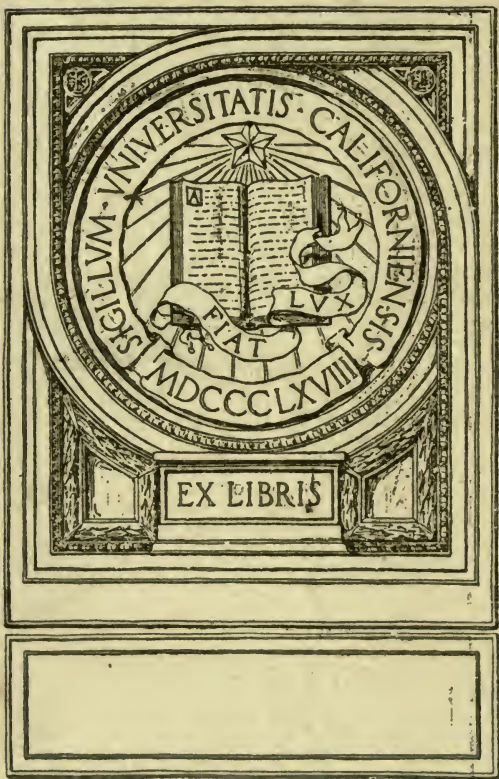


OUR

WEST INDIAN  
NEIGHBORS

FREDERICK A.  
OBER







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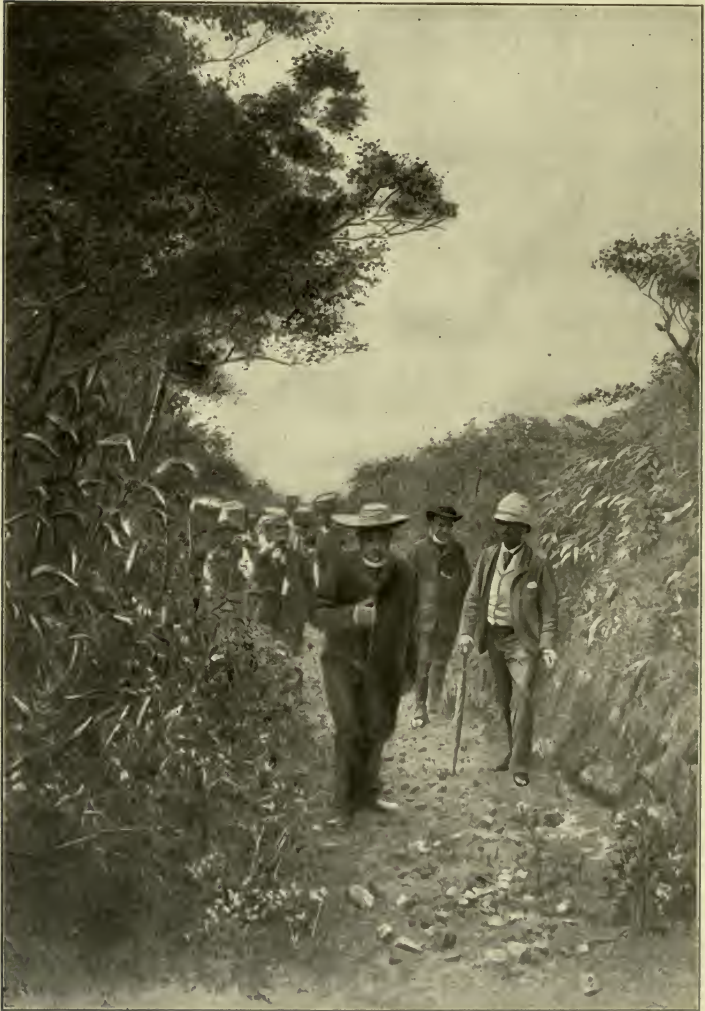


OUR WEST INDIAN NEIGHBORS .





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Author and Party Ascending the Soufrière St. Vincent



# OUR WEST INDIAN NEIGHBORS

THE ISLANDS OF THE CARIBBEAN SEA,  
"AMERICA'S MEDITERRANEAN": THEIR  
PICTURESQUE FEATURES, FASCINATING  
HISTORY, AND ATTRACTIONS  
FOR THE TRAVELER, NATURE-  
LOVER, SETTLER AND  
PLEASURE-SEEKER

*By*

FREDERICK A. OBER

AUTHOR OF

"CRUSOE'S ISLAND," "PUERTO RICO AND ITS  
RESOURCES," ETC.



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# OUR WEST INDIAN NEIGHBORS

THE HISTORY OF THE  
WEST INDIAN  
PEOPLES  
FROM THE  
FIRST  
DISCOVERY  
TO THE  
PRESENT  
BY  
JAMES POTT & CO.

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NEW YORK  
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DEDICATED  
TO  
H. A. ALFORD NICHOLLS, M.D., C.M.G.  
OF  
ROSEAU, DOMINICA  
BRITISH WEST INDIES  
AS A  
TOKEN OF FRIENDSHIP AND ESTEEM



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THE  
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RELATION  
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MARRIAGE  
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# Our West Indian Neighbors

## I

### BAHAMAS, "ISLES OF JUNE"

Their air of mystery and romance—Antillean outposts—Extent and distribution—Suggestive of the Lost Atlantis—Their amenities of climate—Bright seas and coral strands—Character of their population—Their government—English rule and revenues—Historical beginnings—The aborigines and their remains—Native "thunderbolts"—Pirates and buccaneers—Haunts of "Blackbeard" the pirate—Where he made a "hell of his own"—Alexander Selkirk's rescuer—Revolutionists, wreckers, and blockade-runners—Nassau: how to get there; what to see there—What the Bahama "soil" looks like—Native animals and plants—The landfall of Columbus—The Fountain of Youth—Home of flamingoes and parrots—The southern islands and their resources.

**W**HILE the islands, islets, *cayos*, "cays" or keys, of that vast chain composing the Bahamas are estimated at more than three thousand in number, less than two score are, or ever have been for any length of time, inhabited by human beings; which fact may account for the air of mystery that still enshrouds them.

They were the first discovered in the West Indies—the first revealed to Europeans—the first to challenge Columbus, when, in 1492, he approached the then un-

known and unnamed America; they were explored by mail-clad *conquistadores*; warred over by England and Spain; held for years by fierce pirates and buccaneers; made the resorts of wreckers and blockade-runners; and this may account for the halo of romance that still invests them.

Although pertaining, strictly speaking, to the Atlantic, these Bahamas cannot be considered other than as outlying islands of the West Indies, Antillean outposts, guarding the northern approaches to the Caribbean Sea. Through their portals Columbus first made his devious way to Cuba and the islands beyond; threading their tortuous channels, Ponce de Leon came up from Puerto Rico, searching for the famed Bimini, Isle of the Fountain of Youth, and made himself an immortal by the discovery of Florida.

Nearest of North America's insular neighbors in the West Indies, beginning just across the straits of Florida, the Bahamas extend southeasterly more than seven hundred miles, finally "petering out" in the Silver Shoals off the north coast of Santo Domingo; but a prolongation of the chain as superficially viewed on the map would take in the Virgin Isles and the Caribbees, which protrude like gigantic stepping-stones above the blue waters all the way to the Orinoco's mouth on the northeast coast of South America.

And what daring speculations do these protruding peaks of submerged mountains suggest! It is no new hypothesis, that they are the sole visible remains of a vast Caribbean continent, which once occupied what is now the basin of "America's Mediterranean"—the "Lost Atlantis," in fact, none else than that continent surmised by the ancients to exist beyond the fabled Oceanus, which

even the scientists are now prone to regard as something more than mythic. The Tyrian navigators told of it, describing its beautiful scenery, its marble palaces, its glorious gardens of the gods, its rolling rivers and cloud-piercing mountain peaks. It engaged the attention of Plato, Solon, and the Egyptian magi; it aroused more than a passing interest in the Mediterranean navigators; but ere it was explored, long before its mysteries were made known, it disappeared beneath the Atlantic waves.

Atlantis, Atlantic, Atlantean: whence do we derive these words, if not from those "myths of a drownèd continent," which "homeless drift over waters blank"?

"Spirits alone in these islands dwelt  
All the dumb, dim years ere Columbus sailed,  
The old voyagers said; and it might be spelt  
Into dream-books of legend, if wonders failed.  
They were demons that shipwrecked Atlantis, affrayed  
At the terror of silence themselves had made." \*

This sinuous stretch of islands, extending over seventeen degrees of latitude and as many of longitude, together with the great sea which it separates from the Atlantic, has long been the "happy hunting ground" of scientists from the time of Humboldt to the present. Professor Alexander Agassiz, so long ago as 1879, expressed the opinion that, in his extensive dredging operations in the Caribbean Sea, he had brought to light the outlines of old continents, of which the islands inclosing that sea are vestiges.

Alfred Russel Wallace, greatest of English naturalists, declares that the West Indies have been long isolated, and that "originally they probably formed part of Central America, and may have been united with Yucatan and Honduras in one extensive tropical land." Years

\* Lucy Larcom, in "Bermoothes."



before him, Humboldt said: "The supposition of an oceanic irruption has been the source of two other hypotheses on the origin of the smaller West Indian islands. Some geologists admit that the uninterrupted chain of islands from Trinidad [northeast coast of South America] to Florida, exhibits the remains of an ancient chain of mountains."

There seems to be a striking unanimity of opinion that the great barrier-chain of the Caribbean may present the vestiges of a sunken Atlantean continent; but we must not lose sight of the fact that the Bahamas, which properly extend from near Florida to Turk's Island, directly north of Puerto Plata, Santo Domingo, are structurally distinct from the Lesser Antilles, or easternmost Caribbees. The former are mainly of coralline formation, with no trace of primitive rock; while the latter are chiefly volcanic in character—in the language of Humboldt, "islands heaved up by fire from the depths of the sea, and ranged in that regular line of which we find striking examples in so many volcanic hills in Mexico and in Peru." Between these two distinct chains is a fragmentary group of isles and islets, the Virgins, lying eastward from Puerto Rico, which partake of the coralline composition of the Bahamas—at least, above the sea; though they are probably erected upon volcanic bases far beneath the waves.

These, however, are the views of the non-scientific, or, at best, the semi-scientific traveler, and are not put forth as in any sense authoritative. The geologists and geognostics have had their attention re-directed to those gems of the Caribbean Sea, by the terrible convulsion of nature that occurred in the Caribbees in 1902. It took a cataclysm to move them; but, like the unfortunate islands,



they were at last stirred to their very depths, and have been writing and talking ever since, so some valuable information may eventuate, which should be thankfully received by inquiring minds.

One may possess an inquiring and receptive mind, and yet not desire to penetrate so far beneath the surface as lie the vast ocean beds. Still, it is better than not to start in at the beginning of things. The Bahamas have been considered worthy of investigation by minds the most profound: *Quod erat demonstrandum*. Having done our duty, we may now journey on, with light hearts and joyful countenances. The old-school scientists, Humboldt, perhaps, and a few others excepted, persistently ignored mere beauty for beauty's sake, and were prone to plunge beneath the surface for the why and the wherefore. Then they came up and wrangled over what they had found. But it is not necessary, here in the Bahamas, to more than skim the surface of the shining seas, or at the most take a dip in the flashing waves that lave the coral strands, to find enough of interest to occupy one's time for weeks and months.

The amenities of climate are so great, where the temperature preserves an agreeable and temperate mean throughout the year, without frost to nip or excess of heat to debilitate, that one is tempted to protract a stay indefinitely and become a resident. Therein, however, peril lies, as is attested by the wrecks, human and otherwise, that so plentifully bestrew the strands.

Probably no equal area elsewhere, whether of land or water, has witnessed the foundering of so many argosies, as the Bahama, or Lucayan, Isles. Like the sands and coral drift, the Bahaman population is constantly shifting; or else deteriorating. It may be said without prej-

udice that the black men introduced from Africa, to replace the red men exterminated by the Spaniards, could not boast descent from a race superior to the American aboriginal. Neither have they proved their right to supplant them. Nearly every inhabited island is a Haiti in miniature, so far as the complexion of its people goes. The aggregate population is about 54,000, "the most part," says the statistical Whitaker, "being descendants of liberated Africans." The other part is composed chiefly of whites who would like to be liberated, but cannot, from their insular environment.

Why? In a word, because of their poverty. Notwithstanding the climatic amenities, the abundance of tropical fruits, the waters teeming with fish of every hue and almost every kind, the seas abounding with turtle to such an extent that green-turtle soup is "taken only under compulsion"; notwithstanding all this, poverty is everywhere prevalent. Sponge-fishing and salt-raking are the chief industries—although "industry" comes nearer being a misnomer here, where nobody labors, than anywhere else on earth.

Out of the sea come the chief revenues of the islands, and they are to be had for the gathering; yet every year displays an increasing deficit, and the public debt waxes, rather than wanes. This debt, according to the last published statistics, was \$550,000. From the same source, we derive the information that the public revenue was £78,000, and the public expenditure £81,000, leaving a deficit of £3000, which is about the annual average. This is owing, the chronic growlers say, to the "top-heavy character" of their government, which is carried on under a governor with a salary of \$10,000; a chief justice, \$5000; a colonial secretary, \$3500, etc.,

to the total of something like one-tenth the total revenues.

England gives the Bahamas all this, freely and persistently, though Nassau, the island-capital, is four thousand miles distant from Downing Street, and transit occupies fourteen days. But the Bahamas have to pay for it, and that is why its people are sorrowful, perchance ungrateful.

The small army of office-holding Britons might be tolerated, on the score that England has in the past sent hitherward her larger armies of fighting men, who have shed their blood and spent their lives in acquiring and afterward defending her colonial possessions; but there is one other infliction due to British domination not so easy to forgive. It is the bestowal upon all her West Indian islands of her archaic monetary system, with its barbarous nomenclature, "pounds-shillings-and-pence." Nearly all the islands have fractured English traditions, to the extent of locally substituting the American decimal system, thus saving time present, and discounting time future as to prospective penalties for infractions of the unwritten law against unutterable thoughts!

There are those who declare that English rule in the West Indies is retardative, even retrogressive, as exemplified in the Bahamas; but when we reflect what a bulwark England has provided against the ever-threatening flood of black barbarians, we cannot but admit that she is entitled to the gratitude of civilized humanity in general. But for British officialism in the West Indies, with its prestige of might behind it and visible cordons of soldiers around it, there are many islands which would soon resemble Haiti in other and blacker features than complexion merely.

A glance at the historical beginnings of the Bahamas will throw some light upon the unstable and deteriorating quality of the inhabitants, for it is so plainly written that "all who run may read." When discovered, more than four hundred years ago, the Bahamas were sparsely inhabited by a weak and inoffensive people whom Columbus, for lack of a better name, called Indians. They felt no need, and had great lack of clothing; but they were equally devoid of defensive weapons, being armed only with primitive bows, arrows, bone-tipped spears, and stone or wooden war-clubs. Columbus found them not only mild and inoffensive, but, as he wrote in his diary, and afterward told his sovereigns, "There are no better people on earth, for they are gentle and know not what evil is; neither killing nor stealing." That the invading Spaniards both killed and stole, we have ample evidence in the pages of their historians; but, as they were merely feeling their way, at that time, through the archipelago toward the continent which they fondly imagined was ahead of them, and did not wish to begin their explorations with bloodshed, they refrained from taking the lives of these aborigines.

Being diverted to other islands, where rumor had it there were mines of gold (of which the Bahamas were totally destitute) it was nearly twenty years before the Spaniards returned, on war and bloodshed bent. Then, being in need of laborers for their mines and plantations in Santo Domingo, they captured and deported all the Indians they could find. And eventually they found nearly all, as it was easy to hunt out and run them down, with or without bloodhounds, in those islands, covered as they were with a sparse vegetation that afforded but few hiding-places. Some few of the Indians escaped for a while



by hiding in the numerous caves, where they resided for years, in the end miserably perishing. Evidences of their residence in these caves is afforded by the relics found there, such as celts, or stone spear and arrow heads, and their mighty war-clubs.

I would fain lead my readers in quest of these aboriginal relics, had we but the time to spare, having ferreted out many from their secret resting-places; but will content myself with stating that the best of them may now be found in the National Museum at Washington, and in the Museum of Natural History, New York. Suffice it to state that the Spaniards did their bloody work with neatness and dispatch, leaving no aboriginal alive, either in the Bahamas, or in any large island of the West Indies. A few *disjecta membra* only, scattered bones in caves and holes, and now and then crania of doubtful authenticity, remain to remind us of those "gentlest people on earth," and it may be said without fear of contradiction that no aboriginal Lucayan has been seen alive since the sixteenth century ended.

The spear and arrow-heads infrequently found throughout the chain are called by the present natives "thunderbolts," and are carefully saved and cherished as amulets and charms, particularly efficacious against the lightning stroke. These "thunderbolts," the ignorant and superstitious negroes affirm, have been seen to descend from the skies during thunder-storms, and an old negro once said to me: "Massa, don' you mek no mistake; me see dis a t'undahbolt drap wiv my own yeyes, sah. One time da t'undah done strike a tree in front ob ma own house, an' ma wife he say: 'I 'clar I b'leve t'undahbolt done drap in yandah tree'; an,' sho nuff, when me go to look an' zamine dat tree he be right in da crack ob um lightnin'!

Me mus' b'leve um, ef me see um, sah." And believe it he did, no amount of reasoning being sufficient to convince him to the contrary. Incidentally, this incident will throw light upon the length of time that has elapsed since these celts were in use by their makers, and the prevailing ignorance of the present natives.

The Spaniards, then, returned to the islands only for slaves and victims for their various lusts (of which they possessed a full allotment), and the first actual settlements were made by English adventurers. An English navigator, one Captain Sayle, was fortuitously preserved from shipwreck by making shelter in the harbor of an island which, in gratitude for his deliverance, he called Providence. As there was already another Providence, on the coast of North America, he later designated his island as New Providence. This was in or about the year 1667; but, although more than one hundred and seventy years had elapsed since the discovery of the Bahamas (during which period no settlements had been made in the chain), and more than a hundred since the last aboriginal inhabitant had been carried off, leaving the islands depopulated, the Spaniards bitterly resented this invasion of their territory. Five years later they made a descent upon New Providence and conveyed a gentle hint to the settlers that they were not wanted in that part of the world, by roasting their governor over an open fire, and destroying all the property they could not carry away.

They are said to have urged, in extenuation of their rude behavior, that the settlers were mostly wreckers and pirates, anyway, which accusation was very near to the truth. The numerous small cays of the Bahamas, with the hundreds of tortuous channels and shallow waterways, afforded delightful retreats for the then numerous



"gentlemen of the sea," by themselves styled buccaneers, but to others known as pirates. Pirates they were, at all events, if the old chronicles may be believed, and not only in Nassau, but throughout the entire chain of islands, north and south, indulged in every kind of debauchery and excess. It is difficult to tell just when they were finally exterminated; but the descendants of their contemporaries, the wreckers, continued to exist until late into the last century. Indeed, there are men still living who make no bones of decrying the erection of light-houses and beacons for the mariner's guidance, saying that the Government has taken the bread out of honest men's mouths and destroyed a lucrative profession!

The Spaniards returned again and again, at one time being re-inforced by the French; but the pirates and buccaneers continued to flourish, and at last became so impudent (daring even to scuttle the ships of his British Majesty, King George I., and force many of his unfortunate subjects to "walk the plank," that he dispatched that famous navigator, Captain Woodes Rogers, with instructions to either reduce the pirates to obedience or destroy their colony. Captain Woodes Rogers was the bold privateer who, in 1707, rescued Alexander Selkirk, after his four years' solitary exile on the island of Juan Fernandez, made this prototype of Robinson Crusoe first mate aboard his ship, and gave him command of one of his Spanish prizes.

Captain Rogers was sent out with particular instructions to kill, or capture alive with a view to hanging, the notorious John Teach, alias "Blackbeard," who had made Nassau his rendezvous, after having been driven from the Virgin Islands, and who was commodore, as he styled himself, of as desperate a gang of pirates as the world has

ever known. He held his councils of war beneath the shade of a spreading banyan tree, which is still shown in the suburbs of Nassau, and there planned piracies which ravaged not only the West Indies, but the coast of North America. Captain Teach derived the name of "Blackbeard" from his long, black, and flowing whiskers, which (says one who had the privilege of conversing with him in his palmy days) he suffered to grow to an immoderate length, and the effect of which he was solicitous to heighten by twisting them up in small tails, like a Ramilies wig. When his evil passions were aroused—which was nearly all the time—he appeared a perfect fury. He always went into action with three braces of pistols thrust in his belt and slung over his shoulders, and with lighted matches under his hat, sticking out over each of his ears.

In Nassau, Blackbeard was looked upon as the devil incarnate, and indeed he was never more flattered than when his resemblance to his Satanic Majesty was commented on, either by friend or foe. He delighted in exhibiting himself to his merry men as a demon, and one day when business was dull, over under the lee of Hog Island, in the harbor of Nassau, he appeared in the rôle of Devil in what he playfully called "a little hell of my own." It was a private performance, with himself as sole actor and his men as suffering spectators. He collected a great quantity, some say a ton, of brimstone and combustibles between decks of his pirate ship, and after driving his crew below and battening down the hatches, he set fire to the mass and compelled the miserable wretches to remain while he enacted his conception of the devil, to the life. The situation finally became intolerable and the men burst the hatches and escaped to the deck; though Blackbeard

was not only unaffected by the smoke and fumes, but seemed actually to enjoy them, like the diabolical salamander that he was.

Captain Woodes Rogers arrived too late to capture the pirate, who sailed for the Carolina coast, where he shortly after met his merited fate at the hands of Lieutenant Maynard of the King's navy. Caught in Ocracoke Inlet, to the south of Hatteras, Blackbeard was brought to bay and forced to fight the brave lieutenant, who overcame him after a desperate contest, and cutting off his head, stuck it on the end of his bowsprit, and in this manner carried the "captain and his whiskers" into port.

It was in the latter part of 1718 that Blackbeard met his untimely end; but the Bahama pirates, and following them the wreckers, continued to exist for long years thereafter. All the maritime nations having united against them, however, they no longer prospered, and were compelled to eke out a mere existence by fishing for conchs. As these shellfish were (and are now) very abundant in Bahama waters, and as the pirates and their descendants subsisted, in great measure, upon their flesh, the natives have acquired the name of "Conchs," by which they are universally known throughout the chain and in the Florida Keys. From some of these conchs, by the way, are obtained the beautiful "pink pearls," not infrequently found in the waters surrounding the southern islands, and which are sometimes of great value.

The American Revolutionary War wrought a change in the complexion of the inhabitants, for it brought about an irruption of Tories from the Southern States, who came over in large numbers, bringing with them thousands of negro slaves. This peaceful invasion inured to the benefit

of the islands, for the new settlers brought wealth and thrift; but eventually they succumbed to the combined effects of insularity and climate, and became as depressed and poverty-stricken as the original inhabitants.

Another result of the war was the capture of New Providence by an American force under Commodore Hopkins, who soon after abandoned the island as untenable. It was retaken by the Spaniards, and held during the war; but was again captured by Americans, sailing from Saint Augustine, the invading force consisting of about fifty volunteers commanded by a gallant Carolinian named Devaux. The island was then well fortified, and moreover was occupied by more than seven hundred Spaniards, yet the forts were taken almost without bloodshed, owing to the strategy and audacity of the young Carolinian, who deceived the garrisons by sending the boats from his brigantines to shore loaded down with soldiers, who, instead of landing, lay down and were rowed back to the vessels, from which they were again taken to land. This process, and a great hubbub, deceived the Spaniards into the belief that a large force was about to attack them, and when Colonel Devaux appeared at the fortress gate, they incontinently surrendered. They were greatly chagrined, of course, when they learned the actual number of their captors; but that was not until after their arms had been given up and they were held as prisoners of war. The Spaniards were transported; but the island remained in American hands for a short time only, reverting to Great Britain after the treaty of peace was signed and ratified. For the past hundred years and more, the history of the Bahamas has been uneventful, except for a brief period during the Civil War in the United States, when Nassau became the headquarters of blockade-



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100



Nassau's Great Silk-Cotton Tree

THE NEW  
AMERICAN

runners, and for a while reveled in riches; which, however, were as quickly dissipated as they were acquired.

Just when and by whom the Bahama climate was discovered, is not a matter of record; but it was probably by Columbus, who wrote in his journal of the deliciously soft and heavenly airs; and he arrived at the very worst season for experiencing its blandest possibilities. The temperature averages about seventy-five degrees between October and May, and eighty or eighty-five between May and October, and the heat is always tempered by refreshing breezes. Situated as it is, just beneath the northern Tropic, Nassau possesses an ideal winter climate—in the shade; but the glare of the ever-shining sun is something terrific. As in the Bermudas, the white rock and the "water-colored" houses reflect the rays of the sun with an unmitigated intensity. But the houses, all, are well provided with jalousied verandas, which admit the salt sea-breezes, excluding the heat and light; and then, there are trees, here and there, chiefly of the tropical variety, such as palms, cocoa and royal, silk-cottons and banyans or American figs. At least one tree in Nassau is entitled to rank among the vegetable wonders of the world, and that is the gigantic silk-cotton (*Bombax ceiba*), which spreads its broad limbs and buttressed trunk over vast space in the court-house square. Another is the famous "banyan," already mentioned as once affording shelter for the pirates when they held their smoke-talks.

Nassau, on the whole, is an interesting town, filled with cultured people occupying comfortable and attractive homes, and as the island-capital, is the metropolis of the Bahamas. Man and Nature have combined to make it available and desirable for winter tourists, its situation



being unexceptionable, and its hotels and boarding-house irreproachable. It has boasted for many years a large and well-conducted hotel in the "Royal Victoria"; but even this has been surpassed by the new and perfectly appointed "Colonial," both under American management, and every winter visited by delighted thousands from the United States. They share, with the governor's mansion, the honor of being the largest structures in the Bahamas, and occupy the most advantageous sites for recreation and sight-seeing.

With the exception of Havana, Nassau is the nearest to the United States of any island-city in foreign waters, for it is only 175 miles, and an over-night run from Miami in Florida, with which and the "American Riviera" there is, in the winter season, tri-weekly communication, affording rail connection with every town and city in the United States and Canada. Then there is the all-sea route between Nassau and New York, traversed by the splendid steamers of the "Ward Line," which has been established and well known for many years.

New Providence is comparable to the Bermudas in its aggregate of similar attractions, and has the further advantage of being much nearer the Equator, the northern Tropic running about two degrees south of the island. Thus a voyage through tropical waters may be commenced at Nassau, if desired, and continued more than a thousand miles southward as far as Trinidad, coast of South America, with some island or other in sight every day, and a good prospect of making harbor every night, depending upon the means of conveyance, preferably a good steam yacht. While there are many small (and very filthy) vessels at Nassau which could be chartered for a run through the archipelago, and while there is a

semi-occasional mail-boat, manned and officered by negroes, which plies between New Providence and Inagua, British energy and revenues have not yet been equal to establishing steam communication between the different islands of the colony.

After the sights of Nassau have all been disposed of, after old Fort Montagué and Fort Charlotte have been visited and admired; Fort Fincastle (which resembles a stranded stone steamboat more than anything else on earth) and the deep quarry-cut called the "Queen's Staircase" have been inspected; the "Lake of Fire" and "Sea Gardens" wondered at; the little darkeys who dive for coins praised and petted; then the visitor is likely to settle down to a prolonged rest, content merely to inhale the delicious air, and gaze languidly upon the diverting scenes outspread from the hotel verandas. There are miles of splendid roads in Nassau, roads hard as iron and smooth as palace floors, because, like the so-called soil of the Bahamas, they are composed of lime and coral rock. In this connection it may be mentioned that though the Bahamas offer alluring prospects to the agriculturist, inasmuch as almost anything on earth may be raised there, and especially all fruits and vegetables of the tropics, yet the problem ever confronting him will be how to get the various seed and plants into the soil. The surface of an ordinary farm when cleared for planting looks, "for all the world," very much like the *azotea*, or flat roof-top, of an Oriental house, and has about as many cracks and crevices in it for the insertion of seed. A certain American of waggish proclivities—and this was in the long, long ago—suggested that probably the Bahama farmer prepared his "soil" with dynamite and injected the seed by means of a shot-gun; but, however it is done, very little

results from the process. Always excepting, of course, the exotic hemp and indigenous pineapple, which flourish exceedingly, the latter growing to be the largest and the most delicious fruit of its kind in the known world. The pine was found here by the explorers, by the natives called *anana*, and was one of the many desirable gifts of the Bahamas to civilization. Another was tobacco, another maize or Indian corn (though the first fields were found in Cuba), and still another, cascarilla, *Croton eleuthera*, which derives its specific name from the island of Eleuthera, where, it is possible, Columbus may have made his first landfall in the New World.

What is generally considered as the first landfall and landing-place of Columbus, in 1492, has been variously located, the most of the alleged authorities recommending Watling's Island, which is midway the chain and just a thousand miles south of New York. For many years, it was thought to be on Cat Island, which was also called San Salvador, the name Columbus gave to the first island upon which he landed. I myself have been through the chain from north to south, and from south to north, looking for the landing-place of Columbus, and for remains of the Indians he was the indirect means of exterminating; but all I can say is, that it was probably either on Watling's Island or Eleuthera, with much in favor of the latter island, which may possibly be the original Guanahani of the natives, and the San Salvador of Columbus.

At least one other gift of Guanahani to the civilized world should be mentioned, and this is the hammock, for it was in this aboriginal swinging bed that Columbus found the Indians indulging in their midday *siesta*. Many of the native fruits and vegetables, such as sweet

and sour sops, avocado pears, sapodillas, acajous, cassava, etc., were cultivated by the Indians. All the members of the citrus family, probably the bananas, plantains, coconuts, guavas, and pomegranates, were introduced by the Spaniards, but are here perfectly at home and at their best.

There were no large quadrupeds indigenous to the Bahamas, the largest four-footed creature being the iguana, which is still abundant; and until recently it was thought that the "utia," a small animal the Indians were very fond of, had been exterminated. A few years ago, however, numerous specimens of this strange quadruped, which somewhat resembles a woodchuck, were found existing on the Plana Cays, near Acklin Island. The delighted discoverer at once proceeded to shoot and "stomp on" all the innocent little *utias* he could find, afterward removing their skins, which he took to a museum; for which act of refined barbarity he was rewarded by having his cognomen added, as a specific appellation, to the generic designation, *Capromys*. The birds of the Bahamas, also, have been decimated through the indiscriminate slaughter by collectors, very few now remaining of the once numerous humming birds, mocking birds, the bright-plumaged parrots and flamingos. Of the last two species, the parrots are still found in flocks in Acklin Island, and the flamingos in Andros, where they breed.

The attractions of the Bahamas are mostly marine, or submarine, the beautiful blue sea containing many piscatorial wonders. Its beauty-tints are derived from, and are as various as, the sky that bends above it, and its pellucid depths are owing to the coral rock beneath. It is assumed that every visitor to Nassau will hire a glass-bottomed boat and be rowed across the bay to the region



of the sea-gardens, where only an adequate conception can be obtained of the beauties beneath the sea. On a dark night, and when a light breeze ruffles the surface of the water, make your way out to the "Lake of Fire," the luminous lake at Waterloo, not far from town, where a boat and an obliging negro are always in waiting, ready to evoke such phosphorescent effects as are a wonder to behold. "Marine curiosities," such as turtle shells, corals, sea-fans, sponges, conchs, pink pearls, etc., are always on sale in the little shops by the bay-side, and may be obtained in any quantity desired.

While the aggregate land area of the Bahamas is nearly 6000 square miles, there are few islands of great size, and all these are composed of the same calcareous rock, supporting a scanty vegetation with native trees such as the *Pinus Bahamensis* of New Providence, and valuable cabinet woods like mahogany, lignum vitæ, mastic, etc., in the southern islands. There are few elevations, the greatest being hardly more than two hundred feet. Beginning at the north, near the Florida coast, we have the Great and Little Abaco, the former famous for its perforated cliff known as the "Hole in the Wall," and containing a large population mainly descended from the American Tories. Southwest of this group lie the Bimini Cays, where tradition located De Leon's Fountain of Youth.

Harbor Island was the rendezvous of the old-time buccaneers, descendants of whom still reside there, in patriarchal fashion. New Providence we have already seen; but southwest of this island is Andros, the largest and least known of the Bahamas. Here, only, in the chain are to be found running streams, all the other islands deriving their water from the clouds; large forests of valuable woods, and the breeding-places of flamingos,

herons, egrets, and other rare and beautiful birds; while the natives retain, or rather have reverted to, the habits of their African and aboriginal ancestors, and exist mainly in a semi-savage state.

At the head of the reef-inclosed Exuma Sound we find, on the east, famed Eleuthera, with its wonderful perforated cliff known as the "Glass Windows," and south of it Cat Island, long known as San Salvador, famous for its pineapples and historic "Columbus Point." Eastwardly from Cat Island lies Watling's, already alluded to as a rival for the honor of being considered the landfall of Columbus; south of which are Rum Cay, Long, Crooked, Fortune, and Acklin islands, all of these probably visited and named by Columbus, in 1492.

Politically, the Bahamas end with the Inaguas, great and little, which lie about midway between Cuba and the southernmost islands, the Caicos and Grand Turk's. These last-named, though geographically pertaining to the Bahamas, are under the governmental jurisdiction of Jamaica, from which they are distant about 450 miles. They were made a dependency of Jamaica in 1848, as their inhabitants found it more convenient to communicate with that island than with New Providence and the Bahama capital. Very few of them ever had occasion to visit Nassau, except the people's representatives in council, and these complained that while they could make the voyage up in a few days, they could not get back in as many weeks, owing to the opposition of the prevailing trade winds.

All the southern islands are noted for their "salt-pans," from which are raked enormous quantities of salt derived from the sea-water. While the northern islands are at the present time the most populous (New Providence

alone containing about one-fourth the total population), the aboriginal inhabitants seem to have been confined to the southern half of the chain, and were probably Arawaks, working their way northerly toward Florida from the West Indies and South America.

The oft-repeated statement in the Bahamas that the old wrecker instinct still survives obtained a curious confirmation, in the winter of 1903-04, at the trial of a band of blacks from Rum Cay, charged with plundering and ill-treating the occupants of a yacht which had foundered on their shores. While this yacht was still struggling to make port the savage wreckers boarded her and began the pillage, which was nearly accomplished by the time she went to pieces. Their treatment of the owners was so barbarous that one of them died in consequence (it was charged by his son); but, as he did not appear at court to press charges against them when arraigned for trial, they were allowed to go free.

On New Year's Day, 1904, the bark "Primus" went ashore near the Hole-in-the-Wall, Island of Abaco, while the natives were at church. The parson lost no time in dismissing the congregation, and all hastened at once to the shore, and aboard their boats, in order to enter a claim for what valuables they could discover on the wreck. A flotilla containing some three hundred negroes soon surrounded the "Primus," which they were kept from boarding only by a ruse of her captain, who, with a handful of small coins, kept the whole three hundred diving for them, on one side the ship, while his crew hurried ashore with the valuable nautical instruments, which they buried in a place of safety.

"To the wreckers belong the spoils," is a maxim that is believed in and lived up to, if not universally proclaimed, throughout the Bahamas.



## II

### HISTORIC HARBORS OF CUBA

Cuba first circumnavigated—Its tortuous coast-line—Its hundred harbors—Features of the coast—Cortes, De Soto, Drake, and other worthies—Capture of Havana by the British—Memorials of many Spanish victims—The Morro and the "Maine"—Matanzas, Cardenas, Nuevitas, and Gibara—Vita, Naranjo, Sama, Banes, Tanamo, Baracoa—Region of big sugar estates—Trees of the tropical forest in Cuba—Where capital is not timid—Nipé Bay and its bright prospects—Sir William Van Horne's great schemes—The finest coast country of Cuba—Hunting, fishing, and exploring—Best region to settle in—Cape Maisi and Faro Concha—Guantanamo and Escondido—Our new naval station—Where the American invasion began—Coffee and Cacao country—Daiquiri, where Shafter landed troops—Las Guasimas, San Juan, and El Caney—The Morro twenty years ago—Still intact—Santiago from the bay—Where Cervera's squadron lay—Cayo Smith and the "Merimac"—President Roosevelt at San Juan—Reminders of the Rough Riders—An improved Santiago—The Virgin and Mines of Cobre—Down the South Coast—Manzanillo, Pico Turquino, Bayamo, Trinidad, and Cienfuegos—Batabano and the graves of Spanish galleons.

**A**LTHOUGH Christopher Columbus discovered several of Cuba's finest harbors in 1492, Ocampo circumnavigated the island in 1508, and Velasquez began its colonization in 1511, not more than half a dozen ports were established by the Spaniards during the first century of their occupation. And to-day, more than four hundred years after the dis-

covery of Cuba, there exist in that island harbors as good as the best, with respect to natural advantages, which yet await development in almost uninvaded seclusion.

With its two thousand miles of tortuous coast-line, Cuba possesses nearly a hundred harbors, large and small, fifty of which are ports of entry, and the remainder little known. Not all, perhaps, are historic in the larger sense, but some of them are, most certainly, and these we will visit. Beginning in the western province of Pinar del Rio, right in the tail of the "centipede" (which Cuba has been said to resemble in general outline) is the harbor of Bahia Honda, as deep as its Spanish name implies, and a favorite resort of the Cuban insurgents when in need of supplies. Many can recall when Maceo made his famous break through trochas and Spanish lines across the island, in 1896, ostensibly in mere bravado of the Dons; but in reality to obtain the sinews of war brought to this harbor, and others near, by American filibusteros. Bahia Honda is pouch- or pocket-shaped, as also are most of the harbors of the north coast, notably those in Pinar del Rio, and all have some distinguishing feature in the contiguous country, making them "easy marks" for the mariner.

