrub, and bears a large white blossom, somewhat resembling a lily. It emits an agreeable smell, and would be a very superior ornament to a garden. What most entertained my fancy, was the wild pine, as it is called: it is a very great vegetable curiosity. I had observed vast numbers of them hanging on the bushes, and supposed at first that they were accidentally thrown there by the wind, or by the negroes; but found, on a closer examination, that this was the place which nature had destined for their growth. Their roots, composed of long green fibres,

are twisted closely round a small twig, from which they receive their whole support, and seem as if they were placed there by art. The roots are very small in proportion to the size of the plant, which is a species of the aloe, and in form and colour exactly resembles the tree which produces the pine-apple, though it is less in size. I could not learn whether it produces any kind of fruit, but saw several of them in blossom. The flower is white, proceeding from a stem about a foot high, and is a stately object, of the same form as all the aloes; and, like them, the plant is propagated by young shoots, growing up from the roots. I observed a number of climbing plants interwoven with others, like the woodbine: some of them have very beautiful flowers. Among others, the crab-eyes were very numerous, the plant which produces the small red pea worn by the negroes for beads: it bears a very rich blossom. The only fruit-tree I could find, was the sour-sop; a fruit of a very pleasant acid taste, and found to be an excellent antidote against thirst.

After examining all the plants and shrubs I could see at the bottom of the valley, I began to ascend the mountain, and could trace a road, constructed along its side, not passable for carriages, but well enough adapted for a horse or a mule. I continued to ascend along this road, but found the heat too violent, being on the lee-side of the mountain, to gain the highest ridge. When I had gained a pretty considerable elevation, I descried a small house, situated about half-way up the mountain: thither I descended, being much fatigued. It was a small sugar estate; and the house was occupied by the manager, a young man, and his wife, a very agreeable young Danish woman. They received me with great hospitality, brought me refreshments, and shewed me over the sugar-works. I was fatigued and sleepy, which they no sooner perceived, than they offered me a bed to lie down. As I had been wandering about since day-light, and it was now two o'clock, I was heartily glad to accept this kind offer, and was presently shewn to a bed, from which my fair landlady had just risen. I laid down, and enjoyed a very comfortable sleep for two hours, when they woke me to dinner. After taking a family-dinner with them, at which they expressed unfeigned satisfaction, the manager accompanied me down the mountain as far as the watering-place, where the boats were still employed. It is a recess, admirably calculated for such a purpose: a fine pellucid stream gushes down from the top of the mountain, forming a number of small cascades in its course. One of these is so close to the water's edge, that it is only necessary to put the casks under it, and they will fill themselves; and hence they may be immediately carried on-board, without further trouble.

Monday, 20th.—Continued at Black-rock, watering. Went

ashore again in the afternoon, and ascended the mountain top. The side of the mountain being almost perpendicular, the ascent was attended with considerable fatigue and difficulty. I procured a negro to shew me the path, and arrived at the top of the ridge in less than four hours. I found myself amply repaid for my fatigue, by the extensive prospect beneath me. The ship, riding at anchor, appeared like a small pinnace under my feet, and the boats were almost undiscernible specks floating on the surface of the water. The view of the sea, with groups of adjacent islands, was a truly enchanting panorama. The lofty blue mountains of Porto Rico bounded the prospect on the west, and intercepted from my view the setting sun. The whole channel between St. Thomas and Porto Rico is most richly studded with islands, and affords a most magnificent prospect. The elevation of the mountain I computed at two thousand feet, but there were still higher ridges to the eastward of my position. Their sides were, in general, covered with plantations of sugar-cane, and the land near the top was cultivated by the negroes for their own use: they raise sweet potatoes, pease, corn, &c. for their own consumption, and carry the overplus to market on Sundays; this being the usual market-day all over the West-India islands.

I continued sitting on a lofty crag of rock, enjoying the stupendous spectacle, till the sun had sunk considerably below the horizon, and the fainter light of the rising moon had sweetly tinged with a different hue every object around me. The horizon was now more contracted, the distant islands disappeared, and every object beneath me became more and more indistinct: nevertheless, the scene presented so many interesting objects, that I had almost forgotten the distance I had to descend, in order to return to the ship. My guide however, who had less relish for these scenes, threw out a hint that he was desirous to return, by observing that I should find a very hard bed, if I purposed staying there all night. As that was not my intention, we began to descend without loss of time. This task was almost as fatiguing as the ascent, the mountain being so steep; and, though we made our angles very acute, yet the descent was attended with no small difficulty. On our way down, I stopped at the little estate I had visited the day before, and then dismissed my guide. The little family were assembled in their gallery, contemplating the scene: they were not a little surprised at my appearing so late amongst them. After taking some refreshment, I passed a little time with them in their gallery, from which place the prospect appeared to great advantage. The house is very pleasantly situated, about six or seven hundred feet above the level of the sea, and commands a delightful view of the valley beneath, and of the sea, to a great distance. From this place is seen a rock in the sea, at the distance

of about ten miles from the island, which bears a very strong resemblance to a ship. At that distance, it is impossible to discover the difference with the naked eye, and when much nearer, this resemblance still holds good. The seamen call this the Sail-rock; but the inhabitants of St. Thomas's call it Frenchman's-rock, and they tell you a curious adventure that occurred respecting it. In the American war, a French frigate cruising in these seas, fell in with it in the night, and, taking it for a ship, hailed it; the hail was repeated from the rock by a loud echo, and the French captain, after hailing it several times, fired a broadside into it. The rock reverberated the sound of the guns, and at the same time some of the shot were thrown back on-board the frigate. This convinced the Frenchmen that they had fallen-in with an English man-of-war, and they forthwith commenced a heavy cannonading, which lasted without intermission till daylight, when they had the mortification to find that the enemy was formed of such materials as they could make no impression upon: they were then forced to haul off, *re infectâ*.

There are several small islands, or keys as they are called here, to be seen from this house, with the ships occasionally sailing amongst them. I thought the scene by moonlight very delightful; but, had there been nothing else to invite notice, the polite attentions of this little family could not fail to interest. They supplied me with every little article which might be thought curious or serviceable; and, amongst other things, with fruit, which was an excellent treat after coming from sea. I had heard the good lady express a wish for a monkey; and, as we had several on-board, I had sent a man up with one in the morning, with some salt-beef and other little commodities from the ship. I found the monkey already a great favourite, and the family truly grateful. In their solitary situation they seldom see strangers; and it must of course be a gratification to them to learn what was going on in the great world, which they seemed to know only from report. Their society was so agreeable, that it was not till I heard the report of the evening-gun, rolling like thunder through the rocks beneath us, that I thought of returning. I then took leave, and descended to the bottom of the valley, where I found a boat waiting for me.

Tuesday, 31st.—Having completed our watering, we weighed at daylight, and beat-up to St. Thomas's, where we anchored about ten o'clock. Captain Bouchier had determined on disposing of our prizes here, if possible; and, as we could not tell what was the cargo of the Spanish brig, not having her papers, we got her close in-shore, and sent hands on-board to discharge her cargo. Our purser, and one of the lieutenants of the Cherub, had gone up to Tortola, with such papers as we had in our possession, to get the prizes condemned; there being no judge of the Vice-admiralty

Court at St. Thomas's. On going ashore this morning, we received an invitation from the Governor, General M^cClean, to a ball at the Government-house on the king's birth-day.

Thursday, June 2d.—The cargo of the brig was now mostly discharged, and we found it consist of cocoa, cotton, and some indigo: the value of the whole, with the vessel, might be about 20,000 dollars. We here sold the small privateer schooner taken by the Cherub for 1200 dollars. The officers returned this evening from Tortola, having effected the condemnation of the three prizes.

A circumstance occurred to-day which disconcerted us. The carpenter had frequently represented the situation of the ship; and it had been pointed out likewise by different shipwrights, that, unless she underwent a thorough repair in dock, she could not long hold together; and such a repair could not be given her without going home to England. He had now examined the state of the vessel again minutely, and made an official report to Captain Bourchier; that the ship was not sea-worthy, that all her beams and upperworks were rotten, that her stern-post was rotten and loose, moving backward and forward with the rudder, and that he could not be answerable for her holding together in a squall. In this condition, we did not know exactly how to act: if we hove her down in the harbour of St. Thomas, and attempted any kind of repair, we should probably make bad worse; and yet it was a considerable hazard to try and beat up to Barbadoes: however, as her bottom was good, and she had hitherto made no water, we resolved on trying for Barbadoes, though, had any accident happened, we had nothing to expect but her going at once to the bottom.

Friday, 3d.—Arrived the Cherub from her cruising ground off Porto Rico. The time of our cruise being now expired, we prepared to take in whatever was necessary and proceed to headquarters.

Saturday, 4th.—This being the king's birth-day, was celebrated in the usual manner by the garrison and ships of war in the harbour. A public *déjeuner* was given by the governor at twelve o'clock, and in the evening a ball, which was fully attended by the inhabitants, the officers of the garrison, and some few from the men-of-war. It appears a matter of indifference to the inhabitants of St. Thomas's whether they celebrate the birth-day of the king of England or of Denmark, and they appear perfectly contented with their change of masters. Under the Danish flag it was a free port, and carried on an extensive contraband trade with the Spanish colonies: it is now on the same footing with our other islands, but they still carry on their contraband trade. The harbour is extensive and convenient, and the appearance of the island altogether very agreeable. On two hills within the harbour are the

remains of two very strong and ancient towers: they are called here Blackbeard's castles, and are generally supposed to have been built by that once notified pirate. This island, it is well known, was a great rendezvous of the buccaniers; and these towers, no doubt, served as a defence, and perhaps a repository of their plunder.

June 5th.—At 10, *a.m.* Captain Bouchier came on-board, and brought with him an officer of the 70th regiment, who was coming a cruise to sea for the benefit of his health. We immediately got under-weigh, in company with the Cherub, leaving Mr. Clarence the purser, and a midshipman, to take care of the prizes. We proceeded towards Santa Cruz, where we hoped to get quit of our prisoners, as we were informed there was a Spanish cartel then at Christianstadt, from Porto Rico. We were not, however, able to fetch this place to-night.

June 7th.—This morning we found ourselves off the town of Christianstadt; and at nine o'clock Captains Bouchier and Ravenshaw left the ships, being about six miles in the offing. About an hour after, I left the ship in our small cutter, and sailed ashore. The harbour is defended by a formidable reef of rocks, which occupies the whole mouth of the bay, leaving only a small passage to windward, which every vessel or boat must pass through to enter the harbour. This narrow passage is defended by a fort; and every thing which comes in, must pass under their guns. I was fortunate enough to hit upon this passage, and sailed directly into the harbour, which is a very singular one: a small green island lies about two cables' length off the main-land, and, in the narrowest place, not half as much, forming a passage between them, where ships ride securely in smooth water as in a basin.

I landed upon a very extensive quay, surrounded with noble buildings, exhibiting a scene of industry and commerce similar to an English sea-port, and different from any thing I had expected to see in the West Indies. I was surprised to find the captains had not yet reached the shore, and began to be a little apprehensive for their safety, as their gig, the day before, had been upset in the harbour of St. Thomas's. However, about half an hour after, I met them in the street, and found they had but just landed, though they left the ship an hour before me. Not being able to fetch the windward passage through which I had come, they run down to leeward, along the reef, in hopes of finding some other; but, as there was no other passage, they were obliged, after all, to get out upon the rocks, and carry their boat over the reef.

I never was more astonished than to see such a town as Christianstadt in the West Indies. The streets are all wide, long, and straight, and intersect each other at right angles. They abound in noble and extensive buildings, all of stone or brick.

having piazzas in front. The Government-house looks like a palace, and there are several other public buildings equally respectable. Indeed, I did not see any thing like a mean-built house in the whole town; it had altogether the appearance of an European city; carriages with splendid liveries were rolling through the streets, and, what is very uncommon in this part of the world, the roads are so good, that a carriage may conveniently drive over the whole island. This gives an air of gaiety to the town, that is to be found no-where else in the West Indies. Near the wharf is a large square, which forms the parade, where I saw the 96th regiment mounting guard, and a great concourse of people assembled to hear their excellent band; some beautiful airs were performed, and the whole had a truly European appearance. The parade reminded me of the Angel-Hill at Bury St. Edmunds, and several parts of Christianstadt bear a resemblance to that beautiful town. I was particularly struck with the immense number of conch-shells which lay scattered about the streets, apparently for mending the roads; some of them of exquisite beauty, but mutilated; several parts of the town were paved with them. I could not but regret having so little time to wander over the town; it is very large, but I had no means of ascertaining the number of its inhabitants. I saw three churches very neatly built; in one of them which I entered, they were performing divine service in the Danish language. The inside of the building was elegant throughout, and conspicuous for the simplicity of its architecture. There was also a fine-toned organ, and their choir was very respectable.

The old Danish governor, it appears, was very fond of paintings, for the palace is full of them. It would require a month to examine them all; I looked at a great many, but could not see one worthy of particular observation, except a small portrait of the Crown Prince of Denmark, I know not by what master. The apartments are all richly furnished in the European style, with Turkey carpets and window curtains; articles which are seldom seen in in this country.

After inspecting every thing which a stay of four hours would allow, I returned on-board, and we made sail immediately.

Wednesday, 9th.—We were beating-up in company with the Cherub, to pass through the passage between Anegada and the island of Sombrero. The cluster of islands called the Virgin Gordas, which lie in this passage, present a novel and grotesque appearance. They are in general barren rocks, and exhibit a great variety of fantastic figures. One cluster, seen at a distance, very much resembles the ruins of a city; and the eye of fancy will survey the remains of ruined temples, columns, and

arches. These rocks have taken the name of the Fallen City : it is almost impossible to describe the different appearances they assume, when viewed from different bearings. The main-land of the Virgin Gordas is a pretty large island, in possession of the English ; it appears to be very barren, but, I believe, carries on a considerable contraband trade.

Thursday, 10th.—Passed through the passage between the islands of Anegada and Sombrero ; this is a very dangerous passage, and not much frequented by ships. The two islands are not within sight of each other, both being very low, and not visible till you approach very close to them. The island of Anegada is surrounded by a dangerous bank, which extends so far out, that ships are frequently upon it in thick weather before they can see the land. We saw from the mast-head the wreck of the *Astrea* frigate, which was lost about ten days ago, having, by a mistake in their reckoning, taken the high land of the Virgin Gordas for the mountains of Porto Rico. Standing in for the land, the ship struck upon the bank before they had observed the low land of Anegada. The crew were saved by a sloop-of-war, which hove in sight soon after, but the ship is irrecoverably lost. She was a fine new frigate just out from England, and this was her first cruise.

June 10th.—The island of Sombrero is likewise very low ; it is a small barren rock, and in its figure resembles a hat, which is the English of its name. A horrid act of barbarity had been lately perpetrated here, which it may be proper to record, though it tarnishes the British name. The Honourable Captain L—, commander of a brig sloop-of-war, having had occasion frequently to punish one of his seamen for various offences, and often with great severity, at length adopted the barbarous resolution of sending the poor fellow ashore on a barren and uninhabited island. This was the spot he fixed upon ; and a more horrid situation could not have been easily selected, as it does not produce a single article to support existence, not even water. Here the poor man was left ashore, and the brig sailed away for Barbadoes. The intelligence quickly reached the Admiral's ears, and he ordered the vessel instantly to return to Sombrero, and search for him, which they did ; but, after the most minute search, nothing could be found of him but the shirt and trowsers he went ashore in. It has been lately reported that the man was immediately taken off the island by an American vessel, and that he has been since heard of in America.* It is likewise reported that the commander-in-chief acquainted Captain L. that he must either quit the country immediately, or stand

* This report has since been confirmed.

his trial by a court-martial. Certain it is, that the honourable gentleman immediately went home for the benefit of his health. It is much to be regretted that any interest should screen such a tyrant from the punishment he justly deserves.