For example, fifteen miles east of Bahia Honda is another little harbor dominated by the "Pan de Cabañas," or Sugar-Loaf Hill, and twelve miles easterly again is the "Pan de Mariel," another table-topped elevation, or *mesa*, distinguishing the entrance of the natural port of that name, where at present a further distinctive mark is the prow of a Spanish cruiser, "Alfonso XII," sunk by the Americans during the war, sticking straight up into the air. It was at Mariel, by the way, that some unsophisticated Spaniards fired at the battle-ship "New York" with their Mausers; but they did it only once.

The "Pan de Guayaibon," fifteen miles south of Havana, warns sailors of their approach to this famous harbor, which, together with that of Santiago, is the best known of Cuba's ports.

Is it historic? If not, then there is no harbor with a history in America, for it was first found by Ocampo in 1508, first taken possession of, as a "careening-place," within a few years thereafter, and before it was fairly under way as a port stout Cortes sailed from it on his adventurous voyage to Mexico, in 1519. The site where first religious exercises were held here is to-day indicated by a chapel, built near the scion of the original silk-cotton tree beneath which services were performed. Nine years later Pamphilo de Narvaez sailed out of Havana harbor for Florida, whither he was followed in 1539 by Ferdinand de Soto, neither of whom ever returned in the flesh.

Between these two events Havana was sacked by buccaneers and captured by French privateers, who restored the city to its owners, as did the Dutch pirates who took it a century later, after appropriating the wealth of the populace. Twice it was taken, twice ransomed and recovered; for the Spaniards valued city and port combined more than any other in the West Indies, and when the English, assisted by Colonial troops from New York and New England, wrested Havana from them, in 1762, they lost no time in offering Florida in exchange. For, they had not squeezed that Havana orange dry, though they had murdered the aboriginal inhabitants of the island, long before, had imported Africans to take their places, and raised a mongrel people who were working for them like a colony of ants.

It was in the second quarter of the sixteenth century

that the King of Spain sent over an Italian engineer to plan fortifications for Havana, the result of whose work appears in Morro Castle and the Bateria de la Punta, on the opposite side of the harbor-mouth. They were well planned, and to-day are the most picturesque features of Havana's approaches. Before they were finished, in the year 1585, the city was threatened by that masterful sea-rover, Sir Francis Drake, and the panic-stricken Spaniards hurried matters so that forty years later they were nearly completed. And they were well-constructed, more than three hundred years having passed over them without inflicting great injury.

A tablet in the seaward-facing wall of the Castle informs one of the event of 1762, when the British and Colonials breached the fortification and carried the Morro by assault. The sequel of this affair was the construction of the vast range of fortifications banked against the side-hill opposite Havana, the Cabañas, about 5700 feet in length and 900 in breadth—that labyrinth of masonry, with its numerous dungeons in which many of Spain's enemies were done to death. For a brief period the Star-Spangled Banner floated above the Cabañas fortifications, and they were cleansed of their impurities. It was lowered on the fourth of February, 1904, and replaced by the flag of the Cuban Republic. Like the Morro, Cabañas is a monument to Spanish cruelties, and down in the "Fosse of the Laurel Trees" you may find a beautiful bronze tablet affixed (in 1904) against the wall in front of which innocent Cubans were stood up to be shot.

The Spaniards early acquired the "shooting habit," and seem to have been unhappy when they could find no victims. Their places of execution are pointed out all over the island, and are almost as numerous as the bronze



tablets set up by Governor Wood in commemoration of his various doings during the era of reform.

Since the war ended, the Cubans have nearly impoverished themselves erecting marble memorials and monuments of other sort, to their brothers slain by Spaniards in cold blood, and it has been suggested that it would be but an act of justice—at least of poetic justice—to compel the wealthy Spanish residents of Cuba, who are absorbing to themselves the island's resources, to contribute toward this end!

Not Cubans alone have been sacrificed by the Spaniards in their fury, as we may be reminded at the Cabañas, for over across the harbor stands star-shaped Castle Atarés, within the walls of which young Crittenden and fifty companions were shot to death, among the first "filibusters" to lose their lives in the cause of Cuban liberty.

That was fifty years ago; but there are more recent victims yet of Spanish perfidy and cruelty, and they lie in the mud of the harbor beneath yonder misshapen hulk, between Cabañas and Atarés. Have you forgotten the "Maine"? The Spaniards have not, and somewhere in existence yet, it is said, are the wretches who blew up that gallant ship and sacrificed the lives of two hundred and sixty American sailors! They still live, having been shielded by persons high in authority—it is rumored in Havana; but they no longer reside in Cuba, having gone home to the "mother country."

The great battle-ship which the Spaniards sank at her moorings is slowly settling into the mud of the harbor, and it will be well when the last vestige of the "Maine" shall have disappeared, for the sight of her revives too many irreconcilable memories, especially in view of the fact that the Spaniards in Cuba are flaunting too freely

the red-and-yellow flag of ancient tyranny. The "Maine" massacre was the last wholesale execution effected by the Spaniards, for swiftly following after came the avengements of the war, with the sinking of Cervera's fleet off Santiago, when we paid off the old score with large interest added.

The flight and destruction of the Spanish fleet, on the third of July, 1898, was the last great action in the hundred-days' war with Spain, of which the first (slight in itself) was the bombardment of Matanzas by Admiral Sampson, April 27th, when, according to the Captain-General of Cuba, only a mule was killed. It was a Spanish mule, take notice, and sometimes that species walks on legs less than four in number; and when this one was buried, it was not lying on its side, after the manner of quadrupeds when defunct, but with its "toes turned up to the daisies!"

Unlike the harbor of Havana, which is completely land-locked and has a depth in its center of from 50 to 60 feet, that of Matanzas is open and shallow; moreover, save for the affair of the mule, it is hardly entitled to be called historic; so we will hasten on to another, which likewise derives its importance from an incident of the Spanish-American war. This is the harbor of Cardenas, which, however, is no harbor at all, large ships being compelled to anchor fifteen miles from the town. In this roadstead occurred that brief though brilliant action of May 11, 1898, when Ensign Bagley and four sailors were killed, the first American victims of the war—after those of the "Maine"; though several sailors were wounded that same day, while grappling for cables off Cienfuegos.

The north-central coast of Cuba has no good harbor for large vessels—none comparable with that of Havana,



between which and Nuevitas a distance of several hundred miles intervenes. This last may be termed historic, as having once been the seat of Puerto Principe, which was removed inland, on account of repeated attacks and depredations by pirates. It is also claimed by some that its large though somewhat shallow harbor, which is reached through a sea-river six miles long, was first visited by Columbus when, in October, 1492, he landed in Cuba. In support of this claim it is pointed out that Nuevitas is still celebrated for its fine tarpon fishing, and sponges, as in the time of Columbus; but again, the aspect of hill and mountain is not that given by the celebrated Navigator in his journal. A harbor which quite answers to his descriptions, as to its shape and setting, is that of Gibara, 80 or 90 miles to the southeast, for inland from it lie the four great hills with table-tops which he descried, rising conspicuously above the plains.

As we follow the trend of the coast southeasterly we are, of course, constantly dropping equator-ward in latitude, and at and near Gibara are three degrees south of Havana and only one degree north of Santiago, on the southern coast. Here and beyond, pursuing our course toward Cape Maisi, we find the harbors pouch-shaped, and profound in depth, as at Havana and westerly, but sheltered from the heavy seas of open ocean by protecting coral reefs with narrow entrances. Of this character are Vita, Naranjo, diminutive Sama, Banés, Tanamo, Baracoa, and several others not yet ports of entry.

One of the most charming of these deep-water ports is that of Naranjo, back of which lies the big sugar estate of Santa Lucia, with its hundred thousand acres of fertile soil. At Naranjo steamers can go right up to the shore and load or discharge cargo; a pretty stream comes in

from a tropical wilderness, a great hill from which entrancing views may be obtained rises not far away; and this diversity of surface, together with the rich soil and luxuriant vegetation, the healthful climate, and unexamined situation as respects communication with the outside world, augur well for the future of "Port Orange," should it ever be opened for colonization.

This port was entered by Columbus on his famous voyage in 1492, and either this or another like it inspired him to write to his sovereigns: "This is the most beautiful island eyes ever beheld, full of excellent ports and profound rivers. . . . One could live here forever!"

Now and again majestic waterfalls may be seen, flashing white and thundering loudly behind a screen of tropical vines and trees hung with air-plants, and there are miles of forest along shore beyond, filled with precious woods: fragrant cedar, satin-wood, and mahogany. Seventy-two varieties of tropical trees valuable for their uses in the arts and industries are enumerated as being found in the forests of Cuba, the greater bodies of which overspread portions of Santiago province, along the north shore of which we are voyaging.

In this region, adjacent to the coast, are not only some of the finest sugar estates in Cuba, but there is one *ingenio* the largest in the world; for the soil of this section is of almost inexhaustible fertility, and the numerous deep-water harbors opening northward, to New York and a market, afford the greatest facilities for profitable operations. No fertilizers are used, for the extent of virgin soil is such that when, after ten or fifteen years in cane, a tract shows signs of exhaustion, it is practically abandoned and another area divested of its forest covering, plowed, and planted.





The harbors mentioned as lying to the southeast of Gibara are gems in their way, most of them adapted for winter resorts, but particularly for small-fruit colonies. There is still another, in fact, there are several others, but one in particular, which has an expanse of water between its curving shores sufficient to float a navy, and this is Nipé, which until within a comparatively recent period existed in seclusion broken only by the visits of fishermen and filibusters. There is no bay like it in Cuba, or, perhaps, on either coast of the United States, for its situation, within 21 degrees of the Equator, yet only four days from New York and our chief Atlantic cities, is unsurpassed. Like its sister ports and harbors mentioned, it is three degrees further into the tropics than Havana, and yet, in point of time and steaming, one day nearer the northern cities of the Eastern United States; and this amounts to much, in the raising of fruits for northern market, and the prices one may get for them.

Capital is timid, according to the common saying; but capital has shown no great amount of timidity in "planking down" its millions on the north coast, as shown by the vast *ingenios*, the yet vaster areas being brought into banana cultivation, and finally in the extension of the Cuba railway from Alto Cedro, on the main line, to Manopilon on Nipé Bay, where a six-mile frontage has been acquired for a future city, with fifty thousand acres contiguous, as the nucleus of a great winter resort, sometime to rival Palm Beach and Nassau.

That renowned magician, Sir William Van Horne, has waved his wand over Cuba, and wherever it touched, at Havana, at Camagüey, at Nipé and at Santiago, he has planned to build a great hotel. Each hotel will have attractions peculiarly its own, and as the four will be



practically connected by Sir William's railway; the route of the future tourist to Cuba may be vastly more varied and interesting than by any of the lines hitherto existing.

While Nipé was known to pirates, buccaneers, and wreckers, who made it their rendezvous in succession, it was either unknown, or unvisited, except by them, during long centuries, so few important events have transpired here. An occurrence which rises to the dignity of an event, in latter years, was the visit paid Nipé by four war-ships of the American squadron shortly after the naval fight at Santiago. Lying inside, in fancied security, protected by submarine mines in the channel, was the Spanish gunboat "Don Jorge Juan," of near a thousand tons. Her commander did not believe the Yankees would venture over the mine-planted channel through the reefs; but, since Dewey proved the comparative harmlessness of Spanish explosives beneath the sea, our gallant tars mind them no longer; so the "Don Jorge Juan" was soon sent to keep them company.

There has long been a Spanish line of coastal steamers around the island, which touch in at most of the ports, but it is by no means up to the standard set by the American ships, and had better be avoided. Santiago and Havana have been for years served by the old Ward Line; but the only American service reaching the important ports of the north coast, which, owing to their more advantageous situation in general are going to be the ports of the future, is the Munson Line, which includes them all between Matanzas and Baracoa, a distance of some six hundred miles. Its Mobile-Havana line gives a short and direct route through the Gulf of Mexico, only three days in duration, while its New York



steamers consume more time *en voyage*, but take one to parts of the island less visited, but better worth the while.

Any route to Cuba is increasingly attractive as one runs southward in the winter time; but there is none that combines so many attractions as that covered by the schedule of the Munson Line, direct from New York to Matanzas, thence, along the tropic-seeking stretch of coast, to quaint and ancient Baracoa. There is no round-trip within my experience that offers such variety of scene and varying attractions—and I have taken more than one in the course of my existence.

Two or three days are spent in each port, where the launches of the steamer are placed freely at the passengers' disposal, and while the steamer is discharging her cargo for the Cuban market, or taking in sugar, fruits, and bananas for the North, her happy guests are fishing in the harbors, exploring the creeks for curlews, wild ducks, egrets, and alligators; shell-hunting on the beaches, sponge-fishing on the coral reefs, picnicking generally, to their hearts' content.

There is hunting to be had, all along the coast, when one knows where to look for it, and if alligators are desired, try the beautiful Mayari River, which empties into Nipé Bay; if deer, wild hogs, and boa constrictors, essay the forest country bordering that bay and, in fact, extending right across to Santiago. If adventure pure and simple, get the ship's commander to have you put ashore at the mouth of the Mayari, where, up stream a little, there is one of the quaintest towns in Cuba, embowered in groves of fruit trees, and within hail of the wilderness that fills the valleys and spreads out over the mountains between Nipé and Baracoa.

Oh, it is a fascinating country, that containing the sierras de Cristal, the Cuchillas de Toa, and the far-famed Yunque that o'er-tops the peerless port of Baracoa. Here, in this southeastern end of Cuba comprised in the eastern half of Santiago Province, all the unique vegetal productions of Cuba are concentrated; and, "by the same token," this region was once the home of aboriginal Indians who were drawn hither by the unexampled display of Nature's wealth.

Within this district, which closely approximates to the territory given up by the Spaniards at the surrender of Santiago, in July, 1898, are to be found, if anywhere in Cuba, the last vestiges of the aboriginal people, the Cuban Indians. In a story I once wrote, entitled "Under the Cuban Flag," finding it necessary to the proper working of the plot for an Indian, or Indians, to be in it, I "discovered" a tribe residing near the Sierra de Cristal, around the headwaters of the various streams that flow hence to either coast. And, if they are not there, they ought to be, and I am disappointed to learn that some American scientists have visited the outskirts of this region without finding any trace of a pure-blooded Indian.

Here, right here, is an opportunity for some young and able explorer to make his reputation. Let him go ashore from a Munson-Line steamer at Baracoa, Tamano, or Nipé, well equipped for camping-out, with a Cuban guide to show him the way, and a Cuban horse to carry him, and stay in the region at least a month—though all winter would be better. My word for it, he would find enough to reward an outlay ten times the cost of this venture—assuming he craves adventure and loves Nature; and incidentally, he might find a location

for a future home where all the charms of Eden—including even a serpent—could be combined.

But it is difficult to lure the passengers aboard a Munson-Liner away from the "flesh-pots," sad to say. Several of my companions on the voyage, after a few days in Havana, returned to ship with such relief as only the way-worn traveler feels on reaching home. And there they stayed, while I was going about the island, suffering all sorts of things in my desire to acquire accurate information and photographs "on the spot." When at last I met them again on board, (myself being worn down with hard fare and hard beds, and ill from a drink of "raw, unadulterated water" taken in a moment of forgetfulness), they appeared as fresh as when they started. The worst of it was, they were not at all ashamed of their long period of idleness on board, for they declared that they had to imbibe some sort of information, going about as they did from port to port, visiting sugar estates and banana plantations, entering little harbors by moonlight and tying up right at the wharves; riding into the country while the steamer loaded up, boating and bathing in bays with sandy beaches.

The voyage along the north coast ends at Baracoa, a circular, land-locked harbor guarded by Yunque or Anvil Hill, flat-topped, steep-sided, and near two thousand feet in height. Baracoa is the site of Cuba's first white settlement, 1511, and the castle is pointed out which was built, tradition says, by Velasquez, or Don Diego Columbus—who was the first "Diego" of importance in America, let it be noted in passing.

Cape Maisi, where the "Faro Concha" stands—the lone lighthouse on the extreme eastern tip of Cuba—

is exactly due south from New York. This, of course, does not add to its importance, for Maisi was discovered more than a hundred years before Manhattan had a name bestowed upon it by the lumbering Dutchmen who followed after the Spaniards to America. But, this fact is mentioned, peradventure one gets lost he may be enabled to obtain his bearings: due south from New York, and due east of Guantanamo—from the former about 1500 miles, and from the latter perhaps one hundred.

The south coast is vastly different from the north, bare—and would be bleak if it were further from the Equator—rising in great terraces and indented with few harbors—but those few of great importance.

Guantanamo comes first in voyaging from Maisi westward, and as it was probably discovered first by the Spaniards, there will be no harm in mentioning it before Santiago, which has the harbor *par excellence* of the entire south coast. It lies about 40 miles east of Santiago, and comes into history as the scene of a foolish attempt to take that city by the English, in 1741, on which occasion Lawrence Washington, brother of George, assisted to the best of his abilities, being with his much beloved Admiral Vernon, after whom he named the estate on the Potomac which at his death he left to the so-called Father of his Country.

With a base forty miles from their objective, the British had small chance of taking Santiago, and soon gave it up, sailing away and leaving Guantanamo to the solitude in which they found it.

As Guantanamo is probably better known than any other port on this coast, after Santiago, since it played such an important part as a naval base in Admiral Sampson's operations against the Morro, we will not



linger here, save to note that its great bay rivals that of Nipé on the north coast in extent and situation, being from half a mile to four miles wide and ten long, with harbors within a harbor, as Nipé also has.

We cannot forget that the American invasion of Cuba began here, one day in June, '98, with the landing of 600 marines, who made the Spaniards on the sandhills "walk Spanish" until they could walk no longer, when they ran. The Yankees then cut off their water supply by filling up the only well, and as there was not another within twelve miles, that settled the matter for the "Jack Spaniards," who had to drink their *vino* "without."

In the "good old times" of buccaneers and pirate crews Guantanamo served as a retreat for cut-throats and sea-rovers, who also lurked in the secluded nooks of another natural port not far distant called Escondido, or the Hidden Harbor, where the hill on which they had their lookout is still remembered. Since our acquisition of Guantanamo as a naval station, many a luckless marine has wished with all his heart that it was still *escondido*, and had never been discovered, for it is one of the most lonesome places in the world. The town of Guantanamo lies more than twelve miles distant from Caimanera, near the harbor entrance, and whenever poor "Jack" desires to go on a spree he has first to traverse a broad expanse of dismal salt flats, which aggravates his thirst to such an extent that it seems sometimes utterly beyond allay, and the "benders" that result are the most terrific on record.

Two small steamers run between Santiago and the bay, whenever their owners feel disposed to let them, and two railroads are in process of construction which will soon connect with the "Cuba" system at Maya, or



Moron, passing through a region rich in minerals, timber, and coffee. The home of the famous Cuban coffee is among the beautiful hills behind Guantanamo, and this is the section in which the colonist should settle who wishes to engage in that culture, and the raising of cacao. The vast and extensive *ingenios* constitute a group by themselves, and are owned by some of the oldest families in Cuba.

The bay itself can hold all the ships of the navy that it might be found desirable to send there, and as the water is deep, and the seaward hills protect from hurricanes, nothing better could, or should, be asked by Uncle Sam—especially as he got it all for nothing, and presumably knows enough not to “look a gift-horse in the mouth.” Its situation is all that could be desired, with respect to its command of the Windward Channel and the route to Panama, and it will afford a fine rendezvous for our war-ships, while the canal is being constructed and after it is open.

When I paid my first visit to the south coast of Cuba, in 1887, nobody aboard ship ever thought of pointing out Daiquiri, about midway between Guantanamo and Santiago, which the maps did not even dignify with the designation of *surgidero*, or anchoring-place; but since General Shafter landed there with our troops for the invasion of Cuba, in June, 1898, it has been a conspicuous landmark. Its importance ceased with the ending of the war; but not so that of Santiago and the Morro, which has, if possible, been enhanced.

Here is what I wrote at first sight of the latter, years ago: All in sight now are the Cobre Mountains, the Copper Range of Cuba, reputed storehouse of minerals, especially of copper and iron. At last, a break in the

coast reveals the object of our search, the entrance to Santiago's harbor. The line of cliffs, washed by the rough sea-waves, is abruptly terminated by what appears to be an artificial construction, and nearer approach discloses the most picturesque fort and castle ever built, perhaps, in the New World. The great cliff, its base hollowed into caverns by the wave action of centuries, is carried up from the sea-line in a succession of walls, towers, turrets, forming a most perfect type of the rock-ribbed fortress of mediæval times. Perched upon the lowermost wall and overhanging the sea, is a domed sentry-box of stone, flanked by cannon evidently old when the history of our land was new.

The waves have eaten into this cliff all round its base, so that it may not be many years ere this tower totters and falls into the sea. Above, the lines of masonry are sharply defined, each guarded terrace receding from the one below it, each ornamented with antique and useless cannon, and the whole dominated by a massive tower. The pilot boards us at the harbor entrance and guides our steamer close beneath the impending battlements, and we note the group of idle soldiers above, so near that we can hear them converse. We sweep past this jutting promontory, guarded by ancient fort with walls of pink and gray harmoniously blended, and quickly another battery faces us, opposite the entrance to a lateral bay with snowy sand-beach. This second fortification is already succumbing to the assaults of the waves, and has been abandoned. Two hundred feet above us the castled fortress rears its ramparts for a moment, then we have glided past, and are pursuing a sinuous course toward the city of Santiago.

That description of old Morro might have been written

in 1904, instead of nearly a score of years ago, so far as the superficial aspect of the castle is concerned. And since then, as we know, there has been assembled in front of it the flower of our navy; big battle-ships, protected and unprotected cruisers, dynamite-discharging "Vesuviuses," torpedo craft, "destroyers," and everything of that sort.

Nearly two months intervened between the discovery of Cervera's squadron in Santiago's harbor and the surrender of the city, and during forty days and more the war-ships delivered themselves of desultory bombardments. When time hung particularly heavy on his hands, the commander of the squadron would order a bombardment of the Morro; and yet, notwithstanding the efforts of the Yankees to reduce this venerable pile, by casting at it tons and tons of metal, after all was over it was found to be about as good as ever.\*

So the Morro of my first visit was still the Morro of my last: apparently unchanged, except by a coat of whitewash or some visible attempt at cleanliness—of which, having been in Spanish hands so long, it stood much in need.

If the various bombardments of the Morro proved

\* From Admiral Sampson's reports:

"16th June.—Bombarded forts at Santiago to-day, 7:30 a. m. to 10 a. m., and have silenced works quickly, without injury of any kind, though stationed within 2000 yards.

"16th June.—Bombarded forts for 42 minutes; firing very accurate. The batteries were *silenced completely*. Fleet not injured.

"2d July.—Bombarded forts at entrance of Santiago, and also Punta Gorda battery inside, silencing their fire."

Secretary-of-War Algiers comments:

"The total result of Admiral Sampson's shelling consisted in the dismounting of one muzzle-loading brass cannon. de-

anything, it was that cannon-fire from ships against a rock fort perched upon a crag was ineffectual. Witness, also, the futility of Admiral Sampson's fire upon Puerto Rico's Morro at San Juan. Neither fortress was injured to any extent; but when it came to pegging shot at the vessels in Cervera's fleet, all must admit, there was some damage done.

Through the channel which brave Hobson and his seven companions tried to block by sinking the "Merri-mac," on the third of June, 1898, and which was traversed by Cervera's fleet in its forlorn dash for liberty just a month later, we sail into "the finest natural harbor in the world." Until you have passed through that channel and gained the harbor, you can hardly understand how it was Cervera remained so long behind those hills, as "snug as a bug in a rug," without being discovered. But there he lay for more than forty days, secure, if not contented, before the Americans could force him out. And it was not the Americans, then, but the Spaniards, who sent poor, foolish Cervera forth to his doom.

There is room in that harbor for several fleets to lie without rubbing noses, and from on board ship you may

scribed as a 'very ancient pattern,' on the battery east of Morro, and in the 'damaging' of one of the two modern breech-loading rifles on a naval mount at Punta Gorda battery. Not another gun was found to be injured or dismounted. It seems incredible that such repeated heavy bombardments could have accomplished so little. The only real damage was to a non-military edifice, a small lighthouse, and, in several places, the picturesque and historical Morro Castle, nearly four centuries old, was somewhat marred, but not materially injured, by the shots.—From "The Spanish-American War," by R. A. Alger, Secretary-of-War, 1897-99.



view the city, with its oriental architecture, its plaza, marine park, cathedral and sea of roofs disporting various colors—red predominating—at just the right perspective for the best effect. There is no other city with just the warmth of coloring that Santiago has; nor, perhaps, with a more intense warmth of atmosphere, for it appears an exotic always attractive—from a distance—and always stewing in the heat of blazing sun.

It must not be imagined that the Americans, in 1898, were the only ones to “make history” in Santiago harbor; though they put an end to Spanish domination in Cuba through their operations off its mouth and their march upon the city. Santiago was founded in 1514, or '15, by Diego Velasquez, who had with him, among other distinguished individuals, Hernando Cortes and Bartolomé de las Casas, the former of whom sailed from this harbor for Mexico, in 1519, having been preceded by Grijalva, from the same port, the year previous. The fortifications were soon begun and the Morro built; but the latter seems to have been more ornamental than useful, having been of no use in repelling the attacks of pirates and privateers, who, in the years 1537, '53, and '92 captured the city and sacked it at their leisure.

One of the most gallant of naval fights took place in this harbor between a Spanish and a French privateer, which lasted two days, at the end of the second day the Frenchman retiring, crippled, from the combat. In 1662, just one hundred years before the English took Havana, a British force under Lord Winsor landed at Aguadores, near the Morro, which they captured by assault and blew up, marched upon Santiago, and then marched out again, with the church bells of the city, negro slaves, guns, and all the treasure they could find. Spain was



almost everybody's enemy, those years, and the Spanish colonies suffered severely for the sins of the mother land.

It was for Spanish sins, of omission as well as commission, that Santiago suffered in 1898; that Shafter landed troops at Daiquiri, and marched upon the city, while Sampson and the fleet kept watch and ward without. The particulars of that brief campaign are too fresh in the public mind to demand more than mere mention in this connection; but we cannot ignore Las Guasimas, El Caney, and San Juan, any more than we can the Morro and Santiago itself, for the successive conflicts at these places led up to and opened the way for the final surrender of both city and castle-fortress.

Almost as many volumes have been written about this invasion of Santiago province and discharged at an inoffensive public as there were cannon-shot discharged at the common enemy, the Spaniards. One cannot read all of them, but there are a few which should not be ignored, such as Lodge's "War with Spain," Alger's "Spanish-American War," and above all, President Roosevelt's vivid and racy "Rough Riders." In the last-named we have the personal view of the war from a soldier's standpoint; and, though President Roosevelt does not claim that he was "alone in Cuba," nor won the fight at San Juan Hill unaided, still, he took a prominent part in that memorable attack. "There were others," also, and most of them have written about their experiences, so it would ill beseem me to go over the ground; though, in all humility perhaps I may be permitted to mention the salient features of the invasion. This, indeed, I have done already, for the campaign, as intimated, was as brief as it was vigorous, and was over almost before it began. Not before many a gallant soldier lost his life, however,

and many another sizzled in tropic sunshine and soaked in torrential downpours in the trenches, while the dreary weeks went by, and the Spaniards held out. "What was it begun for, to be so soon done for?" might be asked of this campaign; and the answer would be: Begun for the Cubans, and done for the Spaniards. At least, they were "done for" at its ending—"done brown," and for all time, so far as their rule in America was concerned.

The visitor to Havana will be asked, perchance, to "Remember the Maine"; in Santiago he will be importuned by the colored cabbies about the hotels to remember San Juan and El Caney—also to take a trip thither in their conveyances. Don't bother with them, if the weather is fine, but take a walk out there at early morning. San Juan is the nearer to Santiago of the two historic places, scant two miles, in fact.

On the way you pass the "surrender tree," where General Shafter met the Spanish General, Toral, and arranged the terms of capitulation. It is a ceiba, but a small one, and would hardly have sufficed to protect the bulky form of the doughty American General in a thunder storm. This fact was impressed upon me, because I was caught in one, and compelled to take shelter beneath the branches of that historic silk-cotton. It also occurs to me that, if the rain fell during those July days in 1898 as it fell on me that afternoon in May, 1904, the boys in the trenches must have suffered from moisture; and it certainly did, for they were there in the height of the rainy season, which, when I was there last, had hardly commenced.

I understood, also, how it was our gallant soldiers did not go forward any faster, for when I essayed to walk to the city, after the shower, I slipped back at least two

steps for every one ahead. Progression, in such circumstances, and especially when it is hindered by hostile Spaniards armed with Mausers (and expert Mausers they were, too) would be rather difficult, not to say impossible. There were also the barbed-wire entanglements, and the effluvia from the Spanish bodies, living and dead, to be overcome; so, on the whole, the boys had very good reasons for not "waltzing" into Santiago right off after they had taken Kettle Hill, San Juan, and Caney.

From reading President Roosevelt's interesting narrative, one might believe it was only necessary for him to give a whoop and to say "Come on, boys," for the whole thing to be accomplished in a jiffy. But it wasn't done that way, for, though the soldiers whooped "to beat the band," the stolid Spaniards didn't "scare worth a cent," but remained right there for quite a while, behind the trenches and block-houses, and varied the monotony of things by boring holes in the boys with their Mausers. This is the story told me by one who was "on the spot," and it coincides with other authentic narratives, so it will have to "go," despite tales to the contrary.\*

There is nothing now at San Juan to remind one of the fierce charge of the Americans up the hill, save the monument erected on its summit, and the remains of the trenches, the block-house, etc. The intervening seasons have woven a web of verdure over the slopes, the Cuban agriculturists—albeit somewhat slow to forgather for labor—have tilled the fields around, and the whole scene is bathed in an atmosphere of peace. When I was there, one afternoon in May, a care-free mocking-bird was

\* Roosevelt and his Rough Riders "did not join the infantry in its charge on San Juan blockhouse and that portion to the left of the Santiago road known as San Juan, but made their

trilling its melodious song in a thicket near the hill-top, and a careless negro boy was whistling aimlessly while seated at the base of the monument. We three were the only living beings then in sight, save for some distant object like a scarecrow, which I knew to be a native, plodding behind a pair of oxen hitched to a crooked stick, with which he was scratching the surface of the soil.

Enwrapped in sweet solitude was the renowned San Juan Hill, and it was difficult to imagine, looking down the deserted slopes, that it had ever swarmed with the gallant Boys in Blue, yelling "for all they were worth," fighting like the heroes that they were, and collectively working up the war-scene that made their Lieutenant Colonel President of these United States, and their Colonel a Major General of its armies! Greater rewards for shorter service, perhaps no men ever received; and yet, someone has declared republics to be ungrateful!

Not all the fighters at San Juan, nor at El Caney, over there where the ruined block-house stands, received rewards commensurate with their deeds, because, merely, we could make them all Presidents or Major Generals; but then, they have the privilege of writing books, which is a noble one, though devoid of substantial remuneration.

assault on that part of San Juan ridge to the right of the road after San Juan blockhouse and the trenches to the left of the road had been taken by the infantry and part of the cavalry brigade."

"In spite of the calamitous newspaper reports to the contrary and the statements of amateur soldiers accompanying the 5th corps, there was never a day at Santiago when the troops at the front were not supplied with the three most important components of the army ration—coffee (and sugar), bacon, and hard bread, although most of them *threw away their haversacks* containing three days' rations, as they went into action."—R. A. Alger's "Spanish-American War."



All, or nearly all, the Rough Riders are mentioned by name in the book their leader wrote, so they are sure to go down to immortal fame with their deeds blazoned on a tablet more enduring than brass or bronze.

The quaint Indian village of El Caney, where Ludlow, Lawton, and Chaffee, humble heroes all three, performed the all but impossible task of taking a strongly fortified post with obsolete artillery using black powder, followed up with rifle and bayonet, is a more satisfactory place to visit than San Juan, owing to the larger number of its attractions. Here, where the first brave Americans to enter the fort found it "floored with dead Spaniards," the fighting was stubborn and protracted; but the enemy had to give way, all the same, and fled the place in a hurry. However, others have told the story better than it can be retold now, the enemy having departed and the gallant Americans having gone back to their homes.

Returning to the city, we find it little changed from what it was nearly twenty years ago, except in the matter of cleanliness. The people are the same, but the city is cleaner, every important street being swept and dusted every morning before breakfast, while some attention is paid to domestic sanitation. There is still a scant water supply and no sewerage system, even after the much-vaunted doings of General Wood, when he was a dweller in the palace and had everything his own way, and everything to do with it as he liked. Still, there is no longer the specter of "Yellow Jack" overhanging the city, as of yore; though, doubtless, he is somewhere in hiding, awaiting his opportunity—which will come, probably, when the sewerage system is actually installed.

There should be ample supply of water in Santiago, from the springs and mountain streams in the sur-



rounding country; but there is not, and such supply as there is cannot be depended upon, being arbitrarily shut off at the time it is most desired. The attractions here are the plaza, which is in no way remarkable; the governor's palace, of which the same may be said; the location, on a hillside above the magnificent bay, which, as it was a gift of God, is, of course, beyond all praise.

Colonel Roosevelt wrote of Santiago, in his book: "The surroundings of the city are very grand. The circling mountains rise sheer and high. The plains are threaded by rapid, winding brooks and are dotted here and there with quaint villages, curiously picturesque from their combining traces of an outworn old-world civilization with new and raw barbarism. The graceful, feathery bamboos rise by the water's edge, and elsewhere, even on the mountain-crests, where the soil is wet and rank enough; and the splendid royal and cocoanut palms tower high above the matted jungle."

That is a presentment of Santiago and its environment "in a nutshell," the swift, all-embracing glance of the trained observer; and nothing more need be added. I said there are few attractions in Santiago, but there are several spots that one should view, and one of these is an unwholesome mud-hole down by the slaughter house, where the unfortunate filibusters captured with the "Virginus," in 1873, were massacred. There has long been a tablet there to mark the spot, but General Wood affixed another of bronze; though he did not fill up the malarious mudhole; or if he did, another has taken its place, and it is decidedly unsafe to linger there long enough to read the inscriptions.

The Morro, of course, will demand a visit, and as there is a good road thither all the way, it should not be

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Ruins of Fort, El Caney

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omitted from one's itinerary. Neither should the Cayo Smith, near which the "Reina Mercedes" and the "Merimac" were sunk; nor the iron mines, if permission can be obtained to journey over the private railroad that runs from the big iron pier into the country. It is said that, by a very strange chance, some of our war-ships engaged in bombarding the Morro and Santiago, at the time of the Cervera affair, were belted with armor made from the iron from Santiago's mines. It may have seemed like bringing coals to Newcastle; but this sort our sea-fighters heaped upon the Spaniards' heads, as it were. And there is copper, any amount of it, in the mountains across the bay, the Indians having mined it, and the Spaniards after them, before the United States were born and christened.

When I went up to view the mines of Cobre, situated about twelve miles from the harbor's further shore, it was seated upon a flatcar drawn by mules, with only an umbrella between me and the blazing sky overhead, that the journey was performed. I do not desire to repeat the performance, though the mines were worth something to see, and in the chapel of Cobre village I had a glimpse of the famous "Virgen de la Caridad," who (or which) once lost her (its) head, a few years ago, and with it thirty thousand dollars' worth of precious jewels with which she (or it) was at that time adorned. When I saw her, however, she had recovered her head, and was resplendent in jewels again; though they really appeared to be paste. This Virgin is an ancient one, her sponsors owning up to four hundred years, as she is said to have belonged originally to a renowned cavalier, Alonzo de Ojeda, who gave her to an Indian chief, early in the sixteenth century, escaping from whom she found her way to the Bay of Nipé, in some mysterious manner,

where she was discovered by some Spaniards floating aimlessly about in a frail canoe. They rescued and brought her to Cobre, where, in gratitude for her rehabilitation, she performed many miraculous cures, and incidentally acquired a fortune in pearls and precious stones, which some sacrilegious thief appropriated.

I did not think, when I was at Santiago in 1887, that, following down the coast from the harbor-mouth, I should at a time then in the future behold upon the shore the wrecks of Spanish war-ships destroyed by Yankee cannon-fire; nor did I hope to, either. But there they are, or were, rusted heaps of twisted iron, scattered all the way from Nima Nima and Acerraderos, only a few miles from the harbor-entrance, to Rio Turquino, forty-five miles away, where at last the "Colon" was beached. This southern coast westward from the Morro is bordered by the Sierras, with majestic Pico Turquino dominating all, more than 8000 feet in height.

Before setting out on the trip along-shore, climb to the crest of the hill on which Santiago is built and take a parting view of the city, the mountains, and the bay between the two, for it may not be your privilege to behold another like it. Beyond the far-sloping roofs of red and sun-burnt tiles, covering walls in every hue, which stretch from crest of hill to water's edge, lies the harbor, its expanse of deepest blue ringed round with green and golden hills, bathed in the sunshine of this tropic isle.

Mountains are in sight all the way westward to Cape Cruz, behind which lies the deep gulf of Guacanaybo, and the Cauto River, largest stream in Cuba, which waters a vast extent of cattle country, lying between the Cuba railway and the Sierra Maestra range of mountains along the south coast. The chief city of this large and



fertile valley of the Cauto is Manzanillo, which has an immense trade, owing to the vast resources of the region, but is hot and very unhealthy. It was at Manzanillo that the last shot of the Spanish-American war was fired, news of the peace protocol arriving just as several Yankee gunboats had made ready to shell the town.