Sunday, 13th.—Being now, as we supposed, sufficiently to windward to fetch Barbadoes, we shaped our course for that island accordingly. About 3, *a.m.* we discovered a leak in the bread room, and communicated the notice to the Cherub by telegraph. They knowing our situation, desired us to keep close, and to inform them if our danger increased.

Monday, 14th.—Our leak is found to be somewhat increased by the heavy sea we had to encounter, but is still easily kept under by the pumps. About noon discovered land upon the lee-bow, which proved to be the island of Antigua; by which we found that we were sixty miles to leeward of our reckoning, and that we must have nearly run over the low island of Barbuda in the night, which would have quickly put a stop to our navigation. These errors in the dead reckoning are common here, and unavoidable on account of the strong currents which set in various directions: the causes, however, have never yet been circumstantially explained. Captain Ravenshaw now made a signal to us, to know if we would wish to bear up for Antigua; but that we were not desirous of doing, being anxious to reach Barbadoes at all hazards.

Tuesday, 15th.—Another squally night had nearly determined our captain to bear-up for English Harbour; but day light, better weather, and a strong desire of reaching Barbadoes, had overcome his fears, and we still persisted in our former resolution. About sun-set we spoke the Swinger gun-brig, just out of English Harbour, and learned from her that the fever was making great havoc among our officers and seamen at that place. We soon after spoke the Woolverine, and before midnight lost sight of the Cherub.

Wednesday, 16th.—At day light saw the little island of Deseada right a-head; bore up, and went to leeward of it, passing through the narrow channel between Petite Terre and Guadeloupe. The island of Deseada is a high table land, of a singular aspect; but it appears to be pleasant and fertile. We have lately taken it from the French, together with Marie Gallante, an island now under our lee; they are neither of much value in a commercial point of view; but they harboured a swarm of French privateers, and form now a very convenient station for our cruisers. We now continued our course for Barbadoes alone, having parted company with the Cherub.

Thursday, 17th.—At noon began to look out for the land of Barbadoes on the lee-bow, and, about three in the afternoon, thought we had discovered it. We bore up, but had the mor-

tification of seeing it vanish. About sun-set discovered the land on our weather-bow, distant about 12 miles. After standing well in for it, we ran under the lee of the island. We had for some time observed a light, which we supposed to be on shore; but, at eleven o'clock, found it to be a large ship carrying a light at her mizen peak, with two other ships in company. We made the private night-signal, but she took no notice of it, only by hauling down her lantern, and continued her course steadily towards us. This caused us a great deal of suspicion, and we immediately beat to quarters, and hauled down our signal; as one of the ships was now near enough to us to convince us that she was a large man-of-war, and the other two we could perceive were very large ships. We watched their motions very cautiously, but they passed us without taking notice, and continued their course to the northward and westward, leaving us to form conjectures at our leisure.

Friday, 18th.—This morning at eight o'clock we came to an anchor in Carlisle Bay; and the first intelligence we received was, that a report had been circulated at Barbadoes, and inserted in their Gazette, that the Nimrod had been sunk by a French battery at Guadaloupe, and all hands lost. We learned, too, that the ships which had astonished us so much in the night, were a part of the homeward-bound convoy which had sailed from Carlisle Bay the evening before, under charge of the Jason frigate, with several other ships of war. As soon as the ship was anchored, Captain Bourchier took the earliest opportunity of waiting upon the Admiral, to report her situation; and I lost no time in getting ashore to see my old acquaintances, as my long residence in Barbadoes had rendered it a sort of home to me.

June 18th.—Our situation having been reported to the commander-in-chief, he ordered the ship to be overhauled by the officers of the yard, and, if possible, to undergo such repair as should enable her to proceed to England with the next convoy. She was accordingly warped close in-shore, and the carpenters proceeded to examine the state of her timbers, &c.

Sunday, 19th.—This morning Captain Bourchier was superseded by the Honourable Captain De Courcy, and Mr. Fitzpatrick the first-lieutenant went ashore sick to the hospital.

Monday, 20th.—The carpenters, it appears, had made a favourable report of the state of the ship, as the Admiral gave orders to fit us out with all possible dispatch for sea, that we might go up to Surinam to collect the convoy. About eleven o'clock this forenoon, the ship brought home her anchor, and drifted aboard the prison-ship. It is fortunate that this accident did not happen in the night, as we might have drifted to sea

with a large opening in our stern and another in our bow, made by the carpenters just level with the water. She was, however, brought up without much damage.

Wednesday, 22d.—The fever is making destructive ravages in the garrison; several officers of rank have lately died, and many are now sick. The 63d regiment, and the detachments of recruits for different regiments who arrived by the last convoy, suffered most. In the meantime not a single case of fever is to be met with in the squadron, or in the naval hospital. A dysentery at present prevails among the seamen, and on shore with the natives; but in very few cases has it proved fatal.

Friday, 24th.—Lieutenant Fitzpatrick not wishing to accompany us to England, on account of an obstinate asthmatic complaint, applied to the admiral for another ship, which was granted; and Lieutenant Mould, of H. M. brig Recruit, was appointed to succeed him.

Sunday, 26th.—Arrived this morning a packet from England, and H. M. brig Billette, with a small convoy, likewise from home. Our ship was now in a great state of forwardness, and we were ordered to proceed to sea on Tuesday morning.

Monday, 27th.—This day was employed on-shore, in purchasing provisions and necessaries for the passage home, and in taking farewell of the island of Barbadoes and such kind friends as we had made during our former residence.

Tuesday, 28th.—Business had detained me ashore all night; and this morning the ship was under sail, and I still ashore, with all the sea-stock for our mess. I hired a boat, however, and got my things down with all possible dispatch; but, unfortunately, two pigs broke loose from the negroes who were driving them down to the boat, and my time would not allow of going in chace of them. I followed the ship in the offing, where she was hove-to, and found that we had received troops on-board for a passage to Surinam; and two officers, with a beautiful young lady just come from England, added to our mess, besides Captain De Courcy, who, having left all his furniture and utensils on-board another ship, preferred living with us in the gun-room. One of the agent's clerks being on-board paying prize-money to the ship's company, we did not make sail till eleven o'clock.

Wednesday, 29th.—Our fair messmate being dreadfully affected with sea-sickness, we could enjoy but little of her company; but our society, notwithstanding, appears to be very sociable, and promises to be pleasant, during our passage up to Surinam. Weather fine, and not too hot.

Saturday, 2d.—About 3, *p. m.* a very heavy squall came on with such rapidity, as would scarcely allow us time to shorten

sail. For some minutes it blew a perfect hurricane, and we were obliged to bear up for it, but received no damage, except splitting our gib.

Wednesday, 6th.—Being by our reckoning, last night, sufficiently far to windward, we bore up for the land, and this morning found the water changed to a pale-green colour, and no more depth than twenty fathoms. About noon, the land was seen from the mast-head, and we had only eight fathoms water, of a dirty-white colour, muddy bottom: we continued to stand in, till we were within five or six miles of the shore, in about two fathoms and a half, on a mud bank. The land is the most uninviting I ever saw, and appears with so much uniformity for several hundred miles together, that it is impossible to know what part you have discovered, without being particularly acquainted with the place. It is customary with ships that are strangers to the coast, to run along the land till they see a house, and then send a boat ashore through the mud, to ask what part of the country it is. The sea exhibits the appearance of a dirty puddle of water; and of the land you can see nothing but the tops of the trees just above the water; it is a perfect flat, without a feature of variety. The mouths of the rivers are discovered by the difference of the colour of the fresh water, which extends a great many miles out to sea, just the breadth of the river; and this forms a striking object. We were, according to our reckoning, some few miles to windward of Surinam; but as we could not see the river, nor ascertain, by the coast, whereabouts we were, we thought proper to trust to our reckoning, and run down along the coast upon the mud bank, which runs out seven or eight miles out to sea; at sun-set we came to anchor in four fathoms water, about six miles off the shore.

Thursday 7th.—This morning we again examined the coast, but could form no accurate idea of what place it was; but observing a point of land to leeward, we ran down towards it, and sending away a boat at the same time to search for houses, and enquire where we were. At eleven o'clock, the ship stuck fast in the mud, about three miles distant from the point. Fortunately, it was low water, and, in two hours time, we found ourselves afloat again; but the flood-tide was sweeping us fast in towards the shore, which obliged us to come to an anchor where we were. We discovered some houses within the point, and a river, but, to our great mortification, found it was not the Surinam; but whether to windward or to leeward, we could not even guess: however, we now saw our boat coming from the shore, where they had landed to gain intelligence. As we were very anxious to know our situation, we dispatched another boat down to speak them, having previously established a signal, by which

they were to inform us whether we were to windward or to leeward. About one, the boats spoke each other, and made the unexpected signal of our being to leeward of Surinam. At three, the boats came on-board, and we now found that the river we saw, was the Suramac, and that the land we first made was Surinam. We had run about forty miles to leeward of it. This was no pleasing intelligence; for we were to be at Surinam by the 9th instant, or we should be in danger of losing the convoy, and perhaps our passage to England. We had now no other alternative but beating up, taking advantage of the ebb tide, and anchoring with the flood. Accordingly, we weighed at five in the evening, and beat up till nearly twelve, when we came to an anchor, hoping to have gained at least ten miles.

July 8th.—This morning, at day-light, we found the ship about half a mile to windward of the place from which she started. This was discouraging; but we discovered that we had stood too far off shore, and, instead of a weather-tide, had to contend with a lee current. We could now profit by experience, and weighed again with the ebb tide, making short tacks; this enabled us to gain about ten miles in the course of the tide.

In the evening weighed again, and found the wind had shifted, so as to favour us considerably. At eleven at night we anchored again, having made a good tide's work.

Saturday, 9th.—Weighed at day-light, and about eleven were becalmed off the mouth of the Surinam river. Every thing appeared to oppose our endeavours; we were now in sight of our intended anchorage, without a possibility of approaching any nearer to it. These disappointments were the more severely felt, as we were all anxious to see a part of the world so little known to Englishmen. We were confined to a very short time, on account of the convoy, and began to be apprehensive we should not be able to set foot on shore, especially to visit the city of Paramaribo, situated about twenty miles up the river. There being no wind, we anchored, and remained in the same situation till daylight.

Sunday, 10th.—We made another attempt to gain the anchorage off Brams Point, and with our usual success; for about 11 we grounded again in the mud, and were obliged to lie till the return of the flood-tide. Here, however, we could make signals to the fort, and saw four of the merchant ships belonging to our convoy lying at the mouth of the river, and ready for sea. We hoisted our convoy signal, and some of the merchant-men's boats came on-board. We learned by them, that there were about ten ships in all to proceed with us to England.

We had now a better view of the shore, which presents the same forbidding appearance as at the mouth of the Suramac,

It is one continued forest for an extent of nearly a thousand miles, without variation; not a single object to amuse, not the smallest elevation of one part of the ground above another. All, in fact, is one continued level covered with trees, and with so little elevation above the water, that the sea frequently flows ten or twelve miles up into the country, forming immense swamps; for which reason the country has been called by the English "The land of mud."

At four in the afternoon we were again afloat, and anchored within a mile of Bram's Point about five. We presently disembarked our troops, and I went ashore with some of our officers, eager to set foot on the continent of South America. The officers of the fort received us with great politeness, being always glad to see strangers in such a retired situation. There was a company of the 16th regiment doing duty there, and three or four officers, beside those belonging to the garrison, who were there for the benefit of their health, having come down from Paramarabo convalescent, where a great mortality had prevailed. I could not but observe the immense number of the fire-flies which were seen in the woods. They had an odd appearance, each of them resembling a person passing quickly from bush to bush with a light; great swarms of them are constantly in motion. Our troops were embarked in a large covered boat thatched over with reeds, and capacious enough to convey at least 200 men, with their baggage: in this they were to proceed to Paramarabo with the first tide. These boats are peculiarly serviceable here, where heavy rains fall almost every day.

Monday, 11th.—At two this morning left the ship, in company with Captain Decourcy, Mr. Stevenson the master, and the officer of the troops, and proceeded up the river. This is a noble river, as wide as the Thames, flowing through an impenetrable forest, inhabited by wild beasts and by nations of savage Indians. About day-light, we passed by the mouth of the Maravine river, which empties itself into the Surinam about twelve miles from the sea. At the junction of the two rivers is a fort of some strength and extent called Fort Amsterdam; it is considered as the key to the colony. The 16th regiment were doing duty there. The Maravine is nearly as large a river as the Surinam, and on its banks are a number of beautiful plantations. On ascending the river above Fort Amsterdam, the prospect began to grow more animated, as we had now day-light, and our ears were at times saluted with the roaring of the tigers, who came down to the banks of the river to drink. This wild music continued almost all the way to Paramarabo, which we reached about seven o'clock. The tigers

of this country are inferior in size to those of Africa and the East Indies, but are very fierce: all the other wild beasts are likewise less here than in the Old World. We were particularly entertained with seeing vast flocks of *flamingos*, a bird about the size of a young turkey, but more elegantly shaped, and with much longer legs and a long beak. The whole plumage is of a very brilliant scarlet, so that when walking upon the beach, which they always do in a line, they might easily be taken for a party of soldiers.

The river, as you approach the town, becomes more and more interesting. The right bank ascending, appears covered with cultivated grounds and villas; the Dutch and the English too have spared neither pains nor expense to render their habitations delightful. These villas are principally the country residences of the citizens. On landing at the usual landing-place, I was surprised to find myself on a pleasant green, such as I have often noticed in some of the retired villages of England, embellished with rows of lofty trees and spacious walks underneath them. I could hardly fancy myself in a spacious city, such as I expected to find Paramaribo; and was still more surprised, on crossing the green, to find myself in an extensive street filled with noble buildings, and at the same time presenting the appearance of gardens and the country. There was an excellent carriage-road in the centre, and, on each side of it, double rows of lemon and orange-trees, with fruit hanging on them in profusion. Then appeared a broad-shaded foot-path between these and the houses, which were much more spacious and handsome than I expected to find them, notwithstanding all that I had heard of the place.

Having some business at the house of a merchant, we called, and experienced immediately an excellent specimen of that hospitality for which the inhabitants of these countries are so justly celebrated. I was particularly struck with the splendid interior and furniture, which was in a greater style of magnificence than any thing I had seen on this side the Atlantic. While at breakfast, a message was received from the governor, General Hughes, requesting our company to breakfast at the Government-house, a spacious palace nearly opposite to where we were. As we could not comply with the invitation, our company was secured for dinner by the attentive and polite governor, to whom we had no other recommendation than our uniforms. In the mean time, we visited several of the principal merchants of the colony, and afterwards the officers of the 64th, then in garrison. Everywhere the same hospitality prevailed; the inhabitants appeared to vie with each other in their offers of service to us. The officers of the garrison provided us with horses, and accompa-

nied us through the principal streets of the city. It seems impossible for a stranger to form any idea of Paramarabo by a comparison with any other town; it is altogether extraordinary, and different from any I have ever seen.

I have observed already, that the principal streets are very broad, and planted with double rows of orange and lemon trees on each side, thickly covered with fruit, and forming an agreeable shade over the walks beneath them. In the suburbs of the town the streets are still wider, with four rows of fruit-trees on each side; and between these and the houses are seen gardens of a considerable breadth, planted with fruits and flowers of every kind, and separated from the road by hedges of limes, but cut close and square in the Dutch fashion; so that the houses on one side cannot be seen from those on the other, and only now and then by the passengers in the middle of the street. The whole town resembles an immense garden, abounding with fruit, considerably more than could be consumed by the inhabitants, and affording to the passenger a most grateful perfume and refreshing shade. The principal street is about a mile in length, and there are several parallel to it not much less: the streets intersect each other at right angles. Thus the town occupies a prodigious space, of which at least one-half is laid out in gardens.