Twenty-five miles inland from Manzanillo lies the old town of Bayamo, isolated from the coast and railroads in the center of the great basin drained by the Cauto. Here took place the Republican uprising of 1868, here (it is said) the Cuban troops actually came in contact with the Spaniards and won a sort of victory; and here, in the year 1835 was born Don Tomas Estrada Palma, first President of Cuba. Bayamo has often served as a place of refuge for the coast people, and it vies in picturesqueness and respectability with Trinidad, on the coast of Santa Clara province. Trinidad has a poor harbor and is yet isolated from the great centers; but it is a charming place of residence, with fine mountain scenery, and is one of the oldest towns in Cuba, having been founded in 1513, only two years after the first settlement was made at Baracoa. Here Hernando Cortes outfitted his expedition in 1519, at which time it was the residence of many cavaliers who afterward became famous in the conquest of Mexico.

Between Manzanillo and Trinidad lie the "Gardens of the Queen," or chains of coral cays, discovered and named by Columbus on his second voyage to America. But these cays are avoided by the steamers, surrounded as they are by reefs and shoals, and land is quite lost sight of in crossing the gulf, the Trinidad mountains then leaping out, a break in the coast indicating the entrance to Cienfuegos. Founded in the last century,

Cienfuegos can hardly be said to be historic; but it is better than that, it is successful. It is the great sugar city of the south coast, and is similarly situated to Santiago, though without the beautiful environment that the latter has.

It is the original "City of the Hundred Fires," *Cienfuegos*, the Spanish of it, being derived from a remark of Columbus when he entered the beautiful bay and beheld the flashing lights of myriad fire-beetles along shore. This city has shared in the renewed prosperity of Cuba, and is flourishing as never before. Its plaza is one of the finest in the island, and though situated in a flat country, with heights only at a distance, Cienfuegos has a fair reputation for salubrity. Not far from the city are the falls of the Habanilla, called the "Cuban Minnehaha," though still in their setting of virgin verdure.

Beyond Cienfuegos is a wild coast country, a sea dotted with coral cays intervening between it and the Isle of Pines, north of which is Batabano, the original Havana, but now down-at-the-heel and hardly holding its own. Away westward stretches the Pinar del Rio province, with infrequent harbors, and southward the Archipelago of Los Canarreos, the old-time cruising ground of sea-robbers and the grave of many a treasure galleon.

### III

## IN CUBA'S CAPITAL, AND ROUNDABOUT

The entrance to Havana harbor—The Punta and the Morro—Havana's dead-and-buried past—The Havana of yesterday and to-day—What the Americans have accomplished—A horrible condition of affairs—Yellow fever practically abolished—Contaminated wells and open waterways—Havana's pure and adequate water supply—The springs of the Almendares River—A reconstructed city—The innumerable hacks and *guaguas*—Quaint old Spanish *calles* and interiors—In the reeking, malodorous days of Spanish domination—Havana's lack of good hotels and need of better ones—Objects of interest in and around Havana—The great cathedral and its connection with Christopher Columbus—Memorials of ancient Havana—Fragments of the city walls—The garrote in the penitentiary—Marianao, Jesus del Monte, the Cerro, and the Vedado—The tropical Almendares River—C6lon cemetery and the captain-general's gardens—Tobacco culture and the Vuelta Abajo region—What may be seen in Guanajay and San Antonio de los Baños—The disappearing rivers and blind fishes of Cuba—Batabano and the Isle of Pines—An island of romance and mystery.

CUBA has put her dead past behind her; so has Havana. The dead past must have been deodorized and buried by Havana, for one can no longer smell it. In times agoe no seafarer through that narrow gateway between the Morro and the Punta needed a pilot into the harbor of Havana, for he had only to follow his nose. We may safely

venture, now, where of old even "angels might fear to tread" perchance they caught a whiff of the malodorous gales off-shore, which then were pestilential beyond belief.

Morro Castle, that grim and frowning fortress at the harbor-mouth, was begun sometime in the first half of the sixteenth century, and the city that lies opposite in 1519; but the former was not finished when, in 1585, galliard Sir Francis Drake came a-sailing these waters, and the latter is not finished yet. Indeed, it has but recently entered upon a new career, which is destined to cast that of the old Havana into the shade.

That new career was begun about five years ago, when the Spaniards departed and the *Americanos* took temporary possession of the city and the island; and it was the same old Havannah of the sixteenth century that greeted me when, twenty-three years ago, I touched in, and passed a sweltering day and reeking night in city and harbor. The universal enemy, at that time, was "Yellow Jack," who held sway at least six months in the year. Whosoever felt his polluted breath generally succumbed, and off the Cuban coast we had buried a fine young man, a victim of his; so it was with rather gloomy apprehensions that we entered Havana harbor and sniffed the smells borne to us from the shore. Not even old Cologne could boast a more varied assortment of evil odors, nor a more malefic compound in the aggregate, than the Havana of those days before the war.

And it was the same when, as special commissioner for the Columbian Exposition, accredited to the Governor General of Cuba, I visited Havana, in 1891. Nearly ten years had elapsed since my previous visit, yet no improvement had been made in sanitary conditions.



They had long since reached their worst stage possible, at which point they remained until the advent of the Americanos.

What has taken place since the Americans took charge, less than five years ago, is known to all, for our countrymen did not hide their light under a bushel. They let in the light and the air, as well, so that the Havana of "before the war" no longer exists.

Approaching Havana from any direction, even from the leeward (as one generally does approach it in entering the harbor), one is no longer saluted by the odors of an uncleanly city. One would hardly suspect the existence of the acres and acres of filth, accumulated during centuries in the harbor, were it not now and then stirred up by external agency.

This is only occasionally done, however, and the placid surface of the vast *cul de sac* reveals no evidence of the potential evil it contains. It is recognized that the harbor holds a perpetual menace to the city's health, which may become actual and terrible should the vast acreage of sediment be exposed to the sun, and the next great work of the authorities will doubtless be the opening of another outlet to the sea. At present the only opening is that guarded by old Morro; but it would seem perfectly feasible to break through the low-lying land barrier between the harbor and the suburb of Guanabacoa.

When the Spaniards first landed here they found a beautiful, eligible site for a *carenage*—a smoothly receding beach, guarded by coral rocks, upon which they could careen their vessels for repairs when necessary. This beach was long ago covered with masonry and no longer exists as a careening place; but on or near its



site we find the custom house of the present day. At a little distance away stands a *templete*, or chapel, erected near the original ceiba tree beneath which the first mass was held nearly 400 years ago.

Beginning near this point, the city rapidly spread itself towards the hills, such as "Jesus del Monte," about 200 feet high, near which stands the picturesque castle-fort, Atarés; but the vast majority of the inhabitants resided, as they reside to-day, on a plain lying only four feet above sea-level.

The harbor has an extreme length of about three miles, with a breadth of a mile and a half in its broadest part, while its entrance, opposite the Morro, is only 400 yards across. Anciently, it was surrounded by mangrove swamps which have been "reclaimed" by dumping in the street refuse and garbage. In their original state these swamps were first-class breeders of malarial poison, and they were hardly improved by the Spanish process of reclamation. Then again, the scant soil covered a permeable rock foundation, into which the foul liquids, when emptied, readily disappeared; and as "out of sight out of mind" is a proverb with the happy-go-lucky Spaniards, they gave themselves no concern as to where the sewage of their growing city went. The sinks and excavations in the more solid rock back from the shore became filled with polluted liquids, of course; but the summer rains and occasional high tides sometimes washed their contents into the bay. Later on abortive attempts were made looking to a complete sewerage system; but even to-day none such exists.

When the Americans came here they found a horrible condition of affairs in matters of sanitation, and it is to their credit that they almost performed the impossible

task of cleansing the city. It is actually as clean as it is possible to make it, without turning it inside out and upside down, and expending millions in the work of reclamation.

Even the Spaniards and Cubans admit that the Americanos have improved their city vastly. They complacently regard the wonderful work as, somehow, a miracle of Nature, aided by Providence—and themselves—at which the Americans assisted. It “riled” them awfully to be told, in effect, that they had been heedless of the simplest laws of sanitation, and they bitterly resented the inspection and consequent disinfection of their houses. But the great and good work went on, nevertheless, and to-day it is continued by the Cubans, along the lines laid out by their teachers.

Every morning at daylight, or promptly at five o'clock, I heard the chatter and the clatter of a band of Cuban “White Wings,” carefully sweeping up the garbage in the Prado, and I knew, from the chatter and the clatter in other streets, that the process was going on elsewhere—all over the city. These men were closely followed by carts, which, still with lighted lanterns beneath the axle (showing that they were sent out early to the work) conveyed the sweepings to the dock, whence they were carried on lighters far out beyond the Morro and dropped into the sea. There is no more dumping of garbage into the harbor; there are no longer any evil odors drifting across the city, eddying into the streets and settling into courts so solidly that, of old, they could almost be cut with a knife.

It cannot be expected of the natives that they will change their *costumbres*—their ingrained habits—and become personally and individually what they have been

forced to become as a civic body; but, at least, they have been impressed with the advantages of cleanliness, so far as their city is concerned. In the work of reclamation the Americans were aided by the situation of Havana somewhat, but chiefly by the abundance and purity of its water supply.

More than 40,000,000 gallons of the purest water are delivered daily in Havana from the springs of the Almendares River, situated about nine miles distant from the city. The Almendares is itself a beautiful stream, which reaches the sea less than four miles from the Morro. It is bordered by a picturesque country, containing royal palms, bananas—in fact, all kinds of tropical vegetation—and its copious springs, gushing forth in an attractive gorge, are frequently resorted to by the Havanese when on recreation bent. They are reached by the “United Railways of Havana,” which maintains an excellent service of four trains each way daily.

After its wells had become contaminated, Havana dug a ditch from the Almendares springs of the “Vento,” and brought the water to the city. This was more than three hundred years ago, and an unfailling supply has been maintained ever since. At first, however, (and, as well, during centuries of Spanish domination in Cuba) this purest of waters flowed mainly through an open ditch, into which drained the sewage of the suburbs, through other ditches and polluted streams. The inhabitants along the way not only took tribute of the water as it passed, but bathed themselves, their horses, and their cattle in it; while dead dogs and cats, and sometimes human corpses, were found floating therein. Then massive aqueducts were constructed of the substantial masonry for which the Spaniards are famous, by which the

city was partially supplied. Now, it is claimed, there is an inexhaustible supply for every purpose. Generally speaking there is great risk to health in drinking the water furnished in tropical cities; but it would seem that Havana must be considered an exception.

With this abundant flow of purest, softest water coursing through the mains, permeating every dwelling of importance, flushing the gutters, cleansing the streets and squares, and cooling the air, Havana has become in a sense revived, even regenerated. And, as all the day long (with the exception of a few hours in the morning) a strong breeze sweeps the city from the sea, and the nights are always cool, there are many hours in which one may take rest and obtain real recreation, in Havana.

At present, it has been remarked, Havana and Santiago are enjoying a miraculous immunity from yellow fever; but an epidemic awaits them both when, their polluted soils, surcharged as they are, shall be excavated for the long-promised, much-vaunted sewer systems, which are to forever rid them of danger. Then at least one terrible wave of devastation will sweep over each city which may make up for all the years of exemption it has enjoyed during the reign of superficial cleanliness.

The greatest improvements the ante-bellum visitor will notice are in the streets, squares, and parks. The menace of yellow fever having been removed, the visitor may yield himself to the enjoyment of the many places of recreation in the city and its suburbs. The most prominent feature of Havana's recreative system is, of course, the Prado, which bisects the city, adorned with palms, statues, music stands, and overflowing with a wealth of tropical vegetation. It was thought perfect many years ago, it certainly has nearly reached perfection since our



engineers opened it out to the shore and bestowed upon the Havanese the blessings of the "Malacon," which overlooks the harbor entrance, the Morro, and the open sea.

"*Reconstruido en 1902*," is the inscription on a plate of bronze set up near the Central Square, or "Parque Isabel," by former Governor Wood; and *reconstruido*, renovated, regenerated, might truthfully be said of all parts of the city, touched by the magic wand of the far-sighted, self-sacrificing Americanos. Many of the sacrifices made by Americans may have been (probably were) unintentional; but the fact remains that, while individual enterprises have failed, and personal endeavor has been inadequately rewarded, the Cubans have benefited from the push and energy of their neighbors from the United States.

The Americans here, many of them, are feeling the heavy hand that invariably is laid upon the pioneer. Among the pioneers in a direction tending toward the highest morality are the leaders in the movement for establishing in Havana that noble institution, the Young Men's Christian Association. They have already broken ground and will soon commence the work which has proved so beneficent in Puerto Rico and the Philippines.

There are a few notable successes, such, for example, as the great Cuba Railway and the electric traction company of the capital. In no other respect has Havana advanced so much as in its urban and suburban communication. When I was here before, the traveler had to depend upon the *guaguas*, or broken-down omnibuses, and the equally obsolescent hacks. Both vehicles are still in evidence and evidently well patronized; but in addition we have well-equipped electric cars. They



pervade the city now, whereas in former times there were no means of rapid communication between points within it and outside. Many delightful rides may be enjoyed, for instance, into the suburbs, as to the Cerro, the old fortress, the Vedado and Marianao, charming residential sections, near the mouth of the Almendares; the botanic garden, the Colon cemetery, etc. The system is far from complete, but is being constantly improved and extended. Instead of driving the hacks and *guaguas* out of existence, the electric cars seem to have stimulated them somewhat; and, if anything, they are more numerous than ever.

While I have noted no improvement in the omnibuses, which are still dirty and despicable, I must admit that the hacks or victorias, together with their drivers and their horses, have vastly improved. The drivers are as impudent as ever, and as prone to overcharge the guileless tourist; but their horses are evidently better fed and better treated. Not that the Hispano-Cuban character has changed for the better, perhaps; but that the natives' self-interest has been successfully appealed to. American example has done much; but American money has done vastly more!

The changes made by the Americans have all been for the best, and they have shown a wise discrimination in their improvements, having touched nothing hallowed by tradition or made famous through its associations with the historic past. Thus, while it might be to the eventual benefit of Havana for many of its streets to be widened and an open artery for traffic driven straight through the city from the harbor to the hills, yet nothing has been done in this direction. Those quaint old Spanish *calles*, Obrapia, O'Reilly, and Obispo, still exist, and are yet the

chief shopping centers, as of yore. The chief of all, Obispo, has been newly paved, with smooth cement, instead of the rough blocks over which rattled the noisy conveyances, vastly to its permanent improvement; but its flanking neighbors, O'Reilly and Obrapia, still show their antiquity in narrow sidewalks, sometimes scarcely a foot in width. All three are bits out of Old Spain itself, such as we have seen in Seville and in Cordova, with awnings stretched from wall to wall throughout the length of blocks, doors and grated windows displaying Oriental goods, and only an intrusion here and there of the American and his more modern wares.

Nothing, indeed, can change the ways of the Spaniard; he is Americanized in name only, never in dress or habitudes. Walking through any of these streets, occasional glimpses are afforded of typically Spanish interiors, in the open courts containing carriages, stables, horses, kitchen, reception rooms, dining hall and sleeping apartments, all huddled about a common center, and enjoying a common atmosphere, impregnated with odors which any well-regulated family in the United States would find absolutely unendurable. The courts may have an attempt at a fountain, with a thin stream of water trickling into a basin containing attractive foliage, and may be hung with cages of singing birds; but the atmosphere is just the same—of the stable and the kitchen, combined with more offensive odors still; for the Spaniards always make most prominent that department of the domestic economy which we desire to conceal. They could not conceal it if they desired, in fact, on account of their laxity of sanitary regulations.

In the reeking, malodorous days of Spanish domination, a walk through Obrapia and Obispo streets, espec-



Tobacco Workers and Reader

cccccc      cccccc      cccccc

cccccc      cccccc      cccccc      cccccc      cccccc  
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ially at night, would reveal glimpses of interiors that were calculated with malice aforethought to capture the unwary and divert the young man's feet from the paths of rectitude. Against the iron window grilles were pressed the forms of seductively-attired señoritas, whose hands were often extended to grasp the passers-by. A shameless traffic was openly carried on, which was not only winked at, but encouraged by the authorities. This traffic, while it has been banished to other quarters, has not been by any means strangled, nor even discouraged; it has been segregated and placed amid the disreputable surroundings which naturally pertain to a public vice which is privately practiced.

Havana is no better supplied with hotels than it ever was. In fact, one finds here the same old ones, conducted after the same slipshod style, charging the same exorbitant rates, as of yore. They are for the most part Spanish, lacking far more conveniences than they possess, and possessing fewer than the average second-rate hotel in the United States. Those that are centrally situated, on and near the Prado, are highest in price; although there is one hotel which has gained a reputation for superlative rates, and is consequently a favorite with the millionaires, down near the Malecon. There is, however, no good hotel on the American plan with rates commensurate with its service. Rather, there is no good American hotel; though, doubtless, one will be built in the very near future, land having been bought already and ground broken for the foundations, of one to cost a million dollars. As a rule, avoid all the hotels that have been recommended to you, especially those with well-known names. Then again, avoid all those that have no reputations at all, and you will be perfectly safe. In



other words, you will not remain long in Havana unless well-housed and well taken care of, which means that you will not remain there at all, after you have seen the sights.

Objects of interest in and around Havana, there are, numerous enough to claim one's attention for perhaps a week; although one may weary of this, the noisiest city in the world, in less than half that time. The chief objections to Havana are its noises and its perpetual heat of daytime. The former cannot be evaded, if one be domiciled in one of the central hotels; nor the latter, if one be quartered anywhere at all. So there you are, "twixt the devil and the deep, deep sea," conscientiously desirous to "do" the city properly, yet anxious to hie away to fresh fields and pastures new.

Such things as cannot well be avoided may be enumerated on the fingers of both hands. First of all, there is the cathedral, which, though locally called the *catedral de la Virgen de la Concepcion*, is more widely known to fame as that of Columbus. It is so called because, according to the Spaniards, the ashes of the great discoverer once rested here, in a niche near the great altar. According to the latest investigations, however, the ashes of Columbus were never brought here at all (as will be shown in one of our chapters on Santo Domingo, further on in this book).

It was in 1795, that, being about to evacuate the island of Santo Domingo, the Spaniards in authority at that time conceived the idea of removing the remains of Columbus from their place of sepulture in the cathedral of Santo Domingo, to a niche they had prepared in the cathedral at Havana.

Guided by tradition, merely, they did not even receive

the sanction of an inscription of any sort; but nevertheless, they gayly set forth with their findings and deposited them, with vast ceremony, in their new resting-place in Havana cathedral. There the remains remained, for quite another century, and when, in 1899, through force of circumstances over which they had lost control, the Spaniards were compelled to take their departure from Cuba, Captain General Blanco conceived the plan of taking away with them the "real and only remains" of the great Columbus. So they made their last voyage across the Atlantic, and were taken in a war-ship to Seville, where they were placed in the cathedral there. Already, for centuries, there had been an inscribed slab of marble let into the cathedral pave, in Seville, with that world-famous legend:

*"A Castilla y á Leon  
Mundo Nuevo dió Colon";*

but this slab covered the remains of Don Fernando, Christopher's illegitimate son and biographer. Recent investigations have shown that the ashes which were, first of all, taken from Santo Domingo to Havana, in 1795, and last of all taken from Havana to Seville, in 1899, each time by misguided Spaniards more zealous than wise, were those of Don Diego, and not of Don Christopher. So, as it happens, Spain now possesses the remains of the two sons of Columbus, Diego and Fernando; but those of the great Discoverer still remain in Santo Domingo.

No one can deny that the Spaniards, at last, desired to "do the right thing" by the memory of the great Columbus. Those who were his contemporaries treated him meanly enough while living, as history shows, from

King Ferdinand to Isabella and Bobadilla, administering kicks and cuffs (when his back was turned) and fawning in front of his face. After he died there was a slight revulsion of feeling; though it took a long and stubbornly contested process of law to compel King Ferdinand to give Don Diego his rights as son of the great "Admiral of the Ocean Sea." Still, the Spaniards of those days, and all other days, were great on grandiloquent inscriptions, which in vast redundancy have since overflowed innumerable monuments and cenotaphs. The cenotaph in this cathedral was once surmounted by a bust, beneath which this inscription told what the Spaniards thought of Columbus:

*"Oh, restos é imagen del grande Colon,  
Mil siglos durad guardados en la urna  
Y en la remembranza de nuestra nacion."*

"Oh, remains and image of the great Colon,  
A thousand ages thou wilt be preserved in this urn.  
And in the remembrance of our nation."

Hardly a "thousand ages" passed away before the *restos* were again on the move, while both bust and urn have disappeared. In their place, the cathedral shows merely a vacant niche and a pretentious pedestal where once stood a monument.

There is a statue of Columbus in the court-yard of the governor general's palace, on the Plaza de Armas, which is of itself a building well worth a visit. It was the abode of all the captains-general for seventy years preceding the advent of the Americans, and these included such names as Campos, Weyler, and Blanco.

A statue of Ferdinand VII. stands in the center of the Plaza de Armas, and no photograph of the palace can be taken without this marble in the foreground. It has

suffered a better fate than the statue of Queen Isabella, lately deceased, which once adorned the "Parque Isabel," now known as the Central Square. Somehow or other, the Spanish colonials always had a peculiar affection for the last King Ferdinand, who was a scamp well worthy to be the putative father of the late Queen Isabella; but whose sufferings at the hands of Napoleon may have bestowed upon him the air of a martyr, in the eyes of his far-distant subjects across the Atlantic. This portrait-statue of him is more nearly perfect as a work of art than he was as a work of nature.

Memorials of the old Havannah cluster thickly about the Plaza de Armas, and back of the post-office stands the *Fuerza*, or most ancient fortress of the city, built in 1538, by command of Hernando de Soto. The Morro is the "lion" of Havana, and should by all means be visited; but in the morning, and the nearer sunrise the better—provided permission can be obtained. The commander of Cabañas issues permits to visit the Morro, and after eight or nine in the morning the long walk between the two groups of fortresses is very hot and unpleasant. From a military point of view, the Cabañas is the more important of the two great works; but each is picturesque in its way, the situation of the Morro, rising sheer from the sea a hundred feet, with the great waves thundering against walls and parapets, being magnificent.

Inside the Morro you are shown the dungeons into which the Spaniards cast the Cubans, who were subsequently murdered by being thrust through a hole-in-the-wall over the sea, where the sea-monsters lay in wait for their expected prey, in the "sharks' nest," or *nido de tiburones*, a blue water-rift beneath the easternmost sentry-box.



Looking inland from the Punta, opposite the Morro, one discerns another memento of ancient Havana, in the shape of a sentry tower and a fragment of the old wall which once inclosed the city. This wall was doomed to demolition many years ago, for the city had outgrown its limits and overflowed into the suburbs along shore, before the Spaniards loosed their hold. Yet another mural fragment is a portion of the wall against which a band of medical students was shot to death by the Spaniards in 1871. All these objects are near the jail and penitentiary, entrance to which may be obtained on application; not so much to view the interior of the prison, as to see an historic object on exhibition there. This is the grewsome *garrote*, or instrument for the execution of condemned criminals. It is an iron pillar affixed to a wooden platform about ten feet square and six feet from the ground. An iron chair is attached to the column, two feet above which is an iron collar, which is closed in front by a clasp, after the victim's neck has been inserted. A screw protrudes through the back of the collar, which is operated by a bar somewhat similar to that of a copying press, only it is perpendicular instead of horizontal.

The end of the screw is pointed, and when twisted up projects about an inch into the center of the ring. The victim is placed in the fatal chair, the ring clasped in front of his throat, and his hands and feet firmly tied. There is a quick turn of the screw, and the spinal column is broken, death immediately ensuing. The executioner is a middle-aged black man, whose sentence to death was commuted to life imprisonment on condition that he become the public garroter. At the command of the superintendent, he cheerfully consents to show visitors



how garroting is performed. For an actual execution he is said to receive a gold doubloon per victim.

The setting of Havana, within a semicircle of rounded hills, each the site of an attractive settlement, with towers rising above the roof-tops and palms interspersed, is extremely "fetching." The *gauguas* and electric lines run out to these suburbs, and even to Marianao, which is also reached by steam railroad. This last is a favorite bathing resort, and taken together with the nearer Vedado, where are rock-hewn baths in the coral reefs of the sea-shore, is a lively place during the summer season. There is nothing more significant of the change for the better that has come over Havana, than the removal of its wealthier citizens into the suburbs, and the building there of houses for the people of average means. Formerly, they were crowded into dark and noisome tenements, fed upon foul airs, and deafened by uncouth noises; but with the extension of the trolley system all this is changed.

Should you desire to see what a tropical river is like, without being compelled to journey into the forests, take a little trip to the mouth of the Almendares, the springs of which supply Havana with its water. Boats may be hired, and a pleasurable excursion may be taken up the stream, drifting beneath clumps of feathery bamboos, in the shade of broad-armed ceiba trees hung with vines and air-plants, and between gardens of plantains and bananas.

Two excursions from Havana which are never omitted are, first, to the Colon cemetery, with its magnificent monuments, notably the firemen's and that to the students slain by the Spaniards; and second, to the captain general's gardens, now the captain general's no longer, but belonging to the state. These botanical gardens have long been famous, one of the features being an avenue of

palms with close-set trunks o'ertopped with canopies of verdure.

Some feel impelled to visit the Vuelta Abajo, in order to study the various processes of tobacco culture; but it is not necessary to take that long, hot, dusty, and fatiguing ride to the Pinar del Rio region, merely to behold the "weed" growing in its native wilds. Tobacco farms may be seen in the Connecticut Valley; they may be seen quite near Havana, in Guanajay, reached by a few hours' ride over the United Railways. There, too, may be seen the vast tobacco barns in which the leaves are cured, as well as the perfect plants growing in their strength and beauty. The processes are not different from the Vuelta Abajo processes, and the scenery by the way, of broad fields adorned with innumerable royal palms, is not inferior to that of the more distant province.

The excursion to Guanajay may be made in a few hours, leaving Havana in the morning, at 8:45; returning to the city at about four in the afternoon. But an extension of the trip may be made by carriage to the picturesque port of Mariel, which, with its deep-water harbor and its surrounding hills devoted to banana culture, is looked upon as the coming country for the agriculturist in the Havana region.

A stop-over at San Antonio de los Baños, will show one of the wonders of Cuba, in the "disappearing river" there, one of a system of underground streams peculiar to this region. The underground river of San Antonio not only flows through a cave adorned with stalactites and stalagmites, but it is famous for containing some remarkable blind fishes, which have been made the subject of a monograph by a learned professor of the United States Fish Commission. The Cuban naturalist, Poey,

whose great work on Cuban fishes is yet in manuscript, first called attention to the number and peculiarities of the blind cave-fishes of the island, and he mentioned many places in which they were to be found.

There is no system near Havana that takes one to so many points of interest as the "United Railways," with its very accessible station right in the center of the city. Villanueva, it is called, after the Conde de Villa Nueva, whose name is on the statue of "La India" in the Parque Colon. Taking train here amidst the most prosaic surroundings, in a few hours one is whisked through the commonplace, the picturesque, and the romantic, in marvelous succession. This is in allusion to the route to Batabano and the Isle of Pines, both of which are reached over the rails of the United Railways, the former in an hour and a half from Havana, in which time one has been taken right across the island and introduced to the scenery of an entirely different world from that of the north coast.

Batabano stands on stilts, and is a sponge-fishing place, once the chosen site for Cuba's capital itself. Steamers sail thence for all ports on the south coast: for Cienfuegos, for Santiago de Cuba, going eastward; and for Pinar del Rio points, going westward. But the most interesting spot reached from Batabano is that land of romance and mystery, the Isle of Pines, situated about sixty miles to the south. Twice a week, on Sunday and Thursday, a light-draught steamer makes connection at Batabano with the morning express trains from Villanueva.

That is, the Isle of Pines has been considered a land of mystery until quite recently; but the pushing Americans, who have invested more than a million dollars there already, have done much to dispel the air of romanticism,

in their endeavors to show that the soil of the island contains vast resources in the way of latent riches. While there are fine marble quarries in the island, the main dependence of the settlers, the Americanos say, will be agriculture. Hitherto, the island has been possessed by a few unambitious and unenergetic Cubans, who lived in mud or straw huts, content with their ownership of potential millions, perfectly satisfied with their holdings, and who were very much alarmed when their aggressive neighbors from the North came down and offered them more for their properties than they had believed they would be worth.



## IV

### THE RAILROAD BETWEEN HAVANA AND SANTIAGO

The various systems combined in the great united line, Havana-Santiago—Scenery along the way—Mud-splashed natives and bohios—The sugar section of Cuba—Strange trees and shrubs—The Cuban and his crooked stick—Attractions of Matanzas, the Yumuri valley and caves of Bellamar—Railroads that cross the island—Cities of the south coast—the “Cuban Saratoga” and Santa Clara—Possibilities for the American colonizer—Ciego de Avila and the “impregnable” trocha—Blockhouses that were of no avail—A vast cattle country—Bayamo, where President Palma was born—The “Gardens of the Queen”—The oldest railway in Spanish dominions—Camagüey or Puerto Principe, an old city with a new lease of life—Its big hotel and salubrious atmosphere—Through the forest lands, where mahogany and cedar abound—Alto Cedro and the Bay of Nipe—A tropical wilderness and vegetal paradise.

**T**HE railroad between Havana and Santiago affords one of the grandest rides in the world. The distance between the two points is 540 miles, or 869 kilometers, and is covered in twenty-five hours, on a time-table that keeps the schedule to the minute. By the perfect coöperation of the various systems composing the great united line along the backbone of Cuba, and which was only completed in 1902, by the construction of the “Cuba Railway,” excellent and punctual service is afforded from one end of the island to the other.



Exactly at 9 P. M., every day in the week, a train pulls out of the Villanueva station at Havana composed of first- and third-class day coaches, mail and express cars, and a through "sleeper," to which after daylight an observation car is added. At 6 A. M., a similar train leaves Santiago, going westward, so that by taking the route both ways all the glorious scenery of the island is revealed to the traveler—and it is a revelation—nothing of importance should be missed.

By these through trains, however, one of the most important places along the line is reached at a very bad time for observation, and that is Matanzas, at which, going one way, the traveler arrives about midnight, and going the other at four in the morning. This difficulty may be obviated, if one be starting from Havana, by taking in advance the excursion offered by the United Railways Line, giving an all-day trip, Havana-Matanzas-Havana, for eleven dollars, including breakfast or lunch at Matanzas, volantes to the Valley of Yumuri and the caves of Bellamar—all the attractions, in fact; or one may stop over a day at Matanzas, where enough of interest will be found to fill it pretty well.

The distance from Havana to Matanzas is about sixty miles, and the time by rail two or three hours. The scenery *en route* is typical of the western and central parts of Cuba, being chiefly of cane-fields interspersed with smaller farms or abandoned tracts lying fallow from lack of means to cultivate. Everywhere you will see the great pearl-gray columns of the royal palm, with their coronals of verdure, in groups, in long, straight rows forming avenues and boundary-lines, and always ornamental. There will also be bunches of bamboos, feathery-foliaged, like tufts of plumes, their lance-like culms clash-



Palms of the Yumuri Valley



ing together in the wind and their willow-like leaves rustling. They generally indicate the vicinage of water, though, like the palms, they grow in all sorts of places except in the highest hills or mountains.

Now and then you see a great tobacco barn, five or ten times as large as the dwelling alongside it, though both are built of palm, as picturesque and as appropriate to the landscape as structures made by man can be. The thatched hut, as perhaps the reader knows, was derived from the aboriginal inhabitants of Cuba, who were discovered living in the same kind of *bohios* as we see to-day all over the island. Traveling eastward, the vast tobacco barns gradually disappear, to give way to another type of building more modern and expensive—the *ingenio*, or sugar-mill. Eastward and westward from Havana province lies the vast sugar-cane region of Cuba, stretching from coast to coast and becoming more and more in evidence as we proceed. Like immense fields of maize or Indian corn, the tracts of golden-green cane, miles in extent, are only infrequently dotted with the mills where the cane is crushed and its juice reduced to saccharine crystals. Access to the sugar-mills is generally easy, provided one can find the time and opportunity; and the chances are that the traveler has already visited one of the typical structures, such as the “Toledo,” not far from Havana and Marianao, where an admission fee is charged. The owners of the great properties in Cuba are nothing if not thrifty, and are generally not above taking, even demanding, a fee for inspecting their works. This is Spanish “thrift,” as practiced by the people who are so loud in denouncing the acquisitiveness of the invading “Yankees.”

The cane-fields appear to occupy a great proportion of

the total area of Cuba; but late statistics appear to show that the aggregate acreage devoted to sugar-cane is only about one-sixtieth of the grand total of 28,000,000 acres.

You would think, also, when in Havana, that the culture of tobacco is the chief occupation of the Cuban agriculturist. As a great favor, one of the princely tobacconists will allow you to go over his factory, where hundreds of men are employed in rolling and pasting the "weed"; and, though the same process may be seen in Key West and Tampa, even in New York, there are tourists who go into ecstasies over the sight. Just why, it is impossible to say; but probably because they think it the proper thing to do. Neither cigar nor cigarette-making is an attractive process; tobacco culture is not a novel occupation, though demanding skill and experience; and too much has been made of both, hitherto, in descriptions of Cuba and her resources.

It will not be the *Vuelta Abajo* region with its fields of tobacco, nor the great central section with its vaster fields of sugar-cane, that will engage the attention of the incoming Americans with their capital—whether large or small in amount—but the lands that can be made to produce coffee and cacao, pineapples and citrus fruits, and even "garden truck" for northern markets. Tobacco is grown on the insignificant total of one hundred thousand acres; but it has been the means of enriching a good many. Not so many, however, that they cannot be formed into a "trust" that will eventually control the whole supply and yet further enhance the values of cigars that are already priced far beyond their worth.

Nearing Matanzas, we are getting well out of the tobacco section and into the region of waving cane.



Aside from the royal palms, the occasional ceiba or silk-cotton trees are the most conspicuous, with their massive trunks, broad-spreading limbs, and far-extending roots swelling into the parent trunks like the buttresses to a Gothic cathedral. Masses of tropical trees are seen, also, such as the mango, the mamey, the nispero, and a dozen others, but generally so densely grouped that their foliage and fruits can hardly be distinguished. Now and then abandoned fields covered with guavas, from the fruit of which the delicious *pastas* and jellies are made, stretch alongside the railroad tracks.

The huts of the natives are not so frequently seen as farther along the line, beyond the sugar-producing provinces, for the cane-culture crowds them out; but some of them are attractively embowered amid the shining leaves of citrus trees, more often shaded by the dome-shaped crowns of dark-green mangos. The ordinary railroad station, as well as the beginning of a town, in Cuba, is usually a horror of unattractiveness, despite the endeavors of the railroad men to build it well originally and to keep it up to the mark subsequently. Crowded about it will be a host of ox-carts to which the beasts are yoked by the horns; occasionally a cumbersome volante, mud-plastered from wrestling with the roads of the country; and always a crowd of loafers in cotton shirts and flowing pantaloons; hatless, some of them, and also shoeless.

Right in sight of the car windows may be seen a witless Cuban furrowing the land with a crooked stick, using this primitive implement of the times of Noah and Abraham in preference to the best plow that might be offered him. The Cuban is a fool, of course; but he won't believe you if you tell him so, although you know it. His great-great-grandfather plowed with a crooked stick,

hitched by a pole to the horns of his oxen, and why should he not do the same?

Besides, the Yankee plow, he is ever ready to tell you, digs too deep a hole in the earth—turns up the sub-soil, which the great God never intended should be disturbed. Then again, the Yankee plow costs too much for a poor Cuban; though this argument is invalidated by the fact that the rich ones use the crooked stick—or allow it to be used on their plantations—when they can well afford the finer implement.

But if we linger too long by the wayside commenting upon Cuban peculiarities, we shall not reach Matanzas in time for breakfast. There is scant soil for any kind of cultivation in the immediate vicinity of Matanzas; but that, of course, will not concern the tourist, who cares more for what he can see than for the latent possibilities of the earth. This city of about 45,000 inhabitants lies curled around a beautiful bay which is deep enough for good-sized steamers to enter, and is situated upon and amid some swelling hills. Its architecture is the Americanized Hispano-Moriscan, typical of the better portions of Cuba's cities, and some of the dwellings are imposing, especially out at Versailles suburb and along the road from the plaza to the caves of Bellamar. Matanzas has its central square or plaza, on one side of which is the governor's palace, on another the post-office, and on another still a very nice hotel, the best in the place.

But it is not for the sake of its attractions *per se* that we have come to Matanzas. Were it not for the fact that Nature has bestowed two great gifts upon this region, it is doubtful if anyone would stop over for a glimpse of the city. One such gift were enough to cause travelers to make pilgrimages here, and that is the near valley of

the Yumuri, which no less an authority than Humboldt pronounced the most beautiful in the world. Humboldt was prone to indulge in superlatives; but in this case he may not have gone far astray, for the vale of Yumuri is certainly an entrancing spot.

There are two points from which the Yumuri may be viewed, the nearest to Matanzas, about two miles, being the hill and chapel of Montserrat. You may go thither on foot, by *coché*, or by *volante*, the last-named means of conveyance being generally chosen because of its novelty—not for its comfort. There are not many volantes left in Cuba that are available to the general tourist, and perhaps it may be as well to charter one of these craft on this occasion, for another may not offer. They “come high,” and they are swung high, on huge leather springs suspended between wheels of vast diameter, at least eight feet across.

In going to view the Yumuri from the cumbres, farther from the city than Montserrat, the volantes are almost a necessity, the road is so rough and the holes in it so deep. However, whether on foot, by *coché*, or by *volante*, by all means go to see the beautiful Yumuri, a vale sunken five or six hundred feet between encircling hills, its rolling surface dotted with royal palms, and rounded knolls forming the foot-hills to this Royal Plain in miniature. A small stream meanders through the valley, which breaks between almost vertical cliffs and flows amidst the city, with the river San Juan dividing Matanzas into three parts, known as Versailles, Pueblo Viejo, and Nuevó.

You look down upon the Yumuri from Montserrat as into a vast bowl or crater from its brim, and behold its palm-dotted surface diversified with cocoas, cacaos,

almond trees, and small plantations of coffee and sugarcane. Not many houses show themselves, and there are comparatively few huts, on the various spurs from the inclosing hillside. It is most assuredly a beautiful retreat to look upon; but I fancy life must get rather monotonous within it, especially in the rainy season, when it would be far easier to slide down the hillsides over the slippery soil than to climb to their crests and view the world outside.

Then there are the caves of Bellamar. They may have existed as long as Yumuri; but they have not been known to man so long, having been discovered accidentally less than fifty years ago, by a Chinese laborer who lost a crowbar down a hole. When he went to look for it he found an opening into one of the most beautiful caverns on earth.

The main chamber is estimated at about 200 feet long by 70 wide, says a writer of note, "and while it far surpasses in richness and splendor the temple of the same name in the Mammoth Cave, it does not equal it in size or solemn grandeur." The caves of Bellamar are sufficiently extensive to fatigue one in exploring them thoroughly, as I can testify, having been through them, as well as through Kentucky's Mammoth Cave. There is no comparison between the two, the one being vast and gloomy; the other, the Cuban Bellamar, being rich and sparkling in stalactitic and stalagmitic formations, in labyrinthine passages through rows of crystal colonnades, where the only sound is that of dripping water making music in the darkness. There is a "fat man's misery" in the Bellamar, where the passage through is so narrow that not everyone can make it, and the descents into the deeps are sharp, while the bridged spaces across chasms



and along the brinks of steeps are sufficiently perilous to cause a shudder. The cave has been followed three miles and to a depth of five hundred feet, in the white and sparkling limestone.

Returning to the main line and our journey from Havana to Santiago, mention should be made, in passing, of a small town a little off the route of travel, and about two hours distant from Matanzas, known as Madruga, the "Cuban Saratoga," which is a natural sanatorium, being filled with springs impregnated with iron, sulphur, potassa, and magnesia, efficacious in many diseases. Its name is a sadly suggestive one in Cuba, being associated with some fierce fighting during the revolution, when the dead and wounded of the Spaniards, repulsed in their attacks upon the patriots who were intrenched on a lofty hill, were brought into the town by scores.

Had you taken the night train from Havana, after refreshing slumber aboard the "sleeper" you would have awakened about six the next morning at the station of Santa Clara, where coffee is served and a few minutes are allowed for refreshments of the cruder sort. The town or city of Santa Clara, so long famous for the beauty of its women and the salubrity of its airs, is at a little distance from the station, and a special trip must be made to visit it. Founded in 1689, it is one of the older cities of the interior, and stands in the center of a region of hill and plain diversified with sugar plantations, from the wealth of which it draws the substance of its living.

Hills and mountains play at hide and seek, more or less distant from the line of the railway, and there are numerous examples of those rounded elevations, some of them capped with palm trees, that are yet more numerous in the Santiago province. Here, now, there is an



aspect of cultivation that seems to presage the possibility of land for the colonist and settler, for the sugar-cane no longer monopolizes the territory, but it is less given over to any one kind of culture. The uplands become more open, with valleys of verdure interspersed, but there is a vast quantity of apparently sterile land as the geographical center of the island is reached, at or about Ciego de Avila, which is the narrowest part of Cuba east of Matanzas. It is not so sterile, the old settlers tell me, as it seems to be, being merely grown up to "bush" and lacking the necessary cultivation to make it "blossom as the rose."

At Ciego de Avila one sees substantial reminders of the late revolution, in the numerous watch-towers that cross the country at this point. They are still in a good state of preservation, each one being about twenty feet square, with an entrance-way a dozen feet from the ground, the lower part solidly built of masonry, and the upper consisting of a square tower sheathed with corrugated iron. The stupendous, yet worse than wasted, labor performed by the Spaniards during the war may be appreciated from the fact that they cleared a space a kilometer in width directly across the island, a distance of nearly fifty miles, from coast to coast, and erected 210 substantial block-houses, each one of which was occupied by its guard, equipped with a powerful electric light and in telephonic communication with every other, and the whole connected by an all but impassable entanglement of barbed wire. I say "all but impassable," for the Cubans laughed at this "impregnable trocha" of their enemies, and whenever they felt like doing so cut their way through it and passed quite freely from one side to the other.

But there, to-day, exists the kilometer-wide space cleared by the Spaniards, reaching from sea to sea, run-

ning in a north-south direction, and as it was divested of every bush and shrub big enough to conceal a lurking Cuban, it forms a magnificent body of land ready for cultivation. The owners and squatters have merely to put in the plow and turn over the fertile soil, and they can avail themselves of block-houses and barracks for dwellings and cattle-sheds. A primitive railroad runs alongside the trocha (rather, perhaps, it should be said that the trocha was projected to follow the railroad) from Jucaro on the south coast to San Fernando on the north, and thus the Spaniards had a triple line of defense; despite which, however, the Cubans defied them at every point and skipped about pretty much as they pleased. Down the line a few miles from Ciego de Avila an American colony has been started, at Ceballos, where there are already hundreds of acres under cultivation.

The soil and scenery are of similar character all the way to Puerto Principe, or Camagüey, which is 343 miles from Havana and 200 from Santiago. The great plains are covered with the rankly-growing Parana and Guinea grass, in some fields of which the sleek and shining cattle may be seen feeding, with this rich fodder meeting above their backs. This is undoubtedly the land for cattle raising, where the grass grows the year round, where the animals need no shelter, and where running streams are frequent enough for watering them without recourse to artificial means.

Puerto Principe, to which the railroad builders have restored its ancient Indian name of Camagüey, is the most important city between Matanzas and Santiago, with more than forty thousand people, and possessing a high and healthy location. Since the Cuba railway reached it Camagüey has taken a new lease of life. It was ever a

city with a past, living nobody knew how, but probably on the profits of cattle-raising on the adjoining plains. Its sole connection with the outside world (aside from that apology for a trail, the so-called *camino real*, or royal road) was by means of a railway 45 miles in length to the port of Nuevitas. This line has the reputation of being the first ever constructed within Spanish dominions; and there is a locomotive running on it which has been in service for more than sixty years, and is still doing active duty; though it was in the repair-shop at the time of my visit.

One would hardly believe that Puerto Principe could have been sacked by pirates, being so far inland; yet it once suffered terribly at the hands of ruthless Morgan and his men, in 1665, who marched hither from the south coast, attacked the forts, captured them, and shut up all the inhabitants in the churches, where most of them starved, or were tortured to death by the fiends from the coast. The pirates secured a great amount of plunder, including not only gold and jewels, but five hundred cattle. Some of the old churches in which the unfortunate people were confined are still standing, and are vastly interesting, their walls massive, buttressed, and their interiors adorned with ancient paintings.

Since the completion of the Cuba railroad and the removal to this city of the general offices of the company, Camagüey has taken a new appearance. It is still a city more of the past than of the present, typically and archaically Spanish in its architecture, with its plaza, cathedral, quaint old churches and monasteries, its dwellings with massive walls and grated windows. Of itself, it might not be considered attractive enough to draw hither the hosts of tourists for whom the railway company has provided

accommodations in its new and vast hotel, which was once a barrack capable of quartering two thousand men.

This immense building has been renovated and made into a perfectly palatial edifice. It has suites of rooms with all sorts of baths attached, courts and gardens, detached buildings for the cuisine, with pillared corridors connecting with the main structure, and a roof-garden from which an extensive view is open in every direction of Camagüey's surrounding plains. Of itself, I have said, modest Puerto Principe would not consider itself sufficiently attractive to win hither the money-scattering tourists; but with the great hotel as an adjunct, and with the salubrious atmosphere of its high plains, lying mid-seas and healthful to a surpassing degree, there is a good prospect for it to become a winter resort in the near future.

Beyond Camagüey, fifty miles' traveling brings us to the eastern border of Puerto Principe province, in the center of which its chief city is located, and seventy-five miles distant is Victoria de las Tunas, where the train halts twenty minutes for another of those delicious meals which the "Cuba" caterer knows so well how to serve. There is scant time to look about, but from the observation-car we have obtained views all along the road that form a continuous panorama of tropical scenery, increasingly profuse in the strange and varied forms of vegetation so uncommon to northern eyes.

The forest trees are now crowding upon the rails, from which they have hitherto been held back by the ax, and only at the occasional openings in the woods, by courtesy called stations, do we see any extensive areas of field or plain. And at every station there are big piles of timber, rough-hewn by the axmen in the forest, huge logs of precious cedar and mahogany, fifty and sixty feet in



length and two feet through, perhaps exceeding these dimensions. There are, also, native ox-carts laden with these valuable woods, and the natives themselves in numbers, engaged in bringing in great logs from the forest, the mahogany-producing section of which is becoming more and more difficult to reach, and fast receding to the mountains. After viewing the millions of feet piled up at the stations in Santiago province and loaded on the cars, it is easy to understand that there is, or may be, a glut in the cedar and mahogany market. And yet, through the mysterious workings of the "trusts," the price of furniture made from the latter wood does not decrease correspondingly with cost of material!

Most of the stations are names merely, with now and then two or three open-work bohios occupied by the customary Cubans with muddy complexions and mud-bespattered garments—such as they are. But when these forests are cleared and the daylight let into the openings, where the rich humus is so deep as to be inexhaustible, there will in all probability be houses enough around the stations. At present, the prospect is far from encouraging, except in its immensity of opportunity for the right man who shall drop into the right place, in this virgin spot of Cuba. It is more than a "spot," too, being perhaps a hundred miles long, lying adjacent to the railroad and extending back for miles and miles.

Just before dark we reach the station of Cacocum, which is of importance chiefly on account of its stage connection with the town of Holguin, whence there is a railroad to the port of Gibara on the north coast. Why nobody completes the few miles necessary to make an all-rail line between these two important points, is a Cuban conundrum which everybody seems to have "given



up." The only means of conveyance at present are a few shaky stages, or fat-bodied old volantes, which may be seen lying alongside the platform like stranded porpoises.

In the gathering gloom, at the next flag station beyond Cacocum, a clearing in the forest is visible, where an enterprising American has begun operations, with a saw-mill and improved machinery, looking toward utilizing the native products, especially the timber and cabinet woods. Lewiston is the name of the "siding" where two hundred acres of forest trees have already been removed, and the "Cuban Products Company, Limited," the title of the firm which owns 70,000 acres of land here in one large tract, a portion of which has been stocked with cattle.

Darkness has entirely enveloped us by the time Alto Cedro is reached, and we consider this as a misfortune, for Alto Cedro is destined to become one of the most important points along the line, although at present consisting chiefly of a few huts, a station building, and a general store. For, here the main west-east line diverges southward, while a northerly spur is being constructed to Nipé Bay, which is known as the finest natural port in Cuba.

The name "Alto Cedro," the Tall Cedar, gives a hint of the forestal character in this region where the big trees prevail, and where the really tropical province of Santiago holds promise of vegetal wonders. This spot is right in its very center, north-south, east-west, and as the road strikes southwardly to the coast it plunges into a perfect wilderness of wonders belonging to the vegetable kingdom. As it crosses the headwaters of the Cauto and its tributaries, great trees crowd upon the track, as they did a hundred miles further back; but here they display, if possible, a greater wealth of epiphytic and parasitic

plants, plastered upon their branches and affixed to their vast trunks.

It seemed to me, many miles back on the road, that I had seen nearly all the wild orchids in the world sitting astride the limbs of the forest trees or hanging from their branches, but here they quite bewildered me with their variety and profusion. There were great air-plants, some with spikes of blossoms, some with great display of leaves; some were attached to the lianas which draped every tree, some affixed to the rough bark, some again suspended in mid-air to a slender "lialine," or cordage-like vine that came down from somewhere up above, from out the canopy of verdure—and there it swung, an object of exceeding beauty, yet only one of thousands, and perhaps millions, in that forest pierced by the parallel rails which reached from somewhere to somewhere, but here were apparently drifting off into nowhere.

The silk-cottons were the grandest, as they towered above all other trees of the lowlands, everywhere, and the burdens they bore of parasites and epiphytes were commensurate with their vast bulk. They are, perhaps, the only large trees which that piratical parasite, the "wild fig," dares not attack, probably on account of their bulky bole and extensive buttresses.

All the trees were woven together by lianas and *bejucos*, the vines and bush-ropes, which seemed of interminable length, and which were comparable only to the rigging of a Brobdignagian ship, in their entirety. They lined the lengths of forest aisles, they formed a ligneous lattice-work beside the track, which it almost seemed necessary for the engineer to cut with a machete ere he could force the engine through.

The scene changes at or about Moron, or Dos Caminos,







where different, but equally beautiful effects are presented by nature subdued and cultivated. After passing through a tropical wilderness, we suddenly emerge into a veritable paradise, so far as its vegetal products are concerned. We are now in a region of rounded hills, each hill or knoll crowned with a group of palms, or a single tree with soft and feathery foliage outlined against the sky. Sometimes the hills have palm-thatched bohios perched upon them, and their slopes covered with coffee trees, cacaos, mangos, oranges, and limes. The products of these Hesperian gardens are brought to the stations for sale, as at Cristo, where the primitive stalls are full of gleaming fruits of every hue and flavor. And thus it is, all the way to Santiago: the track bordered with fruit trees, the air filled with fragrance, so that you may know what you are passing through, even though it be night.

## V

### THE CUBAN AS HE WAS AND AS HE IS

The *Cubano* and his costume—Why he wears a dirt-color garment—As to his ancestry—What the Spaniards did to the Indians—A Cuban on the Cubans—Why the islanders do not indulge in fire-water—Their temperance and honesty—Common people kind and courteous—Where blood is thicker than water—The commercial instinct of the Spaniards—Not hospitably inclined—Hard-headed and hard-hearted—An Asturian custom—The Asturians in Cuba—Upper classes cold and calculating—The author entertained in a *bohio*—An erstwhile revolutionist—How the money sharks are depriving the patriots of their pensions—Political agitation—Don Tomas and General Maximo Gomez—Cuba's greatest Cuban not a native—Brief biography of President Palma—The Cuban not incurably lazy—But he will not change his *costumbres*—He plows with a stick and tortures his oxen—The Spanish-American innately cruel—An encounter with some natives—The *señorita* and her cigarette—Something about the *Cubana*—Society, schools, and churches—The feeling of security in Cuba—Contrasted with Mexico—Brigands, policemen, and rural guards—Few locks on doors of country houses—Bull-fights banished and cock-fights “on the sly,” only.

**T**HE subject for vivisection in this chapter is the Cuban. Perhaps I used the term vivisection inadvertently, for that implies the cutting up of something *alive*, when there are people who declare that the Cuban does not come under that category. He has practically been dead a long time, they say, but his friends have forgotten to bury him. That is a dis-

torted view, however, due to prejudice, putting which aside, I say, the Cuban is still very much alive—for a corpse.

The first one of my acquaintance I met nearly a quarter of a century ago, and I can picture him yet, as he appeared to my astonished vision clad in flowing *pantalones*—which are a sort of a cross between “pants,” trousers, and a petticoat—a shirt once white, but at that time the color of his native soil, and worn outside his nether garments, the latter held up by a leather belt, into which was thrust a machete, or Spanish cutlass.

His feet, otherwise bare, were stuck into Moorish *alpargatas*, or hempen sandals, which were held in place by a thong between the big toe and the one next to it on each foot. On his head was a tattered *sombrero*, and in his mouth the inevitable and deadly cigarette. That is, deadly to anybody save Cubans or Mexicans; but they are “proof.”

Nearly a quarter-century elapsed, as intimated, between my first visit to Cuba and my last; but this last time I saw the same old Cuban, puffing the same sort of cigarette, and wearing, apparently, that same old shirt. Now, I do not mean to say that the Cuban never dons a clean *camisa*, as he calls it; for I have seen it white and shining, starched as stiff as a board, and standing out all round him like the old-fashioned crinoline our mothers used to wear. But—and it seems a curious circumstance—the every-day apparel of the *Cubano*, especially of the *paisano*, or countryman, though perhaps originally white, is generally dirt color.

I never ventured to inquire why this was thus, but have drawn the conclusion from my own inner consciousness—as the Dutchman drew the elephant—that it

came from his many years of fighting the Spaniards. That is, like certain birds and four-footed animals, which change their feathers or fur from brown in the summer to white in the winter, and vice versa, he has instinctively adopted the dirt-color arrangement as a sort of "protective coloration" scheme. Being then of "the earth earthy," he was rendered less conspicuous to the Spaniard in war-time; and now that peace reigns in Cuba, he either cannot, or cares not to, get rid of the habit.

Perhaps he doesn't want to; for in a land where the soil is mostly a red and tenacious clay, which stains everything with which it comes in contact, the incentives to cleanliness are not overwhelmingly abundant. We will give the Cuban the benefit of the doubt, and admit that while the average *paisano* might appear cleaner than he is, and assuredly can't look dirtier, it may be altogether the fault of the climate—as Bidy the cook declared when she burned the steak.

As to the ancestry of the *Cubano*, let me remark that he is a composite reproduction of Spaniard, Indian, and African, with a complexion depending upon the racial predominance of white, red, or black man amongst his progenitors. There are still white men in Cuba, and there are also many black men, with every gradation between them; there are no longer any red, or copper-colored individuals, known as Indians. This comes from a cheerful habit the Spaniards of the sixteenth century had, of trying their swords on the craniums of the Indians almost every morning before breakfast. Originally there were several hundred aborigines in Cuba; but when the Spaniards got through with them there were not enough to populate a vacant lot,



“ Upon these Lambes so meek, so qualified and endued of their Maker,” (wrote Las Casas, according to “ Purchas his Pilgrims,” published 1625) “ entered the Spaniards, as Wolves, as Lyons, as Tygers, most cruel, of long time famished, and did naught else than tear them in pieces, kill them, martyr them, and torment them, by strange sort of cruelties neither seen nor read, nor heard of the like; so far forth that of above three millions of Souls that were in the isle of Hispaniola—and that we have seen—there are not now above two hundred Natives of the Country left. . . .

“ The cause why the Spanish have destroyed such an infinite number of Souls hath been only their desire to get Gold and to enrich themselves in a short time; or, to say in a word, their Avarice and Ambition. And by this means have died so many Millions, without Faith and without Sacrament.

“ Further note here, that in whatever Part of the Indies the Spanish have come, they have enormously exercised against the Indians, these innocent Peoples, the cruelties aforesaid, and invented day by day new Torments, huger and monstrouser; wherefore God also gave them over to fall headlong down with a more extream Downfall, into a reprobate sense.”

What the Spaniards did in Hispaniola, or Santo Domingo, they also did in Cuba, with the result as stated above. The Indians are gone; Spanish excesses have been restrained; but Spanish character is the same as it was three hundred years ago.

“ The Cuban,” says a native writer, “ is a descendant of the Spanish colonist that came to the island with Columbus, and of the female Indians that were in Cuba when discovered. The negro and mulatto born in the island

is also called Cuban, but for the mere fact of being born here; the mulatto is a mixture of the white man and the negress. So the real Cuban is a descendant of the Spanish colonist and the female Indian."

It is well to be accurately informed at the outset; but we will extend the term, Cuban, to include all residents of the island, whether boasting sanguineous connection (on the female side) with the long-extinct aborigines, or derived by direct importation from Spain, the "mother country" of both Don and donkey.

The aim of this roundabout ramble into the field of history is to show how the Cuban came by his vices and his virtues—such as he has. The aboriginal inhabitants were gentle and refined—for savages—and very abstemious. Strange to say, the Spaniards were also abstemious, so far as abstention from fire-water is concerned; but the Spaniard of history has established a record for indulgence in carnal vices second to none other in the world. These he indulged at the expense of, first, the Indians, then the Negroes, then the native Cubans of whatever complexion.

Hence, racially speaking, the Cuban comes naturally enough by his instincts of cruelty; but through inheritance from neither one race nor the other is he inclined to indulge in strong drink.

Perhaps the noteworthy lack of crime in the island is owing to the temperance of the islanders. In a local guide to Havana, written and published by a native, I read: "The Cuban is not given to the strong drinks. It is very seldom that a drunk man is seen in Havana"; and I may add, or anywhere else, as to that matter. I have been in every one of the six provinces of Cuba, beginning at Pinar del Rio and ending at Santiago,

reversing my journey as far as Camagüey and Nuevitas, and have yet to see a Cuban under the influence of liquor. I may have seen some drunken men on previous visits; but have no recollection of the fact.

It may have been owing to their "capacity," for most assuredly the Cubans do imbibe largely of light wines, chiefly claret of the Spanish variety; or it may have been because the kind of liquor they drink does not readily intoxicate. One might, in fact, drink a bucketful of the *vino corriente*, the *vin ordinaire* imported from Spain, without getting even "half-seas over." It is on every table of the Spanish restaurants, and is almost as free as water; but, whether it be owing to the kind of liquor the Cuban is prone to imbibe, or to his superior "capacity," the fact remains that he rarely gets drunk.

Neither is the native, so far as I have been able to observe, any more given to dishonesty than to drunkenness. With the sole exception of the cabmen (who are generally considered as an exempt class all over the world), the Cubans practice few if any of those despicable tricks by which the traveler is forced to give up his change, loose and otherwise. Make a bargain with any of them (cabmen and drivers excepted), and they will generally stick to the agreement; or if they back out, will do so from some motive other than pecuniary.

It is remarkable that, operating upon such diverse elements as the Indian races of America and the imported Africans, the Spaniards of the old days should have evolved a mixed people more or less homogeneous. The Spanish characteristics have been ineffaceably stamped upon these people, and it is quite natural that the natives should look toward them, rather than toward the Anglo-Saxons from the States.

“Blood is thicker than water” holds good here, and this is why, after having suffered so terribly from Spanish atrocities, the Cubans not only tolerate the Spaniards, but hug them to their hearts. The Spaniards still control all the great business affairs of the country; the streets of the capital are full of Catalan and Asturian draymen, and the cafés of Andalusian waiters. It must be that the Cuban character is long-suffering, if not pusillanimous, when Cubans allow themselves to be overridden (as they are) by the insolent Spaniards. The latter have the business faculty developed to an extraordinary degree, while the Cubans in general do not possess it at all. As bull-fights are now banished the island and cock-fights prohibited and indulged in only “on the sly,” the bloodthirsty instincts of the Spaniards are now turned into another channel. They are still after their pound of flesh, and if blood flows incidentally to the getting of it, so much the more to their liking. The Spaniards in America always were, and probably always will be, keen in the pursuit of the “almighty dollar.” After they had sucked, vampire-like, the last drop of blood from aboriginal veins, they turned to exploiting the native resources of the regions they happened to be in, and only as a very last resort took up with agriculture—the raising of sugar-cane and tobacco.

At present the Spaniards are commercially supreme in Cuba, for while you may “scratch a Turk and find a Tartar,” you cannot scratch a Cuban in commerce without finding a Spanish Creole beneath the epidermis. These Spaniards in Cuba, regarded from an Anglo-Saxon view-point, are not by any means hospitably inclined. Most of them are of Asturian descent, and



you know the Asturian custom when a male child is born: to crack it over the head with a plate. If the plate is broken the child is considered the right sort to rear; but if it does not break, and the youngster's skull is cracked instead, it is held not to be worth the cost of rearing. So the hard-headed ones survive, and many of them come to Cuba, where they engage in business, to the exclusion of the real owners of the island.

It is significant of the strength of the Asturians in Cuba that there is a single society in Havana containing more than 14,000 members. It owns its clubhouse in the capital, maintains a hospital and a magnificent sanatorium in the suburbs, insures the lives of its members for a small annual fee, and is altogether one of the wealthiest societies of its kind in the world.

Respecting my remark, that the lack of the hospitable trait is apparent at a glance, I recall some experiences of my own, in connection with my mission to this island in 1891-92, to invite Cuba to participate in the Exposition of 1893. It was the chief part of my mission to secure the appointment of a local commission by the captain general, for the purpose of collecting and arranging the various exhibits of the island. Four weeks passed before this was accomplished, but when the captain general had his list published it was seen that he had included nearly every man of importance in every province. There were thirty-five men in this local junta, nearly every man entitled to be called "*excelentísimo*" including two real marquises, bearing the historic titles of Balboa and Duquesne.

There were several of the great cigar manufacturers, who produced some famous brands; yet I have no recollection of having been offered a single cigar. More

than this, though I was for a time their coadjutor, officially accredited to their Government, and in a sense their guest, not one of those Spaniards seemed to have entertained the notion that it would be a graceful act to dine me or wine me. They appeared to have exhausted their hospitalities when they had assured me that their houses and all they contained were mine; yet all the time in desperate fear that I might take them at their word.

Letters of introduction? Yes, barrels of them, so to speak; but, when you have once heard the money-seeking Spaniard ask of you, in a cold and calculating voice, on the presentation of such a letter, "Well, what do you want?" you are not in eager haste to present another.

In pleasing contrast to my receptions by the "upper classes" in Cuba, as well as in Spain and Mexico, I place my invariable experiences with the poorer people. It may be the universally leveling and sweetening effect of dire poverty, continued through generations, as in Spain; or it may be that where the wants are fewest and the aim is humblest, the visitor is not regarded as an object of exploitation.

In one of my rambles I came across the palm-leaf bohio of Señor Don Valentini Betancourt, snuggled securely beneath the shade of a great mahogany tree. I had taken a long walk in the woods, and the clearing in which stood the bohio of Señor Betancourt was separated from the last one by more than two miles. The forest was dense, the trail obscure, the hour late, and quite naturally I stopped at the hut for information, which was cheerfully given.

Señor Betancourt was clad in a ragged shirt, worn outside, extremely dirty, as well as expansive *pantalones*,

and his bare feet were thrust into, or rather, perched upon rope-soled "alpargatas," kept in place by thongs between his toes. A shapeless sombrero topped Señor Betancourt's frowsy locks and completed his attire; though mention is due to the big machete hanging at his side like a rude sword, and, of course, the ever present cigarette between his lips.

The roof of the bohio was of palm thatch, the floor was of native mud, and skating across the latter were numerous ducks and hens, which evidently roosted with the family, at night, in the adjoining room, where the bamboo bed was raised about a foot from the floor. There was only one bed visible; but several hammocks swung from the rafters, and the roof was otherwise adorned with strips of pork and *tasajo*, or dried beef, onions, bananas, and plantains, among which hung a hoop of *bejuco* or native vine, containing a chattering parrot.

Judging from their attitude of smiling expectancy, the family were penetrated with extreme admiration of their chance guest, and were anxious to do him every honor possible. They were not inquisitive, yet they contrived to convey to the stranger a consuming interest in his far-distant family, and expressed the hope that next time he honored them with a visit he would bring his wife and babies with him.

Señor Betancourt admitted that he had been a rabid revolutionist during the war, and that he had hidden out in those very woods around his dwelling for many a long and weary month. It wasn't so bad, he said, for the Spaniards rarely found him out, and when they did all he had to do was to "cut and run for it." His chief concern was for his family, which sometimes shared his

hiding-places and sometimes ventured home to the hut and garden. He had no very poignant grief to express over the impossibility of doing any work, during the days of the revolutionary period; and in fact seemed to regard the blessings of freedom as of somewhat doubtful value, won and preserved as they were by constant toil.

Toil and Señor Betancourt evidently had had a falling out, long since; but he had no grievance against the world. Quite the contrary, he believed it was a very good sort of world, now that the Spaniards were suppressed and one could do as he pleased. He would like to be allowed to carry a gun; but as the license cost \$15, and there was not much to shoot, after all, it was just as well, perhaps. He hoped to get his pension money soon, and in point of fact had, like too many others of his countrymen, already hypothecated it to the "money sharks" for about 25 per cent. of its full value.

"But what could you?" he asked with a shrug of his shoulders. "We have waited for years for that pension, and 25 per cent. is better than nothing."

"One hundred per cent. is better still," I suggested.

"Yes, perhaps; but think of the long time to wait, Señor! Perhaps a year, and we may all be dead in that time! *Now* is better than by and by, especially when it is to have money to spend!"

The Oh-be-joyful Present was vastly more to him than the doubtful Future, even with a golden spoon in its mouth.

No, the Cuban has not changed one whit since we first became acquainted, away back in the "eighties." The waves of the American invasion may have rolled over him, may have tumbled him about in the surf, and knocked him off his feet; but he smilingly emerged,



relighted his temporarily extinguished cigarette, and kept on his humble way.

At least, so it appears to me, for he still pursues his serene though aimless career, apparently unconcerned whether General Maximo, "Don Tomas," or some unknown American, occupies the position of supreme power. There have been agitations, "political upheavals," and *gritos*, for this, that, and the other aspirant for political honors; but at heart the average Cuban remains unchanged.

The heroes of his heart are the aforementioned "Don Tomas" and General Maximo Gomez, the "Washington of Cuba," who lives in a modest house on an obscure street near the Prado in Havana. It may seem a contradiction of terms, but the greatest Cuban is not a native of Cuba, having been born in Santo Domingo. It was owing, I think, to my acquaintance with that island, that the old hero gave me a most cordial reception, when I called on him at his house. Although I went to him a stranger, we soon became well acquainted, and before I left he voluntarily offered, and wrote for me, a letter of introduction to the governor of Puerto Principe, which was the means of another most agreeable conversation on Cuban topics with one thoroughly acquainted with the island and the events of the war.

"Don Tomas," as perhaps everybody knows, is President Tomas Estrada Palma, inaugurated in May, 1902, who was born in the little town of Bayamo, Santiago province, in 1835. Although his birthplace is an isolated spot, his father, who was a wealthy planter, educated him for the bar and provided for him well. But when he was thirty-three years old he joined the insurgents at the beginning of the Ten Years' war. He rose to

the rank of general and afterward filled the presidential chair of the insurrectionist provisional government.

Then his family estates were confiscated, his mother was killed by Spanish troops, and in 1877 he was himself captured and taken to Spain. There he was kept for nearly two years in prison, refusing persistently to take the oath of allegiance to Spain to save his estates, and when he was released he vowed he would never return to Cuba until she had achieved her independence. In pursuance of this vow he went to Honduras, where he fell in love with and married the daughter of the president of that republic and was made postmaster general.

After residing in Honduras a while he went to the United States, settling at Central Valley, N. Y., where he opened a school for boys and thus gained a livelihood. His life in the United States was an open book to all, and especially well known, of course, is his career as the head of the Cuban junta, with headquarters in the city of New York.

Seeing the innumerable company of Cubans loafing about their "shacks" of straw and palm leaves everywhere so numerous in the country districts, and noting their apparently insatiable desire to do nothing all day, and do it thoroughly, foreign visitors have concluded that the Cuban is incurably lazy. It is an obvious conclusion, in fact, and I was surprised to be told by the superintendent of a large colonization scheme that Cuban labor as he found it was not only regular, but reliable. He had more than a hundred men at work, clearing land and planting orange trees, engaged all day and every day, from daylight till dark (with two hours' suspension of labor in the heat of the day), and had no cause for complaint.

The men are faithful, willing, and in their way industrious, their faults being those of an ignorant, simple-minded people, given somewhat to superstition and holding in reverence local and racial traditions. They still prefer the machete to the bush-scythe and grass-hook, for it is a universal implement as well as weapon.

In this respect the Cuban is unchanged; it is doubtful if he ever will change. He will spread out his hands and shrug his shoulders (rolling and lighting another cigarette the while) when shown the superior tools of the foreigners; he may make sporadic attempts to adopt them, but almost invariably will fall back upon his primitive implement of the time before the flood. His ancestors always used those implements; they are good enough for anybody. For the Cuban has a great reverence for his ancestors. "*Es costumbre*"—it is the way of our people—is his fetish, which he worships absolutely. Now it is, and always has been, *costumbre* to yoke the oxen by the horns, and to plow the land with a crooked stick. Of course, it is very painful to witness the apparent suffering of the dumb beasts, rigidly fastened to the tongue of a cart, every jolt of which twists their heads about and jars their nervous system.

Efforts have been made to induce the Cubans to change this *costumbre*, but without avail. When the great Cuban railway was in process of construction, orders were issued for the adoption of yokes, in certain sections, which orders were at first sullenly obeyed, then in effect ignored. When the inspectors came around the oxen were found toiling ineffectually in the yokes, or else turned out to pasture with galled necks and shoulders. It was not long before the order was revoked, and now it would be difficult to discover a team of oxen yoked up in the fashion so thor-

oughly despised by the natives. It seems still a mooted question, indeed, whether the oxen can do more work yoked in the American or the Cuban style.

As to the feelings of the beasts themselves, the Cubans never felt impelled to inquire, until the inexplicable American raised the question. It seemed, in fact, absurd, if not insane, to inquire what the dumb beast felt. Dumb beasts were created, the Cubans hold, to work for man, and are entitled to no consideration whatever. It may not be true, as some have stated, that the broncho ceases to buck and the mule to kick, in Spanish-American countries; but at all events the bucking broncho and the kicking mule are exceedingly rare in these regions. The Spanish-American treats his dumb animals cruelly, with hardly any exception; but the result is that they are thoroughly convinced that he is their master, and rarely rebel.

While cruelty seems to be ineradicable, and the Spanish-Americans, including the Cubans, dote on cock fights, bull fights, and other debasing sports, there is a strain of innate courtesy withal. I have experienced their kindness and courtesy on occasions, and always found them un-failing. Above all else, the Cuban is good-hearted. I find him the same in this respect as in the olden days. One might think that the vagaries of the American soldier and sailor, especially when out on a spree, and their well-known disregard of the social amenities on such an occasion, would have tended to sour the Cuban disposition; but it seems to be as sweet and simple as ever.

I once rode from Guanajay to Mariel in a dilapidated *coché* of the ancient type, and in company with three natives of the island. Two were men, each man clad in mud-stained shirt and pantaloons, the former worn on the



outside, and their unstockinged feet thrust into Moorish sandals.

The third native was a woman, and between us all we filled the *coché* nigh to overflowing. Soon after we started the rain came down in torrents and we were obliged to resort to every sort of expedient to prevent getting drenched. Though thinly clad in cotton garments, my two male companions ran the risk of a wetting in order to give me the best and driest seat, and perceiving that the gloom of the occasion seemed to have a depressing effect upon my spirits, exerted themselves to divert me.

All were smoking, of course, and when the woman handed me, first a cigarette, and then a light, I was fain to join them in the trivial pastime. As the clouds of smoke rolled up, the sympathetic Cuban nature showed itself in inquiries as to my family, and as to whether I was very lonely so far removed from home and friends. They entered into my description of life in the States with infinite zest, and were profuse in their expressions of admiration for America and the Americans. The señorita told me vivaciously, between puffs, that she was a *soltera*—a spinster—and though she owned in her own right a valuable tract of land, she had no home of her own, but resided with married sisters.

This reference to the fair sex reminds me that while I have said a great deal about the *Cubano*, or male Cuban, I have almost entirely neglected the *Cubana*, or the female of the family. That is because I have been speaking of the Cubans generically—as a whole, and not with respect to differentiating them sexually. As the whole, of course, embraces a part, what has been said respecting the *Cubano* refers as well, allowing for sex, to the *Cubana*.

That there is a fair sex in Cuba goes without the saying; but whether she appear attractive, collectively and individually, depends upon the taste and temperament of the observer. When, as a younger man, I visited Havana, Santiago, etc., I was much impressed, I can recall, by the flashing black eyes, the graceful carriage, and the coquettish manners of the Cuban *señoritas*. But they are merely the Spanish damsels transplanted; and it may be said of them as of the society and home life in the city, that having seen them in Spain you have nothing more to add; except that the same remarks apply to the *señoras*, who are the *señoritas* after they are married.

Society, schools, and churches illustrate the condition of the people and identify them with the dominant race or nationality. The society is Spanish; the schools are numerous and modeled after those of the United States—thanks to our self-sacrificing educators—and the religion of the masses is Roman Catholic, some of the churches, notably in Havana, Santiago, and Puerto Principe, comparing favorably, from an architectural standpoint, with their prototypes in Europe; though not so large nor so old as the finest in Spain.

One of the things that impresses the visitor to Cuba, if he remain long and travel extensively, is the feeling of absolute security that prevails throughout the island. Those who have traveled in some of the "doubtful" countries will know what is meant when I say that there is something assuring in the very atmosphere. In Mexico, for example, say twenty years ago or so, the air was vibrant with a sense of insecurity, and a large revolver—the bigger the better—was very comforting, nestled snugly against one's hip or thrust into a belt.

In certain districts of that country it was chiefly the

revolver, visibly and largely in evidence, that kept trouble away from the foreigner, before resolute "Don Porfirio" throttled brigandage and brought the train and highway robbers to terms. We know what those terms were: his own, enforced by fearless and almost omnipresent "rurales," who stood the highwaymen up against a wall or a bank, and put bullets into them until there was no occasion for any more.