A heavy thunder storm about noon drove us into the barracks, where we were accommodated by the officers with a change of linen and every thing we could desire. I observed here several specimens and productions of natural history, collected by the officers; which they had purchased from the Indians or aborigines of the colony. These last come daily to the town in large parties, bringing with them whatever they can dispose of: monkees, parrots, parroquets, different species of animals, and a variety of beautiful woods, which they will often carve into swords and other weapons, and afterwards polish very highly. I was much astonished at the weight and hardness of some of these articles, as well as the beauty of the veins. Bows and arrows are sure to be objects of commerce with these Indian parties; and fire-arms and ammunition form the most desirable articles of exchange. An old musket or pistol was an almost irresistible temptation, and the most valuable collections of natural history might be procured for these trifles. The parties that I saw were, both men and women, entirely naked, except a narrow piece of coarse cloth which was attached behind to a string tied round the waist, and passing between the legs, came up and tied before; this was scarcely sufficient to answer the purpose intended. I was astonished to see this taste for nudity prevail so much in so populous and polite a place as Paramarabo; for not only the Indian nations

are to be seen parading the streets in this state of nakedness, but also hundreds of slaves of both sexes, who are the attendants upon the white inhabitants, and people in as high a state of civilization perhaps as the inhabitants of London. As no excuse on the score of civilization can be offered, I must refer the cause of this scandalous practice to a depravity of morals, which to a European is scarcely credible. A very great share of this charge must fall upon the white females of the country, of whom a part have been educated in Europe; and all have received as good an education as women of the same rank in England, and make the same pretensions to delicacy and sensibility: they would consider themselves highly insulted if any person should suspect in them a want of these illustrious female virtues. I know not in what degree a woman may possess these fascinating virtues who is attended daily and hourly by men slaves, with a very insufficient covering for their nakedness; and whose female attendants (often young and beautiful), are seen, both in the street and in the house, with no other covering than that described above.

The children of colour male and female run about perfectly naked till the age of eight or nine years; at that time a small plate of tin or some other metal, not larger than a dollar for the girls, frequently forms the whole of their covering. Of the boys less care is taken; and the men constantly shock the eye by the indecent and filthy spectacle that they present. A great number of these slaves are mulattoes and Mustees, with skins almost as white as Europeans. If any Creolian understanding can ever really believe (as they pretend) that the negroes are only beasts, yet surely the white skin and European features of a Mustee, who often rivals them in beauty, and are generally nearly allied to them by consanguinity, must force from them the acknowledgment that they are of the same species, and endued with the same feelings.

The order and regularity of this town must make an impression upon every stranger that visits it, more especially if he has ever witnessed the confusion and disorder so conspicuous in the capital of Barbadoes. The slaves appear to be kept here in a state of discipline rather uncommon; no noise, no riot, is ever heard in the streets. They salute every white person they meet with great respect, and, if two of them happen to quarrel in the streets, they are sure to be seized and punished by the officers of the police. This town is indeed the very reverse of Bridgetown in many respects. It should seem that the slaves often smart from the effects of this discipline, for one of the most disgusting sights which a stranger has to contemplate, is the frequent marks of the whip which their naked posteriors so generally exhibit.

As soon as the thunder-storm was over, which was very severe, and continued several hours, we repaired to the Government-house, and met with a very hearty reception from the old general, who appeared to be nearly worn out by the climate and disease. He was very communicative, and made us the offer of his horses or his barge for any expedition that we might have in view during our stay. At his table we met the officers of his staff, and a singular character, whom I cannot avoid noticing as a specimen of the effects of indulging trifling propensities. A servant whispered me at dinner that "Colonel White wished the pleasure of taking a glass of wine with me." I very soon perceived which was the gentleman to whose politeness I was indebted for the attention, as I had already learned the name and rank of every other person in uniform. He was seated opposite to me, and had on a staff uniform coat with two large golden epaulettes, but no mark to distinguish to what department he was attached. He was a man of between fifty and sixty years of age, of very agreeable manners, and, as I received a great deal of attention from him after dinner, it induced me to enquire who he was. The officers of whom I asked the question laughed at my calling him Colonel, and informed me that he held no situation in the colony either civil or military, that he had been long an inhabitant respected for his urbanity of manners and hospitality, but the whimsical idea of wearing a military uniform had lately seized him, and he requested permission of the governor so to do. General Hughes could not refuse to indulge a man so generally beloved in this capricious freak, and he has carried it so far as to assume the title of Colonel, and appears, on all public occasions in a full-dress uniform. At the last birth-day, he was at the expense of a new embroidered suit to appear in at the ball.

The evening proved very wet, with thunder and lightning, which precluded the possibility of walking or riding out. This inconvenience was however compensated by the kind attention of the officers of the garrison, with whom we remained till a late hour. The appearance of the forest in the night was to us both novel and agreeable; it was illuminated by millions of fire-flies, constantly and rapidly moving in all directions. The light they produced was sufficient to render the forest visible to some distance, though it was only distinguishable while they were in motion: the moment they stopped, we could no longer distinguish them. I had no opportunity of examining the insect myself, nor could I gain much information by inquiries about it. The mosquitoes appeared in greater numbers here than in the islands, and were somewhat larger. I observed like-

wise some centipedes and spiders of much greater dimensions than what I had ever seen before, particularly of the last.

July 12th.—We passed the night in the house of a merchant of respectability who has large contracts for government, and this morning were summoned to the breakfast of the hospitable general. After having visited whatever was deemed worthy of observation in the town, we prepared to return to the ship, for which purpose the governor politely made us the offer of his barge, a much more commodious vehicle than our own boats, being furnished with a comfortable cabin in the style of the city barges on the Thames. Most of the rich inhabitants have similar barges, some of them very expensively fitted-up, wherein they make excursions up and down the river. They can eat, drink, and sleep, in the cabin, and frequently devote to these parties a week or more. I shall for ever regret that the nature of our service would not allow us to remain long enough in this colony to join in one of these excursions. After taking leave of our hospitable friends in the garrison, we loaded our own boats with pines, shaddocks, sappadillos, and a variety of other fruits, and entered the governor's barge, accompanied by six officers of the garrison, who went down with us to see their friends at Brams Point, who might be considered as in a state of exile while their duty confines them at that detached post. Our barge was rowed by twelve negroes, and assisted by a large lug sail whenever the direction of the river would allow it to be of any use; so that our journey down to Brams Point was soon accomplished. Though the prospect of particular parts of this river is beautiful, yet the whole together is languid and monotonous, as there is no diversity of objects whatever to relieve the eye. In the neighbourhood of Paramaribo, where the estates are situated nearer together, the scenery of the banks was not without its charms, but at a distance, above or below, there is nothing which can possibly distinguish one part of the river from another. We met with a hospitable reception from the officers of this post, and after dinner returned to our ships. The same evening we weighed, and proceeded with the convoy towards Tobago.

Thursday, 15th.—In the morning at day-light appeared off Tobago, and stood within five or six miles of Scarborough, the principal harbour, where several ships were ready for sea, waiting for our appearance. These came out and joined us, and we immediately made sail towards Grenada. The island of Tobago appears high and rocky, and is by no means of an inviting aspect; but it would without doubt present many romantic prospects on shore, as there is a chain of mountains

extending the whole length of it. In the evening, the high land of Grenada appeared on our lee-bow.

Friday, July 16th.—About ten o'clock entered the harbour of Grenada, and anchored. We were immediately visited by the Hon. Captain Decourcy, who came off to meet his brother, our captain. This gentleman holds an excellent situation here on the staff (deputy quarter-master-general), and appears to possess all those amiable qualities which have so much endeared his brother to us. He gave all of us a pressing invitation to his house, and desired we would consider it as our home while we staid in the island. We were here visited likewise by Lieut. Burton, late first-lieutenant of the *Nimrod*, now commanding the Grenada brig on this station. With him we went on shore to the town of St. George, which, like all other English towns in the colonies, contains nothing worth looking at. It is built upon uneven ground, and some of the streets are so steep as to render the descent in a carriage impracticable. At the back of the town, the mountains rise almost perpendicularly to an immense height. It was now the middle of the rainy season, and their summits were buried in the clouds. The frequent drenching showers of rain that fell, of course prevented our making excursions out of the town. We found one tolerable good inn, but nothing deserving to be mentioned in the whole place. In the afternoon we repaired to the house of Captain Decourcy, which was pleasantly situated a little out of the town, at the bottom of the bay which forms the harbour, and commanding a view of it. The harbour is large, and affords good anchorage to a great number of ships, but is open to the west: on every other side it is well sheltered by the mountains. The house of Capt. Decourcy is placed in a romantic recess at the bottom of a mountain which rises almost perpendicularly behind it; and the barracks, which are built on the top, seem to hang directly over it. These were frequently hid from our sight by the clouds which in the rainy season descend half way down the mountain sides.

We were met at dinner by several military officers, and our society was still more enlivened by the presence of several ladies. In the evening we retired to a spacious gallery looking into the garden, and most of the gentlemen present being musical amateurs, the time was spent in singing a number of favourite glees and duets, accompanied by Mrs. Decourcy on the piano-forte. Some very beautiful pieces were performed in a masterly manner, and so inexhaustible were their resources of amusement, that we did not think of separating till past midnight. The *Sicilian Evening Hymn to the Virgin* was then sung, (*O sanctissima, O purissima, &c.*) after which we retired.

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Sunday, July 18th.—The weather has continued uninterruptedly bad; torrents of rain, with lightning and thunder, the greater part of the day and night. All this effectually prevented our visiting the interior of the island.

We have much to regret not being able to visit the extraordinary lake near the centre of the island, on the top of the mountains, very often literally above the clouds. We continued to pass our time mostly at the friendly mansion of Captain Decourcy, and in the evening the musical party was again renewed.

Tuesday, July 20th.—At ten this morning weighed anchor and put to sea with the convoy, to make the best of our way to Tortola. Whilst standing off and on, to collect the convoy, Captain Decourcy staid on-board with his brother till we should make sail, having a boat alongside with six negroes waiting to take him on-shore; there were likewise several other boats alongside, holding on. While the ship, in standing over from one side of the bay to the other, was going with great velocity through the water, one of the negroes in Captain Decourcy's boat having inadvertently veered away a part of the rope which held him, the boat was immediately run over by the one next astern of her, by which means it was turned bottom upwards. This was done in a moment; yet all the negroes saved themselves with great dexterity, laying hold instantly of the other boats, so that not one of them went astern of the ship. The boat, however, with its bottom upwards, went astern, and close by it a hat was seen floating; upon which two of the boats alongside pushed after it. The hat and the boat were soon picked up, but some time was lost in a fruitless search after the owner of the hat; nor did we for some time know on-board the ship that they were all safe. Fortunately no injury was done to the boat; and, as soon as she could be bailed-out, Captain Decourcy and his companions took leave, with great regret on both sides, and we made sail with the convoy.

Wednesday, July 19th.—Passed at a distance the islands of St. Vincent and St. Lucia. The tops of their high lands invisible, from being enveloped in clouds.

Tuesday, July 25th.—A heavy gale of wind during the whole night, with a remarkably thick atmosphere. No land could be seen, and we were not very confident in the correctness of our dead reckoning. We supposed ourselves to be near the Virginia Gordas, but were afraid of running past them: we bore up, however, for the purpose of making the land, and were running down with great confidence into the most horrible dangers; for, when the fog began to clear away, we saw the stupendous rocks

of these islands just under our bow. Some of the convoy were so close in, that we were for some time under great apprehensions for their safety.

These islands are the most barren in the whole West-Indian archipelago, but they do not the less display the most strange and fantastic scenery. By having run too far to the northward, we were under the necessity of coasting along the whole range of them very close in-shore, to come at the Round-rock passage, which admits us to the harbour of Tortola. We now had a very near and distinct view of the rocks called the Fallen City, and certainly no name more appropriate could have been given to them. The general aspect of the Virgin Gordas is black; but on this island is also seen a vast series of white rocks, arranged with a kind of regularity in ridges, so as to exhibit to the eye a resemblance of streets and squares and ruined buildings. The passage between these islands to arrive at Tortola is extremely narrow, having on one side a rock, which at a distance presents a figure nearly spherical, whence it has obtained the name of the Round-rock. It forms an excellent mark to hit upon the passage. We anchored this same evening at Tortola, where the whole convoy were assembled, and waiting only our arrival to depart for England. Tortola is among the least interesting of the Leeward Islands. Its high and barren mountains, instead of the beautiful green which distinguishes the other islands, exhibit a black and bleak appearance. The weather was gloomy and stormy, and the dark rocks around reminded me of the coast of Norway. The town, like most of the English towns in the torrid regions, was ill-built, and presented no object of interest. But, if the exterior of the houses exhibited nothing very inviting, within at least hospitality presided in a very extensive degree. The convoy being assembled here, a number of strangers were in the town, and the houses of the merchants were all converted into taverns, where no introduction was required, nor any reckoning thought of. I observed here a singular example of this virtue, which I was told was perpetual,—a huge bowl of punch, holding two or three gallons, standing all the forenoon upon the side-board, with a number of tumblers about it, and several ladles; and whoever is thirsty has only to walk in and help himself.

We remained two days at Tortola, during which time the state of the ship was again examined, and the greatest apprehension was entertained for her safety, as she certainly could not weather a severe gale. The Captain, a 74, was going home with the convoy, and it was found necessary to order the Nimrod to keep close under her quarter during the passage, that she might be ready to give assistance.

On the 28th the signal for the convoy to weigh was made, and we were all elate with the hope of seeing in a few weeks our native country, notwithstanding the crazy condition of the ship. But the cup of pleasure is often dashed from our lips before we can taste the contents. The convoy was already under-weigh, and proceeding with a prosperous breeze to the northward of Tortola:—already was I taking the last farewell look at the receding Antilles, when a brig-of-war hove in sight, and informed the commodore, by signal, that she brought dispatches from the admiral relating to us. I had in a few hours the mortification to find that I was the only individual concerned in these orders. The commander-in-chief had fixed upon me to send to the then sickly island of Marie Gallante, recently taken from the French, and garrisoned by marines from the fleet. Four medical officers had already died there, with more than half the garrison; and the rest were nearly all in the hospital. Thus, instead of returning to England, I was obliged to prepare for this post of danger: it was, however, only exchanging one danger for another; for such was the state of the *Nimrod*, that it was found necessary to keep her together by ropes strapped round her; in which condition she arrived at Plymouth, to the no small astonishment of the shipwrights who broke her up.

The brig sent to convey me to the commander-in-chief was called the *Pultusk*: she returned immediately to Tortola, and remained there two days to complete her watering, when we sailed for Antigua. This vessel had been a French privateer, and was accounted the fastest sailer on the station: she had, in consequence, been very successful. As she was to undergo a repair, we proceeded to English-harbour, where the only dock-yard of importance on this station is established. This harbour is large, and deep enough to admit ships of any size, although the entrance is so narrow, that they are obliged to be warped in. It is agreeably situated, surrounded on all sides by lofty hills covered with shrubs. On the top of the ridges to the right and left as you enter, are spacious and commodious barracks; and at the bottom of the harbour, which winds in a very picturesque manner round the projecting promontories, stands the Naval Hospital, on an elevated but not well-chosen spot. There is no town here, though this arsenal is the principal one on the station, and a number of men-of-war are constantly here for repair. The principal town (*St. John's*) is on the west side of the island, about twelve miles from this place: the squadron was at this time lying there, though the admiral, with his staff, were at English-harbour. Ships of war seldom come here but for the purpose of refitting, as this is one of the most unhealthy

spots in the West Indies; at least, there are more seamen die here every year than in the whole Leeward Island station besides, with the exception of Barbadoes. The situation itself is unhealthy, being so surrounded that the ventilation is impeded, and the heat becomes intolerable. Indeed, there seems to be no spot in these countries but what is from time to time visited by the yellow fever, which renders them the grave of Europeans. But the causes of fever here are accumulated: the men are employed at severe labour in the dock-yard beneath a vertical sun; and, in spite of the severest discipline, find the means of procuring rum at an easy rate,—a temptation no sailor can withstand. If they see a single individual of sober habits fall a victim, it is a sufficient argument to them that temperance is no security, and they may as well enjoy the luxuries while within their reach.