By methods not so drastic, perhaps, nor on so extensive a scale as were pursued in Mexico by President Diaz, the Cuban authorities have finally rid their land of banditti. The last real brigands avowedly of the genuine stamp, were garroted in Santiago, while I was there, and since then the "rurales" have held what they themselves confess are veritable sinecures.

## VI

### COLONISTS AND CAPITAL IN CUBA

The American colonist becoming ubiquitous—Belongs to a superior class—What Cuba has to offer him—What the colonizers offer—Vast tracts of fertile soil, perfect climate; beyond the reach of Jack Frost—Interior of the island opened to settlement by the Cuba Railway—Everything on earth may be raised here—A market for everything in the United States—How a home may be established—The best section to locate in—Capital's favorites: sugar and tobacco; the humble colonist's tropical fruits and "garden truck"—Isle of Pines, La Gloria, Holguin, and Ceballos—The elemental requirements for getting a living—Rules for good health—Endemic diseases and insect pests—The maja or great Cuban boa constrictor—A description of the Isle of Pines—A natural health resort—Its girdle of treasure-galleons—Haunts of the old-time buccaneers, where a great treasure is buried in the sea.

**T**HE American colonist in Cuba, if not exactly ubiquitous, is very much in evidence. Every one of the six provinces has its colony, and some of the provinces have several settlements, composed largely of restless individuals from the States who have gone to Cuba hoping to better their condition. Whatever may be their fortune, they cannot be considered other than valuable acquisitions, since most of them have money, many have brawn and energy, and some of them have all three combined.

Taken all in all, the class of Americans that has gone to Cuba, hoping to find there the promised land of its desires,



is a superior one, and would find a welcome anywhere. This is taking into account the people who have gone there to settle, to build homes, and if possible acquire fortunes, and leaving out of the reckoning those who are exploiting Cuba for merely speculative purposes. Not that these last may not, also, be superior persons; but they have not the vital interest in the outcome which the others possess.

Viewed at long range, say from New York, Boston, or Chicago, the possibilities, the vast opportunities, of the Pearl of the Antilles, loom larger and grander than close at hand, perhaps. It is the perspective, of course, that is to blame for the glowing accounts of Cuba which one reads in real-estate, colonizing, and mining prospectuses; the enchantment distance lends, which paints the picture in such brilliant hues. Distance requires a telescope, and no telescope is good unless it magnifies!

But, taking a strictly impersonal and unbiased view of Cuba and its colonists, making every allowance for the enthusiasm of capitalists who have discovered a new country to exploit, while at the same time sympathizing with the settlers who may not find it all their fancy painted it—or rather, the “other fellow’s” fancy—let us inquire into the status of the people who have gone down to possess the land.

First, however, as to the island itself: Is it really worth the while? As to that, it is only necessary to state that we have, in Cuba, an island large enough, almost, to be dignified with the name of country, more than 800 miles in length, 45,000 square miles in area, with little more than ten per cent. of its soil under cultivation, and with more than a million acres of forest lands. Lying, as it does, below the frost-line, with absolute exemption from the

dangers attendant upon the cultivation of tropical fruits, as in Florida and California, it has attracted the attention of all those engaged in that occupation.

It has a vast body of fertile soil, accumulated by the deposition of humus through uncounted centuries, which is almost if not quite inexhaustible. Above all, it has a climate the like of which cannot be found north of the island itself. Its climatic advantages alone would outweigh whatever disadvantages it possesses; but these latter are almost *nil*, or at the most factitious—the result of artificial conditions. Until within a few years prohibited to the foreigner, the interior of the island, with its beautiful valleys, plains, and forest-covered hillslopes, has been unexploited, and is yet to a great extent, in certain sections, unsurveyed.

It has been estimated that by the construction of the great Cuba Railway, alone, a territory including 70 per cent. of the island's area, with less than 40 per cent. of its population, was thrown open, or made available more or less remotely, to settlement. With scores of deep-water harbors, and with a railway system connecting the eastern and western provinces, its offshoots to both coasts constantly increasing in number, access is afforded to every important point in the island.

As to Cuba's strategic position, commanding the Gulf of Mexico, the Caribbean, and almost in touch with all other islands of the Greater Antilles, we have nothing to do; but that position counts in an enumeration of its advantages. These advantages, then, are strategic, climatic, and cultural. As the largest of the West-Indian islands, Cuba holds a dominating position, and should a West-Indian Confederation ever be formed she would be, as she has often been styled, "Queen of the Antilles."

It is no exaggeration to say that every agricultural product on earth can be raised in some portion or other of the island, from strawberries and potatoes in the hill and mountain regions, to cocoanuts, coffee, bananas, and pineapples, in the tropical littoral. Finally, all these products are in such demand that they find a ready sale in the United States and such parts of Europe as can be reached without too long a sea-voyage. Cuba is within three days of New York, and as between California and the Atlantic seaboard the distance is less, while the water-borne freightage is about one-fourth what it is by rail from the Pacific coast, with our great metropolis as the objective. Tropical products, at present, and particularly citrus fruits, are discriminated against by duties imposed in favor of Florida and California, which amount to about the added cost of freight from the latter State across the continent.

These are some of the facts that have combined to make the island of Cuba seem alluring to the pent-up dwellers in the frozen North in winter time. Perpetual summer (which, by the way, is a thing one can get too much of in a very little while) seems more attractive than six long months of winter; and the prospect of raising one's own tropical fruits, out of doors and without a greenhouse, is seductive, to say the least.

So the colonist went to Cuba, led thither, perhaps, by the flowery descriptions of the colonizer and (in the majority of cases, it is likely) kept there by a lack of the wherewithal to return, whether satisfied with the country or not. I am speaking of the average colonizer, of course, the one with small capital, who depends mainly on his muscles for support. He will naturally turn to small fruits, and perhaps to "garden truck," for a living, the while with his own hands, perhaps, constructing a house

in which to dwell. He has, probably, paid for a few acres, either wholly or in part, and has been guided in his choice by the advice of someone who knew as little about the subject as he himself. At all events, he is there, a stranger in a strange land, amid surroundings altogether new and novel, with climatic and elemental forces to combat of which he has but the faintest conception. Planting begins at the opening of the rainy season, or in the spring months. If the colonist settle in Havana province, or in Pinar del Rio, he will be appalled by the generally forlorn appearance of the natives, clad in cotton garments splashed with clay-streaks, sanguineous in hue and repulsive in appearance. The women, even, slatternly dressed, and most of them carrying babes in their arms, or leading children by the hand, are clay-bedaubed, while the native bohios, the rude huts of palm slabs and thatch, are painted with Nature's pigment two or three feet from the ground, the mud-stains indicating the high-water marks of the rainy season. Country travel is none too good in the season of sunshine, but as soon as the rains commence it is simply awful, for the roads are covered with a tenacious clay almost as adherent as that famous plaster, which "the more you tried to pull it off, the more it stuck the faster."

Compelled to pull his weary feet out of a succession of clay-pits, as he wallows through his garden setting out his plants or putting in seed, his shoes increasing in size and weight until they are so large and heavy he can hardly lift them, the Colonist will probably be inclined to murmur. And especially will his thoughts take a pessimistic turn when the sun comes out and bakes the clay to the hardness of a pottery shard, and pinches the life out of whatever tender seedling it gets within its grip!



There are good soils in the Havana province, notably in and about Guines and the southern branches of the United Railways, and this section is a good one for garden stuff and the smaller fruits that are most perishable. But it will not do to depend upon the Havana market, as John Chinaman supplies that almost exclusively; and he, as everybody knows, can beat the world at raising "truck," and all the world over, at that. Though the soils of this province are not so good as some farther east, here and in Matanzas province being generally thin and stony, the contiguity to the chief shipping port of the island, with frequent steamers for the northern cities, is a great consideration.

Although some American capital has been invested in the Vuelta Abajo region of Pinar del Rio province, and adjacent to the fine natural port of Bahia Honda, it will probably not be the *vegas* where the famous tobacco is cultivated that will engage the attention of the colonist with small means; nor the great central section in the Santa Clara province, with its vaster fields of sugar-cane. Tobacco, as the statistics show, is grown on the relatively insignificant amount of 100,000 acres, out of Cuba's grand total of 28,000,000; but it has been the means of enriching a great many. Its cultivation, however, requires great care and skill, acquired only by long practice and traditional inheritance by natives from natives, so it will not do at all for the colonist. Neither should he think of sugar-cane, for the great *ingenios* are being gobbled up by corporate capital aggregating in the millions. The immense and world-renowned sugar estates of the central region and the north shores of Santiago province, mainly, appear to occupy a large proportion of Cuba's acreage, but in reality cover only about one-sixtieth of the total area.

Pinar del Rio, the western province of Cuba, will not be a favorite with the colonist of slender resources, because of its poor soil in the main, which is intolerably dusty in the dry season, and stick-in-the-muddy in the wet. The same, with some qualifications, may be said of Havana province, and to some extent of Matanzas. Some pushing Americans thought they had secured a title to the earthly paradise when they invested a million or so in the Isle of Pines. About ten per cent. of its 1200 square miles is classified as fertile, and this is found in detached vales amongst the hills; a large proportion being sterile upland and "*ciénega*," which is the Spanish for swamp, being used for that word in the prospectus in which the "immeasurable fertility" of the island is set forth. Only about one per cent. of the Isle of Pines was formerly cultivated, but since the influx of the Americans with their colony, the area has been greatly increased. The cultivable land remains the same, however, and the incoming agriculturists are wrestling with the problem: How to get a living from the soil, which time alone can solve.

The climate of the Isle of Pines is nearly perfect, and it has the finest mineral springs in the world; but it lies sixty miles to the south of Havana, can be reached only by steamers drawing less than eight feet of water, and though it can raise anything that "grows on top of earth," all products must be first taken to Batabano, there transshipped, rail to Havana, with another transshipment to port of destination. All this, with the monopoly across the Gulf of Batabano, means probably the difference to the grower between profit and loss.

With many things in his favor, including direct transportation to northern ports, even the advantageously-

situated colonist on the north coast of Cuba will have to face a similar situation: How to exist while the products of the soil are coming along. An obstinate and apparently invincible colony on the north coast is that of La Gloria, about thirty miles from the port of Nuevitas, which has succeeded, in spite of many discouragements, in raising almost everything under the sun. But La Gloria is without rail or direct water communication with the outside world, and the sources of its existence are as mysterious as the impelling reason for locating it where it is.

A colony situated within reach of civilization is Las Minas, on the railroad between Puerto Principe and Nuevitas, and this appears to be flourishing. The same may be said of the Holguin colony, and the Ceballos; though the latter, about ten miles from Ciego de Avila on the Cuba railway, is rather a coöperative concern than a colony, and is most skillfully managed.

Without committing myself to an opinion as to the relative merits of these settlements, or of the several others I have seen, I may say that all show a determination to hang on and succeed if possible. They have proved at least two things: that Americans can live and thrive in Cuba, and that the island has in it the makings of many a fortune. In all my wanderings about I did not see any Americans who seemed to be ill; though I did see many very much down in the mouth. This is not saying, or even implying, that there are no endemic diseases there, for there are, but mostly of malarial or intestinal character.\*

\* "The Cuban campaign," said General Ludlow in his testimony before the war-investigation committee, "was a race between the physical vigor of the men and the Cuban malarial fever that lay in wait for them!"

My advice would be: Avoid a chill, and avoid bad water. Rise early, always fortifying yourself with a cup of coffee before going out in the morning, work as much in the shade as possible, lie up at noontime for at least a couple of hours (take the *siesta*, which all the natives indulge in), and conform as much as you can to the life the natives lead. These rules I myself have followed during several years in the West Indies, and so can recommend them. I have had fevers, and hard ones; in fact, contracted a mild case of malaria on my last trip down; but they were acquired by exposure and getting wet.

While the elemental requirements for getting a living by agriculture all exist in Cuba, it does not follow that everybody can succeed even in making both ends meet. The fate of the pioneer—everybody knows what that is!

The monotony of country life in Cuba has hardly a palliative for one who comes from what he so fondly recurs to in his thoughts as "God's Country." He is likely to get down-hearted and to mope about the "shack," instead of looking about for the really interesting things to be seen outdoors on every side. If he sees a centipede, a scorpion, or tarantula—and they are all there, and liable to make for his "happy home" when the rains come down, preferring a dry thatch to a wet hole in the ground—he may possibly draw contrasts between life in the tropics and in the North. *En passant*, I may remark that while people are sometimes bitten or stung by all three, very few fatalities occur; and as for snakes, there is nothing worse than the big boa, locally known as the *maja*, which, though sometimes attaining a length of sixteen feet, is entirely harmless to human beings. But it likes fowl and dotes on chickens, so has to be reckoned with, if the settlement be near a forest.







In summing up, I should say that, all things considered, a location on or near the north coast of the southeastern section of Cuba, which is two degrees to the south of Havana and has a nearly perfect climate, with rich soil, permitting of raising such purely tropical products as coffee and cacao, as well as all the citrus fruits in perfection, pineapples, etc., etc., would be preferable to any other. Immense tracts of virgin soil are yet available, and the scenery comprises some of the fairest prospects on earth.

If, only, the colonist can hold on for several years, he may be able to overcome all the obstacles at present existing and become wealthy through indomitable energy and foresight; but then again, he may not. Energy and foresight count for little as opposed to elemental and climatic forces. There is small danger from cyclones and hurricanes, in Cuba, especially in the western parts; but the perpetual strain of the climate is something which few people from the North can endure without eventually yielding the best within them.

It is well known that the American residents on the Isle of Pines have made a brave fight against the treaty by which the island was to be handed back to Cuba, basing their claims for continued protection from the United States upon their preponderance numerically, financial investments aggregating several millions of dollars, and the general well-being of an essentially American community.

One thing seems to have been overlooked by the exploiters of the Isle of Pines, and that is the vast treasure by which the island is girdled. It is a matter of record, that treasure-ships by the score have been sunk off the Isla Evangelista, as the island was known in the

ancient days of silver-laden galleons, which sometimes doubled the western end of Cuba on their voyages homeward from Mexico and Yucatan. In the year 1560 a Spanish ship went to the bottom in a tempest when off the east end of Isle of Pines, carrying down twelve tons of silver from the mines of Guanabacoa, and a vast quantity of treasure comprised in rare jewels.

The most romantic of those tales of sunken galleons pertains to a treasure-ship which was lost in the year 1679, and all on account of an Indian slave, one of the very last left alive in Cuba. He was the property of Doña Inez Escobedo, who was taking him as a present to her brother, a governor of one of the Canary islands. She also had a vast store of jewels, and there was with her a distinguished company of retired officers of the Crown, most of whom had gold and silver in bars, from the proceeds of which they intended to live in luxury in Spain.

One fine morning, when the galleon was a few miles to the southeast of the Isle of Pines, it was discovered that she had sprung a leak, and when the master of the vessel started to investigate he was met by the sound of blows, caused by the Indian slave, who with a hatchet was scuttling the ship. He warned the captain not to advance, as he himself was determined to die, and meant to carry down with him the whole ship's company.

In order to draw his fire, a black slave was thrown into the hold; but the Indian paid no attention to him, and went on with his vengeful work. Then into the hold sprang an old Spanish officer, one Señor Don José Nuñez, a *caballero* of renown, who with drawn sword advanced in the darkness against the desperate Indian. Seeing no means of escape, and having accomplished his purpose, the Indian crawled beneath a beam and drowned himself.



in the fast-deepening water, which soon gained upon the pumps to such an extent that the galleon sank with all its treasures, the passengers barely saving their lives.

Within sight of the Isle of Pines, in the calm of a summer sea, this galleon went down with all its treasure, and though many attempts have been made to recover the latter, they have not yet succeeded. To keep her company, one of the infrequent hurricanes that sometimes occur off the southwest coast of Cuba sent to Davy Jones' locker a galleon which had been captured by a buccaneer. This buccaneer was the redoubtable Bartholomew Portuguese, a crafty corsair, whose headquarters were at the island of Tortuga, off the north coast of Haiti. Prowling about the Isle of Pines, he suddenly came upon and captured a treasure-ship with half a million dollars' worth of gold and silver bars. He had hardly set the Spanish crew adrift, after cutting the throats of several, as a warning, when a hurricane sprang up that sent his ship to the bottom; and there she lies, presumably, to-day, neither ship nor treasure having been seen since that time.

## VII

### JAMAICA, QUEEN OF THE ANTILLES

Distance from Santiago to Jamaica—Port Antonio and Kingston—Blue Mountain Peak and the way to it—Valleys, streams, and ridges—The land of springs—Three zones of vegetation—All the fruits of the Tropics—No description can do justice to Nature's pictures in Jamaica—Discovered by Columbus, captured by Admiral Penn—Port Royal, ancient pirate city, and its awful end—Where the hotels are to be found—Kingston's shabby-genteel architecture and its suburbs—Roads, railways and highways, 800 miles of them—A city that wants to be clean—An island that wants to be American—Steamship lines running to Jamaica—Its situation in relation to Panama—Why Jamaica prefers Brother Jonathan to John—Her best customer and best friend—Has long been "on the fence"—A prophecy made in 1782—What Mr. Froude says anent Jamaica's future—What Mr. MacNish says—A position painful to contemplate.

**B**YOND Santiago and the south coast of Cuba we find a glorious assemblage of islands, scattered over the fair and tranquil Caribbean Sea. Two routes are open to us thence: one to Haiti, Santo Domingo, Puerto Rico, and the crescentic Caribbees, and the other to Jamaica, land of running streams and lofty mountains.

It would seem, perhaps, invidious to descant upon the scenery of any one island more than another, for in truth each has a bit of earthly paradise to show; but Jamaica is certainly one of the most attractive. It is only 172

miles from Santiago to Kingston, 90 from the nearest point on the Cuban coast to Montego Bay, and about the same distance to that thriving port on the north coast, San Antonio. And while we are mentioning distances, it may be as well to note that the last-named port is just 1400 miles from New York, from which a run of four hours by rail, or seventy miles by sea, brings one to Kingston, the emporium and capital city of Jamaica. There was a time, not long since, when Kingston absorbed all the travel and most of the traffic of the island; but things have changed since the establishment of the United Fruit Company in Jamaica, with its splendid steamers direct to Port Antonio, and its fine hotel perched above the port and growing city.

Still, the entrance to Kingston's magnificent harbor is well worth the short voyage around the east end of the island to view, especially as we pass close to ancient Port Royal, and abreast the palm-covered Palisadoes, the far-stretching sand-spits which fend off the rough waves from the southward. Entrancing mountain views we have had, ever since we sighted land, for grand Blue-Mountain Peak rises to a height of 7300 feet, the dominant pinnacle of a system which comprises several other elevations rising five and six thousand feet, with lateral ridges running to the coast on either side, north and south. Between them are valleys and streams—more than one hundred of the latter—most of which are hidden from sight; but enough revealed to evoke wonder, admiration, and astonishment in the beholder.

Like Cuba, this island still retains its original and aboriginal name, which was "Xaymaca," the land of woods and waters, island of springs; and, given a tropical climate, with abundance of water, thus supplying heat

and moisture, the great requisites for exuberant vegetation, we may not be astonished at the results. In fact, borrowing a simile from the Spanish, our vision embraces the range of three zones of vegetation when we look upon Jamaica from the sea: the *tierra caliente*, or hot zone; the *templada*, or temperate, and the *fria*, or cold region; and no mere being of human mold can do justice in a verbal description to the composite picture presented.

Imagine, if you can, the ranks and crowds of cocoa palms along the shores, the bananas, plantains, bamboos, and hosts of tropical fruit-trees, abounding in the middle zone; and try to picture the shady nooks with their gushing springs and babbling brooks, with their silver, golden, and tree-ferns, trumpet trees, ceibas, mahogany, green-heart—all precious woods, in truth; the clearings with their wealth of coffee, cacao, orange, lime, lemon, bread-fruit, mango, custard-apple, guava, cinchona, nutmeg, and pimento (with spices and “gales from Araby”); the gold-green seas of sugar-cane, the brown squares of native provision-grounds tip-tilted against the hillsides; the somber sweeps of forest, and above all, the towering peaks in space supernal, their brows adorned with cloud-wreaths woven from the rising mists.

No, no, it is impossible to do justice to Jamaica's landscape charms on paper; neither can canvas portray them adequately, for, though the forms may be imitated, not so the multi-colored vegetation, the evanescent hues of leaf and fruit, seen through the mist and sunshine mingled, as in a cloth of gold.

Let us, then, lay hold of something concrete and tangible: for example, the old pirate city that lies abeam on the tip end of the Palisadoes, to wit, Port Royal, for here we have near a century of Jamaica's history in epitome.



Its history, that is, after the island was taken by Penn and Venables, in 1655. Admiral Penn (our immortal William's *pater*) proceeded against the Spaniards by sturdy Cromwell's orders, because they had murdered English sailors and driven English ships out of the Caribbean Sea.

That was the beginning of British rule in Jamaica, two hundred and fifty years ago. The Spaniards had been in possession since 1509, Christopher Columbus having discovered the island in 1494. Their first settlement was on the north coast, in the parish of Saint Ann's, but about 1630 they founded another which they called San Jago de la Vega, over on the mainland opposite Port Royal, which is now known as Spanish Town, and is worth the trouble of a visit, being within a few miles of Kingston.

The putative founder of Sevilla, the first town, was Don Diego Columbus, son of Christopher, and to his son, Don Luis, was given the marquisate of La Vega. While on this subject, I may mention that some of the Spanish names survive in a corrupted form, as *Boca del Agua*, a beautiful stream now known as the "Bog Walk"; *Agua Alta*, the "Wag Water"; Rio Cobre; Montego, from *Manteca*, because the Spaniards tried out lard in the bay; Rio Novo, etc.

But Port Royal brings to mind the times of old, when English and French and Dutch went buccaneering, at first in quest of the common enemy, the Spaniards, and after that in search of plunder, no matter what the nationality of the people to whom it belonged. Hither came the mighty Morgan, afterwards Sir Henry, by the grace of King Charles II.; Lollonois, Mansveldt, and many another buccaneer and pirate of high as well as low degree, and the streets of gay Port Royal rang with

revelry such as suited the whims of men engaged in deeds of blood. Hand-in-hand with the pirates, the slavers, also, united to give the town an evil reputation, for one historian of Jamaica, Bryan Edwards, says that more than 600,000 were landed here between the years 1680 and 1786. But the end came, in the year 1692, when Port Royal slid off into the sea, carrying with it such as remained of "the most ungodly people on the face of the earth"; and, 'tis said, when the water is calm, one may see to-day the submerged ruins of dwellings, warehouses, forts, and churches.

In the museum of the Jamaica Institute at Kingston may be seen a bell of the church which went under with the rest; and over at Green Bay, on the opposite shore, stands (or recently stood) a tombstone to the memory of one who was thrown into the sea, on that dreadful day in June, 1692, and by a second earthquake shock thrown out again, living more than forty years thereafter.

Port Royal to-day shows few if any traces of that terrible catastrophe; at least, I saw none on my first visit there, when, as the guest of Commodore Lloyd of H. M. S. "Urgent," I lunched at headquarters ashore.\* Perhaps it was the lunch, perhaps the pirates are all dead; but I recall only the former, which was so excellent I felt that looking for the latter would be a waste of time. The Commodore had an attractive collection of tropical

\*The American Consul, Mr. Estes, and Mr. Frederick A. Ober, the Commissioner of the World's Fair to the West Indies, breakfasted on Thursday with Admiral Gherardi on board the war-ship "Philadelphia." Shortly after midday Mr. Estes and Mr. Ober proceeded by steam-launch to Port Royal and had luncheon with Commodore Lloyd.—*The Jamaica Post*, March 28, 1891.

plants, which, along with everything and everybody else at Port Royal, were watered from a spring seven miles distant across the bay, there being no local aqueous supply at the Port.

What the old buccaneers did for water, history does not inform us, except indirectly. That is, we are told that rum and wine were freer than water there, a cask of one or the other being "on tap" all the time in the streets; and woe betide the man who refused to drink at the behest of the bewhiskered buccaneers, who "set 'em up" whenever they were flush. They were always in good spirits so long as the liquor lasted; but it gave out at last, after the perfidious Morgan was knighted, for he turned upon his erstwhile comrades and sent many of them to the gallows-tree, to which he himself should have preceded them. On Gallows Point, not far away, you may see the place where they were gibbeted and the vultures picked their bones.

The defection of Sir Henry Morgan, buccaneer, cut-throat, piratical gentleman of the sea, finds its parallel in an event of modern times, to wit, the case of the East-Indian mongoose. This animal was introduced into Jamaica for the purpose of destroying the Norway rat (likewise a foreigner) and accomplished the intended purpose effectually.

But alas! it destroyed everything else that was not bigger than itself, birds as well as quadrupeds, and the last state of Jamaica was infinitely worse than the first. The birds being nearly exterminated, the insect pests multiplied exceedingly, particularly the ticks, inasmuch as it is as much as one's life is worth to take a walk in the fields or though a bit of woods. The mongoose upset the balance of Nature—and now, it is reported, Nature

is upsetting the mongoose, for the ticks are attacking and killing the very animal that caused their multiplication!

Meanwhile, we are supposed to be sailing across the land-locked harbor to Kingston, capital and chief city of Jamaica, which, with due regard to actual conditions, is vastly more attractive at a distance than close aboard. Seen across the bay, with its fringe of cocoa palms, which also besprinkle the city considerably, and with its effective background of mountains draped in tropical vegetation, Kingston presents an alluring spectacle; but when arrived at one of its wharves one no longer wonders why the early pirates took to Port Royal and its early inhabitants took to drink.

And yet, Kingston has improved wonderfully within my recollection. It is no longer the ramshackle town of Tom Cringle's time, for there were no trams then, and the hero of the immortal "Log" either had to foot it or ride on horseback, whenever out on mischief bent.

But, when we compare the Kingston of to-day with the city of day before yesterday, it is almost entitled to be classed with Havana and Santiago. For it tries to be clean, and has always been respectable. It has not had an influx of benevolent Yankees, like those who took hold of the Cuban cities, washed their faces, scrubbed their streets, and after showing them what they ought to do and how to do it, leaving behind a few million dollars with which to do it. Whatever has been done for Kingston has proceeded from her innate love of cleanliness, not from a factitious virtue which had to be dinged into her head by a sort of surgical operation! The improvements have cost money, to be sure; but the authorities nobly borrowed it on the island's credit, and that will explain how it is they have a debt of about £3,487,452,



more or less—but not much less. Seventeen million dollars in debt, with a population under 800,000, and less than 15,000 of them avowedly white, Jamaica must have harbored some “Napoleons of finance” within her borders, at some time or other. Perhaps they are there now, perhaps they are hiding in the woods; but they don’t seem to be able to draw her out of the mire into which she has fallen and appears to be hopelessly held.

Not all the borrowed money went into civic improvements, for, in Sir Henry Blake’s time, ten to fifteen years ago, much of it went for roads—for which God bless the builders! Then there is the railroad from Kingston northwest to Montego Bay, 113 miles, and northeast to Port Antonio, 75 miles, which runs part of the way through a tropical Eden, and some of the way through swamps and brush. It cost “a mint of money,” much of which went into pockets, the natives say, not emptied in Jamaica.

However, it connects Kingston, and its 45,000 population, with Montego Bay (5000) at the western terminus, passing through Spanish Town (5000), and several other towns along the way. It is a boon to the tourist, for thereby he may see the country without great effort, and revel in scenery otherwise not accessible to the traveler.

Neither should the hotels be omitted in this account of what the (other) peoples’ money went for, since they exist to-day and minister to the wants of the tourist in places which, but for the borrowed money, might never have been opened to the public. Not alone the Constant Spring near Kingston, which is a palatial and well-set structure in a cool and airy situation, but the charming little inn at Rio Cobre, Spanish Town; the one at Mon-eague, and several others in the country districts, are in

evidence. In fact, Jamaica is quite a contrast to some other islands that might be mentioned, in its possession of good roads, fine hotels, and country inns, and a hospitality that is bountiful and overflowing.

The largest of the British West Indies, it is, next to Barbados, the most thoroughly English of them all. Its 4193 square miles of territory (the island is 144 miles in length and 50 in width) is divided into three counties, all with names derived from Old England, as Surrey, Middlesex, Cornwall; as are those of its fourteen parishes, such as Hanover, Portland, Manchester, Clarendon, etc. The people are intensely loyal to King Edward and the British Government; yet with a reservation that bespeaks them possessed of at least a modicum of common-sense, when they reflect upon the contiguity of the United States and a market, as opposed to the inefficiency of the "right little, tight little island," 5000 miles away.

Until recently there was only a roundabout communication with England by way of the "Royal Mail" line of steamers; but now that American enterprise has stimulated competition, there is a direct mail line, the Elder-Dempster, which "does" the distance between Jamaica and the Mother Island in about twelve days. This is as opposed to four or five days between Jamaica and Boston, Baltimore, or Philadelphia, by steamers of the United Fruit Company, or the Hamburg-American to New York, which has taken the place of the old-time "Atlas" line.

The British have, apparently, only recently become aware that they are losing the trade, and perhaps the loyalty, of a large and fertile island, which has acquired increased importance from the building of the Panama canal. Lying right in the direct route of steamers between the Isthmus and all Atlantic ports of the United

States, and less than 550 miles distant from Colon, Jamaica, more than any other island, will feel the impetus this vast undertaking will give to all enterprises in the Caribbean Sea, of which it is nearly the exact geographical center. It may reach out and grasp, or at least take tribute from, the commerce of the Central and South American littoral—of the rich Veragua coast and Spanish Main. There is doubtless a great future for Jamaica, and perhaps Britons are beginning to perceive this, as evidenced by their increased efforts to retain its trade and maintain connection with its ports.

Love, the cynic says, is a mere matter of propinquity, and almost any man may love almost any woman (and vice versa), provided they be thrown together often enough—though not too often to dispel the illusion. This, in a word, is probably the reason why Jamaica prefers Brother Jonathan to John Bull: because he is nearer, and being also richer, is, of course, the more available as well as desirable, *parti*.

Political considerations have held her against geographical conditions. If Cromwell had not sent out that expedition under Penn and Venables, about the middle of the seventeenth century, as the outcome of which Jamaica passed from Spanish into English hands, we might now be claiming proprietorship there, as well as in Puerto Rico.

Without pausing to discuss the desirability of this prospective acquisition (though, in parenthesis, it may be said that much may be argued in its favor), let us inquire into the motive for Jamaica's behavior. In the first place, contiguity, a distance of about 1400 miles, as against 5000; five days' voyaging as opposed to twelve, and a first-class passage of \$40, rather than \$150. Then, again, even

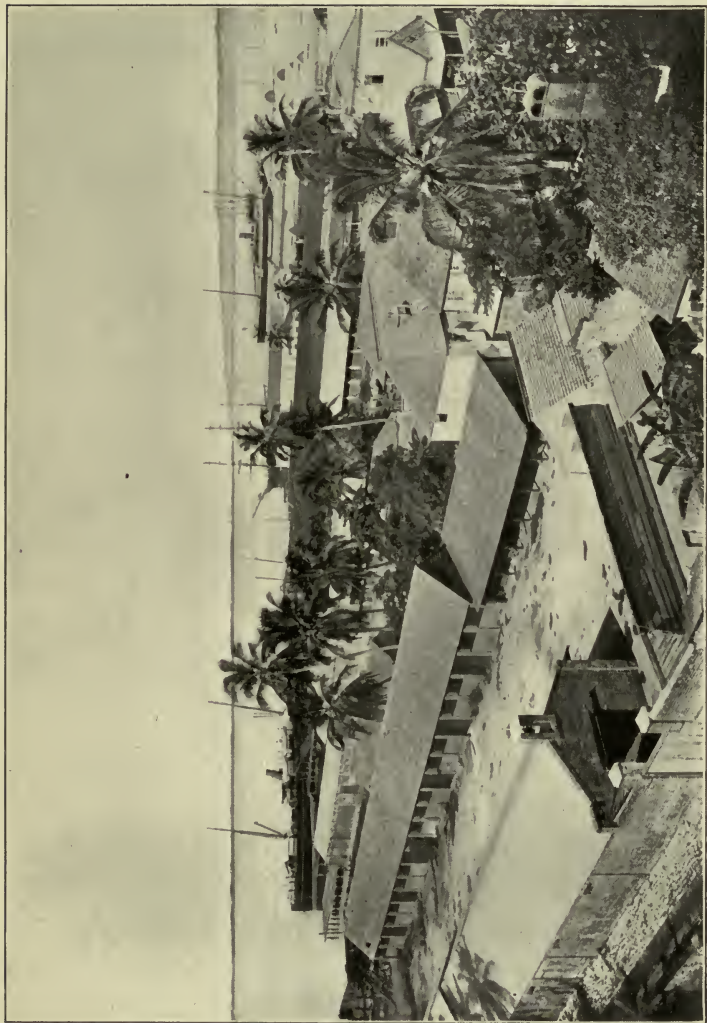
despite the distance that separates them, the English have not taken their due proportion of Jamaica's products. We are her chief customers, taking all of 60 per cent. of her sugar, rum, bananas, etc., while the United Kingdom takes less than 30 per cent.

Ungrateful Jamaica, however, instead of reciprocating, allows her political sentiments to outweigh commercial obligations, and buys more than half her manufactured goods of merchants in the "mother country." She also supports a long list of officials at salaries ranging from £6000, allowed the governor, to a beggarly £600, given to the registrar general. It is evident, then, why British officialdom is loath to let go; though not so evident why Jamaica still clings to the paternal hand.

Two weeks after Admiral Dewey's victory, which gave us control in the Philippines, the writer put forth in a Washington paper a tentative proposition for a "swap." That was probably the first suggestion of an exchange of the Philippines for the British West Indies. Since that time, however, the proposition has been considered in all seriousness, and it is not unlikely that what was intended as a suggestion merely may crystallize into an actuality.

Not to wander too far from the subject, however, and to come around to the original statement that Jamaica's love for us is no new fancy of recent birth, let me quote in support from Bryan Edwards' "History of the British Colonies in the West Indies," published in the last decade of the eighteenth century. Referring to the bill presented to the House of Commons in March, 1782, by the Right Hon. William Pitt, Chancellor of the Exchequer, "for the purpose of reviving the beneficial intercourse that existed before the late American war, between the United States and the British sugar islands," he says:





Kingston Harbor, Jamaica



“This bill, through the influence of popular prejudice and other causes, was, unfortunately, lost. Had it passed into a law it would probably have saved from the horrors of famine fifteen thousand unoffending negroes, who miserably perished, in Jamaica alone, from the sad effects of the fatal restrictive system which prevailed.

“With a chain of coast of twenty degrees of latitude, possessing the finest harbors for the purpose in the world, all lying so near to the sugar colonies and the track to Europe—with a country abounding in everything the islands have occasion for, and which they can obtain nowhere else—all these circumstances necessarily and naturally lead to a commercial intercourse between our islands and the United States! It is true, we may ruin our sugar colonies, and ourselves also, in the attempt to prevent it, but it is an experiment which God and nature have marked out as impossible to succeed.”

He continues: “I write with the freedom of history, for it is the cause of humanity that I plead.” And he might have added, “with the spirit of prophecy,” for this remarkable forecast was written more than a hundred years ago. Bryan Edwards was for many years a resident in Jamaica, and knew the island well. Since his time there have been many famous men born or resident there whose lives and works have shown that the so-called Anglo-Saxon does not deteriorate in the tropics. Jamaica, indeed, has always held first place in the cause of West Indian civilization, as evidenced not only in individual cases, but by her literary and scientific societies.

So long ago as 1775 (to instance a noteworthy act in a slave colony) a debating society in Kingston determined by a majority that “the trade to Africa for slaves is neither consistent with sound policy, the laws of nature,

nor morality." Yet Bristol and Liverpool petitioned against its restriction, says the historian, and the Earl of Dartmouth (president of the board of trade) declared: "We cannot allow the colonies to check or discourage in any degree a traffic so beneficial to the nation."

That same year, also, 1775, the Assembly of Jamaica petitioned his Majesty in favor of the Americans, in their forthcoming struggle. Their petition was disregarded, however, and in consequence of the war, as the Jamaicans had foreseen would be the case, many articles necessary in the West Indies rose to four times their usual price.

It is most interesting to note at the present time that not only has Great Britain's attitude toward her suffering colony been consistently oppressive, but that Jamaica's attitude as toward us has been constantly friendly, and in a measure prescient of that great change which shall some time bring her into closer relations with our country. That change may not come about in this century; but eventually we shall acquire, not alone Jamaica, but all her sister islands of the Caribbean Sea—those glittering gems in a chain which links us to that country for our future commercial expansion—the continent of South America.

James Anthony Froude, who was in Jamaica in 1887, has this paragraph in his "The English in the West Indies," referring to the British islands: "The Americans will not touch them politically, but they will *trade with them*; they will bring their capital and skill and knowledge among them, and make the islands more prosperous than ever they were—on one condition: they will risk nothing in such enterprises as long as the shadow hangs over them of a possible government by a black majority!"



When in Kingston, the traveler will—at least he ought to—visit the mercantile establishment of “MacNish, Limited,” founded and presided over by Mr. Thomas MacNish, a stalwart Scotchman, who has lived in the West Indies nearly forty years, acquired a competency by hard and honest labor in his business, maintained himself in health through many seasons of fever and hurricane, and (incidentally, be it mentioned), has raised a family of sixteen children of whom any man might well be proud. Mr. MacNish (who ought to know), is constantly pointing out to the Jamaicans their mistake in allying themselves, politically and commercially, with Britain, rather than with the United States.