When the ships are under repair, the crews are crowded all together into a long building called the Capstan-house, which, notwithstanding all the precautions taken to ensure ventilation and cleanliness, has ever been a hot-bed of disease. So fatal has English-harbour proved to our seamen, that the commander-in-chief, Sir Alexander Cochrane, who has always evinced the utmost solicitude for the health of the men, has given strict orders with respect to this place. No captain is to go in here unless by positive orders; and the ships that prove sickly are fitted with all possible dispatch, and sent out to sea, where they become very soon healthy. It has been in contemplation to remove the hospital, as a much greater proportion of men were found to die there than at Barbadoes. The present situation has a swamp to windward of it; and many men have never been affected with the fever until sent to the hospital with some other complaint. The projected removal to a height which enjoys the sea-breeze, is certainly very desirable. The chief surgeon, Dr. Cummins, had very recently fallen; his successor, Mr. Hardy, an amiable and accomplished young man and a profound scholar, had just settled himself there. He had been four years in the country as surgeon to the Jason frigate; and he told me that, during all that time, he had never felt even a headache. A few weeks after my departure he too sunk under this dreadful visitation. Whole ships' companies have been swept off twice over, during their repair at this pestiferous station.

As the squadron was to proceed immediately to Marie Galante, I took a passage in a store-ship to St. John's, where the ships were anchored at a considerable distance from the town; and, as we sailed early the next morning, I had no opportunity of visiting it. I was informed, however, that it was more re-

gular and handsome than any of the other English towns in this country. The island of Antigua is the most considerable of the Leeward Islands; it is of much greater extent than even Barbadoes, and is highly cultivated. The rum produced here is equal to that of Jamaica, and is in great esteem throughout the islands. There is no doubt but the head-quarters of the station would be fixed here, but that the island of Barbadoes is situated so far to windward of all the rest, as to afford the greatest facility of sending immediately any military aid to any of the other islands. The packets likewise from England arrive there for the same reason, and take the Leeward Islands in their way home.

The morning after my joining the flag-ship, the squadron sailed for Marie Gallante, where we arrived on the third day from our departure from St. John's. We passed through the channel between the island of Guadaloupe and the little island of Petite Terre. This last is an appendage to Marie Gallante; but is uninhabited. It is a flat sandy island covered with wood, and has a fresh-water lake in the middle of it with plenty of fish; there are also abundance of rabbits, guanas, hagouties, and other eatable animals. As we coasted along the western side of Marie Gallante, we had an opportunity of remarking the beauties of its landscape. This island much resembles Barbadoes, and is of nearly the same dimensions; it is however more thickly covered with wood. It is a dependency to the government of Guadaloupe, and was taken possession of by some ships of the squadron in the beginning of March last, without orders from home, and without the concurrence of the commander-in-chief of the land forces. Sir Alexander Cochrane, however, considered it a station of importance for the more effectual blockade of Guadaloupe, being about forty miles to windward of that island. In consequence of this misunderstanding, the admiral sent a garrison of marines from the different ships for its defence, and every man and officer connected with the garrison were of the navy or royal marines.

The capture of this island was effected under circumstances rather curious. Whether by accident or design, the attack was made early in the morning of the day which succeeded the last evening of the carnival. On this evening, all the inhabitants from the highest to the lowest are making gala: they dance in every public place in the open air. The houses of the principal inhabitants, in fact the whole town of Grandbourg, is then one masquerade, where harmony and conviviality predominate. A great part of the night is spent in carousals; and at sun-rise the next morning few are to be found out of their beds, except some of the most determined dancers with their

masquerade dresses, who could not present any great obstacle to an invading enemy.

About 200 men were landed from the *Circe* and two other ships in the bay of St. Louis, at a village of the same name about ten miles from Grandbourg, under the command of Capt. Hugh Pigot, of the *Circe*. They marched along the shore without opposition, and arrived at the town between six and seven o'clock unperceived until within a quarter of a mile of the fort. They halted at the entrance of the town, and the news of the invasion was conveyed to the commandant whilst in bed, who, at this unseasonable disturbance, huddled on his clothes, mounted his horse, and set off full speed to the interior of the island, for the purpose, as he said, of raising the militia. Some of the townsmen, on the first alarm, had run to the fort and dragged out an old iron field-piece, with a resolution to act; nor did they stop till within pistol-shot of the enemy. They next proceeded to load it, whilst a deputation had waited upon the commandant, to learn his intentions. The only order his haste allowed him to give, was to fire the field-piece; one of the townsmen, however, (an English merchant who had long been settled there,) considering that they had no other arms than this field-piece, and that it could only be fired once, took a flag of truce, and was commissioned by the townsmen to demand an hour for considering on the capitulation. Captain Pigot, however, was not disposed to allow another minute, and the troops advanced in two columns on two different points at once. The field-piece was presently abandoned, the townsmen returned to their houses, the French flag at the fort was superseded by the English, and the island was in possession of an enemy before one-third of the inhabitants were out of their beds. They received the news of the change with perfect *sang froid*, and entertained the English officers with their accustomed hospitality. A detachment was sent after the governor, who had taken refuge in one of the plantations, and he was brought in towards evening a prisoner of war. There was no regular force in this island except about eight or ten men, who of course were made prisoners. The military force of the island consisted entirely of the militia, and amounted to above a thousand men; but this kind of force was of little avail against a *coup de main*.

The place thus taken possession of, a garrison of between four and five hundred marines from the different ships were sent on shore for its protection. At first the troops were healthy, and the novelty as well as comfort of the situation, both for officers and men, threw them off their guard, so that no precautions were taken against the approaching wet and sickly season. The men were paraded and exercised in the middle of

the day, field-days were appointed once or twice a-week, and the same discipline was observed as if at Chatham barracks. The consequences of this soon made their appearance; the head-quarters were at Grandbourg, a small town built in a swamp, and surrounded on three sides by swampy ground, extending to some distance, particularly to windward. The fort and barracks were in the very worst place of this swampy ground; the water accumulated round their barracks, nor had any means been concerted for security against danger, till the fever began to rage in a terrific manner. Many of these marines had been a long time on the station, yet had never been on shore; a circumstance which placed them on a footing with new comers. But the greatest danger was the facility with which the worst rum in the world could be procured; and even the severe discipline which was afterwards established, was not sufficient to keep many of the men from daily habits of intoxication.

In the latter end of May, ulcers became very frequent, a disease as formidable as fever, and even more destructive, as being rendered almost incurable, from the bad habits above-mentioned.

In the beginning of June the fever began its ravages. So formidable were its first attacks, that many persons seized with it died within twenty-four hours: some in less time. Throughout the months of June and July it continued to gain strength, and in the beginning of August the officers began to experience its deleterious effects. Eight of them in one fortnight (exclusive of the medical officers) fell victims to it. Such was the posture of affairs when I went on shore in this island: the garrison was reduced to less than two hundred men, of which 160 were in the hospitals.

I was, as usual in these islands, much gratified with the beauty of the country, but more so with the neatness of the town; which, though comparatively a village, was far superior in elegance to any English town I had seen within the tropics. The streets all intersected each other at right angles, and there are three very handsome little squares. The governor (Capt. Pigot) had taken possession of a very commodious dwelling belonging to the priest of the parish, situated a very short distance out of the town, and provided with every accommodation that could be required, though on a small scale. The French Government-house had been given up to the troops, on account of the unwholesome situation of the barracks.

The state of the garrison was deplorable; every man that was attacked with the fever considered his case hopeless, and became indifferent as to his fate. So persuaded were they

of dying if carried to the hospital, that they would frequently secrete themselves in the houses of the coloured inhabitants, or in any place where they could find shelter. I had frequently to seek them out in the town and its vicinity, and found great difficulty in persuading them to quit their retreat. This difficulty, however, was overcome as the mortality became less, and confidence was restored. As the men became convalescent, they were sent up the country upon a more elevated situation, where hospitals were hired by the governor for the purpose of providing change of air. These were at the distance of about two miles from the town, and as many of the sick as could with safety be removed were sent up there. Of the marine officers of the garrison there only remained two or three, and all the medical officers were either dead or obliged to leave the island in consequence of the fever, which had brought them to the verge of the grave. I had taken two assistant-surgeons on shore with me, neither of whom were alive three weeks after.

The severity of the duty allowed me little leisure to make excursions into the country, excepting that part of it where the hospitals were situated. An event, however, soon after occurred which gave me the opportunity of seeing a great part of it. This circumstance merits a detailed account, as I believe it never appeared before the public in any other form than the modest and concise dispatch of Captain Pigot to the commander-in-chief, in which, whatever concerned himself was either suppressed or but slightly noticed.

The French inhabitants of the island were dissatisfied with their new masters, and wished to recover their lost honour; (for, in a commercial point of view, they were much the better for the change,) and they concluded that now or never was the time to effect it. They had closely watched the progress of the fever, and saw with pleasure the effective strength of the garrison reduced to about five-and-twenty men, the rest being sick in the hospitals. Hereupon, the most turbulent and dissatisfied of them sent over a petition to General Ernouf, the governor of Guadaloupe, beseeching him to assist them, and stating that with sixty men they would answer for making all the English garrison prisoners. This indeed was possible; and so completely were the officers of the garrison off their guard, that though every woman and child in the island was well acquainted with the conspiracy, and the men could not restrain their insolence and even menaces towards us, yet the governor and his staff considered themselves in the most perfect security, and laughed at the idea of any such attempt. No precaution whatever was taken to prevent surprise; and, indeed, had the thing been foreseen, the garrison was not in a condition to have ex-

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erted much vigilance. It was on the 18th of August that I landed here, and could scarcely find sufficient men in health to take care of the sick. My own duty consequently was so severe, that I had no time to visit or form acquaintances with any of the inhabitants: I had heard much of their hospitality and politeness from the few remaining officers in the garrison, and from the few with whom I had any intercourse I found the account verified.

It was on the evening of the 22d, four days after my arrival, that, returning from my visit to the country hospitals, I was stopped by a planter whose house I was passing, and who came out and very politely requested of me to alight and join in a convivial party within. This invitation was seconded by a lady of elegant manners, the mistress of the house, who likewise came out into the road to make her request: she was followed by several well-dressed females, who appeared to be interested in the petition. It was not easy to withstand the solicitation of such petitioners; and though I had never seen them before in my life, yet such was the apparent cordiality of their invitation, that I could not resist the officious politeness with which my horse was conducted to the stable and myself to the house. There were a number of persons of both sexes assembled, and the greatest attention possible was paid to me by every individual. I was informed by the ladies that their principal motive for stopping me was to engage me to do them the honour of breakfasting with them next morning, as they expected a number of friends. They were aware that my time was much occupied with the sick; but, as I generally passed their house about the hour of breakfast, they thought I might spare half an hour to honour them with my company. There is something so persuasive in the eloquence of a French lady, and she meets all your objections with so many accommodating arrangements, that, though I could ill spare the time, I consented to breakfast there. The next request was, that I would engage as many of the officers of the garrison as I could to accompany me, and particularly the adjutant (Mr. Jones), for whom they expressed the greatest esteem. In fact, they would not let me go until I had promised to use all my influence with him. This promise obtained, I was allowed to retire as soon as I thought proper. On returning to the town I communicated the invitation to the adjutant, and engaged him to go up with me the next morning to breakfast. No suspicion was entertained by either of us of any sinister design, and in the morning, whilst I was visiting the town hospitals, the adjutant made free with my horse to go to the appointed rendezvous, and took a negro servant with him to bring him back for me. I had completed

my morning visit before I knew any thing of this, and felt myself disappointed at being deprived of my horse. It was already eight o'clock, (the hour appointed,) and the horse did not return; and, as I had little time to lose, I determined on breakfasting with the governor that morning. I escaped, however, an adventure by this circumstance which might have proved disagreeable, and which the adjutant had to encounter. The distance to the house of the planter with whom we were to have breakfasted was about two miles from the town, and the road lay through a ravine, the sides of which were richly ornamented with trees; and, among the rest, a number of orange, lime, lemon, mammy apple, and other fruit-trees, growing without culture, and forming a most enchanting scene, more like the works of art than of nature. Along this delightful valley the adjutant was riding slowly, accompanied by the negro on foot, and had just ascended the hill on which the estate is situated, wrapt in deep reflection, which the scenery alone was well calculated to inspire, when he was accosted suddenly by a soldier in a French uniform, who, after challenging him repeatedly without being noticed, at last fired at him, just as he perceived the ambuscade laid for him. A few yards before him were seated on the ground a number of French officers, with a great many of the most respectable inhabitants of the island, who were making a sumptuous breakfast under the shade of the trees, and who constituted the friends we were invited to meet. The shot from the sentry pierced and knocked off the adjutant's hat: in the confusion which this surprise created he applied spurs to the horse, and the animal sprung forward in an instant, and clearing the breakfast apparatus, to the astonishment of all who were engaged at it, he dashed into the thicket, and disappeared in a moment.

In this interval, however, several shots were fired at him by the sentries; and I have since learned that it was at the solicitation of the ladies present, particularly of the lady of the mansion, that no further attempt was made to secure his person. The friends we were so earnestly solicited to meet were no other than a detachment of 120 men sent by General Ernouf from Guadaloupe, and who landed in the night in the Bay of St. Louis, under the command of a colonel. All the principal inhabitants had joined this party, and by appointment they breakfasted in the open air at the before-mentioned estate, previously to their attack upon the town. I have reason to believe, from the subsequent conduct of these ladies, that they had no other intention than that of securing our persons without exposing us to danger, and at the same time to leave the garrison as destitute of officers as possible. The whole affair being by this ac-

cident discovered, the French had nothing to do but to finish their breakfast with all possible dispatch, and proceed at once on the attack.

The officers of the staff were all at breakfast with the governor, when the adjutant, who had by a circuitous route escaped from the enemy, arrived at full gallop at the Government-house, without his hat, and announced in a few words the proximity of the French force. At the same moment the sentries at the door descried the bayonets of a column of men descending a hill at the distance of about a mile. The *Circe* frigate, then lying in the roads, fired a gun, and communicated the information of another column being seen in a different direction, and about the same distance. No time was to be lost; whatever measures were necessary must be taken with the utmost promptitude. What marines could be mustered capable of duty were instantly under arms, and eighty men were landed as expeditiously as possible from the frigate. The governor determined on defending himself in the fort, which was nothing more than a small square, surrounded on three sides by wooden palisades, and on the fourth, next the sea, by a breast-work. This was the only side on which there was no danger of attack; the other three sides were open to the enemy. The entrance into this fort formed one of the sides of a neat small square, overgrown with grass and planted with two rows of trees, the three other sides being occupied with houses. The greatest length of this square must be short of a hundred yards.— On the eastern side of the town was a savannah or meadow of about a quarter of a mile over, towards which one of the French columns was seen rapidly advancing. In order to keep these in check for a short time, till the men could be landed from the frigate, about sixteen marines were marched over the savannah close up to the spot where the French column of about 60 men were then resting on their arms under some tamarind-trees, waiting the arrival of the other columns. Having prepared for the reception of wounded men in the fort, I accompanied the governor and his staff to the savannah, where I had great satisfaction in witnessing the intrepidity of the marines, who advanced very close up to the French corps and discharged a volley amongst them, which did great execution, although at the same time another column of equal force was fast advancing to their assistance. The French were not a little disconcerted by the bold attack of this handful of men, and began immediately to repel the assailants. The marines retired in open order in the manner of light troops, and disputed every inch of the ground with great bravery, having two men killed and two or three wounded.

The seamen were by this time landed, and every thing in the fort made ready for defence. Two six-pounders were placed in the gateway, and the men were arranged, as well as circumstances would permit, close within the palisades. The marines retired in excellent order into the fort, and were quickly followed by the French, whose numbers were rapidly increasing by the inhabitants joining them: the town was perfectly evacuated, and the houses shut up. The commandant of the garrison (Major Tillesley) on hearing the first alarm, mounted a horse and galloped off into the country, to assure himself of the strength and observe the movements of the enemy. It so happened that he took a different road to that by which they had come down, so that he penetrated as far as our hospitals without seeing them, and began to consider the alarm as false, especially as at the first hospital nothing had been seen of them. On arriving at the second, however, he was informed by the men that they had been made prisoners, and that a sentry had been placed over them, who was afterwards removed. As this hospital commanded a view of the plain below, the major could now plainly discover their whole force and all their movements. The skirmishing on the savannah had already begun, and no time was to be lost, as the enemy was now between him and the fort. After directing the men in the hospitals to steal down as well as they were able by the sea-side to the fort, he took the same direction himself at full speed, and passing unperceived in the rear of the enemy, gained the beach, and thus was enabled to pass unseen by them till he came into the little square just opposite to the gates of the fort, which he entered at the same moment with them, and on the same side, but at opposite corners. And here it seemed as if his good fortune had forsaken him, for the owner of the horse he had taken happened to live at this very corner, and the animal positively refused carrying him any further; a contest of some minutes here took place between them, in the very teeth of the enemy, several of whom fired at him and slightly wounded the horse. This circumstance made the animal set off at full speed, and the major dashed into the fort just at the moment the French began the attack. As they approached the corner of the street which opens into the little square and brought us once more in sight of each other, their drums beat the *pas de charge*, and we supposed it was their intention to attempt to carry the fort by assault. Immediately after, the commanding officer made his appearance, accompanied by a serjeant and drummer, marching in ordinary time at the head of his division as upon parade; and in this order he advanced nearly into the middle of the square. The troops, however, did not follow him, as he seems

to have supposed, but immediately occupied the houses on two sides of the square.

The governor (Captain Pigot) and most of the officers were standing at the gates of the fort; not a shot had yet been fired, and every one was kept in readiness and suspense. The French officer had now advanced near enough to have spoken the governor, if such had been his intention; and such I think it must have been, or his conduct otherwise could not be accounted for; for he raised his sword as if for the purpose of salute, and I have always been of opinion that this was what he meant, for we were standing not more than twenty yards from him. It is certain that they did not expect resistance; but, whatever might be his intention, the French troops, who had now occupied all the windows of the houses, took it as a signal to fire, and instantly they discharged a volley from their whole force. Capt. Pigot attempted to prevent the seamen from firing till he could ascertain the intentions of this officer; but it was too late, for they had been kept several minutes in breathless suspense, and the moment they received the enemy's fire, the fatal triggers were pulled; and, as this unfortunate officer presented so conspicuous a mark, he had a number of pieces directed towards him. He staggered a few yards and fell. The serjeant, at the first alarm, retreated to a tree, but he did not escape a wound which afterwards proved mortal. The drummers had already retreated to the corner of the square, and were there killed. The combat now went on with great spirit on both sides, and was kept up till nearly four in the afternoon. The French occupied not only the houses in the immediate vicinity, but every other that would afford them shelter, and an opportunity of firing upon the fort. Between three and four o'clock, a column of men were seen approaching by the road leading to St. Louis, with a large flag, the colours of which could not be distinguished, but the general appearance of the men was blue. They were first descried by the French, who were expecting a reinforcement of sixty regulars from that quarter, and were anxiously looking for them. We had no expectation of a reinforcement from any quarter, and therefore did not look after them; but they were seen from the frigate, who made us a signal to inform us of their arrival. We could make nothing out from their appearance, but the probability was that they were French. Shortly after the appearance of two ships beating up from the northward was announced by the frigate: this gave us hope, but the movements of the enemy soon revealed the truth. They had the opportunity of reconnoitring, which we had not, and had made them out to be a body of British sailors, in consequence of which they beat the retreat. This they effected so

hastily, as to leave their killed and wounded upon the ground. Meanwhile the column of seamen moved on, marching four deep, with a large union jack fastened to a pole; the French just contrived to get out of their way, and they entered the town about four o'clock. It appears that the *Ulysses* and a sloop-of-war had anchored that morning in the bay of St. Louis, and perceiving two or three very large canoes upon the beach, Capt. Maude suspected that a descent had taken place, as the thing had long been talked of; and, hearing the firing from the fort, he lost no time in disembarking a hundred and twenty men from the two ships, and heading them himself, proceeded to our relief. It is a curious circumstance, that on their march (which was conducted in a compact body, without either advanced or rear guard) they passed a column of French, the same which the enemy was so anxiously looking for, without seeing them. The French, not much admiring the strange equipment of this party, had retired behind a mill on the side of the road, and allowed them to pass unmolested.

To say the truth, their appearance was a little uncouth; for each man was armed with a black ship's musket and a cutlass, with two huge pistols stuck in his belt. Some had red night-caps, some white hats, and not a few were provided with long boarding-pikes. In addition to this, their enormous flag and singular mode of marching, cast such an air of ferocity and singularity over the whole body, that the French may be thought to have acted wisely in not trying any experiments upon them.

The whole of the troops from Guadaloupe had been brought over in large canoes, containing about fifty men each: the first division that arrived had taken the precaution to haul their canoes over the beach upon a beautiful lake; of which I shall have occasion to speak hereafter. They were hereby concealed from the observation of any English ships of war that might come into the bay. The last division, however, had neglected that precaution; as they arrived so late, that it was necessary for them to march immediately to the scene of action.

As the French retreated we continued to annoy them as long as they were within reach of our guns. We had in the fort an extremely long twenty-four pounder, with which the seamen continued firing at the French as they ascended a hill at the distance of more than a mile. They could see by the dust that the shot fell very near them. I was informed afterwards, by different persons who accompanied this retreat, that one of the shot killed a negro, who, according to the custom of the country, had hold of the tail of one of the French officers' horses. In ascending a hill, or when moving slowly, these negroes, instead

of walking directly behind, still keep hold of the horse's tail, and walk on one side. This happened to be the case with this negro at the time he was struck by a twenty-four pound shot; which, however, did no injury to the officer or the horse.

Another curious incident occurred in the town during the action. Although the inhabitants in general had fled, yet some few remained; probably from excessive fright, not knowing well what to do. Among these few were three young ladies of respectability, who happened to be at the time alone in their house, which was close to the beach; and, having no one to conduct or protect them, they remained during the action with an old negro-woman, lying upon the floor of their parlour. The frigate kept up a constant fire upon that part of the town occupied by the French, and harassed them very much in their retreat. A shot during the contest had passed through the room where these young ladies were lying, and grazed the floor, passing out afterwards through the side of the house. When the firing from the fort had ceased, the frigate still continued, as before observed, to harass the retreat of the French across the savannah. The old negro-woman at length grew tired of her confinement, and must needs get up to look out at the window towards the sea. The firing of the frigate could here be seen to great advantage; for every shot passed within a few yards of them. She called to the young ladies, and entreated them much to come and see the beautiful effect of the frigate firing. With a great deal of entreaty she at length persuaded one of them to rise from the floor and come to the window. The younger sister was just about to follow her, when a shot from the frigate passed in at the window, carried away the old woman's head, and the young lady, who was close beside her, was instantly covered with brains and blood. This terrified them so much, that they could not muster up courage enough to rise, till one of the English officers, having heard that they were in the house, went to their relief.

After this fatiguing day things wore a different aspect. The French had retired to the heights "covered with glory," and we had little in our possession besides the town; but, as we had gained an addition of force, we did not apprehend any regular attack from the enemy. We were compelled, however, to keep a very sharp look-out, to prevent surprise. The French commandant, immediately on landing, had issued a proclamation, requiring all the inhabitants capable of bearing arms, to repair to his head-quarters immediately, on pain of death. He collected by this means about a thousand men, yet still did not think this a sufficient force to undertake another expedition against us; for which reason he sent to Guadalope to request

artillery and more troops. In this first attack, indeed, he manifested in a considerable degree that virtue so essential to a general which we name prudence; for in the pocket of the officer to whom he had confided the command were found instructions, by which it appeared that the commandant thought it more suitable to his dignity to remain on the heights, where he could observe in security what was passing in the plain below, so he deputed the next in command (a captain-serjeant, who lost his life as above related) to go down, and bring the governor and officers of the garrison close prisoners to his head-quarters; if necessary, to kill the sentries at the governor's door, or any of the officers who should make resistance; to hoist the French flag, and establish a strong guard over the prisoners.

The governor immediately sent a dispatch to the commander in chief at Barbadoes, requesting assistance; and, in the interval, we remained at a respectful distance asunder, looking at one another. The French contrived to obtain a small reinforcement from Guadaloupe, with two iron field-pieces. At length, after ten days, the Captain 74, arrived with a reinforcement of four companies of the 9th West India regiment (a black corps), under the command of Lieut.-Colonel Blackwell; who were no sooner landed, than preparations were made to march in pursuit of the enemy. A flag of truce was sent up to his head-quarters in the afternoon, with a summons, to which a very pompous answer was returned, importing a determination to perish sword in hand sooner than accept any terms.

Orders were given for the troops to be in readiness to march at two in the morning, and all the necessary arrangements were made. We accordingly moved forward about four, and arrived at the enemy's head-quarters before daylight; but they had retired as soon as they heard our drums and bugles, and taken a position about two miles further up, where they resolved to defend themselves. It was an estate situated on a hill, and naturally a very strong post. There they might have made a spirited stand, having so advantageous a position and double our numbers. Our advanced-guard arrived before this post about daylight, and a skirmishing began. The French did not flinch in the least, till our main-body coming up, two field-pieces were then brought to bear upon them: they retreated farther into the country, and attempted to make a stand upon the next height. This station, after a quarter of an hour's fighting, was carried by the black troops with the bayonet. Several men were lost on both sides in this affair, and a field-piece taken from the French, together with a number of prisoners.

The troops halted at this last place for some time, and break.

fasted, dispatching only a small party to watch the enemy, who retreated in some confusion, leaving their only remaining field-piece on the road. Indeed, so bad were the roads, that the difficulty of carrying it forwards more than counterbalanced the advantage of it. The guns were obliged to be drawn by oxen, and, so great was the exertion of the men who assisted in this service, that we lost two of them, who dropped down dead at the first position we arrived at. It was therefore determined to send back the field-pieces, as soon as we discovered that the French had none to oppose to us. After a few hours, we followed the enemy's route, who had hitherto been directing his course northward. He was evidently much harassed, as we continued to pick up stragglers, who were too exhausted to keep up with the main body. Amongst these was a deserter, who had run away from the garrison several weeks before the invasion, and concealed himself in the country. As soon as the French landed, he had enlisted into their service; as had also another deserter from us. This poor wretch was taken on the march, with arms in his hands, and, as soon as the troops halted, was brought out to be shot. The sentence was carried into immediate execution, no time being allowed him. This man had greatly aggravated his offense, by his insolent and oppressive treatment of the English who were made prisoners in the hospital, over whom he was occasionally placed as a sentry. The unfortunate man pleaded very hard for an hour to collect himself; but circumstances would not allow of it, as, according to the military law, a man taken under such circumstances must suffer death on the spot, without any formal trial.

We halted at length for the night, at a large estate about twelve miles from Grandbourg; and at daylight again continued our pursuit. We learned from the prisoners, that the redoubtable commandant, instead of perishing sword in hand, had forsaken his companions in arms, and without making known his intention to any but the next in command, had made his escape to Guadaloupe in a small canoe, without his coat, for fear of being picked up by the English. He assigned as a reason to the officer next in command, that he was going to procure assistance from General Ernouf, to drive the English out of the island. We learned also that the militia were falling off very fast since the attack in the morning. Indeed, several of the principal colonists had come to our head-quarters; and we obtained a list of all who had signed a requisition to the governor of Guadaloupe, and had been the chief conspirators in this affair.

The affairs of the French became every hour more desperate: they changed the course of their march, and directed it to the westward upon St. Louis. We followed close at their heels,

and about eight o'clock in the morning drove them from an estate where they made some resistance. A melancholy circumstance occurred here. An English merchant, Mr. B., who had visited this colony for commercial purposes, and who was well known to the officers of the garrison, had, some weeks before, gone up into the interior on account of ill health. This gentleman fell into the hands of the French, who detained him a prisoner, and had marched him from post to post. From this last post they were driven so hastily, that he found means to conceal himself, and to be left behind. They retreated from the estate only at the moment that the advance of the black regiment entered it. Mr. B.—— was concealed in the mill: it was not supposed that the French had evacuated it, and the troops advanced with caution, expecting every instant to be surprised. At this unfortunate juncture, Mr. B. came out from his retreat, and peeped round the corner of the mill, to look for the English. On seeing the well-known red jackets, he advanced in a transport of joy, and was instantly shot by one of the black soldiers, who took him for a Frenchman. He lived long enough to take leave of his old friends and acquaintances, at least the few of them that the fever had left. Every Englishman deeply deplored the fate of this unfortunate young man.

The French were now considerably reduced in numbers, as the inhabitants were stealing away to their homes, and no prospect of any amelioration in their affairs presented itself. They were driven from every post almost as soon as they occupied it; and at length, by a dexterous movement of the English troops, were completely surrounded. It is but justice to the French officers and men to add, that whilst this movement was making, their resistance was noble and gallant; but being reduced in numbers, and surrounded, they ceased to fire, and hoisted the white flag. They had previously sent an officer with a flag-of-truce to our head-quarters, but not knowing where they were, he missed us; and the detachment, to the number of 280 men, surrendered, a few miles from the village of St. Louis. The men and officers were sent on-board the men-of-war in that bay, and with them as many of the inhabitants as had rendered themselves conspicuous in this contest. Their estates were placed under sequestration, and themselves exiled for a time; but, in the course of a year, every thing was restored to them.

It was not till some time after this invasion that tranquillity was completely restored in the garrison. Reports of another invasion were in constant circulation, and readily believed. The fatigue and harassing which the soldiers and seamen had undergone during this short campaign, proved much more fatal than

the bullets or steel of the enemy, especially to the seamen who were landed from the different ships. Fortunately, our hospitals being so full of our own men, we had no room for them, and they were immediately removed to their respective ships. I say fortunately, for, being taken off this pestiferous island, they had a much better chance of recovery than in it. Many, however, who were taken up to Barbadoes, died there of the fever they had contracted in Marie Gallante. Our own sick, it may be supposed, did not benefit much by the confusion; in fact, their numbers were greatly increased; for all the new comers felt the effect of this fever almost immediately, and the list was considerably augmented by the addition of the wounded men, both English and French. One of my fever patients, who was at death's door, was killed by a shot from the fort, as he lay in his bed on the 23d, the first day of the invasion. Some of the French had entered the hospital for the purpose of firing from the windows upon the fort; this attracted the attention of the seamen in the fort, many of whom were ignorant of its being the hospital. The building was of wood, and the shot had a free passage through it. The youth who lost his life in this way was lying in his cradle with his head towards the fort, and the shot, after passing through the head-board of the bed, entered at the top of the skull, and was lost in some part of his body. He would undoubtedly have died in a few hours, had this accident never happened. Besides the two assistant-surgeons who accompanied me on shore, another who was landed from the Captain 74, died within three days from his setting foot on shore. The excessive fatigues of duty soon added myself to the list of fever patients, and obliged me to resign my labours, and take to my bed.