As Mr. MacNish has, time and again, printed in the local papers of Kingston facts and figures which irrefutably maintain his position, I am betraying no confidence in publishing the substance of what may be called the “inside history” of Jamaica’s government.

“Someone,” says Mr. MacNish, “has called our Government a benevolent despotism. Benevolent humbug! We have no Government—only tax collectors! We have no citizens—only taxpayers, and the laboring classes are only economic slaves. Land laborers, 18 cents per day for men, and 12 cents a day for women, and all food stuffs and necessaries of life taxed the heaviest of any place under the Union Jack! Coolies are imported, and by contract are to get 24 cents per day. They live on rice, on which the import duty is 3 shillings per cwt., and ghee, which is 2 pence per pound. Common flour is taxed 8 shillings per barrel, etc. [See list appended.]

“Jamacia is doomed to poverty and hunger, unless the miraculous happens. Sir David Barbour, K. C. S. I., who was sent out by the British Government to report

upon the causes of Jamaica's depression, was astonished when his attention was called to the manner in which all articles, mainly food stuffs, were discriminated against by Jamaica, to the tune of 54 per cent.

"Here is the list, as it appears in the Barbour Report:

"Foodstuffs and necessaries of life which the people in Jamaica can only get at a fair living price from the United States, and the import duties on same:

	COST.	DUTY.
Flour, baking, barrel, 196 lbs.....	\$3.60	\$1.92
Flour, shop, barrel, 196 lbs.....	2.75	1.92
Crackers, 100 lbs.....	3.00	1.00
Corn Meal, barrel, 196 lbs.....	2.15	0.48
Hams, 100 lbs.....	10.00	4.00
Lard, 5 lb. tins, 100 lbs.....	7.00	2.00
Butter, 5 lb. tins, 100 lbs.....	22.00	4.00
Oleomargarine, 5 lb. tins, 100 lbs.....	8.00	4.00
Matches, 50 gross boxes, 45 in box...	15.00	21.60
Kerosene, 100 gals. in tins, 150 test best	8.50	12.75
Salt Beef, 100 lbs.....	5.00	1.80
Salt Pork, 100 lbs.....	4.50	1.80
Sausages, 100 lbs.....	12.50	4.00
Bacon, 100 lbs.....	11.75	4.00
Mutton, 100 lbs. frozen.....	8.50	20% 1.75
	\$124.25	\$67.02 54% Average.

"Jamaica's oranges are shut out of the markets of the States by the 6 shillings protective duty in favor of California and Florida, and should the President of the United States have his attention called to the un-British import duties on America produce, by which the balance of trade is nigh \$4,000,000 per annum against his country and in favor of Breat Britain, he would be compelled to demand fair trade, or a tax upon our produce. With a fair import tax on American foodstuff and necessaries of life, double the quantity would be used here, and an equable trade arise between the two countries."

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## REVENUE.

Import duties .....	£381,952	10s	od
Licenses and excise.....	190,973	4	1½
Fees, stamps .....	70,321	0	1¼
Postoffice, telegraphs .....	32,804	18	5½
Railway .....	142,305	9	10
Petties, balance .....	37,617	7	9½

£855,974 10s 3½d

## GENERAL EXPENDITURE.

Charges of debt.....	£209,208	3s	od
Governor and staff.....	6,745	2	6
States subsidy to England....	20,000	0	0
Education .....	55,423	6	9
Medical .....	49,799	5	4½
Public works and buildings....	64,232	10	7
Railway .....	80,341	7	3
Judicial (law, not justice)....	38,290	18	9½
Police and prisons.....	75,847	7	3¼
Military, militia (to fight the Yankees who support us)...	12,636	19	5
Subsidy telegraph .....	2,500	0	0
Petty officials, customs, etc....	173,721	12	10½

£788,846 14s 2d

## DEBTS.

Net present liability.....£3,487,452 19s 7d

## EXPORTS.

United States .....	£1,539,375	9s	7½d
Britain .....	393,042	5	2½
Elsewhere .....	287,219	13	8

£2,219,637 8s 6d

## IMPORTS.

United States .....	£803,070	15s	10d
Britain .....	997,444	6	8
Elsewhere .....	190,369	13	8

£1,990,884 16s 2d

Of imports £39,692 1s 9d are free: United States £470 0s 0d;  
British £39,222 1s 9d.

“The contractor for the railway to Port Antonio paid laborers a dollar a day, and stated that he did not desire better value than the black men gave at that wage; but at twenty cents and a shilling, they are slowly starving to death. Out of this pittance, even, they are obliged to pay the most extortionate and unjust of import duties on foodstuffs—which can only be had from the United States—the nation which keeps us alive by taking two-thirds of our products free of duties!”

These are some of Mr. MacNish's facts, and he backs them up with most convincing figures. Respecting his suggestion to the Royal Commissioner, that retrenchment begin with a reduction in salaries of department heads, such as the governor general with his \$30,000 a year, and the attorney general with \$7500, etc., Sir David demurred, on the ground that a lower-paid official might render poorer service.(?) As a high-salaried official himself, the Commissioner evidently had a fellow-feeling for the Jamaica incumbents that was vastly more than “wondrous kind.”



## VIII

### A FEW THINGS TO BE SEEN IN JAMAICA

A land of lavish hospitality—The country inns and great houses of the estates—A highway that engirdles the island—Trip to the Peak of Blue Mountain—Hope River, Cinchona, and Newcastle cantonments—Government botanical and experimental stations—King's House, when Sir Henry Blake was Governor-General—Up-Park Camp and Hope Gardens—Castleton Gardens on the Wag Water—Spanish Town, the "City of the Dead"—Beautiful scenery of the Bog Walk—Saint Thomas in ye Vale, the Cockpit Country, Morant Bay, and the thermal springs of Bath on Garden River—Cane River and Three-fingered Jack—Manchioneal; John Crow Mountains and Moore Town, home of the famous Maroons—Old Cudjoe, king of Nanny Town, and the dance he led the soldiers—Pimento groves of Saint Ann's, and the falls of Foaring River—The bay Columbus\* stayed in when wrecked—Famous men who have been in Jamaica—Its natural history—Schools, churches, and church-goers—Proverbs of the English negroes.

**W**ITH more than seven hundred miles of magnificent roads, leading to all the attractive and commercial points of the island, some of them winding over hills and mountains to an elevation of 4000 feet, some again following the trend of the coast, with branches here and there to interesting places, and with every mile something rare and beautiful for northern eyes to view, Jamaica is certainly the paradise of cyclist, automobilist, and pedestrian.

By means of the numerous highways and their byways,

the far-seeing English residents of Jamaica have made available to the tourist some of the most beautiful scenery of tropical America. As the island is English in its government, speech, customs, and style of living, possessing numerous small inns and road-houses scattered throughout the country districts, as well as good hotels in town and city, while the most hospitable of islanders are domiciled in stately mansions and "great houses" on the estates, one might put in a full month to advantage.

By all means, if time allows, take the great drive over the chain of public highways that engirdles the island, running mainly along the coast, and for which you may hire a "rig" in Kingston, two horses and a driver, for about a pound a day. Failing the drive, take the coastal steamer to the various harbors, which costs about the same per diem, but with meals and state-room included. But the highway journey is by all odds the better way of seeing the island, for the varied pictures, of tropical vegetation, of roaring rivers, of dashing surf, of overhanging palms, pimento, orange, banana, and coffee groves, and paradisaical plantations, are actually unsurpassed. Add to these the beauties of the winding paths and lanes, the balmy air (at the right season), the tropical fruits and beverages, the unique natives and their huts—all these combine to swell an experience really worth something.

Now, Kingston, as already intimated, is vastly more interesting as to its environment than its intrinsic attractions. It is well situated as a point of departure for other and better places, for example, the Blue Mountain Peak, which towers above it more than seven thousand feet. By driving in a buggy to Gordon Town, arriving there at daybreak and taking ponies for the mountain trail, it is possible to accomplish the ascent and return in one day.

Once arrived, and provided the mist does not obscure the view, you will find beneath and around you the grandest of mountain peaks, with their incomparable valleys, the eye ever beheld. The view is indescribable in its grandeur and beauty, and the ride thither a fitting prelude to the scene. There is a hut, simply furnished, at the Peak, and it is advisable to give at least two days to the trip, in order to view the cloud effects at sunrise and sunset, and to experience the sensation of isolation, on a lofty pinnacle in the clouds beneath a tropic sky.

The drive through the picturesque gorge of Hope River, with the "ferns and plantains waving in the moist air, cedars, tamarinds, gum trees, orange trees, striking their roots among the clefts of the crags, and hanging out over the abysses below them," is one of the finest anywhere to be found. It ends at Gordon Town, whence one may journey on to New Castle cantonments, where troops are quartered for their health on the steep slant of hills nearly 4000 feet above the sea. Beyond, also, 21 miles distant from Kingston, is the Government cinchona plantation, which, with its 150 acres, constitutes an experimental station for the cultivation of exotic economic plants, chiefly tropical in character, though the altitude is from 5000 to 6000 feet above sea level.

One of the most enjoyable experiences of my life was a visit I once paid to Cinchona, at the invitation of the director of Public Gardens, Mr. Wm. Fawcett, author of a valuable book on the "Economic Plants of Jamaica," and to whose intelligent supervision of its parks and gardens the island is vastly indebted. The estate is called Cinchona, from the main purpose for which it was founded—to ascertain if that valuable tree could be introduced with profit into this island.

It was found that it could be, and not only that, but now it may be seen absolutely running wild in the mountains everywhere. But it was a parallel case to that of the old man who taught his horse to eat shavings, "Just as the critter got to liking shavings, it up and died." So with cinchona. Just as it became acclimated and it was shown that it would grow well in Jamaica, the price went down, and now you may have all the "Peruvian bark" you want for the asking. However, other things are grown here besides cinchona—such, for instance, as tea, coffee, rare flowers, and valuable woods.

One thinks of Jamaica, of course, as being a tropical island, where heat and yellow fever reign at least half the year and rain and rheumatism the other half. But, in fact, it has within its area of 4000 square miles every variety of climate and glorious range of scenery that the heart of man could desire. One morning, I remember, I walked out before breakfast and picked most delicious wild strawberries (which, as you know, only grow in a temperate climate), and then strolled down into a ravine filled with immense tree-ferns, which are never found anywhere but in a tropical country.

It is in this favored section among the hills that the best coffee estates are found, above 2000 and 3000 feet elevation, and from this region is sent out the famous Blue Mountain coffee, which commands the highest price in the London markets. I mention this fact to show the wide range not only of a climate, but of productions, open to one who might wish to attempt farming or fruit growing in this or any other island of similar characteristics.

Another delightful spot that lingers in memory, linked with dinners the like of which no mortal ever surpassed, is King's House, the official residence of the Governor



General, where, at the time I was a guest within its precincts, Sir Henry Blake and his charming lady resided. Sir Henry went from Jamaica to the far side of the world, having been promoted to the governorship of Hong Kong, in which little island he may have greater scope for his remarkable abilities, but certainly cannot accomplish more, in any direction, than he did in Jamaica.

*The Governor & Lady Blake  
request the honour of  
Mr. Ober's  
Company at Dinner  
on Saturday, April 4th, at 7:30 o'clock.  
King's House.*

*An answer is requested  
to the A. D. C. in waiting.*

King's House is a fine old mansion, with a semi-detached dining and ballroom, which alone cost \$25,000, and the grounds around it are well laid out. The Liguanea Plain, in which are situated the chief attractions around Kingston, contains within its limits the noted Up-Park Camp, the cantonment of the West India regiment, and at the foothills is the Hope Garden reservation, containing more than 200 acres devoted to tropical horticulture.

Nineteen miles distant from Kingston, out toward Saint Catherine's Peak, on the Wag-Water River, is the Government's greatest botanic station, Castleton Gardens, where tropical arboriculture is carried out on an extensive scale. The three stations of Castleton, Hope, and Cinchona form a combined system which vies with, per-

haps surpasses, the tropical gardens of Trinidad, while Cuba has nothing to equal it.

Mention has been made of Spanish Town, the original La Vega of the Spaniards, which is only a dozen miles from Kingston, by rail, on the banks of the Rio Cobre. It was once the seat of government, and the fine old buildings are here that were once occupied by the colonial officials, also the oldest cathedral in the British colonies. Spanish Town has a charm all its own, but it savors chiefly of the antique. Owing to its quietude and the great number of tombs and mural tablets in its old cathedral, it is frequently called a city of the dead; but might well become a cheerful place of residence. One of its ornaments is a statue of Lord Rodney, in a temple of great artistic merit, flanked by two of the brass guns taken from the "Ville de Paris," in 1781. This statue was once walked off to Kingston, and there set up facing the harbor; but returned to its original foundation when Spanish Town protested.

Do not omit going to view the beauties of the Bog-Walk, when you are in Spanish Town, for they are absolutely unrivaled. The Bog-Walk, negro-English for *Boca del Agua*, is a beautiful gorge of the Rio Cobre, where (the talented Lady Brassey once wrote), one finds "everything that makes scenery lovely—wood, water, and the wildest luxuriance of tropical foliage, mingled and arranged by the artistic hands of Nature in one of her happiest moods."

Still farther up the river (which is one of the most picturesque streams in Jamaica), is found a veritable natural bridge, the giant key-stone of which is about 60 feet above the water and draped with beautiful vines. Not the least of Rio Cobre's attractions is the hotel that

bears its name, from which, and from the several boarding-houses in and near the town, many pleasant excursions may be taken.

By means of the railroads and highways, the fascinating interior country of Jamaica has been thrown open to the traveler, who may journey without discomfort to such quaint and quiet places as Saint Thomas in ye Vale, Mandeville (hymns in praise of which have been loudly sung by Froude and others), Moneague, and the wonderful "Cockpit Country" in the limestone region, with its abysmal pits and caverns.

If you have time, visit the bunch of parishes, Saint Thomas, Portland, St. Mary, and St. Ann, in and near the eastern end of the island. One might, it seems to me, spend a week or two in any one of them. The Blue Mountain range forms the boundary chiefly between Portland and St. Thomas, hence numerous rivers descend to the sea on either side, north and south, all of them picturesque and some of them historic. A deep inlet in the south shore of Saint Thomas is Morant Bay, famous in modern times as the chief seat of the great rebellion of 1865, led by the colored man, Gordon, in whose defense Froude pleads eloquently, but whose memory is not held very sacred in Jamaica. The man who caused him to be hanged, and who was afterward tried for his "murder," Governor Eyre, had been a famous explorer in Australia, and passed his old age in retirement in England.

North of Morant Bay, a few miles, on Garden River (probably so called on account of the first botanic garden in Jamaica having been established here, in 1774), is Bath, a pretty little hamlet famous for its thermal springs and mineral waters. The waters here are said to be efficacious in the cure of rheumatism, skin diseases, etc., and

one writer mentions that their continued use "sometimes produces almost the same joyous effect as inebriation, on which account some notorious toppers have quit their liquors for a while and come to the springs to enjoy the singular felicity of getting drunk with water!" Another famous spa of the island is that of Milk River, to the southwest of Kingston, while still another is to be found not far from the city, to the northward.

On the way to Bath we have passed the one-time residence of a notorious native of the island, Three-fingered Jack, whose cave up the ravine of Cane River with its attractive falls is only ten or twelve miles from Kingston. Three-fingered Jack had an eye for the beautiful, and also to business, when he located there and plied his nefarious calling of highwayman on the Kingston-Morant road, where he used to hold up the passing travelers. He was killed by a Maroon, who was given therefor by Government a pension of twenty pounds a year for life—and he lived to a good old age, after the manner of pensioners and charity dependents all over the world.

On the Yallahs River, about halfway between Kingston and Port Morant, may be seen "Judgment Cliff," which is the remaining half of a mountain split by the great earthquake of 1692. It is a thousand feet in height, and though produced by a cataclysm of nature, by the natives is held to have been caused for the special punishment of a depraved Dutchman, a planter, who was buried beneath the fallen half of the mountain.

Around on the east point of the island is Manchioneal Bay, which was once the scene of adventures in "Tom Cringle's Log," and inland from this point, over behind the John Crow Mountains, lies the once-famous Moore Town, chief settlement of the Jamaica Maroons. The



Maroons, as my readers may or may not know, had their origin in the Spanish slaves who ran away from their masters at the time the English took the island, about the middle of the seventeenth century. They fled to the mountains, and there they stayed, and their descendants after them, though the best of English soldiers chased them about for a hundred years. In the year 1733 two full regiments of regular troops, besides all the militia of the island, were searching for them; but they never took a prisoner or killed many of these wily blacks, who themselves neither gave quarter nor asked it of their pursuers.

Their leader was an uncouth dwarf named Cudjoe, and their retreat in the mountains was known as Nanny Town. Cudjoe was a pagan and, with all his followers, worshiped the African deities of obeah, or the gods of sorcery-working wizards. At one time the troops were on their trail for nine successive years, and yet at the end of that time the Maroons were more numerous than at the beginning, owing to accessions from runaway slaves.

Old Cudjoe himself was said to be in league with the devil. He looked like the devil anyway, the soldiers said, and fought like the devil, too. Many a time did he draw the white troops into an ambush in the wild ravines, only to slaughter them like sheep, till the streams ran with blood and but few survivors escaped.

Moore Town is situated in the parish of Portland, the chief city of which is Port Antonio, which ranks second only to Kingston in business, and leads it in bustling enterprise. Many of the Maroons, whose ancestors were never so happy as when "potting" the whites, are now engaged in raising bananas for the United Fruit Company, which owns the principal portion of Port Antonio, and indeed of the parish, if not of the island.

The really historic parish of Jamaica is that of Saint Ann, on the north coast about midway the island, the scenery, also, being all that the heart of man could desire. "Earth has nothing more lovely than its pastures and pimento groves," says an old writer; "nothing more enchanting than its hills and vales, delicious in verdure and redolent with the fragrance of spices." One should ramble beneath the spicy pimento trees, inhaling the delicious odors, and gaze out seaward over the rounded hills and pasture-lands. The largest falls in the island, those of Roaring River, are in this parish, almost within sound of the sea, and they are also among the most beautiful cascades to be found in the world.

#### THE INSTITUTE OF JAMAICA

Owing to the success which attended Mr. Ober's recent lecture on the Chicago Exhibition, the Governors of the Institute have invited that gentleman to read a paper on the Voyages of Columbus, a subject which he has studied for many years. Mr. Ober is shortly about to make investigations in St. Ann's as to Columbus's residence in Jamaica, and he hopes to be able to comply with the invitation before he leaves the island. The paper will treat especially on the West Indian portion of the great Explorer's travels.—*The Colonial Standard and Jamaica Despatch, Monday, April 20, 1891.*

This reference to Columbus, the discoverer of Jamaica, reminds me that the island has fared full well, so far as having been visited by distinguished men is concerned. There were some, like the infamous Sir Henry Morgan, who came with evil intent, to be sure; but he and his companion buccaneers contributed to the enrichment of Jamaica, and now they have gone to their rewards, the island gets the benefit of the fine halo of romance they left behind them. This, viewed as an asset, counts for some-



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thing with the tourists, and so does the site of Port Royal, once "the world's wickedest city," and on that account well worth visiting.

Sir William Phipps, the New England Yankee who recovered so many tons of silver from sunken Spanish galleons off the coast of Santo Domingo, outfitted at Port Royal, and the Duke of Albemarle, who was then Royal Governor, obtained the (British) lion's share of the plunder. Sir Hans Sloane, putative founder of the British Museum, came out with Albemarle, resided in the island two years, 1685-86, and wrote the *Natural History of Jamaica*, which was published in 1707-25.

The best work on the birds of Jamaica is by Philip Henry Gosse, whose fascinating book was published in 1851. Since the days of Gosse, and especially since those of Sloane, the natural history of the island has changed considerably, owing to the introduction and pernicious activity of the mongoose; but there are still some birds of fine plumage, hosts of butterflies, fourteen kinds of fire-beetles, a few species of harmless snakes, lizards, iguanas, alligators, and fresh-water fishes.

Some of the streams are cold enough to be the haunts of trout, but the only game fish is the mountain mullet, which on occasions rises to a fly with dash and vigor. The hunting is not good, being confined to wild pigeons, doves, alligators, and water-fowl; but the sea adjacent to the coast furnishes a great variety of fish which may be taken with hook and line. It is in its botanical and marine treasures that Jamaica excels, and particularly in the number of its ferns can hardly be surpassed.

It can hardly be claimed for the blacks of Jamaica, who are about forty times as numerous as the whites, that they have produced any remarkable intellects, like the famous

black Chief Justice of Barbados; but as a class they are shrewd and by no means ignorant. The island is well provided with schools, there being about a thousand public and free, which are universally attended, besides several training colleges, private and denominational. Churches, there are, everywhere, and well-attended, especially by the black and colored people, who, of a Sunday, may be seen trooping over the roads in country and town, clad in their brightest raiment and wearing their broadest smiles.

In Jamaica, perhaps more than in any other British island of the West Indies, we find a deal of wisdom in the utterances of the black people, who display some knowledge of the world and human nature.

It is now 70 years since the Jamaica negroes were emancipated and 100 since the blacks drove the French out of Haiti; yet neither people has made any great advance, notwithstanding the efforts of priests and parsons, schools, and enlightened paternal governments.

But the negro has shown himself virile and long suffering, forgetful of the wrongs done him during the past of slavery. And he has evolved a distinct school of philosophy, as evinced by certain proverbs, of which a few of the choicest are appended:

“Alligator lay egg, but him no fowl.”

“Ants foller fat”—no smoke without some fire.

“Bad family better dan empty pigsty.”

“Beggar beg from beggar, him neber git rich.”

“Behind dawg, you say ‘dawg;’ befo’ him, ‘Mistah Dawg.’”

“Better fo’ fowl say ‘dawg dead’ dan fo’ dawg say ‘fowl dead’”—because dog can kill fowl, while the latter is harmless.

“Big blanket mek man sleep late.”

“Braggin’ riber neber drown somebuddy.”

“Brown man’s wife eat cockroach in corner”—does something underhand.

"Buckra work neber done" — buckra (white man) an African word.

"Bull horn neber too heaby fo' he head."

"Cashew neber bear guaba" — can't gather figs of thistles.

"Cane no grow like grass."

"Cedar bo'd laugh after dead man" — cedar is used for coffins.

"Cockroach neber in de right befo' fowl" — might makes right.

"Coward man keep whole bone."

"Crab no walk, him no get fat; walk too much, him lose he claw."

"'Come see me' is nuttin, but 'Come lib wiv me' is sometin."

"Crab walk too much, him get in kutakoo" — kutakoo is a kind of crab soup.

"Cuss-cuss neber bore hole in 'kin" — hard words break no bones.

"Cow lose him tail, Goramighty brush fly fer um" — the Lord tempers the wind to the shorn lamb.

"Cotton tree fall down, nannygoat jump ober um."

"Dawg no eat dawg" — honor among thieves.

"Don't care keep big house."

"Ebry dawg know he dinner time."

"Full belly tell hungry belly take heart."

"Goat say him hab wool; sheep say him hab hair."

"Greedy puppy neber fat."

"Habee-habee no wantee; wantee-wantee no habee" — waste not, want not.

"If snakes bite yo', when yo' see lizard yo' run."

"Ebry John Crow t'ink he own pickney white" — our own child's the best.

"Little crab hole spoil big race horse."

"Little watah kill big fiah."

These are only a few of the numerous proverbs current among the black inhabitants of these islands; but they show, as I stated at the beginning, that the negro has a shrewd wisdom all his own; that there is something to him, for, as he himself has said:

"You neber see empty bag 'tan' up."

## IX

### IN THE BLACK AND BROWN REPUBLICS

How to reach Haiti and Santo Domingo from Jamaica—Port au Prince, capital of Haiti—Where one's room is preferred to his company—The late President Hyppolite and Fred Douglass—Why colored men are sent to Haiti by our Government—The island as God made it—And as the black man has defiled it—The Haitian army and police—Cape Haitien the northern capital—Where the flagship of Columbus was wrecked—Sans Souci, La Ferrière, the Black King's palace and castle—The vale of Millot—Tortuga the buccaneers' island—Historic spots on the Haiti-Santo Domingo coast—Val de Paraiso—Aborigines and aboriginal names—Origin of the term Hispaniola—Rise of the filibusteros—How the Haitians maintain a standard of color—Are the Dominicans color-blind?—Expelled by the guillotine route—White man has no rights in Haiti which the black man is bound to respect—Perils of politicians—What Hyppolite did to the cobbler—My acquaintance with two despots—Great undeveloped resources—Fanatical natives—May a woman eat her own children?

**S**TEAMERS of the Royal Mail line sail among the islands, and if tourists wish to visit the ports of Haiti or Santo Domingo, they may be taken along either the north or the south coast. Jacmel, Port au Prince, and Cape Haitien were once beautiful places, but the long period of negro domination has ruined them utterly, and there are no acceptable accommodations in any part of either Haiti or Santo Domingo. This is all the more regrettable, as they possess great natural charms, and here also are to be seen the historic



spots identified with the discovery and settlement of America, such as Isabella, the first town, and Santo Domingo, capital city of the Spanish portion of the island.

There are many objects worthy of inspection; but in both portions of this island, the western half of which is occupied by the Haitians, and the eastern by the Dominicans, the roads are mere trails, full of holes which are pools of water and mud in the rainy season, and pitfalls for man and beast in the dry.

The distance from Kingston to Port au Prince is 276 miles, but on arriving in the beautiful bay and getting a near view of the squalid city that straggles along shore, one might imagine himself in a different world. A different world, indeed, it is, for the people are French in speech and habitudes, and there is an air about them which plainly tells you they vastly prefer your room to your company. You may land if you like, they seem to say; but the sooner you leave the better: a feeling you soon entertain without suggestion.

As to Port au Prince, I can bear testimony respecting its utter filthiness, and agree with a recent resident there that it may bear away the palm of being the most foul-smelling and consequently fever-stricken city in the world. "Everyone throws his refuse before his door, so that heaps of manure and every species of rubbish incumber the way. The gutters are open, pools of stagnant water obstruct the street everywhere, and receive constant accession from the inhabitants using them as cess-pools and sewers. There are a few good buildings in town, and none in the country, the torch of the incendiary being constantly applied, and no encouragement is offered to rebuild, through the protection of government or local enterprise."

These incendiary fires are continually occurring, and are usually certain precursors of revolts or revolutions. The few foreigners in Haiti are there only on sufferance, and, though the opportunities for making large fortunes are many, yet few merchants have ever come away with much, for it usually happens that about the time a departure is contemplated an incendiary fire sweeps off the accumulations of years, or the stores and warehouses are plundered by revolutionists.

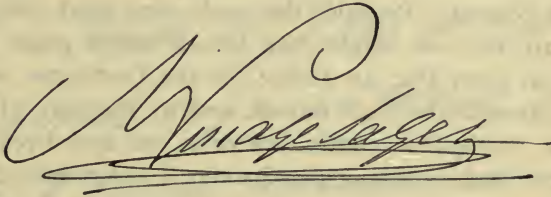
There is a hotel in the Champ de Mars, not far from the President's Palace, where I have been entertained fairly well, in days gone by; and in the Palace I was once received by the late President Hyppolite, when at the height of his power and but two weeks before he put to death more than two hundred of his opponents. It was thought then that the occasion justified the means employed, for it was either Hyppolite or his enemies, and the former chose to make corpses of his foes.

Frederick Douglass was minister at Port au Prince at the time of my visit, and his secretary was a former minister, Mr. Bassett, who at the time of Saget's deposition, when men were massacred by scores, sheltered more than five hundred people and saved them from being shot; an act of humanity for which he was never reimbursed. Like the present President of Haiti, Hyppolite, the tyrant, was big, blue-black of hue, and an old soldier.

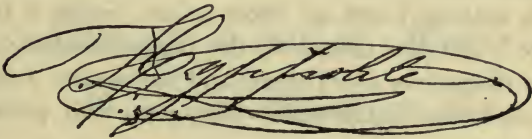
These two representatives of the negro race were such striking contrasts that one instinctively asked himself if a common descent were possible, for Hyppolite resembled very much a barbaric African potentate, while Douglass was a polished scholar and quite a man of the world. I often tried to get from the latter an expression of his opinion as to the much-vaunted "success" of the Haitian

civilization, but never succeeded, for the diplomat was wary and would not commit himself.

It has been our custom, of late, to send out colored men to Haiti as minister and consuls; but the Haitians themselves do not like it overmuch, notwithstanding the


 A highly stylized, cursive handwritten signature in black ink. The signature is written on a light-colored background and is underlined with two parallel horizontal lines. The letters are fluid and interconnected, with a large, sweeping flourish at the beginning.

NISSAGE-SAGET


 A cursive handwritten signature in black ink, enclosed within a large, horizontal oval. The signature is very fluid and somewhat abstract, with many overlapping loops and flourishes. The ink is dark and the background is light.

HYPPOLITE

men are able and excellent; for they look around the world and perceive no colored men as representatives in other lands, and ask why we do not treat all alike. They used to ask this question, in their ignorance not understanding the exigencies of American politics, and the necessity for our Executive to provide for his colored friends and voters in some way without giving too great offense to the preponderating white vote. As few white men who have been in Haiti once ever care to go again, it is perfectly safe to send the colored office-seeker there.

But the Haitians, in their vanity, have at last imagined that the real reason is because the white man is not good enough for them! Let it go at that, for Haitian vanity is something so stupendous that to combat it would be a futile task.

As God made it, Haiti is a dream of delight; as the black man has defiled it, no white person can live there and be content. Provided the roads were good—though they are not—we might hire horses and a guide and strike in from Port au Prince for the Dominican territory, through the high forests, and by the way of the historic Enriquillo country, where at one time lived the innocent Indians whom the Spaniards exterminated.

A glimpse of what God did for Haiti before the white man brought hither the black pagan from Africa may be obtained by short rides into the country; but in the town there is nothing worth an effort to see, except it be the "palace" and the cathedral, the ragged soldiery, who obtrude themselves everywhere, and the equally disreputable police, also disagreeably ubiquitous and persistent as beggars.

Many of the soldiers are stationed about the President's palace in the Champ de Mars. The latter is a large plaza which more resembles a vacant city lot than a public parade ground, being totally devoid of vegetation and incumbered with all sorts of rubbish peculiar to the average vacant lot, including the goat and the tomato can.

The building itself is large, but unpretentious, built of brick and wood, on the seaward side of the Champ de Mars. A company of ragged soldiers is always on guard, no matter who the presidential incumbent may happen to be, and a Gatling gun is mounted in the lower hall in close proximity to some neglected but beautiful



statuary, relics of a past age when one of the executives had a spasm of refinement and undertook to embellish

Portau Prince.

May 16. 1891-

Mr Coutier Esqr

My dear Sir: I have the honor  
to introduce to you Mr Frederick A  
Otor, a Special Commissioner in  
Connection with the World's Columbian  
Exposition to be held in Chicago in  
1893. He is an attaché of the  
Legation and any attention you may  
be able to show him will be gratefully  
appreciated by yours truly

F. Douglass,

the palace. The white marbles to-day are soiled with

the finger marks of the dirty soldiery who lounge about on guard, but otherwise they have not received much attention.

The soldiers are nearly all barefooted, clad in ragged regimentals, and carry their guns like so much "cordwood." Once in a while one of the numerous generals comes around and shouts "Attention!" when such of the soldiers as are within hearing shuffle up in an irregular line, dragging their guns behind, and go through what they fondly believe is a drill, as prescribed by great tacticians. Then, this over, they lounge back again to their favorite pastime of drawing circles in the sand with their toes, or shooting craps.

When off duty, the Haitian soldier sometimes puts in his time begging from passersby on the streets, pleading as an excuse that his pay is in arrears and he will have to wait till the next revolution for a chance to get even. As this is generally the truth, or at all events quite a reasonable assumption, the soldier sometimes does very well by waylaying people on the street corners and soliciting from door to door.

English, French, and American steamers touch in at all ports on Haiti's coast, and communication is frequent between Port au Prince and Cape Haitien, the northern capital. On the way, the beautiful island of Gonaive, in the Gulf of Léogane, is passed, and at the extreme northwest of the main island lies Mole San Nicolas, a land-locked, natural harbor, of such strategical importance that the United States would like to possess it as a naval station.

Cape Haitien is as finely situated as the Port, having a grand background of mountains and forest. Its great structures erected by the French of the eighteenth century

are shapeless heaps of brick and stone, while the fountains they provided are choked, the aqueducts they constructed in ruins, and the gardens they laid out gone to decay. There is no good hotel in the place, nor a public, scarcely a private, convenience of any sort; the gutters are filled with filth, the air tainted with pestilential emanations.

Yet, here at Cape Haitien, great historic events have taken place; here Leclerc and thirty thousand of his men died of yellow fever; here the white men were driven by the blacks into the sea; here liberty was proclaimed to Haiti, and here lived the black kings who made laws and committed massacres unchecked. Out beyond the reefs that protect the harbor from the sea, the flagship of Columbus, the "Santa Maria," was wrecked, on Christmas eve, 1492, and over on the shore at Guarico the wreckage was collected and the first fort in America erected by Europeans.

Two hours' ride from the Cape are the ruins of Sans Souci, the beautiful palace, in a more beautiful valley, built by commands of Christophe, the great Black King, in the early years of the nineteenth century. Sans Souci is situated in the hills above the lovely vale of Millot, with a background of tropical forest and a foreground sprinkled with palms and the huts of simple cultivators. Roofless ruins are the only remains of the palace, and a wilderness of tropical plants of the extensive gardens of Christophe's time.

Two hours further back in the hills stands the stupendous castle-fortress erected by the king as a retreat when the French should come to avenge his massacres. They never came, having had enough of Haiti; but there Christophe immured himself, within walls twenty feet in

thickness and a hundred in height, in the long galleries and on the parapets mounting more than three hundred cannon, most of which may be seen to-day. Here, at last, died the great Black King, self-slaughtered by a silver bullet driven into his brain. The chamber in which he killed himself is shown, also his treasury, where he is said to have accumulated thirty million dollars.

La Ferrière, as the fortress is called, stands upon the truncate crest of a steep-sided mountain, in the midst of wild forest, yet can be seen from the Cape, from a vessel's deck in the bay, one of the grandest, strangest, most fascinating of the New World's works in stone and mortar. It is a monument of the Haitian civilization at its best; it will never be duplicated.

Near the coast, at the Cape, the ruins are shown of a buccaneer stronghold; but the real rendezvous of the sea-rovers was at Tortuga, the desolate island across channel, five miles from Port de Paix. Here such worthies of the buccaneer profession as Lollonois, Mansveldt, Morgan, and other crime-stained cut-throats made their headquarters during many years, in the last half of the seventeenth century. The island, with its priceless memories of Columbus and the buccaneers, belongs to Haiti, and has few, if any, permanent inhabitants. These few live in huts on the sands and spend their time in fishing, turtling, and searching for the pirates' treasures, said to be concealed in the caves.

It was in the guise of privateers, and then as *filibusteros*, or buccaneers, that the alien invaders of the Caribbean Sea first worried the Spaniards, and in 1530 one of their great Dons stirred up a veritable hornet's nest when he drove the French and English buccaneers from the Island of Saint Kitts. For, deprived of their



possessions there, their plantations and fishing privileges, they turned pirates and made a rendezvous at Tortuga, off the north coast of Haiti. Some of them, mainly of French extraction, settled in the larger island, where they led a semi-savage existence, hunting the wild cattle which, sprung from Spanish stock, roamed the fields and forests by the thousand.

These, in fact, were the original buccaneers, the name itself being derived from their practicing of "boucaning," or smoking, the flesh of the wild cattle, after the manner of the Carib Indians, over an open fire of sticks and leaves. They were in partnership with the *filibusteros* proper, who derived their supplies from them, and divided with them their Spanish spoils. Many a treasure-laden galleon, floundering through the Windward Passage between Cuba and Haiti, was captured by these buccaneers, who generally took their treasures to Tortuga, where they held high revel over their ill-gotten wealth.

The buccaneers lasted for quite half a century, the last great haul they made being at the sack of Panama, 1671, when Morgan (afterwards Sir Henry, and governor of Jamaica), secured enough to enable him to settle down to a respectable mode of life. Something more than a quarter-century later, or at the Peace of Ryswick, 1697, the French were confirmed in possession of the third of the island, now known as Haiti, although the boundary line between French and Spanish territory was not actually delimited until about the middle of the next century.

This boundary has often been crossed, by one party or the other; but not in recent times; and is at present respected by both the Haitians and Dominicans. The wonder is that, during the frequent "revolutions" of the century past, the respective territories have not been more

frequently invaded and the island devastated by interne-cine slaughter. The reason for this forbearance may be shown in a study of conditions prevailing there.

There is no doubt as to the courage of these Haitian-Dominicans, since, so far as their white ancestry is concerned—although it may now be considered, perhaps, as a negligible factor—we have on one side the remote descendants of the fierce buccaneers, and on the other the equally remote descendants of valiant *conquistadores*.

This process of elimination began when the French colonists were “expelled” (to make use of Minister Leger’s innocuous euphemism) from the country about a century ago, and is still going on. That those white colonists were “expelled” by the guillotine route,—at least, beheaded,—burnt alive, and sawn asunder, is neither here nor there. If the question were raised, the Haitians would doubtless tell you that their revolutionary ancestors acquired the custom from their masters, and merely gave them a dose of their own medicine. At any rate it was effective, for not one of them has ever returned to plague the Haitians by their presence in the flesh. What they did to Dessalines, Christophe, and others whom the white people called tyrants and monsters, and the blacks regarded as heroes, has not been recorded. But it is certain that Christophe, the great Black King, committed suicide by shooting himself in the head with a silver bullet, and that tradition relates he was moved thereto by the spooks he saw, mainly of the white variety, in his magnificent palace of Sans Souci.

The rare perspicacity shown by the Haitians, in not only expelling the white man from their republic, but in passing laws which forbid him to acquire any realty whatever,—except he be married to a black woman,—has

not been evinced by the Dominicans; neither have they been so acutely discriminative in their slaughterings. They have not withheld their hands from the sword—or rather from the pistol and machete—but perhaps they may be “color blind”; they have gone on with their blood-letting wholly regardless as to the complexion a man may have when in life.

When the late lamented Hyppolite was in high feather as President of Haiti, he, one day, in riding down a side street of Port au Prince, saw a poor cobbler sitting on a bench. The cobbler also saw him, and though Hyppolite was in a general’s uniform (and “generals” compose nine-tenths of the “army”), he did not know he was gazing at the august Executive. But he instinctively removed his hat, and then went on with his work. It “riled” the President to see a man working, and so busy that he hadn’t time to rise from his bench, and he called two of his soldiers. “Take that man away from his work,” he commanded. He was taken away.

“Now, take him off and shoot him,” was the next order. This was done, and the President’s affronted dignity was placated.

This is a tale they tell in Port au Prince—now that Hyppolite is dead. They would not dare tell it when he was alive, though it may be just as true now as it ever was. I met this despot of a decade ago, and was much impressed with his dignified bearing. I also met and was very friendly with another “late lamented” hero, or tyrant (as the case may be), General Ulises Heureaux, former President of Santo Domingo.

Just how many successors they have had since is a matter of no consequence, for the present Executive of the republic will (in fact, he must) carry on the policy of his

predecessor. Haiti is getting blacker and blacker, if it be possible (the white element having almost arrived at the vanishing-point); and if Santo Domingo is not getting whiter, it is not the fault of either the man for the moment in power,—nor of the fiscal and other agents of that country, who do not stint the “whitewash” brush at all.

It is when the one country or the other desires to raise a loan, that protests begin to appear in the press anent the “mother goose” stories respecting the voodoo, cannibalism, etc., etc., which are repeatedly told of the Haitians. In other words, both peoples are wholly regardless of what the white man thinks or does, so long as he furnishes the *dinero* for the exploitation of their beloved country—by and for the natives, of course.

That each country is rich in undeveloped resources, of gold, copper, to some extent iron and coal, and with vast treasure in its cabinet and dye woods, everyone who has passed through their wonderful forests can testify. The difficulties in the way of exploiting the hidden treasures of both republics lie, as intimated, in the peculiarities of the inhabitants. In no country of the world will greater hospitality of a certain sort be shown than in Haiti or Santo Domingo; in no vast forest region will the lone traveler (speaking generally) be safer than in the interior of that beautiful island.

But the “exception” might appear in the shape of a bullet, or of a machete cut from some fanatical native resident in the mountains who had not seen a white man often enough to know him from a rhinoceros, and who would naturally give himself the benefit of the doubt! As to the propensity (alleged) of the Haitians to pilfer from the treasury, it may be remarked that it is *their* treasury, and so long as those who actually suffer do not



complain, why should the casual resident or new arrival? As an old-timer of Port au Prince once remarked to the writer: "What's the difference between our beloved President, who 'feather his nest,' and then skeep to Jamaica, and your great Monsieur Crokair, who do the same and skeep to Eengland? Ha, you geeve it up, eh? Well, it ees this, *mon cher ami*. Our beloved President, he steal some millions, and he skeep—but he nevair come back again no more! If he do we shoot him dead! But as for your Monsieur Crokair—eef he come back, you go to meet him with the brass-band, the fireworks, and the 'glad hand.' Is it not so?"

After all, why should it concern us what the Haitians take from other Haitians—peradventure they do so? A woman belonging in the alleged voodoo sect, who was indicted for devouring her own children at a cannibal ceremony in honor of the "great green serpent," naïvely remarked: "Well, what if I did? They were *my* children, and who had a better right?"

What an outspoken editor of a local paper, the *Gazette du Peuple*, wrote more than twenty years ago applies to the condition of affairs in Haiti to-day: "For sixty-eight years, or from the date of our national existence, what have we done? Nothing, or almost nothing. All our constitutions are defective, all our laws are incomplete, our customs badly administered, our navy is detestable, our police ill-organized, our army in a pitiable state, our finances rotten to the base, the legislative power is not understood and never will be, the primary elections are neglected, and our people do not feel their importance. Nearly all our public edifices are in ruins; the public instruction is almost entirely abandoned."

## HAITI, THE "HOME OF THE VOODOO"

Aboriginal name of the island—Altitudes of its mountains—Description by an old writer—A country to be avoided—The Black Republic, according to Saint John—Where Voodooism flourishes and cannibalism is said to be practiced—Land of the *loup-garou*—The "goat without horns"—An American botanist on Haiti—Toussaint l'Ouverture not now revered in Haiti as of old—Because he is a colored man, not black—Tribes from which the Haitian negroes descended—The basis of their language the Congo tongue—the family that introduced the serpent worship—When the first slaves were taken to Haiti-Santo Domingo—A brief revolutionary chronicle—When the Haitians expelled the French with "Yellow Jack" to aid them—Their policy of isolation—Where the white man is discredited; though the black female sometimes marries him—How the aristocracy has suffered—Haitian revolutions are "family affairs," and the whites must not intrude—But they sometimes are slain by stray bullets—A list of Haiti's various rulers—Some of them served out their terms—Nineteen rulers, including one "king," one "emperor," and seventeen despots.

**T**HE aboriginal name of the island, signifying the high, or mountainous country, describes it in a single word. The island of Hispaniola, or Haiti-Santo Domingo, contains 28,250 square miles, of which 10,200 square miles, or a little more than one-third, is comprised in the Haitian portion. Not only is this the most mountainous island of the West Indies, but it can boast the highest peaks in the Antilles, for the dominating peak of the Cibao, or central cordillera, Monte Tina, is estimated to be over 11,000 feet in altitude, ex-

ceeding Turquino of Cuba and the Blue Mountain Peak of Jamaica by more than 3000 feet.

Given, then, a congeries of cloud-piercing mountains surrounded by a tropical sea, with ever-blowing winds beating against their peaks and slopes, the moisture condensed from which furnishes nourishment for forests of perennial verdure, with deep ravines and smiling valleys, through which course roaring rivers, rippling streams, and you have the essentials for what Haiti veritably is, a natural paradise.

Says an English gentleman of high attainments, one who resided in Haiti in official capacity for more than twenty years: "I have traveled in almost every quarter of the globe, and I may say that, taken as a whole, there is no finer island than that of Santo Domingo-Haiti. No country possesses greater capabilities, or a better geographical position, more variety of soil, of climate, and of production, with magnificent scenery of every description, and hillsides where the pleasantest of health-resorts might be established."

"And yet," he goes on to say, "it is now the country to be most avoided, ruined as it is by a succession of self-seeking politicians, without honesty or patriotism, content to let the people sink to the condition of an African tribe, that their own selfish passions may be gratified."

In other words, the gifts of nature have not been appreciated as they should have been, and there seems to have been a perversion of the divine intent: that the best gifts of God should go to those best capable of appreciating them. Here in Haiti we have an Eden, no doubt; but also a serpent, collectively represented by the black population, and specifically by the African sorcery of the Voodoo, or *Vaudoux*.

That is, the gentleman just quoted would have it appear so, for he is no other than Sir Spencer Saint John, one-time Her Britannic Majesty's minister resident at Port au Prince, and whose book, "The Black Republic," contains a scathing arraignment of the Haitians, together with details of the revolting practices of the Vaudoux and the cannibals, who reside in the most beautiful country that America can boast. It was published fifteen years ago, yet the circumstantial accounts narrated in this book of horrors have never been refuted. In fact, no one who has visited Haiti and remained there any length of time can escape the conviction that voodooism, and occasionally cannibalism, are still practiced by the people living in districts remote from the coast and important centers of population.

This is not saying that all, nor any large porportion, of the Haitians, follow the precepts of the sorcerers, the serpent-worshippers; but that they have permeated the population in every direction. The writer has had occasion to verify these accounts of Saint John (not the "Divine," if you please,—in Haiti) in conversation with respectable residents of Port au Prince and Cape Haitien, few of whom had the hardihood to deny the existence of the evils described.

There is too deep a belief in the almost preternatural power of the *papa-lois* and *maman-lois* (high priest and priestess of the Vaudoux), and the dread of the terrible *loup-garou*—the human hyena that kidnaps children, buries them alive, and then resurrects them for the sacrifices—is too pervasive and real, to permit of denial by those who have to live in Haiti and endure the evils they cannot remedy.

The Haitians will tell you that it is none of your busi-





Palm-Thatched Hut of the Mountaineers



ness, and that, at all events, you should not try to attract attention to the bad qualities of a few, to the exclusion of their innumerable virtues. Perhaps this is true, for that the natives of Haiti have many virtues, and among them those of hospitality and generosity, no one who has lived among them will deny. So, let us content ourselves with merely mentioning the fact that the Voodoo does exist in the island, that it is probably a survival of African fetichism, and that the worship of the serpent (the great green, harmless snake of the island) does not necessarily imply a belief in cannibalism. Now and then, it is affirmed, in the frenzy of the serpent dance, the worshipers will be content with nothing less than the sacrifice of the "goat without horns," or in other words, a living child; but as it is usually a colored or negro child, "furnished for the occasion" by some one of the revelers, the white person has really no reason for interference—so the Haitians say.

This is, perhaps, an extreme expression of their resentment at the intrusion of white people into their affairs. They cannot understand, inasmuch as they themselves remain at home and attend to their own affairs, why the white man, or woman, should take a particular interest in their home life and customs.

The Haitians, "according to St. John," are quite as black as painted; and yet he lived for years among them, and at last escaped with his life, to malign and traduce them—according to the Haitians. He was there in a diplomatic capacity, and presumably was not given to wandering in the forests looking for spooks. Hear, then, the testimony of an American botanist, who visited the island in 1903, and who did go into the deep woods and live among the primitive people there.

“Haiti,” he says, “is a land of vast mountain chains, rising 8000 feet in the air, overlapping and entangling each other in inextricable confusion; unpierced by the rail, threaded only by bridle paths; clothed with tremendous tropical forests, in which splendid hard-wood trees, almost worth their weight in gold in the markets of the world, fall and die of old age, untouched by the ax.

“Throughout these mountains are little palm-leaf huts, perched on some overhanging cliff, or beside some deep ravine, the home of negro peasants, cultivating their banana patches and living almost as primitive a life as their race sustains in the heart of Africa. It is a land of peaks, and these gigantic needles, clear in the morning sun, or rising like misty islands from the rolling sea of afternoon clouds, make an endless vista of wild and magnificent mountain scenery. It is a land of gold and silver, copper, iron, and coal, of which the surface is hardly scratched; a land of almost infinite possibilities, which is not, and never can be, developed under the present conditions; a land ruled by black men—not by mulattos, but by black men alone.

“The black intends to keep his country for himself. In the capital, Port au Prince, this black man, when high in power, will generally be found a cultivated, polished, French negro, educated in Paris and a frequent visitor to that city, living in a pleasant tropical bungalow, driving a handsome turnout, formally calling on the distinguished white stranger, and inviting him to dinner. And, back in the mountains this black man, perfectly illiterate, still conducts his Voodoo ceremonies, and makes human sacrifices. It is off in these remote regions that the Voodoo practices are kept up. Of course, I did not see them; no white man ever does. But everyone in the island admits that



they continue, and with human sacrifice, in spite of the Government's efforts to stop them."

"Of course I did not see them;" the Haitian points triumphantly to that admission, and demands that the white man produce proof of guilt on the part of the black man. But, though he himself saw no human sacrifices, Mr. St. John adduces proofs enough in his pages, citing from local newspapers, and giving the evidence of at least one priest, who saw a child strung up by its feet, and its throat cut, when the "goat without horns" was demanded as a sacrifice.

Let us turn, however, to the more pleasing features of life in Haiti, and so far as possible ignore the presence of the black man from Africa, whose presence in this paradise is at best an accidental intrusion. He was brought here by the white man, as a slave; and, by a sort of poetic justice, it was in this island of Santo Domingo, where slavery was first introduced into America, that it was also first abolished. The Haitian negro, also, has the credit of having been instrumental in abolishing it, when he became numerous enough, and when the events of the French revolution made it possible to form the desirable conjunction. Toussaint l'Ouverture was Haiti's George Washington; but as he was a colored man, in whose veins ran the blood of the hated "*blanc*," he is not held in so high esteem as the great Christophe, or as Dessalines, (1804-1820), the latter of which precious pair of barbarians said in his proclamation of 1804: "Your friends, victims of the French—why delay to appease their manes? What—the ashes of your relations in the grave, and you have not avenged them?"

That proclamation was issued in the year 1804, January first of which year is the date of the Haitian Independ-

ence, one hundred years ago. Twelve years previously both whites and blacks had vied with each other in committing atrocities only paralleled by those then transpiring in France, and which were the inciting causes in Haiti. Both whites and blacks broke their prisoners on the wheel; a white planter was forced to eat his wife's flesh, after she had been killed; and the ears of prominent white planters were worn by the blacks as cockades!

But, as already mentioned, the blacks were apt pupils in the school of atrocity. Originally descended from some of the most savage races or families of Africa, some thirty in number, they furnished the proper stock for the engrafting of scions of the white man's deviltries. There were Congos, Senegals, Yolofs, Foulahs, Bambaras, Socos, Sofos, Fantins, Popos, Benins, and a score of other families having a common racial origin, nearly all from the west coast of the "Dark Continent." The basis of their language as spoken now in the Creole dialect, or patois, is the Congo tongue; but the language of the Vaudoux is Ardra, to which family belongs the honor of having introduced the serpent worship into the island. While French (and Parisian French, at that) is spoken by the better classes, among the common people a Creole jargon is used, an abbreviated form of French, in which "conjunctions and pronouns are mercilessly sacrificed."

Slavery was introduced into the Santo Domingo, or Spanish, portion of the island in 1506, and into Haiti in the seventeenth century. The buccaneers all had slaves—all who could afford them—and as early as 1681 there is a record of a cargo of African slaves being sold for seven hundred pounds of sugar each, "sucking infants to go with the mother, without account."

After Dessalines and Christophe had aped royalty a

a few years, and the island had come under Petion, the capital of the mulatto moiety of the republic was virtually at Port au Prince for several years, where it actually is at the present time. General Boyer, whose father was a mulatto tailor and his mother a Congo negress, succeeded Petion as dictator, and under him the two halves of Haiti were united into one government. His was the longest reign the distracted country had experienced, lasting twenty-three years.

After Boyer came the deluge of aspirants to the throne or presidential chair—call it what you will—which has been the curse of Haiti to the present time. The blacks were royalists by profession, even during the time of the directory and the revolution in France, so that the buffoonery of Dessalines and Christophe, when they proclaimed themselves respectively as emperor and king, was quite acceptable to the majority of their subjects. At heart the Haitians are royalists to-day; that is, they prefer the pomp and ceremonials of courts to the plain simplicity of a republic. They like show and glitter, frills and furbelows, gold lace and epaulets, cocked hats and cock's feathers, and it was a sad day for the masses when the grand marshal, grand almoner, master of ceremonials, Knights of Saint Henry, "princes of the blood," dukes, counts, barons, chevaliers, etc., were abolished. But for their inclination to reduce everybody and everything to the dead level of barbarism, they would take to a re-establishment of royalty as easily as a duck to water.

This was proved fifty-five years ago when Soulouque, an illiterate and superstitious black, declared himself "emperor," under the title of "Faustin I.," and revived the old "nobility" of the Marmalades and Limonades. But after the novelty had passed the black baby cried for a

new toy, and as their emperor and his court had become the laughing stock of the civilized world, even obtuse and impervious Haiti was forced to repudiate him. A revolt was successfully conducted by one Geffrard, who not many years after followed Soulouque to Jamaica, an exile, both having, it was reported, plundered the government of millions. Geffrard was a mulatto, but his successor, Salnave, was a black soldier, who, "elected" President in 1867, was driven from power and shot in his own doorway by orders of his successful rival, Saget.

And so they went, blacks and mulattos alternating, few of Haiti's "presidents" ever completing their terms of office. Jamaica became the Mecca for ex-presidents of Haiti, and there are several there now, who only saved their black skins by suddenly crossing the channel and putting themselves under the folds of the British flag.

All the settlers of French extraction having been murdered, all their property not claimed by their illegitimate children was absorbed by the state, and as all the country mansions had been destroyed, they can be traced to-day only by their ruins.\*

The sugar plantations had been destroyed, and have never been restored; but the coffee trees planted by the French, and seedlings from them, still flourish, and it is chiefly upon their products that the Haitians subsist.

\* "What was the condition of the Haitian negroes a hundred years ago? They were slaves. They were treated like beasts. They were compelled to work like machines in the field. They could not read. They could not write. They were not even good artisans, because they were not allowed to learn anything. The sanctity of their homes was held at naught and profaned; their daughters, their wives, were mere pastime for their white masters. Their degradation was complete." — *Minister J. N. Léger in the North American Review.*



Even so early as 1805 the crop of the year exceeded 30,000,000 pounds, or enough to load fifty large ships. Add to the coffee crop the logwood and mahogany, the natural fruits and vegetables, the fish of the rivers and the sea, and take into account the glorious climate, that requires neither clothes nor fuel for the dwellers there, and we have some of the requirements for a lazy man's elysium.

Some labor is necessary, of course, to cut logwood and mahogany, and it requires a little exertion to pick up the coffee berries; but other than this the Haitians of the interior districts exert themselves hardly at all. The black peasantry of the hills bring down the produce of the old plantations, where it is taken in hand by the politicians who control the customs, and, needless to say, the bulk of the proceeds is appropriated. As the only revenue is derived from the customs at the ports, the most desirable governmental positions are, of course, those that enable their occupants to get their hands on the exports and imports. There is a Haitian proverb that it is no crime to steal from the state. "*Prendre l'argent de l'état ce n'est pas volé.*" The collector of the port "rules the roost," until he is removed, or "promoted," when another is given a chance to dip into the treasury. No ruler has arisen since the emancipation having the interests of the people really at heart; no great public work has ever been undertaken for the improvement of the country; the only structures of importance, with very few exceptions, are those left by the French, and these are, most of them, in ruins. Buildings destroyed by fire or earthquake are never replaced, and the nearest approach to rebuilding is seen in the slab shanty leaning against the walls of some large structure that has been demolished.

We have seen who were the ancestors of the people at present dominant in Haiti, who, always in fear of their more powerful white neighbors, have enacted that the pale-faces shall not directly acquire any real estate in the country. Even if they marry Haitian women they cannot inherit any landed property, but only the proceeds of it when sold at auction.

“They can be merchants, artists, mechanics, professors, teachers, clerks, and engineers,” says a native writer; “but are barred from the bench and the bar, military honors, and civil distinctions.” In social life, however (the Creole goes on to assure them), and in callings for which they are legally qualified, “they are treated with all the courtesy and regard to which their character entitles them. Exemplary conduct on their part always enables them to overcome the social disadvantages attaching to their unfortunate color”—or rather, lack of it!

In short, Haiti is the one country in the world where it is discreditable to be a white man. Still, it is confidently asserted, the colored females manifest a preference for suitors of the Caucasian race, notwithstanding this bar sinister on their escutcheon, and will marry them despite their disabilities—always provided, of course, that they have money, and can boast respectable parentage.

The aristocracy of the island, having suffered considerably from the weeding-out process so ruthlessly applied by the blacks, cannot muster a corporal's guard, at present, the times having sadly changed since the good old days of King Henri and the Emperor Faustin I., when the dukes of Marmalade and Limonade were flourishing. The only one the writer was ever privileged to gaze upon was clad in faded and ragged regimentals, very much out at the elbows, and mounted on a sorry nag, the visible

ribs of which he vainly prodded with enormous spurs fixed to bare and bony heels. But he wore a tattered chapeau with a rooster's feathers in it, and his ebony features were stamped with the dignity descended from an immemorial ancestry!

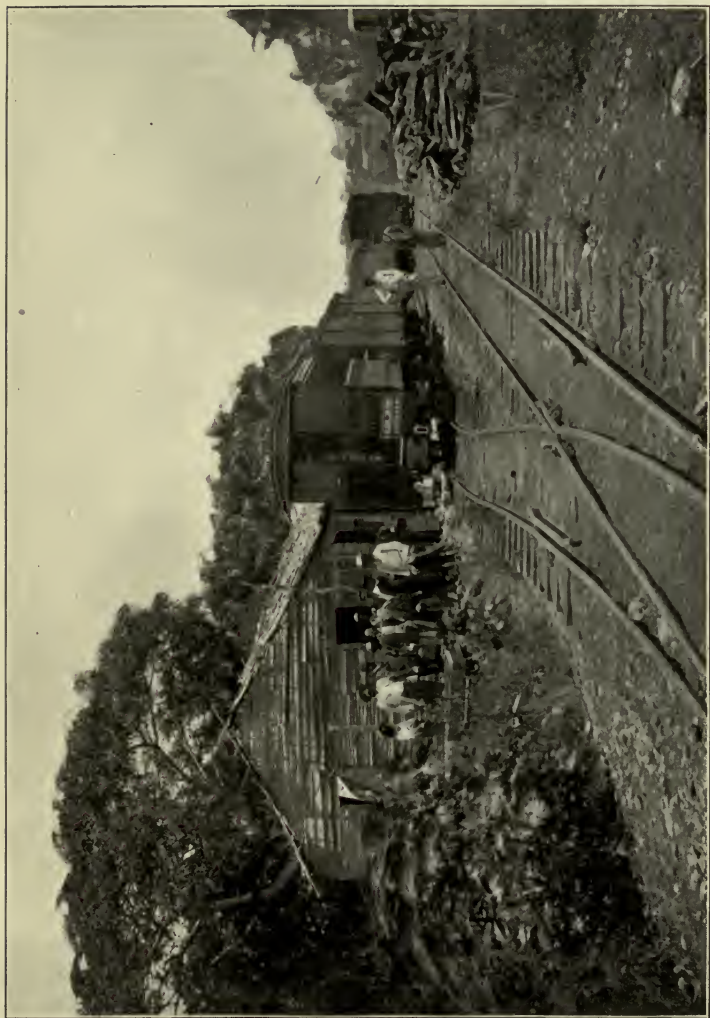
It may be true, as the Haitians assert, that their frequent revolutions are strictly family affairs, and that the foreigner is perfectly safe provided he goes into hiding while the fighting continues; but the fact remains that very few foreigners in Haiti ever die of old age! In a land where somebody or other is always out gunning for somebody else, there is danger, an ever-present danger, of being shot. It may not be with intention; but therein the real danger lies; for no Haitian was ever known to hit what he fired at—though he is sure to hit somebody, and that somebody is usually the "highly respected foreigner!" Even an execution is no exception to the rule, for it requires whole volleys of musketry to slay one solitary victim, and it rarely happens that he does not have several innocent attendants to the spirit land, slain by bullets that went astray.

Of Haiti's nineteen rulers, including a "king" and an "emperor," and all of them dictators or despots, four, only, completed their terms of office; two died in office; two were killed; one committed suicide; one "abdicated" (under compulsion); eight were exiled; one is still on probation. These facts speak for themselves, and may account for the reticence of the Haitians in respect to matters political.

1. Dessalines, killed by his troops, in 1806.
2. Pétion, died in office, in power 12 years, 1818.
3. Christophe, committed suicide in 1820.
4. Boyer, exiled, after 23 years in office, 1843.

5. Hérard Rivière, exiled, after one year, 1844.
6. Guerrier, died in office, one year, 1845.
7. Pierrot, elected 1845, abdicated next year.
8. Riché, proclaimed in 1846, died next year.
9. Soulouque, elected 1847; "emperor," 1849; exiled 1859.
10. Geffrard, president till 1867; exiled.
11. Salnave, president, ousted and shot, 1870.
12. Nissage-Saget, 1870-74; completed his term.
13. Domingue, seized government, 1874; expelled, 1876.
14. Boisrond-Canal, 1876; expelled from Haiti, 1879.
15. Salomon, 1879-88; died in exile.
16. Legitime, 1888, one year, driven out and exiled.
17. Hyppolite, 1889-96; died in office. Poisoned (?).
18. Simon Sam, 1896-1903; filled full term and retired.
19. Nord Alexis, 1903; at last accounts in power.





Puerto Plata—Santiago Railroad



## XI

### MISGOVERNED SANTO DOMINGO

Richly endowed Santo Domingo—How the Indians were mistreated—Santiago, City of the Caballeros—Railroads and natural highways—Columbus and the chain of forts he built—"Sons of Somebody" subjected to African "Sons of Nobody"—The degradation of the Dominicans—The late President Ulises Heureaux, called by his people "Lilis"—The despot of Santo Domingo, whose victims were numbered by hundreds—A diplomat, a linguist, and a brute—Assassinated by the son of a man he had killed—His unique personality—The two curses of the Black and Brown Republics—African inertia and atavism—Aspirants for the presidency in Sto. Domingo—Condition of the government to-day, hopelessly bankrupt—What constitutes a "revolutionist"—A personal view of "Lilis"—An offer to loan the bones of Columbus for a consideration—What the consideration was to be—Official document in proof of the assertion that the offer of a loan was made.

**I**T seems an anomaly of history that an island boasting the oldest city on American soil, and among the first discovered by Columbus, in 1492, should be the least known of the West Indies; yet this may be said of Hispaniola (or Haiti-Santo Domingo), first settled between the years 1493 and 1496, and since occupied by people of a race alien to its aboriginal inhabitants. These latter were long ago exterminated, though at the time the island was discovered they numbered more than a million. Their blood flows in the veins of many an islander, but mingled with that of the conquerors, and

also merged in that sanguineous stream which for centuries followed thitherward from Africa.

It is not Santo Domingo's fault that it has not occupied a more prominent position in American affairs. Richly endowed by nature, with the most delightful climate imaginable, with a vegetation comprising all the products of the tropics and semi-tropics; streams of purest water sparkling in the sun; hills and headlands presenting the most extensive and magnificent views of palm-covered plains and varied forests; mountains (the central cordilleras) rising to the clouds and containing rich deposits of gold; fine harbors, outlets to an interior country of surpassing fertility; all these it has. Nature has done much for Santo Domingo; it could hardly have done more; and man, also, has done much—all he could, in fact—to pervert the evident designs of a beneficent Providence.

Yes, man has proved recreant to the trust imposed in this instance. Beginning with the times of Columbus, everything seems to have missed its mark. Apologists for Columbus may tell you that he had vast, even insuperable difficulties to contend with; moralists may animadvert upon his career, as an object lesson of what should have been avoided; but the fact remains that Santo Domingo fared badly at his hands, and the aborigines fared worse. To paraphrase that couplet anent the Pilgrim Fathers:

The conquistadores fell on their knees;  
Then they fell on the aborigines.

They smote them, hip and thigh; and, moreover, they smote off their heads by basketfuls, it being a common practice for those noble hidalgos who came over with and shortly after Columbus to try the temper of their "Toledos" upon the Indian skull.



“It is a fine morning, let’s go out and crack a skull,” seems to have been the customary remark; at all events, the historians tell us that the beheading of Indians was their regular matutinal pastime.

What with the unrestrained inclination of the conquistadores to decimate the aborigines, and the severe tasks they imposed upon them in the fields and mines, the Indian soon became a negative, then an exceedingly scarce, commodity. This term is used advisedly, for the poor Indian was considered as something less than the lower animals and was bought and sold, as the produce of the land. A superficial regard was paid to his soul, perhaps, inasmuch as the missionaries (and among them the great and good Las Casas, who resided in the island many years) entered their protests regularly and called down upon the Spaniards the vengeance of Heaven.

Their protests did not appear to be effectual, however, for the exterminating process went on; the system of *encomiendas* was carried from Santo Domingo to Cuba, thence to Yucatan and Mexico; to the Spanish Main and Peru. For Cortés, Pizarro, Balboa, and many other Spaniards whose names are now secure in Fame’s temple, had their first training in Santo Domingo. It was not only the colonizing center of the then New World, but also the home of its barbarities, in which the conquistadores, many of them, first fleshed their swords; first spilled the blood of innocent, inoffensive Indians.

If one would know how, at least in one instance, nature’s best intentions have miscarried, he should visit the city of Santiago de los Caballeros, in Santo Domingo. Situated at an elevation of 500 feet above the sea, on a plateau in the center of a vast valley, bounded on the north by the Monte Cristi range of mountains, and on

the south by the cordillera of the Cibao, it possesses a salubrious climate and attractive scenery. The bluff upon which it was built is washed by the waters of the Yaqui, called by Columbus *Rio del Oro*, or River of Gold, on account of the precious grains he found in its sands. The Yaqui rises in the southern cordilleras and flows at first northerly toward the site of Santiago, then turns northwesterly, running all the way through a valley of its own name to the Bay of Manzanillo, where it meets the sea near the boundary line between Santo Domingo and Haiti, not far from Monte Cristi.

From the Santiago watershed also flow, southeasterly, streams which unite to form another large river, the Yuna, which empties into the Bay of Samana; thus the city has natural outlets east and west, and is the distributing center for an immense region rich in mineral and vegetable products. It is situated about equi-distant, 100 miles, from the bays of Manzanillo and Samana, and from its commanding position has long been the objective point of railroads from either coast. At present there is a railroad from the roadstead of Sanchez, in the bight of Samana, to within about twenty miles of Santiago, the inland terminal being at Concepcion de la Vega, one of the ancient settlements of the island; and another connecting Santiago with Puerto Plata.

It was originally the intention of the builder of the first line to connect both bays, uniting such towns and cities as Moca, La Vega, Santiago, and San Lorenzo, with Sanchez, and the Bay of Manzanillo or Monte Cristi, at either end. But the many obstacles incident to railroad construction in a tropical country, where a corrupt government granted land to which it had no title, and mean-spirited citizens insisted upon extortionate damages for

the taking of properties to which they laid claim, proved too much for the projector of this enterprise.

A great natural highway, however, runs from one end of this double valley to the other, and though from Samana to Santiago the ordinary road is almost impassable, especially in the rainy season, yet from Santiago to Monte Cristi wheeled vehicles may be driven at all times.

It was my fortune twice to pass over the gap existing between La Vega and Santiago, a distance of perhaps twenty miles, and it took me six hours, mounted on a good island pony, to accomplish the journey. The roadway was a perfect Sargasso sea of mudholes, in which human bipeds and beasts of burden floundered almost hopelessly, the former hopping from hummock to hummock, and the latter plunging belly deep in holes the length of their legs. This was one of the first highways ever surveyed in the New World, and yet to-day, doubtless, it is in worse condition than four hundred years ago, when the virgin forest first resounded to the clang of armor and the smiting of steel on stone, as the cavaliers of Columbus made their explorations.

When Columbus first marched his gallant caballeros through the "Hidalgos' Pass" in the Yaqui Mountains, setting out from the city he had founded in 1493, and called Isabella, he found, in the valley revealed as the crest was reached, a gentle and docile body of people, engaged in cultivating the soil and innocent pastimes.

In his second expedition to the interior, having ascended the Yaqui as far as the present site of Santiago and crossed the watershed, he was so overcome by the beauty of the great valley as seen from the hill of Santo Cerro that he fell on his knees and thanked God for the privilege

of beholding it. He called it the *Vega Real*, Royal Valley or Plain, since it surpassed in natural charms every scene he had ever looked upon.

This was in 1494; in 1495 he led his forces against the hitherto peaceful Indians and overwhelmed them with terrible slaughter, converting the hill of Santo Cerro, whence he had first viewed the beautiful Vega, and is said to have directed the battle, into a veritable Golgotha. Closely following upon that engagement, in which the backbone of an Indian rebellion was broken, came the establishment of the third in a chain of forts built to command the valley of Yaqui and the western Vega. It was called Concepcion, and after it the village of that name, still existing. Fort Concepcion de la Vega was destroyed by an earthquake in 1564, but remains of one of its bastions are still to be seen, as also portions of the bell tower of a church erected soon after it was built.

The year previous, in 1494, a settlement had been effected at a spot called Jacagua, about two or three miles from the site of Santiago, where a spring of delicious water and good soil made an excellent location. But ten years later, or in 1504, a body of hidalgos petitioned King Ferdinand of Spain for permission to locate upon the more commanding situation of Santiago, on the bluff above the river Yaqui.

They were, most of them, of noble blood—*hidalgos*, or *hijos de algos*, “sons of somebody”—and probably the pick of the conquistadores. Their request was granted, and also permission to distinguish their city by the appellation it so proudly insists upon to-day: *de los Caballeros*, “The City of the Gentlemen,” in itself a patent of nobility. At the outset a place of importance, soon outranking the city of Santo Domingo, which was founded by the



plebeian Bartholomew Columbus two years later, Santiago de los Caballeros has ever held itself to be the aristocratic capital.

It is pitiful, in view of the changes that have happened in the past centuries, to find the population of the island maintaining this distinction to-day; to-day, when the descendants of negro slaves claim to be the *caballeros*, and those of the conquistadores have nearly disappeared. Yet more pitiful is the fact that the descendants of those doughty conquerors, who, despite their cruelties, have won a meed of admiration for their bravery and unflinching endurance, have for many years been subject to the inferior race!

The white population of the island, all too few in number, has its largest representation here, and there are old families who can boast descent, more or less direct and contaminated with negro and aboriginal blood, from the intrepid companions of Columbus. I myself have seen, have purchased from their owners, rare old "Toledos" that doubtless came over with the conquerors—perhaps the very swords with which the valiant Spaniards were wont to cleave the skulls of inoffensive Indians—as we read was their daily custom of a morning, in order to keep their hands in, and to prove the keenness of their blades.

The degradation to which the Sons of Somebody have descended, and the poverty that would induce the parting with such precious heirlooms, are suggestive, to say the least. But what can you expect from a people who have been under the iron heel of oppression for many generations, who have been accustomed to look up to, and not down upon, the African sons of nobody?

It is difficult for the Anglo-Saxon, so-called, to survive three generations in the tropics, without physical

degeneration, even when dominant and aggressive. What, then, of these Latins who have maintained themselves without actual racial deterioration, and can boast—have the spirit left to boast—of their ancestral traditions?

Because of this distinguished ancestry, perhaps, the residents of Santiago have made many, though ineffectual, protests against the black and yellow domination which, since the expulsion of the Spaniards, has prevailed in Santo Domingo. Introduced to take the place of the fast-disappearing Indians (some historians say at the instance of Las Casas himself, though from the best of motives), the blacks from Africa finally became numerically superior to the whites—they and their various mestizos—and in the end predominated.

One of the most famous, and by all odds the greatest, of those usurpers with black blood in their veins was the late President, Ulises Heureaux, who was assassinated in 1899. He was an especial object of detestation to the caballeros, but rode over them rough shod. Not that "Lilis" (to use the diminutive by which his subjects generally spoke of him), was other than "the mildest-mannered man that ever cut a throat," or that the writer has any prejudice against him personally. But throats he cut—or men he shot, which amounts to the same thing—and many of them, merely to keep himself in power.

He seemed possessed of the idea that he was the man for the country; but, as he never did anything for the country except to continually squeeze it, that his coffers might be filled, the impression somehow got abroad that perhaps he was not the right man after all. He once told me, in conversation, that he rarely had a man shot for opinion's sake, or imprisoned that he did not soon release him. For, said he naively, in his quaint and broken

English, "What good it do me ef I kill he? Then he brother, he father, he wife—all make my enemy. But ef I put he in preeson, and then take he out, and feed he, and give he clothe, he's family all my frien'."

Notwithstanding this protest, there was a discrepancy between his theory and his practice, as several score of political victims might testify—peradventure they could revisit this world from which the astute "Lilis" so incontinently thrust them forth.

I remember that on my first visit to Santiago I carried a letter of introduction to a white man of high attainments, who honored me with an exceedingly generous hospitality. I departed for the hills in search of gold and ancient relics, and when I returned a few weeks later my talented host was not to be found. His house was there, but closed; his friends answered my queries evasively with suggestive shrugs of the shoulders, and it was some time before I learned that he had been taken suddenly to the capital and incarcerated in the castle. From the castle he was taken out and shot to death—so far as I could ascertain for no other reason than his aversion to the President.

No less than seventy such summary executions were charged upon "Lilis" after his downfall and death; and it was further charged that no man's life, no woman's virtue, was safe in Santo Domingo while he lived.

I do not make the charge, for it is common report in the island, that he played the tyrant as hardly the rôle was filled before for centuries. And yet "Lilis" had many good qualities. He was modest, and unquestionably brave; he spoke three languages, was a born diplomat and a past master in the art of political and other intrigue. How many bullets he carried in his body I do

not know; but several had found him out, and one of his arms hung useless from a wound received when he was fighting—for or against the government.

He may have made many mistakes during his long reign, but the final one consisted in shooting the wrong man! As long ago as 1884, it is said, he put to death one Caceres, a man of respectable family; and fifteen years later, in July, 1899, a son of this man shot him to death in the town of Moca, whither he had gone to arrange for a loan. Brave to the last, the President tried to draw his revolver and make stand against his foe; but he was taken by surprise, and fell to the ground shot through the heart. His guard fired several ineffectual shots at the assassin; but he escaped, and, the deed being done, was lauded as a hero all over the island.