I shall not dwell on the history of my sufferings during a confinement of more than six weeks, but observe, that the government of the island during that period, was transferred to Captain Maurice, and that the fever had nearly disappeared from the sick-list. As soon as I recovered my strength, I used to ride out every day, for the sake of health and viewing the delightful scenery of the island. Although in many respects it resembles Barbadoes, and possesses all its landscape-beauties, yet it possesses a great number which are peculiar to itself. The hills, though not very high, abound in wood and rich foliage; the ascent is in general easy, and on their summits is mostly found a verdant plain of some extent. The ravines, though in a state of nature, present all the striking features which are usually in Europe the result of art: in fact, a great part of the island recalls the idea of an English gentleman's park; and

there are many spots, the features of which are now strongly imprinted on my memory, that, for symmetry and beauty, far surpass any thing which Kew or Kensington Gardens can boast. The ravines, in general, rise by a gradual and easy ascent; yet there are some which would vie with any Alpine country in their abrupt and rugged sides. These ravines abound with fruit-trees, which grow, without culture, in abundance; particularly the lemon, a species of Seville orange, the mammy apple, custard-apple, sour-sop, sappodillo, and the goava; of which last there is a superior species peculiar to this island.

Most of the ravines, after entering them from the bottom, are found to branch off in various directions, which branches are generally separated by bold promontories of considerable height, covered with wood to their summits. Their bottoms are covered with a verdant carpet, which may vie with any park in Britain, and form the most delightful rides imaginable. At one time, a fine wide lawn, with gently sloping sides, covered with lofty trees, winds round the bottom of the hill, opening continually some variegated view, with now and then the mouth of some other ravine unexpectedly presenting itself, with fresh features that tempt the traveller out of his road for the pleasure of exploring it. Then the amphitheatre begins to contract by degrees, till at length two-horses abreast can no longer gain admittance. The foliage closes over your head; the ripe goava now and then leaves the mark of its exuberant pulp upon your clothes, or even face; the road then becomes steeper, till at length you emerge unexpectedly into daylight, and feel again the refreshing influence of the trade-wind. Here a fine verdant plain stretches before you, and at your feet appears the sea, and the flat land, which extends in unequal distances from the beach. The entrance into these ravines from above is often so concealed as to be very difficult to find, without a guide; and even when entered from below, at their mouths, a stranger is very apt to lose himself amongst the ramifications here described.

Towards the north end of the island the prospect becomes more and more diversified; the hills and ravines are of a much bolder character, the woods thicker, with a greater number of timber-trees. The form of the hills, too, is more fantastic; and very extensive tracts are found here, untouched by the hand of man, and in all the rude majesty of nature. Here is still a small remnant of the aboriginal natives, the Caribees; there are many families to be met with here said to be Caribs, but I have always suspected them to have been mixed with African or French blood. I saw, however, during the campaign, a man and a woman whom curiosity had attracted to one of the most northern of the French posts, whom I considered to be genuine

Caribs. They were of a dark copper colour, with long black hair, flat faces, and a countenance more hideous than that of an African negro. They were filthy in their persons, and quite naked, excepting a very slight covering round the waist. These persons did not understand the common Negro-French, except a very few words, nor could I find any negro that could converse with them. I could obtain but little information respecting these Caribee people, only that there were some families of them residing on the highest hills in the uncultivated parts of the northern district, but that their numbers must be very few. They have nowever formerly been much more numerous, as the Caribbean features are to be seen in great abundance amongst the people of colour, which give them an appearance totally different from that to be met with from any admixture with European blood. There is beside, a race to be found here which I have never seen elsewhere, originating in the combination, direct or indirect, of Caribbean, African, and French blood. These are much handsomer than any thing produced by European and African blood only, and much fairer in complexion than they can ever be, though nearer by two removes to the European. I do not remember seeing any instance where the communication with a white parent was direct, although I have suspected such an origin in some white families here; and, on suggesting these suspicions to a very intelligent friend, and pointing out the physical appearances, he gave such an account of their progenitors, as rendered the thing more than probable. I can say with truth for these families, that they were (especially the females) among the handsomest persons I have ever seen, either in the temperate or torrid zone.

I have been led into this digression by the common opinion prevailing in Europe, that the Caribee race is extinct: It is indeed reduced to a few families in only a few of the islands that bear their name: the greatest number are to be found in St. Lucia and St. Vincent's; there are also some in the mountains of Dominique.

But, to return to my description of this island. In the northern district, I must not overlook a lake, or as it is called here, *lagoon*, which appears to be formed from a number of ravines emptying themselves into one valley, which, meandering over a space of eight or ten miles, approaches within twenty or thirty yards of the sea near the bay of St. Louis; its communication with it, however, is cut off by a bed of sand thrown up by the sea, and which it has been customary for the inhabitants occasionally to cut open, in order to allow a free exit for the waters. A more beautiful sheet of water was never seen than ~~this~~

winding round the basis of the hills, as beheld from their summits. At one time it expands into a broad beautiful mirror, reflecting from its bosom the thick foliage of the circumjacent woods, with here and there the mansion of a planter, or a bold projecting promontory of rock; at another, the approaching shores conceal its waters from the eye by the apparent contact of their foliage; and, in many places, especially between some of the many islets that decorate the surface, the boats and canoes are lost under the shade of the trees on each side. In a variety of places there is not room for the oars; and so a complete canopy is formed overhead for some distance. This lagoon abounds with fish, and particularly with fine prawns.

Towards the eastern side of the island, the hills are still more towering and rugged, but less woody. There are several extraordinary caverns in this quarter; one in particular, which would contain many thousand persons; its inmost recesses have never been duly explored. Indeed throughout, this island is one of the most interesting in the world to the lover of nature in her primitive beauties, although the whole seems as if laid out by the hand of science. It is unhealthy even to the natives, who suffer most from intermitting fevers. I have met with quarantans here of ten and fourteen years standing. The treatment of them is certainly preposterous. Intermittents were very frequent in the garrison, but I never met with one instance that did not yield to the treatment adopted by English physicians; and the most obstinate rarely exceeded a month.

This island is happily situated with respect to others in its vicinity, which adds to the interest of the prospect. On the west is Guadeloupe, with its cloud-capped eminences. Nearly opposite the town of Grandbourg appears the volcano called by the French *Souffrier*. This is the highest point of Guadeloupe; from its summit smoke is continually issuing, and in the night, especially in the hurricane season, a luminous vapour is seen to rise, like that from the iron works in some parts of England. Another phenomenon worthy of observation is to be seen here in the rainy season from the same mountain, viz. a number of considerable cascades, which, when viewed through a telescope at sun-rise, and for two hours after, present the most beautiful appearance that can be conceived. The water rushes down in continued cataracts from the summit, increasing considerably in the descent; this the horizontal rays of the rising sun render brilliant beyond the powers of description, even at the distance of forty miles.

On the southern side are seen the still loftier mountains of Dominique, with their heads buried often in the clouds, except in fine weather, when their tops may be discerned above the region of vapours, and covered with verdure. Sometimes, but seldom, they may be seen wholly unobscured to their summits. These are the highest mountains in the Antilles. They are reported to furnish shelter to a few Caribs and Maroon negroes.

Between Dominique and Guadeloupe are seen the cluster of islands called the Saints; but the tops of the mountains only are visible. On

a clear day, from the higher grounds, the beautiful island of Martinique may be distinguished. To the north-east, at a distance, the small island of Desceada, a mountain with a table land on its summit, forms another feature in the survey, so that, taking the island of Marie Gallante all together, with its internal and external prospects, there are few places perhaps on the globe that can vie with it.

With respect to manners and morals, the vices I complained of at Barbadoes, particularly with regard to females of colour, are here much the same. The demeanor of the colonists, especially of the females, is more refined and polished; and, in the exercise of hospitality, they yield to none. There is in fact much less difference in the manners of the colonists and those of the mother-country in the French islands, than in ours. In this colony of Marie Gallante there are comparatively very few Creoles, that is, persons born and brought up entirely in the colonies. The greatest proportion of the white people here are natives of France, and not a few have fled from the disorders of the Revolution. Some of the turbulent spirits who, on the downfall of Robespierre and the cessation of the reign of terror, dared no longer to shew their faces among their fellow-citizens, found their way to this retired colony, and, in this obscurity, are not without the power of fomenting disturbances and creating factions. To these the colony was indebted for the distress brought upon it by the late invasion.

On the whole, I should prefer the state of society and manners here to that of Barbadoes. Their convivial parties are generally such, so far as eating and drinking are concerned, as no epicure would turn up his nose at. In their cookery, and the great variety of their dishes, they far excel the English colonists. The monotony of an English dinner in the West Indies is enough to create disgust in persons of delicate stomach, sat the objects which compose it. I have dined at Barbadoes at ten parties in succession, where there was scarcely a single article at any one of them which was not at all the rest. A roasted turkey at the head of the table, a ham in the centre, a piece of roast kid at the bottom, are the standing dishes at every dinner at Barbadoes; the interstices being filled up with roast fowls, boiled potatoes, plantains, and yams. I had taken such a dislike to turkies and fowls, that I could not for several years eat them again with any relish. In this island, however, what they may want in materials they make up in variety, to which there seems to be no end; and in their vegetable preparations especially, they have taken advantage of the native productions of the island, and have formed many a delicious dish of which the English colonists have no idea, though they have the same articles growing amongst them, or might have them. Among the most delicious of these vegetable luxuries, and which constitutes a great part of the diet of the lower classes and coloured people, is a dish called *calalou*, which consists principally of a plant called by that name in the English islands, but by the French *chaoux Caribbe* (Caribbean cabbage.) This, with other mucilaginous herbs, is boiled with salt pork or ham. Frequently the coloured people boil these vegetables with salt fish, and

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The wine drunk here is principally claret; before the arrival of the English, Madeira was scarcely known in this island. The communication with France and the French colonies being cut off, has rendered French wines extremely scarce, which, on our arrival, were both plentiful and cheap. The natives observe the same custom here as in France, of not sitting at table after dinner to take wine: the cloth and the desert (which is here splendid) remain on the table till the company quit. A bottle is generally put before each guest of such wine as he prefers, but it is deemed no breach of politeness for a person to alter his mind, and take a different kind. Wine is likewise taken at breakfast; the *déjeuner à la fourchette* is given here as substantially as in France. The ladies shew no squeamishness at this meal, but take their leg of a duck or wing of a fowl, and wash it down with a large tumbler of claret without ceremony. In the evening, all the male inhabitants of every colony, of whatever nation, smoke their segar, generally in the open air; but the French Creoles make the segar the companion of their morning, noon, and evening enjoyments, and will often smoke them in their bed-rooms.

I shall now say a little on the condition of the slaves and free coloured people, wishing to exhibit a comparative view of their treatment under English and French masters. The people of colour may be divided into three classes,—field slaves, house slaves, and free people of colour. Of the field slaves there are none but negroes; a master cannot send a mulatto into the field. The condition of these is consequently the worst, yet not so very bad as has been represented. To one who has enjoyed the advantages of freedom and civilization, there is indeed something horrible in the idea of being driven out in the morning just like

horses with a long whip, which is applied with more or less severity, according to the humanity or the want of it in the driver. The corporal pain arising from the application of the whip we may suppose to be nearly equal in all; but the feelings of the mind in a person brought up as above, would far exceed the pain, and the degradation would be the most galling part of the punishment. These feelings, however, do not exist in the persons we are treating of. I do not mean that they are incapable of having such feelings under proper education, but that education they have never had, and their minds can only form comparisons of things which they have ever known. Now few of them have known any situation of life so good as what they here enjoy, many of them having been all their lives in a much worse state of slavery in their own country; and the most miserable of all slaves here, are those who have negroes for their masters. It is not their sighing after liberty, that constitutes the hard condition of these people. I am well assured, that very few in the English islands could be found, who are not extremely ill-treated by their masters, that would accept of liberty if offered to them. I here speak only of field negroes. I have often conversed with them on the subject of freedom, and their uniform answer to the question, "Don't you wish you were free?" has ever been, "Ah, massa, what poor neger do? no good massa give ee yam (food), and give ee house, and cure ee when he sick." They have no idea of freedom but what they see in the free negroes in the island, the only class of persons in which real poverty is to be seen in this country. The greatest evils they feel arise from being compelled to work against their inclination, and occasionally punished for attempting to evade their task.

With respect to the severity exercised in the English islands, it depends much on the humanity of the owner, and the command he has over his passions. In many estates in Barbadoes, I have seen the blacks treated with paternal tenderness; and these masters find their account in it, for the slaves are grateful and faithful, and are much easier to manage by kindness than by force. It is unfortunate, both for the negroes and their masters, that any human being, whether philosopher or idiot, should have started the notion that the Africans are by nature inferior in intellect to Europeans, and consequently incapable of cultivating those arts and sciences by which we are distinguished. I have already stated to what an extent this absurd opinion prevails in Barbadoes,—an opinion which will one day prove dangerous to our colonies; for, if ever education should extend its blessings to these unfortunate people, nothing will sink so deep into the mind, and rankle there, as the idea of being considered an inferior order of beings. Half the hardships these people

endure, may be traced to that source alone. The English act more from this principle than any other nation; and, where the disposition is naturally ferocious, this horrible prepossession will prevent that pity which would intercede in behalf of a suffering fellow-creature. I cannot otherwise conceive how a young and delicate female, possessed of many amiable and tender qualities, could gratify her revenge, by being herself an eye-witness of the punishment of her slave, of the same age and sex as herself, and with whom she has been probably brought up from her infancy. This is a circumstance which I have frequently witnessed; when the punishment has been inflicted by her own order, for some offence committed against herself.

To return to the field negroes. The quantity of work which they have to perform, can by no means be deemed a hardship: I have no doubt that two labouring men in an English farm, would do more work than any twenty of them. Nor do they work too many hours. They are frequently very comfortably lodged, have as much food and clothing as they require, and are taken good care of when sick. Thus far, their condition is better than that of the poor in our own country; and, in this respect, the French and English colonies are much upon a par. But, in the English islands, their education is neglected: the natives do not even take the pains to instruct them in the principles of the Christian religion, or take any care to have their children baptized. Indeed, in general, they set their faces against all the attempts to instruct them which have been made by the Methodists and Moravians, particularly in the island of Barbadoes. In the French islands, the case is very different. The slaves are very carefully instructed in the principles of religion; and I have been much gratified by observing their serious and decent behaviour at church. There, at least, they seem to feel themselves men, the offspring of one common Father, and entitled to the same blessings as their masters. They have a constant custom here, which no Christian can look upon with indifference. Every night, when the negroes have finished their task, they return home together, each with a bundle of grass or guinea-corn on his head, for the supply of their cattle; they then proceed to some open space on the estate, where, forming a large circle, each one throws down his load, and sits down upon it. Then the best instructed negro on the estate (and they never want persons capable of the office), stands up in the middle, as their officiating minister; when, in a double choir, they begin to sing their evening-hymn, the man in the centre, with one or two others, beginning the first stanza, which is repeated in chorus by all the rest, male and female: thus it is continued to the end of the hymn. The effect is very sweet on

a still night, the echo of the strain reverberating from the neighbouring ravines. After the hymn, two or three short sentences, with responses, are recited; and the man in the centre concludes the devotion by a short prayer, the rest all kneeling. The same kind of religious exercise takes place in the morning before they go to work.

The circumstance of being Christians, and instructed in the sublime principles of that religion, conduces much to the comfort of these people. It teaches them that they are men, and equally under the protection of the common Father of mankind with their masters. It imparts to them a hope of a blessed immortality; and, if they suffer oppression here, they have the assurance of being heard at last before an equitable tribunal, where every man will be rewarded according to his works. The English planters allow their slaves to continue Pagans from generation to generation, and even seem to dread the introduction of moral and Christian instruction. There are, no doubt, exceptions to this rule; but it is, in fact, the predominant principle. The French slaves, therefore, are in some respects incomparably in a better condition than the English, as they are regarded and treated like brethren and Christians.