Many a man had desired to kill "Lilis" before this event deprived the government of its head; many a man had attempted to do so, but the despot always got wind of the plots and turned the tables upon the conspirators. In 1894 he executed six ringleaders in a conspiracy against him, and the number of people he had put to death on various pretexts, without trial, is estimated at more than three hundred. But he was deprived of power and of life at the same moment, and others arose to misgovern the so-called republic.

Writing soon after President Heureaux was shot, I said that while his death had released the island from despotism, it might plunge it into anarchy; and subsequent events seemed to bear out that prediction, for soon there rose Jimenez, Vasquez (whose cousin shot "Lilis"), Woz y Gil (who was at the time Dominican consul in New York), and finally Morales, to dispute with Vice President Figueróa the succession to execu-



tive power. The latest happenings, the "revolutions" and counter-revolutions; the sending to Santo Domingo of an American war-ship and the shooting of an American marine, are events too fresh in memory to need especial mention.

The great Cuban patriot, General Maximo Gomez, has been frequently invoked (as a son of Santo Domingo) to aid one aspirant or another; but he told me himself, in Havana, that there was not an honest politician in the island. He might perhaps have made it more comprehensive; but he was speaking only of Santo Domingo.

It is the same old story: innumerable aspirants for the presidency, but only one presidential chair to be filled—at the time. If there could be introduced a certain sort of rotation in office, by which one of the gentlemen could be seated and held in power for the space, say, of a month, and then be induced to resign in favor of the "next," an element of stability might be introduced into Dominican affairs.

But the presidential bee is an inconsiderate insect—in Santo Domingo—as well as all-pervasive, for it seems to buzz in every ear at once. No sooner does one man feel that the salvation of his beloved country depends upon his election to the presidency, than at least a score of other "patriots" become convinced that they, too, were born especially for *presidentes*, and evince their determination in no unmistakable manner to carry out the evident designs of fate. The wonder is, not particularly that so many Dominicans are afflicted simultaneously with the presidential hankering, but that they can find so many adherents on the spur of the moment.

The average Dominican is accustomed to carry fire-arms almost from the time he can walk without assist-

ance, and he blindly adheres to whomsoever comes along first and makes the best offer for his services. That is, he adheres to him until his convictions are changed by a better offer; and this accounts for the fact that there are always so many revolutionists in the field and fighting so promiscuously. A government partisan one day may be a revolutionist the next, depending upon the celerity with which he can change his convictions and get outside the walls.

Generally speaking, a government soldier is one fighting behind the city walls; while a "revolutionist" is one without and wandering in the open. Of whatever party, however, the Dominican soldier is always the same in one respect—he cannot shoot. Were he a marksman of even average ability, the Republic would long ago have been deprived of its most eminent citizens, for it is doubtful if there lives any man of prominence in Santo Domingo who has not been shot at a number of times.

It also strikes the observer in the island with surprise that, with double the area of Haiti, Santo Domingo possesses only half the population of the "Black Republic." The generous rivalry going on between the two republics doubtless serves to keep down the population of both, and the time may come when, in the interests of civilization, some more powerful nation will step in to stay the slaughter. There are those, to be sure, who pretend that the interests of civilization can best be served by allowing it to proceed! but these, needless to say, are somewhat prejudiced.

Perhaps they are among those belonging to the rather large number of foreigners who have secured "concessions" from the government of Santo Domingo. Haiti never grants any concession to the white man, of what-

ever kind, having had one bitter experience at least, which has sufficed her for more than a century. The black man knows when he has enough; but the colored citizen of the Dominican half of the island has yet to learn.

Like his great contemporary, President Diaz, of Mexico, Heureaux wisely realized the value of foreign capital properly invested—that is, in such a manner that *it could not be withdrawn from the country*—and encouraged all enterprises to that end. This will account for the railroads in the island, such as that from the bay of Samana to the Vega or interior vale of Santo Domingo, and from Puerto Plata to Santiago. Also for the taking over by a foreign concern (originally Dutch, but now American) of the debt and the administration of the customs.

It is a tradition in Santo Domingo that no foreigner ever held the better end of a bargain with “Lilis”; nor, as to that matter, with any of his numerous successors. But there are several living witnesses to these things; let them come forward and testify.

This allusion to personal encounters with the presidents brings me to speak of a little enterprise which I myself once attempted to carry through. Not for my own benefit, but (as I viewed it then) for the benefit, or glorification rather, of the great United States. It was while serving in the capacity of commissioner to the West Indies for the Chicago exposition of 1893. Desiring to advance the interests of the exposition to the best of my ability, I conceived the design (as it was a “Columbian” exposition, and desirous of securing all relics of Columbus) of inducing the Dominicans to erect at Chicago a reproduction of the old tower that stands at the mouth of the Ozama River, the “Homenage,” and fill it with

relics of Columbus and his period. The President accepted my proposal with avidity, and sent his minister of public affairs to the consulate, where I made my headquarters, to negotiate.

I thought the way smooth for securing the object of my desires; but I had not counted upon that peculiar trait of the Dominican which (to state it mildly) attaches a mercenary value to patriotism. The minister of public affairs came and talked it over with me, and all seemed going along swimmingly until I happened to mention that the reproduction of the tower would probably cost his republic a matter of twenty thousand dollars or so.

He then made reply that they had considered this expenditure, and had concluded, in view of the poverty of their country, and inasmuch as all their revenues were hypothecated to the "Dutch loan," to ask the exposition managers for a *loan* of, say, \$100,000, from which they would be reimbursed to the amount of \$10,000 annually!

After I had recovered from the first shock of surprise, the humor of the incident struck me so forcibly that I resolved to go through with it to the end, in order to see to what lengths the government was ready to proceed. So I said that perhaps my people would erect the tower themselves, and then Santo Domingo would only have to fill it with her products, etc.

I was met with the astounding statement that what they wanted was the *loan*, from which we could deduct the \$20,000 in advance (a vast concession, which the minister rolled as a sweet morsel under his tongue), and we could fill it with what we pleased. And he added, bringing forward an argument which he evidently considered convincing, that if we would grant the loan (for Dominica to represent herself at the exposition), they



would send over "the most sacred remains of Don Christopher Columbus," which (as I knew) they still held conserved in their cathedral.

I was somewhat dubious about the bones of Columbus. Not that I had doubts as to their authenticity; but did have grave doubts as to the propriety of receiving them as an "exhibit."

I sought to minimize his claim by casually alluding to the doubts which existed as to their remains being the real and only legitimate bones of Columbus; but he was not to be "bluffed." We carried the matter before the President, with whom I had a personal interview. He was evidently the real author of the minister's suggestion, for, after listening to my protest against his government humiliating itself by asking a loan, instead of honoring itself by voluntary representation at the exposition, he replied:

"Now, Mistair Commissionaire, it ees not ze honaire zat we want, but ze loan. You may have ze honaire, my dear frien', but I have conclude zat to go zare eet ees necessarie to mek one leetle loan, and for zis loan I will pay seex per cent. eenterest, and will return eet at ze rate of ten souzand dollair evary year."

In order to understand the full significance of the offer made by the government of Santo Domingo, and at the same time clear up the mystery attaching to the two sets of "remains" left behind by Columbus when he died, let me explain:

We will grant that he died at Valladolid, Spain, 1506. After his demise his remains were taken to Seville, where they were deposited in the monastery of Las Cuevas; but as there was a clause in his last will and testament desiring that they might at some time be transported to

Santo Domingo, this depository was considered as temporary, though it was not until 1540 that his request was fulfilled.

In the lapse of centuries, and some say owing to the necessity for concealing his tomb for fear of sacrilege by Sir Francis Drake and other "English pirates" who were cruising in the Caribbean sea, the actual place of sepulture was lost sight of. Others of his name and family had been deposited there beneath slabs let into the pavement, but without distinctive inscriptions.

In 1795 the island passed to the French, and it was desired to remove the remains of Christopher Columbus to Havana; but nothing, however, could be found to identify his *boveda*, or vault.

A frigate was sent from Havana with orders to transport the great Columbus to Cuba, and it was necessary that his remains should be found.

Officials sounded the pavement, and, finding a slab that gave forth a hollow noise, excavated beneath and discovered fragments of bones and of a leaden case, which they took up with great care and bore to the frigate with vast pomp and ceremony. The *restos* were deposited in a niche made for the purpose in Havana Cathedral.

I would much rather believe that the bones of Columbus still remain in the land to which he gave a new continent and beneath the flag which he carried on his voyages of discovery.

Not that the Spaniards deserved well of Columbus, nor that he himself desired to rest in the soil of Spain; for they permitted him to die neglected, if not in poverty.

It would seem that his desire had been granted, and that his ashes "repose" in the island of Santo Domingo; but here again comes in the irony of a discriminating

fate. Not even Columbus, far-seeing as he was, could have divined that the island he had toiled for and fought for would pass into the hands of the descendants of the Africans taken there as slaves.

Negro slavery in America had its beginning in that very island of Santo Domingo. To-day we find the remote descendants of Africans who were torn from their homes by the Spaniards, and who wore their lives out beneath the lash of Spanish task-masters, exhibiting as the most precious of their treasures the remains of the man who laid the foundations of that slavery!

It is probable that the Spaniards took the ashes of Diego, the only legitimate son of Christopher Columbus, to Havana, and hence one hundred years later to Spain. I do not ask anyone to accept this statement on my assertion, but will now relate the discovery of the second set of "remains," upon which the Dominicans found their claim to the "real and only legitimate *restos*."

In 1877, while repairs were being made in the cathedral, a vault was discovered from which the workmen took a leaden casket containing not only fragments of bones, but a silver plate with an inscription setting forth that these were the remains of Don Cristobal Colon, discoverer of America, etc.

The leaden case also bore an inscription, "*Ilustre y esclarecido Varon, Don Cristobal Colon*," and there was likewise a bullet, which, it was claimed, Columbus had received in a skirmish with pirates in Africa. Here, then, was evidence in abundance—more than was actually necessary, in fact—that the *restos* had at last been found.

The island was shaken from center to circumference, as it was quickly realized what a valuable asset these

remains could be made and the Dominican authorities really rose to the occasion. They carefully collected the fragments of bones, ashes, bits of lead, and so forth, and had them placed, together with the leaden case, in an *urna*, or casket, of satinwood and glass. This casket was kept in a secure place, and three keys were provided, all of which were necessary to unlock it.

One key was in the custody of the cathedral chapter, another in the keeping of the President of the Republic, and the third of the *Ayuntamiento*, or city council.

At the time the "legitimate" remains were found another vault opened disclosed the *restos* of Don Luis Columbus, Duke of Veragua, and as it was pretty well known that the third Columbus interred in the Presbytery was Don Diego, who at one time was viceroy of Santo Domingo, upon this inference is based the assumption that it was he who was taken away in 1795.

At Pajarito, the hamlet that was shelled by the "Newark" on February 11, 1904, still stands the old chapel from the doorway of which Bobadilla proclaimed his authority to supersede Columbus, just prior to sending him to Spain in chains. It would seem that this precious old city, with its historic relics and memorials of an interesting past, has a rather precarious tenure of existence, what with the bombardment it has undergone and is still likely to be subject to from one revolutionary party or the other.

Whether they will hold the relics of Columbus in greater veneration than they do the ancient structures they so recklessly turn their fire against, remains to be seen. It so happens, however, that some of the most precious of American memorials are in possession of men of alien race and sympathies.



Whether they have a proper regard for them, merely as relics of the historic past, may perhaps be gathered from my own experiences. I refer now to the story respecting the alleged sale of the remains.

It is not true that the remains of Columbus were offered to me on sale, but it is true that there was a tentative memorandum drawn up regarding their transfer to this country as an "exhibit." This memorandum is on official paper bearing the imprint: "*Republica Dominicana, Ministerio de Fomento y Obras Publicas.*"

The substance of the document is as follows:

1.—The Dominican Government is enthusiastic in its desire to assist at said Exposition in 1893, for the purpose of exhibiting there the products of the island, natural, mineral, industrial, etc.

2.—The Dominican Government would include in its exhibits the remains of the great discoverer, Don Christopher Columbus; provided, however, that the Government of the United States of America, or duly accredited officials, would so manifest their desire, and would guarantee to receive the precious relics with all the honors due to a personage of the exalted station of the great admiral; also with the proper guarantees for their restoration.

3.—It would be expected that the Government of the United States would waive the collection of duties on such articles as were intended for exhibition, and that they might be sold at its close.

4.—In order to accomplish its desires, it will be necessary for the Dominican Government to effect a loan, in the United States, of one hundred thousand dollars (\$100,000), in gold, interest on the same to be at six (6) per cent.; and the principal to be refunded at the rate of ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) annually.

As security for this loan, the Dominican Government will pledge a portion of its annual revenues, guaranteed by an order on the *Casa de Recaudacion*, and for the return of the proportional amount as agreed upon.

5.—It is agreed that if the Commissioner be successful in securing this loan (as above mentioned) of \$100,000, he may

reserve the sum of twenty thousand dollars (\$20,000) for the construction of a Government building at Chicago, said building to be an exact reproduction of the old castle in this Capital, known as the "Homenage," and conforming to the plans of the architect in charge.

6.—To accompany the precious remains of Don Christopher Columbus during their transportation and throughout the period of their repose at the Exposition, the Dominican Government will designate a commission of its most distinguished citizens, to the number of six, who will guard these sacred relics while they are in the United States of America, and until they are again returned to their final resting-place in this Capital.

This precious document, a speaking commentary on the astuteness of Dominican diplomacy, was signed by both the Minister of Public Affairs and myself, in the presence of the late President Heureaux, who looked smilingly on, nodding his approval.

That "Minister de Fomento" was Señor Woz y Gil, who was ousted from the presidential chair in 1903, having succeeded, after several intermediaries, the gallant and sanguinary "citizen president" of Santo Domingo who now sleeps his last with the great church of Santiago de los Cabelleros as his solitary tomb.

## XII

### TREASURES IN SEA AND SOIL

Santo Domingo girdled with sunken treasure galleons—The Treasure-trove of Silver Shoals—The fleet that went down off Puerto Plata—What Davy Jones's locker contains—Search of Sir William Phipps for the Spanish silver—Cotton Mather's account of the voyage—How the Phipps fortune was acquired—Silver bullion brought up by the ton—Lion's share appropriated by the Duke of Albemarle—What his heirs did with it—The harbor of Puerto Plata—Beautiful bay and harbor of Samana—The Samana peninsula and Bay of Arrows—Santa Barbara, Sanchez, Savana de la mar, La Vega, Moca, and Macoris—The railroad to the interior—When Samana came near being annexed to the United States—The regions for agricultural and mineral development—When gold was first discovered by Europeans in America, and where it was found—The River of Golden Sands—Where gold may be found at the present time—The natives wash it out with a calabash—Handfuls of nuggets and where they were obtained—The mystery of the Cibao country.

**W**HILE I was in the town of Puerto Plata, at one time, the people there were greatly excited over the rumored discovery of some silver bars, found on or near a submerged reef known as the Silver Bank or Shoals. Inquiry revealed the fact that the submarine treasure had probably lain beneath the water for more than two hundred years, and further research convinced me that a one-time resident of my own State, Massachusetts, had searched for, and had found some, of the treasure alluded to.

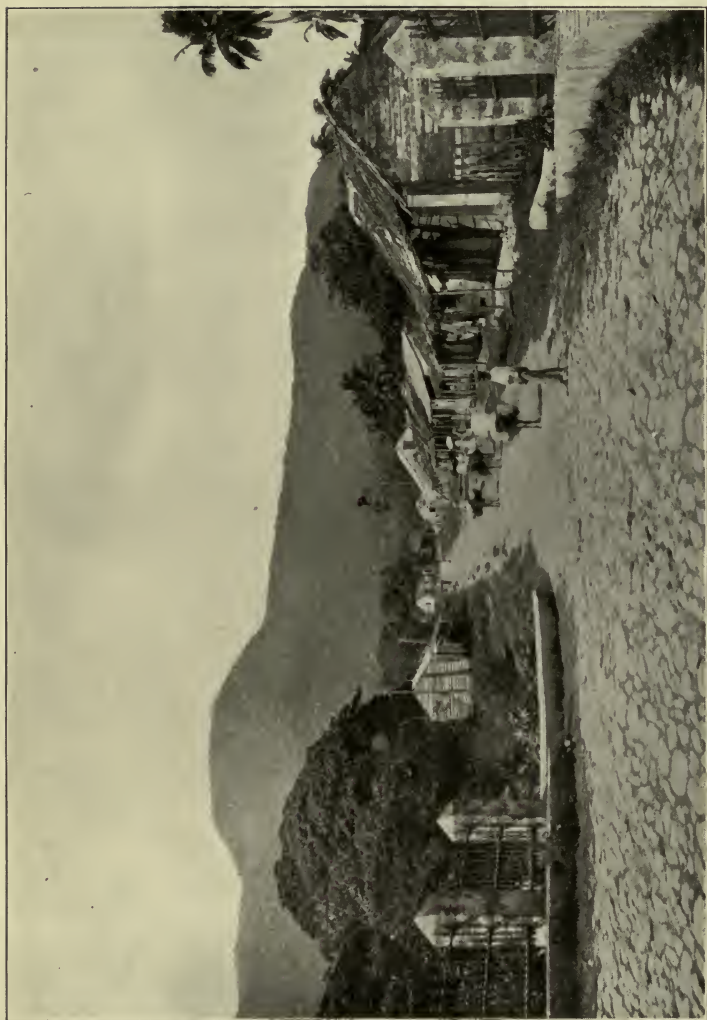
West Indian waters still conceal the wrecks of many Spanish galleons sent to the bottom long ago by buccaneers, by storm and hurricane; and in fact the island of Santo Domingo is completely girdled with them. Probably the richest treasure ever sunk in any sea was that contained in the galleon which sailed from the port of Santo Domingo in 1502, with Governor Bobadilla, the persecutor of Christopher Columbus, aboard. It was lost in a terrible hurricane, predicted by Columbus, who was the "weather sharp" of those days, and it lies off the southeast coast of the island, near the islet of Saona.

Among other treasures contained in this galleon was a mass of pure gold, the largest nugget ever found in the West Indies, perhaps in the world. As neither wreck nor gold has yet been located, there is still a tempting prize for some daring diver with modern equipment to recover.

Four hundred years have passed since Bobadilla and his ill-gotten gold went down, and two hundred and seventy since the Puerto Plata treasure went to Davy Jones's locker. The latter was contained in a Spanish fleet homeward bound from the Isthmus laden with silver from the mines of Peru. The commander of the fleet was bearing up for the Bahamas channel, after passing through which he would have an open passage all the way to Spain. But Fate, in the shape of a great storm, interposed, and the entire fleet went to the bottom not far distant from Puerto Plata on the north coast of Santo Domingo.

As to the sinking of this fleet with its vast treasure of silver and rich freightage of pearls and gold, an authentic account has been preserved in the pages of Cotton





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Mather's "Magnalia Christi Americana," published two hundred years ago. It was not the erudite Mather's intention, perhaps, to chronicle the happenings of a treasure-seeking expedition *per se*, so much as to narrate the adventures of a great hero of his, Sir William Phipps, whose fortune and fame were based upon this expedition. As an account by a contemporary, this narrative telling how the "Phipps' fortune" was made, is exceedingly valuable as well as interesting, and especially in connection with the investigation now under way for the recovery of treasure that is supposed to have been left behind after Sir William's search in 1683.

"The subject of this sketch," says Mather, writing a few years after he had relinquished his fanatical pursuit of the witches of Salem, "was born February 2, 1650, at a despicable plantation on the River Kennebec and almost the furthest village of the eastern settlement of New England. . . . His mother had no less than twenty-six children, whereof twenty-one were sons; but equivalent to them all was William, one of the youngest, who lived with his mother, his father dying, until he was eighteen years old. . . . He then betook himself a hundred and fifty miles afield, even to Boston, the chief town of New England, where he learned, first of all, to read and write, followed the trade of ship carpenter for about a year, and by a laudable deportment he so recommended himself that he married a young gentlewoman of good repute, who was the widow of one Mr. John Hull. . . . And he would frequently tell the gentlewoman, his wife, that he would yet be Captain of a King's ship; that he would come to have the command of better men than he was now accounted; and that this would not be all that the Providence of God would bring him to;

that indeed he should be the owner of a fair brick house in the Green Lane of North Boston, etc. . . .

“Being thus of the true temper for the doing of great things and upon the advice received of a Spanish wreck about the Bahamas (said to have been given him by a smuggler), he took a voyage thither, but with little more success than what just served to furnish him for a voyage to England, whither he went in a vessel not much unlike that which the Dutchmen stamped on their first coins, with these words about it: ‘None can tell where Fate will bear me.’ . . .

“Having first informed himself that there was another Spanish wreck, wherein was lost a mighty treasure hitherto undiscovered, he had a strong impression upon his mind that he must be its discoverer, and he made such representations at White Hall that by the year 1683 he truly became the captain of a King’s ship, the ‘Algier Rose,’ a frigate of eighteen guns and ninety-five men. . . . In her he sailed to Jamaica, and thence to Hispaniola, where, by the policy of his address, he fished out of a very old Spaniard a little advice about the true spot where lay the wreck which he had been hitherto seeking: that it was upon a reef of shoals a few leagues to the northward of Port de la Plata [Puerto Plata] in Hispaniola, a port so called, it seems, from the landing of a shipwrecked company with a boatload of plate, saved out of a sinking frigate. . . . Nevertheless, he had to return to England [more likely to Jamaica] where at length he prevailed upon the Duke of Albemarle and some other persons of quality to fit him out again, and then set sail a second time for the fishing ground that had been so well baited half a hundred years before. (9) (9) (9)



“ Arriving with a ship and tender at Port de la Plata, the divers were sent to explore the ‘ Boilers,’ as the reefs of shoals were called, but they discovered nothing. At last, when about to return empty-handed and despondent, one of the divers was sent down to bring up a sea feather, which was espied attached to a rock; and he also brought up a surprising story, to wit, that he had seen great guns in the water world below, the report of which great guns [Mr. Mather’s pun] exceedingly astonished the whole company, who were at last assured that they had lit upon the true spot of ground which they had been looking for; and they were further confirmed in these assurances when, upon further diving, the Indian fetched up a ‘ sow ’—as they styled it—or a lump of silver, worth perhaps two or three hundred pounds. Upon this they prudently buoyed the place, that they might readily find it again, and then went back unto their captain, whom for a while they distressed with bad news, nothing but bad news; nevertheless, they so slipped the sow of silver on one side under the table that when he should look that way he might see that odd thing before him. At last he saw it and he cried out with some agony: ‘ Why, what is this? Whence comes this?’ And then, with changed countenances, they told him how and where they got it. ‘ Then,’ said he, ‘ thanks be to God, we are made!’ ”

“ And so away they went, all hands to work; and most happily they fell upon that room in the wreck where the bullion was stored up; and they so prospered in their new fishery that in a little while they had, without the loss of any man’s life, brought up thirty-two tuns of silver; for it was now come to measuring silver by tuns! Besides which, one Adderly of Providence [Bahamas],

who had formerly been very helpful to Capt. Phipps in the search for this wreck, did meet him now with a little vessel, and with his few hands took up about six tuns more.

“Thus did there come into the light of the sun a treasure which had been half a hundred years groaning under the water; and in this time there was grown upon the plate a crust like limestone, which crust being broke open, they knocked out whole bushels of rusty pieces-of-eight, which were grown thereinto.

“Thus did they continue fishing till, their provisions failing them, 'twas time to be gone. And it was remarkable that though the 'sows' came up still so fast that on the last day of their being there they took up twenty, yet it was afterwards found that they had in a measure wholly cleared that room of the ship where those massy things were stored.

“But there was one extraordinary distress which Capt. Phipps now found himself plunged into; for his men were come out with him upon seamen's wages at so much per month; and when they saw such vast litters of silver sows and pigs come on board at their captain's call, they knew not how to bear it, that they should not share all among themselves, and be gone to lead a 'short life and a merry one,' in a climate where it was so delightful to live. But still, keeping a most careful eye upon them, he hastened back to England [first to Port Royal, Jamaica, in all probability], though he left so much behind that many from divers parts made very considerable voyages of gleanings, after his harvest.”

From reading this involved narrative, it might be inferred that Capt. Phipps very thoroughly ransacked the sunken wreck off the reefs of Puerto Plata; but there is

no evidence that he found and searched more than a single galleon, while the Spanish records show, it is said, that a whole fleet was sunk.

No doubt can attach to the authenticity of the Mather narrative of Capt. Phipps's wonderful voyage; but if additional evidence were desired, it could be adduced from a history of Jamaica written more than a hundred years ago, in which is given a curious sequel to the adventure. In the year 1687, it says, Christopher, Duke of Albemarle, was appointed Governor of Jamaica. "This nobleman was the only son and heir of Gen. Monk, who had restored Charles II. Brought to beggary by vice and extravagance, he was reduced to the necessity of imploring bread from James I., and the king sent him to Jamaica, where he died soon after his arrival. He lived long enough, however, to collect a considerable sum of money for his creditors, for, entering into partnership with Sir William Phipps, who had discovered the wreck of a Spanish plate ship, he was greatly enriched.

"On the death of the Duke, his coadjutors in the diving business, many of whom were buccaneers, complained that they had not received their full share of the prize money, and her Grace, the Duchess, who had got possession of the treasure, refusing to part with a shilling, they formed a scheme to seize her person in the King's House at Spanish Town and carry her off. Luckily she received some intimation of the plot and communicated her apprehensions to the House of Assembly, who thereupon formed a committee of their ablest members to guard her day and night until she safely embarked in one of the King's ships for England.

"She arrived home with all her treasure, at the be-

ginning of June, 1688; but some years afterward fell into a state of imbecility, in the progress of which she pleased herself with the notion that the Emperor of China, having heard of her immense riches, was coming to pay her his addresses. She even made magnificent preparations for his reception.

“As she was perfectly gentle and good-humored in her lunacy, her attendants not only encouraged her in the folly, but contrived to turn it to good account by persuading a needy peer, the first Duke of Montague, to personate his Chinese majesty, and deceive her into wedlock, which he actually did; and with greater success than honesty by this means got possession of her wealth and then confined her as a lunatic.

“Cibber, the comedian, who thought the circumstance a good jest, introduced it on the stage, and it formed a scene in his play called ‘The Sick Lady Cured.’ Though her Grace survived her husband, the pretended Emperor, for many years, dying at last in 1734 at the age of ninety-eight, her frenzy remained to the last, and to the day of her death she was served on bended knee as the empress of China.”

Puerto Plata is the chief seaport of the north coast, and the brightest, most cleanly and most progressive of any town in the island. It derives its name from the time of Columbus, who called it the Port of the Silver Mountain, the beautiful elevation behind it being frequently capped by a wreath of silver clouds.

As a railroad connects the port with Santiago, and the adjacent country is rich, picturesque, and healthful, it is likely that Puerto Plata will become an attractive residential region, should peace ever prevail in Santo Domingo. There is a good landing-place in the shape of a



jetty thrust out from the shore; but as the water is shallow, the interesting sight is afforded of native ox-carts floating in the harbor, with the oxen attached wading about with the water up to their noses.

The harbor is small but deep, serving well for coast-wise commerce, but hardly sufficing for large steamers. The best harbor in Santo Domingo lies about a night's run to the southeast of Puerto Plata. This is its great natural basin and glorious harbor, Samana Bay.

The real harbor of the great bay of Arrows lies five or six miles within the gulf, and, together with the town adjacent, is known as Santa Barbara. A series of small cays lies opposite town and harbor, between the islets and the main, being a perfect cul-de-sac, with deep water close to shore. Steep, cultivated hills rise directly from the shore, with offshoots offering choice sites for dwellings; the lateral valleys are fertile and filled with every tropical product, the beaches are smooth and fringed with palms, the bay within the reefs delightful for bathing, boating, and fishing.

The Samana peninsula is about forty miles in length, and consists of a range of hills thrust right out into the ocean to the north of the bay. These hills, swept by cool breezes, covered with tropical vegetation, and with their feet on either side plunged into the sea, offer desirable sites for farms and winter settlements.

About sixty years ago a colony of blacks was settled here from the States, and the American traveler will have the pleasure of hearing his own language spoken, instead of Spanish, which prevails elsewhere in the island. These black people have held their own, have built schools and churches, and have set a good example of thrift and sobriety to the shiftless natives. They were, President

Heureaux once told me, the most reliable and peaceful of his subjects. That is, they did not aspire to furnish a presidential possibility every few months, like their neighbors, and had no political ambitions likely to prove disastrous to himself.

At the head of the bay is the straggling settlement of Sanchez, hardly more than a streak of buildings showing against a background of forest-covered hills. The bay is shallow here, but great importance attaches to Sanchez, on account of its being the coast terminus of the longest railroad in the island. This road is between sixty and seventy miles in length, and extends to the town of Concepcion de la Vega, but was projected to unite the bay with the important city of Santiago de los Caballeros, and perhaps with Monte Cristi.

So far as its natural features are concerned, this Vega Real is one of the most beautiful regions in the world, the soil is fertile, and the productions limited only by the labor of the inhabitants. Unfortunately the natives are lazy and shiftless, working only for the satisfaction of their present needs; their dwellings are mere huts of straw and slabs of palm bark, without windows and floors, except for holes closed at night with boards, and mud hardened by the passing of feet.

The Samana Bay country came within an ace of being annexed to the United States, during President Grant's administration, as "old-timers" may recall, for, after commissioners had been sent out to inquire into the condition of things and the desires of the Dominicans, a convention for a treaty of annexation was entered into; but the Senate rejected the treaty by a tie vote, June 30, 1870. It has always attracted the attention of enterprising Americans, and there are several nuclei for colonies along

the shores of the beautiful bay, one of them, on the south shore, at Savana la Mar, being finely situated and flourishing.

The great peninsula extending eastward from a line drawn due north and south between the head of Samana Bay and Santo Domingo City contains vast and fertile regions almost as little developed as during the times of the aborigines. Here dwelt the Higueyans, among whom was settled for a period stout old Poncé de Leon, the conqueror of Puerto Rico. Along the south coast of the islands, as at Macoris and Azua, are extensive sugar plantations, some of which are very remunerative, needing only protracted peace and capital to become as profitable to their owners as the *ingenios* of Cuba—provided, of course, they could receive as fair treatment from the United States in the way of reciprocal duties as Cuba is receiving to-day.

The region for agricultural development lies adjacent to the coast, and in the rich valleys of the Yuna, and of the Yaqui, north and south. That for exploitation with a view to unearthing gold and other minerals, is the cordillera country of the interior.

It was in Santo Domingo, really, that the first gold was discovered by white men in America, for, though Columbus had seen gold in the Bahamas and in Cuba in the shape of nose and ear ornaments worn by the natives, the latter always pointed to Haiti or Santo Domingo as the home of the precious product. When he arrived off the coast of Haiti, in December, 1492, he was given a great deal of dust and some nuggets, and when he finally reached the bay of the present Cape Haitien he found himself on the threshold of the golden country, the "Cibao" of the Indians.

I once saw a handful of fine nuggets, obtained from near the head waters of the Cibao, by washing with the primitive apparatus consisting merely of a wooden dish and a calabash. The largest of these nuggets weighed five ounces; I bought one weighing half an ounce, and have heard of lumps eight ounces in weight. This gold is remarkably fine and sells in London and Hamburg for about \$20 per ounce. It is thought to be derived from placer washings of unknown deposits in the distant mountains; but no one seems to have visited the original source, which is still a mystery. Before me, as I write these lines, lie some grains of gold from the Cibao reigon, which I obtained at Yanico, where the second Spanish fort was erected four hundred years ago.



## XIII

### AMERICA'S OLDEST CITY

A reproach to Americans — The first Spanish colony in America — Columbus an explorer, not a colonizer — His brother, the Adelantado — How gold was discovered in Santo Domingo — The city founded on Ozama River's banks — Why it was named "Santo Domingo" — The disastrous hurricane of 1502 — A mediæval city wall — House where Diego Columbus lived — Where lords and ladies held their court — The Columbus tower, date 1509 — The old historian's description — Ruins within the battlemented walls — The old monastery, mint, convents, and churches of the sixteenth century — Our oldest university — The cathedral and its precious relics — Last resting-place of Christopher Columbus — A cannon-ball fired from a ship in the fleet of Sir Francis Drake.

**Y**OU may search vainly, far and wide, for a more interesting place than America's oldest city, Santo Domingo, capital of the island of the same name, in the West Indies. Notwithstanding its antiquity, it has been shrouded in such obscurity, of late, that there may be those who will deny its claim to the title I have given it. It is often flung at Americans, as a reproach, that they have no ruins of consequence within the confines of their country; but, if it be true that they have no historic structures with dismantled towers to show as evidence of ancestral greatness, the continent at large can boast some wonderful groups of ruins in Mexico and Central America, where indubitable evidence exists of a former civilization that

will compare favorably, so far as its architecture goes, with any the world can show, in Europe or the Orient.

Still, Palenqué, Uxmal, Chichen Itza, and Copan are silent cities; their origin, their builders, shrouded in the mists of antiquity. The fact remains that Santo Domingo is America's oldest city, that is, of European foundation, and continuously occupied since its first stone was laid in place. One Spanish settlement, only, antedates it: Isabella, on the north coast of the island, originally called by Columbus "Hispaniola," and since named after the city in question, Santo Domingo. After Christopher Columbus had first landed there, in the part known to the natives as Haiti, and had sailed the length of it, he returned to Spain. This was on his first voyage to the New World, in 1492-93. On his second voyage he sailed a more southerly course, at first, but eventually returned to his point of departure, and on the north coast of Hispaniola laid the foundations for a settlement which he called Isabella, after the Queen of Spain, his royal patroness. Having established there the nucleus of a colony, he sailed away on other voyages; for first of all Columbus was an explorer, a discoverer; never a colonizer. Having discovered a new world, he left the little details of its colonization and conquest to others, pressing on eagerly in search of other countries then unknown.

However, the site of Isabella was unhealthy; it was situated at a distance from the rich gold region of the interior; and the upshot of it all was that, some three years after its settlement, while Christopher was away on one of his numerous voyages of discovery, his brother Bartholomew, who had been made "adelantado" of the island and left in sole charge of its conquest, abandoned the place entirely.

The Adelantado sent out exploring parties in search of a more advantageous site for a colony than Isabella; but what he sought was really found by accident. The future capital of Hispaniola, in fact, was founded on a romance. It owes its origin to the adventures of a Spanish soldier, one of Don Bartholomew's men, who, having wounded one of his comrades in a fight at Isabella, and fearing punishment, deserted. He wandered through the interior forests and over the central mountain chain, finally reaching the headwaters of the river Ozama, which has its outlet on the south coast of the island. The Indians north of the mountains had already been subjugated, having lost thousands in the great fight the year previous when Columbus had led his forces against them; but those to the southward of the cordillera were as yet unconquered. Still, tales of Spanish prowess had penetrated to every portion of the island, inasmuch as a mail-clad warrior might have wandered all over it without meeting with opposition from the Indians. So it fell out that when this common soldier, this fugitive, Miguel Diaz, appeared among the Indians residing on the Ozama, he was received with open arms. It happened that these people were ruled over by a female cacique, who was captivated by the gallant figure cut by the soldier in armor, and promptly surrendered her heart and fortune to his keeping. Thus the Spanish soldier became cacique, or head man of the tribe, and found himself lacking for nothing which the heart of aboriginal man could desire.

Still, as time wore away he yearned for the former comradeship,—such is the perversity of man, always wanting something he has not, or once did have,—and his queen perceiving him distraught, soon wormed his secret from him. Being in love with the soldier, she did not

wish to have him leave her; but, being in love with the soldier, she wished to gratify his desires. So, when he informed her that he could return to Isabella for a short visit, provided he might take with him a gift of gold to his commander, and that having made his peace with Don Bartholomew he would quickly return to her, his "first and only love," she told him of great store of precious metal which the earth contained, within her province.

And what is more, she took him to the mines and her people dug out a backload of gold, which he lost no time in conveying to Isabella, where he related such a wonderful story that the Adelantado not only forgave him his offense, but promoted him on the spot. He also accepted his offer to guide him to the rich deposits of gold, which impressed him so favorably that he returned to Isabella and lading all the movable property there aboard ship sailed around to the south coast, where he practically founded a settlement by erecting a fort on the east bank of the Ozama. The fort was the fourth of the kind erected in the island, and consequently in the West Indies; but the settlement was the second; and as Isabella soon went to ruin, and has never been inhabited since the Adelantado abandoned it, Santo Domingo (as stated at the beginning of this chapter) has the honor of being the oldest existing city settled by white men in America.

Don Bartholomew named his settlement after good Saint Dominic, who was a native of Spain; and incidentally honored his father, Dominico Columbus, the humble citizen of Genoa. Christopher Columbus approved of all his brother had done, especially the peculiar honor to their father.

After enduring the various vicissitudes of a tropical settlement for six years, the new town on the east bank



of the Ozama was first attacked by an army of ants, and then swept nearly out of existence by a hurricane, so the survivors removed to the west bank of the river, where the foundations were laid for the city which actually exists to-day. But it was while the Spaniards were in possession of the town on the east bank that a scene was enacted which has become historic, namely, the arrest of Columbus by his successor in the government, Bobadilla, and the sending of the King of Spain's "Admiral of the Ocean Sea" to the mother-country in chains. The walls of a chapel still stand on the east bank, from the doorway of which the arrogant Bobadilla caused the royal proclamation of his authority to be read; but of the fort in which by his orders Columbus was confined with fettered limbs, a few bricks and stones alone remain, near the bay at the mouth of the river.

Yes, here it was that Columbus received the first check to his career of conquest, here began the long series of misfortunes that ended only at his death. From this harbor of