The next class of slaves comprises artizans, or domestic servants, whom they call house slaves. The first of these are such as have learned some trade, as carpenters, coopers, taylors, &c. They are very valuable to their owners, not only for the work they do in the family, but for the great profit which their labour brings in, and the hire which they fetch when let out to work. A slave of this description frequently sells for five hundred pounds. It often happens that the stock of some small estate is disposed of by auction, and every week the Barbadoes Gazette teems with advertisements such as the following:

“To be sold by public vendue, at —, on — next, the whole of the live stock, late the property of —, consisting of four mules, two asses, a cow, a washerwoman, and an excellent cooper.”

This association of articles appears the more strange, as the slaves are universally the last of the catalogue. I recollect one instance in this style: “Two mules, three goats, a sow with eight pigs, and a fine healthy young woman with four children.” The slaves, like other articles at an auction, are mounted on a table for inspection, and their limbs and body undergo a close examination by the purchasers, to see that they labour under no disease.

The other class of house slaves do the duties of domestic servants; and, as a number of them are retained in every respectable house, they have little to do, and live well. They are lazy enough, and their morals in general are very loose. An English

servant-girl in London would for the most part do the work of fourteen female slaves. They are well treated, I may say, upon the whole, though they often suffer, and that not a little, from the caprice of their masters and mistresses. From their debauched habits, the females are continually producing an offspring from white men, and this causes the coloured race (Mulattos, Mustees, &c.) to increase in a degree which may be thought dangerous to the safety of the colonies. These persons are generally well-informed, being brought up from their infancy among the whites; and, as they acquire all the habits and vices of the Europeans, they look down with contempt upon their ignorant and uncivilized brethren. The young Mulatto and Mustee females frequently procure their freedom and that of their offspring, as the reward of their prostitution and fidelity. At Barbadoes, however, this cannot be done under a very considerable sum of money. Three hundred pounds currency is the lowest price at which a young female slave can obtain her manumission. Each of her children must be freed separately, at a very exorbitant price, whence it frequently happens that the children of a free woman are her slaves. I was greatly astonished at this circumstance, having never heard of it till some time after my arrival at Barbadoes. One day received a visit from a very respectable looking woman, who waited upon me at my apartments in the hospital, and, after some preamble, laid open the motive of her visit. I should not, on my first arrival, have taken her for a woman of colour; but I was now sufficiently accustomed to the features of these people, to perceive that she was a Mustee. She informed me that she had always lived very respectably as the *chere amie* of an officer of rank, who had been long dead; he had purchased her, and died of the fever, leaving her a female child; that, before his death, he had made her free, but that her daughter was not included in the manumission, and was her slave, left to her by will; that she had bestowed some expense and great pains on her education; that her daughter was virtuous, had refused some good offers because she did not feel a mutual passion, and that she (the mother) could not think of forcing her inclination. I was at a nonplus to divine what this story would lead to; but the good woman at length put me out of suspense, by informing me that I had seen and several times spoken to her daughter, and she thought, as I was not yet provided with what is here considered an essential part of the establishment of every unmarried man, that I ought not to let slip the opportunity of possessing a girl who was greatly attached to me, and whose person was very superior to the generality of women of colour. The terms on which she proposed to part with her daughter were

the following : That I should purchase her from her mother at 120*l.* currency, which, she said, was twenty pounds less than what she would fetch, if sold at public vendue ; and that I should engage to give her her freedom before I quitted the colony. She observed also, as a greater inducement, that there would be no need to purchase the freedom of her children, as she was herself of the last degree of colour that could be enslaved, and that her children would necessarily be free, and entitled to all the privileges of white people. Surprised as I was at this strange proposal, I was still more so, on ascertaining who the girl was ; for I had indeed frequently spoken to her, and noticed her, but never suspected her to be a person of colour, much less a slave, for she was of as fair a complexion as any European, with beautiful brown long hair, and possessed all the manner and accomplishments of a young lady.

It is amongst this class that the yoke of slavery is most severely felt ; for, as I observed before, they are more intelligent in proportion to their intercourse with the whites, and are, from nature, tinctured with a great degree of curiosity. They are well apprised of the situation of affairs in St. Domingo, and there is some reason to think, that, in the British colonies, these people will effect one day a revolution which will astonish Europe. I particularize the British colonies, as the slaves are no where, perhaps, so harshly treated as by the English and Dutch. I know not how the French slaves were treated prior to the Revolution ; but, at the present moment, their situation is unquestionably very far superior to that of the English. They are not degraded to an inferior order of beings, nor kept at such a mortifying distance as in the British and Dutch colonies.

I cannot suppress here the relation of a circumstance which occurred about three years before my arrival at Barbadoes. It is only of late years that a law has been passed making the killing of a slave murder. This law had not been acted upon in Barbadoes, and the inhabitants considered it merely as hanging over their heads *in terrorem*. During the government however of Lord Seymour, a rich planter, who had been long notorious for cruelty to his slaves, was prosecuted for the murder of one of them, under circumstances of the most aggravated cruelty. This man's slaves were distinguishable from all others, by being mutilated in some part or other : many of them had lost one or both ears ; some had their noses slit ; and there was scarcely one that did not bear the dreadful mark of having been nailed to a post or tree, by one or both ears. This monster was tried under the statute above mentioned, and being found guilty, was condemned to be hanged. No person in the island had the least idea that the sentence would be carried into ex-

ecution; it appeared to them preposterous to hang a white man for any thing, but particularly for so slight a misdemeanour as killing a negro. This, as they imagined, would be to establish a precedent of the most dangerous kind. Lord Seymour considered the matter in a very different light, and, deaf to the remonstrances of all the principal personages in the island who interested themselves in behalf of the prisoner, resolved to have the sentence carried into execution. Accordingly, the sheriff, much against his will, led out the culprit to the gallows, where he had no doubt that a pardon would be sent from his Excellency. So great was the crowd assembled, especially of people of colour, that it was found necessary to employ a strong body of the military; and, after a considerable delay, the murderer, to the great astonishment of the natives, was turned off; and the Barbadian pride was shocked to the utmost, to see a man, worth forty or fifty thousand pounds, dangling by the neck, merely for torturing a negro to death! He had scarcely had two swings, however, before the rope broke, and loud peals of acclamation resounded through the crowd, who considered that the sentence of the law was now carried into execution. The sheriff, who doubtless was the author of the accident, repaired to the Government-house, to know whether this punishment would not suffice; intimating that he considered the intention of the law to be complied with, that the scandal of hanging a white man might be avoided. The governor remained firm; and, ordering another detachment under arms, proceeded himself to the place of execution, where he saw the sentence properly carried into effect: which probably, but for the presence of the troops, would never have been done.

As to the free people of colour, a great diversity prevails among them: but in Barbadoes, the great bulk of them are far indeed from being in a comfortable condition. Many of these, however, having learned some useful trade, and being brought up in habits of industry, accumulate a comfortable independence. No property, however considerable, can ever raise a man or woman of colour, not even when combined with education, to the proper rank of a human being, in the estimation of an English or Dutch Creole. They are always kept at a respectful distance; and it would be looked upon as a kind of sacrilege, for a man of colour to sit down in the house of a Barbadian.

I was once severely reprehended by a lady at Bridgetown, for having been seen walking in the street with a surgeon of a frigate who happened to be a man of colour, though brought up in England, and educated at the University of Edinburgh. This gentleman had come up to the hospital one day on duty, and went to the house of the dispenser; (with whom his business lay,) at the hour of dinner. The dispenser himself was a native

of the island, and on that day he had some of his friends on a visit. As soon as this surgeon entered, the whole society was thrown into disorder. Being a superior officer, the dispenser was obliged to pay some attention to him, and the least thing he could do, was to ask him to sit down. This, however, he well knew, would be considered as an insult by his friends, who accordingly all rose, highly indignant at this intrusion upon their dignity, at the instant when the gentleman of colour sat down at one end of the room. In vain the dispenser apologised in a whisper, assuring them the stay of the obnoxious visitor would be very short; they all withdrew, and immediately ordered their horses. Before leaving the hospital, however, they called to pay their respects to Dr. M^cArthur, the principal medical officer of the establishment. I was dining with him that day, and we were taking our wine, when these Barbadian gentlemen (four in number) entered; there were at table several officers of rank, and they were scarcely seated amongst us, and had been furnished with glasses, &c. when the surgeon of the frigate, whose brown skin had driven them so precipitately from the dispenser's table, made his appearance. In a trice, a chair, glass, congratulations from all hands, indicated the esteem entertained for him; nor could the Barbadians now be guilty of so great a breach of politeness as to quit the room abruptly. They were therefore under the necessity of sitting down at the same table with a man of colour, and even of submitting to the mortification of drinking wine with him. I marked the frowning look of one, as he raised the glass to his mouth, and he seemed involuntarily to push his chair as far as the boundaries of the room would allow; it served, in fact, as a signal for the others to withdraw. This surgeon was a perfect stranger to the country, and could have no conception of his being the innocent cause of all this rude behaviour.

In the French colonies, the situation of the free people of colour is little inferior to that of the whites; many of them possess estates, and live respected by their white countrymen. One circumstance, I think, contributes much to this. The men of property who have lived with a woman of colour, and had by her a number of children, are frequently induced, from religious considerations, to make some amends for their former excesses, by marrying the woman; and, as the civil or Roman law prevails here, this marriage renders all the children legitimate, so that they can inherit the property of their father. In an English colony, such a marriage would be contemplated with a degree of horror. I was once rallying a Barbadian upon a circumstance (certainly of very rare occurrence), which at that time was much talked of in the island; namely, an intrigue detected between a young lady and one of her father's slaves,

an African negro lately imported. He gravely replied, that the English women did much worse things; they went so far as to marry men of colour. Legal marriages among people of colour are seldom thought of in the English colonies: in the French islands they are much more frequent. An English negro has frequently two or three wives, a circumstance I do not remember to have seen among the French. I have often heard the young mulatto girls promise that they would never live in concubinage, but marry some honest and industrious man of their own colour. This shews at least a correct notion of right and wrong, which springs from their religious education, though their good resolutions are frequently broken. So great a temptation do fine clothes and ornaments hold out to them, that few can withstand the propensity to finery.

I shall conclude my remarks on slavery by observing, that, whether the slaves be well or ill treated, the system is essentially bad. St. Domingo has set a tremendous example, and given a practical confutation of the absurd opinion that would degrade the negroes from their due rank in the scale of creation. Sloth and pride are the constant concomitants of slavery. The Creole, in poverty, is often seen to be industrious; he cultivates his own little spot of ground, avails himself of the assistance of his children, his little cottage is a picture of neatness; and, by a prudent economy, he lays by a little at a time, till a sum sufficient for the purchase of a slave is accumulated. Then, farewell industry; neither father nor children will any longer work: the whole is left to the slave, and the property of the colonist will quickly disappear with his habits of industry.

But the worst and most hideous feature of slavery, is its moral turpitude. The names of those men who by perseverance, after uncommon struggles, have wiped away the reproach from our country of trafficking in human beings, will descend with honour to posterity. But, strange as it may appear, while the nation for more than twenty years were solicitous in the behalf of negro slaves, whose condition was very often ameliorated by slavery, not a pen was drawn, or a speech made, in behalf of thousands of Christian slaves, who, born in free and civilized countries, and many of them nursed in the lap of luxury, were languishing under a horrid captivity in Africa, subjected to the tyranny of cruel and ferocious Mahometans.

Before taking leave of this island, where, (after the disturbances had subsided,) I passed many agreeable months, I shall notice two occurrences, that to an European will appear objects of interest. The first of these was the shock of an earthquake, one evening about eight o'clock. I had been that day suffering much from indigestion, and was obliged in the evening to lie down upon a ship's cot, in a room adjoining the hospital where

I always slept. I was at the moment in a profound sleep, and was only awoken from it by being thrown out of the cot, upon which I had thrown myself carelessly, and by falling upon the floor. I was surprised to find myself in the dark, and a moment after saw the candle, nearly extinguished, lying on the floor: a tremendous noise was heard over head, and every beam of the house seemed to be cracking; in attempting to get up, I was again thrown down, and the cot swung with great violence against me. I was so completely surprised at being assailed in this strange manner in my sleep, that I was not able to form a conjecture about it, but picked up my candle, and groped my way into the hospital, where I found every thing in confusion. All the patients that were able had run out, though not one of them understood the cause of their terror; the majority who remained in their beds were of opinion, that it was a visit paid them from the devil. I had by this time recovered my senses sufficiently to form some idea of the cause of the phenomena. Notwithstanding the positive assertion of one of the patients whose leg had been amputated two days before, that he had seen Lucifer standing by the door of the ward, I insisted upon the return of the fugitives, assuring them that the danger was over. I then ordered my horse, and proceeded to visit the convalescent hospital, where I found one of the stone walls which formed two ends of the building split from top to bottom: this circumstance had discovered to them the cause of the alarm. From this place I proceeded to the Government-house: here the suddenness of the event, combined with some ludicrous accidents, had produced the same impression on the minds of the marines and seamen, (of whom there were thirty or forty,) as in the great hospital first mentioned. Sailors are the most superstitious men in the world; they are always looking for and expecting supernatural appearances. The house inhabited by the governor was a large antique mansion, and had the character of being haunted: the governor's boat's crew slept in their hammocks in one of the garrets, the floor of which was so rotten and full of holes, that the greatest caution was necessary in walking across it. The heat of the apartment, so near the roof, was very considerable, being exposed all the day to the sun's vertical rays; the men consequently lay very carelessly in (or rather on) their hammocks; and one of the heaviest of them, (I believe the only one that was a-bed at the time,) was thrown out upon the old rotten floor, and consequently fell through into the room beneath, upon a table round which were seated a number of his comrades. The tremendous uproar in the air, the cracking of the timbers over-head and all around, but more especially the sudden appearance of their messmates, vociferating with a voice of thunder "The devil! the devil!" put the whole party to

flight, and the confusion of all the house was great beyond description.

The other phenomenon was of a nature to excite all that horror in the breast which the most tremendous calamity could give rise to. One Sunday evening I had been on a visit to the country, and was returning alone, riding slowly along the beach. Not a breath of air was stirring, the sun had just sunk below the horizon, and I was noticing the swell of the sea, as well as the awful hollow sound of the billows breaking on the beach. While ruminating on the scene, I was overtaken by an elderly gentleman, a native, but a stranger to me: he accosted me very politely, and, on my remarking that it was a fine tranquil evening, he replied, "Would to God it were well over!" I could not but express my astonishment at this ejaculation, for I saw no cause for apprehension. He then said, "I have lived sixty years in this island and in that opposite to us, (Guadaloupe,) and am not easily to be misled by these appearances: look at the tremendous swell of the sea without a breath of wind, which is every moment increasing, (and which shortly afterwards obliged us to quit the beach:) look at the Souffrier: What an accumulation of smoke!" I had not till that moment taken notice of the volcano: it was throwing out a much greater quantity of smoke than I had ever before observed, and in gushes extremely black. He next pointed out to me the cattle and the birds, who, instead of retiring to rest after sun-set, were running and fluttering over the country, as if apprehensive of some calamity. The stars, which began to be seen, were of a magnitude far exceeding their usual appearance; and every now and then was heard a sound resembling what is called here the howling of the wind, though not a breath of air could be felt.

The planter who called my attention to these phenomena soon left me, to go and prepare for the result. I arrived very pensive at head-quarters, but found a party at the mess-room so cheerful and interesting, that I soon dismissed from my mind all gloomy presages. We parted at a late hour (for this country), and went to bed, without thinking of the alarm which the Creole had excited.

I was not however yet asleep, when, at one in the morning, the hurricane, like a clap of thunder, came instantaneously upon us. The motion of the house was very perceptible, and in a few minutes the roof was carried away, leaving nothing but the stormy sky over my head. I was quickly out of bed and dressed. My first care was to ascertain the state of the hospital; but, on attempting to open the door, I found my utmost strength was not sufficient: the wind had rushed with such force up the staircase, and was so compressed against the door, as to render all my attempts to open it abortive. At length however, after a

few minutes, what force could not do, accident effected; for, while I was pushing at it, it flew open of itself with great violence, and then all my strength would not suffice to shut it again. On entering the hospital, I found all the window-shutters carried away by the wind, with part of the roof. Several of the patients had run down on the first alarm, and, one or two of them venturing outside the building, were carried away like a piece of paper by the wind, and could not return but with the greatest difficulty. The sea, at the same time, which washed the hospital-walls, had rolled up into the little square before the building, and to some distance up the street.

All was consternation and alarm among the inhabitants: no one knew where to fly for safety, as the danger appeared equal in or outside of the house. Within you had to dread the falling of the building, and without there was no resisting the wind but on the hands and knees; and the number of things flying about, such as window-shutters, shingles of the roofs, branches of trees, &c. added to the tremendous roaring of the wind and sea, which scarcely allowed the voice to be heard at a yard distance,—created such a scene of dismay as I had never witnessed. The darkness was most intense, so that no one could give assistance to another; and, though frequent flashes of lightning were discovered through the thick gloom, yet they were not capable of throwing even a momentary light upon the surrounding objects.

While I was groping my way through the Hospital, to seek out the objects most likely to sustain injury from terror, and to restore confidence and administer cordials, a horrible crash was heard at one end of the building, and a continued thumping, evidently produced by some large body, succeeded to it. I hastened to explore this new danger, and found that the sea had forced its way through some breach in the stone wall of the Hospital yard, and was now flowing into the lower apartments, bringing with it some planks and other fragments, which shewed that a wreck had taken place there. I soon-mustered some of the most courageous of the convalescents, to proceed with lanterns, and such ropes as we could procure, to the spot, and see if any human being was within the reach of assistance. We found that a vessel had been driven ashore against the Hospital wall, where it was dashed to pieces: no person, however, could be seen or heard, and we had the satisfaction to find in the morning, that the schooner which had been thus lost, had not a single individual on-board, nor cargo. These horrors continued with equal intensity for about four hours, when the wind moderated; and, shortly after, day-light discovered to us the extent of the mischief it had occasioned.

This was considered by the inhabitants as one of the most



favourable hurricanes that could well happen, either in respect of its intensity or duration, as well as for the little damage occasioned by it. The few small vessels that were lying off the town were driven from their anchors, and most of them wrecked; many houses were unroofed, many trees torn up by the roots, and all of them stripped of their leaves; so that the island presented a most desolate appearance in the morning. The beach was wonderfully altered in appearance by the violent beating of the sea, and was covered with an immense quantity of sea-weed. On the east side of the island, a schooner, with eleven men, was driven, or rather lifted, by the sea over a very dangerous reef of rocks about a mile from the shore, and was afterwards left high and dry on the beach at a considerable distance above high-water mark, without injury to the vessel, and to the astonishment of the crew, who found themselves at daylight lying amongst the trees. A man-of-war brig commanded by a lieutenant, that had sailed the preceding day from *Marie Gallante*, was lost, with all hands, to windward of the island: no vestige of the wreck was ever found, so that most probably she was swallowed up by the waves.

It was shortly after this event that I quitted the island. A French squadron had come out, not knowing that *Martinique* was in our possession till they arrived in sight of it, when they instantly bore away for the *Saints*, menacing us as they passed; but, as this was the only harbour that remained for them, (the island of *Guadaloupe* not possessing any,) they resolved to avail themselves of it as soon as possible. This little cluster of mountainous islands affords a very secure harbour, and the fortifications are so strong, that it has obtained the appellation of 'the Gibraltar of the West Indies.' There are two passages into the harbour, which allow a great facility of slipping out.

The English squadron under Sir *Alexander Cochrane* soon made their appearance, and a blockade of these ships was immediately formed. To go into the harbour after them was impracticable, and there remained only one way of driving them out, viz. by landing a force, and attacking the works; and, as the French garrison was not strong, this was resolved on. A few men were hastily procured from *Dominique* and from our garrison, whom I accompanied; and a landing was effected in the night on the weather-side of the islands. This mode of attack was never suspected by the enemy, whose attention had been wholly directed to the fleet. The debarkation was completed before daylight, and the troops in a very gallant style made themselves masters of one of the heights. The appearance of the British flag so unexpectedly on one of the peaks astonished the enemy, who found it necessary to concentrate their land force. The English seamen were busily em-

ployed in bringing some great guns on-shore, for the purpose of erecting a battery to play upon the French squadron; and the troops continued to make themselves masters of one post after another. These islands consist of lofty peaks, some of which are united by the flat ground, or by ridges of inferior elevation; others are separated entirely by the sea. On the tops of all the principal peaks strong works are constructed. The loftiest of the whole of them is called Mount Russell, from a British admiral of that name, who first contrived to get up guns upon it. It seems to be almost inaccessible; at least, there are few persons hardy enough to scale its summit.

The French, in the mean time, were concentrating their force within the citadel, and another very strong fortress on an island commanding the lower entrance. Their commodore foresaw that he should have to encounter shells and rockets from the heights occupied by the English during the night, and determined to ensure his safety by flight, which he accomplished about eight in the evening; in a manner very creditable to him. His movements were not discovered by the fleet, though we who were on shore could distinctly perceive them. It seemed strange, that an event which every one was in expectation of, should have been allowed to create confusion or surprise; but so it happened. The French commodore passed close under the English admiral's stern, who went on the poop himself to hail him as an English seventy-four; nor was the truth discovered till a broadside was poured into his stern, and a second fire took place, before our people had time to recover from their surprise; and, before the fleet could slip their cables, the French had got the start of them. Their squadron consisted of five ships, three of the line, and two frigates: one of the line-of-battle ships was subsequently taken, with the two frigates. The other two escaped, and got safe into Cherbourg, where they remained blocked up till the end of the war.

The squadron being gone, and the English troops having a firm footing on the islands, the French garrison had only to consider whether they would be cannonaded out of their works, for which preparations were making, or starved out, which they must soon have been, for want of water. They determined to capitulate; and on the third day we were in possession of all the works, which, by previous orders, were immediately blown up. With a strong garrison, well provisioned, they might have held out against a superior force for a considerable time. There are not many inhabitants in these islands; but their habitations are situated in such sequestered spots, that they looked like the retreats of hermits. There is one coffee estate here which produces the most esteemed article of that kind in the West Indies. Part of the produce was regularly sent to France,

for the consumption of the family of Napoleon, as it formerly was for the Bourbon family.

I remained a month or six weeks in these islands, as the expedition against Guadeloupe was shortly to take place, and I was to go on that service. The troops had been collecting at Barbadoes, and in January 1810 arrived here, under the command of Sir George Beckwith: they only remained a few days, to arrange matters, and determine on their mode of action. I need not enter here into any military details of this expedition; they were given in the newspapers of the day, and are foreign to the objects of this work.

Guadeloupe is the largest of all the Windward islands, and is divided into two parts by a small river called the *Rivière salée*, or salt river. The northern portion is called Grande-Terre, and on its eastern side is one of the largest towns in the West Indies, called Point-a-Pitre. In a commercial point of view, this seems to be of more importance than any other French town in the colonies: it is situated upon a flat, and is unhealthy; it is however very populous, and inhabited by rich merchants. The southern division of the island is called Basse-Terre; a chain of very lofty mountains runs through it from north to south. The capital, called by the same name, is a very large town, situated at the foot of this chain, on a narrow slip of land on the western side of the island; it is a well-built town, and has a delightful promenade in the centre of it, under the shade of lofty trees which meet at the top. On each side are benches, and a considerable number of respectable persons may always be seen walking up and down; and in the evening about sunset it is sure to be crowded. There are more taverns and coffee-houses here than in any other town that I have visited, and they are more respectable than those of Barbadoes, not being kept by coloured people, nor being, as in most of the English islands, brothels. They are frequented by the inhabitants, who meet there for the purpose of rational conversation, and to learn news; in fact, it is the only place in the West Indies where I saw any thing like an English or French coffee-house.

The town of Basse-Terre appears to be about two miles in length; its breadth is not much, as the mountain rises very abruptly behind it, and even seems to overhang it. The streets are rendered pleasant by the beautifully clear and cold water, which, descending from the mountains, is conducted through them in channels of about a foot in depth, running with a copious and rapid stream through every street. Some of the cross-streets are so steep, that they cannot be passed with a carriage. There are abundance of carriage-roads however constructed to communicate with the country; though, in such a mountainous district, they cannot be expected to be very good. A profusion

of magnificent prospects will meet you at every step as you quit the town, in whatever direction it may be.

But the object of the greatest interest here, is the *Souffrier* or volcano, which seems to overhang the town, and forms the highest point of the ridge. On approaching it, the smoke is seen to issue out of three or four different spots, and these at some distance from each other: nor is there any thing like a regular crater. I could not learn from enquiry that any eruption has taken place since the island has been in the possession of Europeans. I must confess I had no opportunity of consulting any person of a philosophical turn; and as for the bulk of the townspeople, they have as little heed about a volcano which threatens one day to bury them all in one common ruin, as if it were only a crow's nest hanging over their heads.

There is an extensive ravine descending from this mountain, which opens to the sea between the town of Basse-Terre and the southern point of the island; through it, as through a funnel, the wind rushes with such impetuosity, as to endanger the safety of small vessels passing close in-shore, and great numbers have been upset by it. We had to encounter it in a frigate, at the distance of three miles from the shore, and felt it very sensibly.

The commander-in-chief had fixed upon me to convey to England about 600 of the prisoners of war, a majority of whom had been in the hospital, and could not be sent with the great body of prisoners immediately after the capture of the island. Two transports were set apart for this purpose, and every thing provided for a supply of their wants: they were in general young conscripts, most of whom had only arrived with the last squadron, which brought out above a thousand men for the defence of the colonies, and which they succeeded in sending on-shore at Basse-Terre, before the arrival of the English fleet. These young men, or rather boys, had suffered greatly from dysentery, a distemper which they brought with them on-board. Truly deplorable was the condition of these poor wretches, covered with vermin, reduced by disease, and imposed upon by the older soldiers, who by some manœuvre got possession of their clothing, of which, as they did not feel the immediate want, so neither did they consider that they were undertaking a voyage into a colder climate. Many of these youths abandoned themselves to despair, and made no effort to struggle against their unhappy fate. The consequence was, that a number of them died in the hospital, and those who embarked for Europe as cured of their dysenteries, experienced almost immediately a return of the disease. I took sixty of the worst of them into the transport in which I had embarked, and which had on-board 300 men and 19 officers. Thus crowded together, their condition, with regard to health, was not likely to improve.

It was June before we quitted Basse-Terre, and approaching to July before we took our last farewell of the West India islands. In a few days we began to perceive ourselves in the midst of that vast vortex which is known by the name of the Gulf Stream, and is thus formed. The current of the great ocean, under the equinoctial line, sets in an unvaried course to the westward, and passing down between the main-land of South America and the West India islands, its direction is changed by the form of this continent, and forced to the north-west. It then enters the Gulph of Mexico, where being hindered from flowing any farther to the westward, it sweeps round this immense gulph, and turning its course to the north-east through the Gulph of Florida, flows again into the great Atlantic Ocean. Here it holds a northerly course, which becomes more and more easterly as it advances, till it ceases to be any longer distinguishable near the Azores or Western islands. Its track is marked all the way by immense quantities of seaweed, which it brings with it from the coast of Mexico, and which extends in long lines as far as the eye can reach, looking like banks above the surface of the water. This current is of the greatest service to ships homeward-bound, as it runs in the direction they want to go.

In the latitude of about forty-four or forty-five degrees, the air all at once began to be extremely cold, which increased so rapidly upon us, that the seamen began to look out for an ice island. The next day this cold increased still more, and on the succeeding day we learned that two of the sternmost ships of the convoy had run upon a large mass of ice, and could not be got off. So material was the damage they sustained, that they were abandoned by their crews, who were taken off by a ship that narrowly escaped the same fate. The cold occasioned by these masses of ice was felt for more than a fortnight, and proved fatal to fifteen of the prisoners, all except one (an officer) young conscripts under eighteen years of age.

The case of one of them was peculiarly distressing. This poor boy had been robbed by his messmates, old soldiers, of every article of clothing and bedding, who moreover had concealed his illness. This perhaps would never have been known, had I not accidentally discovered a naked boy reduced to a skeleton lying in one of the births, and which I at first took for a dead body. On examining however into the circumstances, I found a poor wretch, alive indeed, but who could not possibly survive many days, lying stark naked in the midst of his own filth, without bed or covering, in the last stage of dysentery. To appeal to the humanity of his messmates, who had robbed him of every thing, would be unavailing. I appealed to the French officers of his own regiment, but they were afraid to attempt to exert any authority. I could not prevail on one of

the prisoners to attend upon him, even for a reward. I set the example however to the French officers, by bringing out from my chest a few articles of clothing, which was attended with success, and the poor wretch was again covered. I offered his messmates an additional allowance of grog to attend upon him, but they refused it. Next day I stopped their grog altogether, and offered it to any four men in the ship who would undertake to attend by rotation. This had the desired effect; four men offered themselves, and during the day acquitted themselves very well of their duty, for I had a constant eye upon them. In the night, however, I cannot answer for their conduct; for in the morning the man was missing, and was never heard of more. From the sentries on deck I learned, that, about one o'clock in the morning, three or four men had brought up a sick man perfectly naked, and carried him into the head to the common privy; that the men returned one at a time, but that several had gone and returned; that they did not notice whether they had taken the naked man down or not. One of the sentries on the gangway affirmed, that he heard something splash into the water, and immediately after saw something alongside, but could not distinguish what it was, the ship was going so fast through the water; that he called to the sentries on the fore-castle, who enquired of the prisoners in the head what it was; they answered, that they had let fall a bucket which they were emptying; and their persons could not be identified. I have no doubt that this young man's messmates were guilty of the atrocious crime of throwing their sick comrade overboard. I afterwards gave in their names, with all the particulars of this affair, to the officer to whom I delivered up my charge.

It was the middle of July when we arrived at Plymouth, in a deplorably unhealthy state, where we were compelled to hoist the quarantine-flag by the officers of health. I shall never forget the impression the sight of my native country made upon me, after having been so long accustomed to the luxuriant landscapes of the West Indies. The beautiful seat of Mount Edgecumbe, under which we were anchored, appeared a wilderness; and the French officers, who had been born and brought up in the West Indies, expressed a degree of astonishment and disappointment at the meagre appearance of the country. We were afterwards ordered to Portsmouth, where we ultimately delivered up our prisoners to the *depôt* at Porchester Castle.

I could not help feeling impressions similar to the French officers, at the same effect produced by the scenery all the way from Portsmouth to London; but this disappointment was amply compensated by the animated faces, the intelligent aspect of the inhabitants, especially of the females, which formed so brilliant a contrast with the black and yellow visages I had been so long in the habit of contemplating.



A SPANISH PLANTER OF PORTO RICO,
LUXURIATING in his HAMMOCK.



SLAVES IN BARBADOES.

W. H. WOODWARD del.

Printed by J. W. & J. G. S. G. G. G.

PLATE 17



CARLISLE BAY AND BRIDGE TOWN BARBADOS.

Engraved by J. M.

Printed by J. M.



A CHIEF OF THE BOESMANS OR BUSH NEGROES ON A VISIT TO THE GOVERNOR OF PARAMARIBO.
ARAWAKAS AND CHARAIRES OR CARIBBEE INDIANS AT SURINAM.



- | | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 Blunt Arrow to take live Birds | 6 Apaitou or War Club | 11 Reeden Flute |
| 2 Common Arrow | 7 Basket | 12 Bone Flute |
| 3 Fish Arrow | 8 Calabash ornamented | 13 Quici ou or |
| 4 Pingo, or Wild Boar Arrow | 9 Laddle to row with | Female Apron |
| 5 Bow | 10 Crown of Feathers | 14 Ring made of a Nut |



CITY OF PARAMARIBO, SURINAM.

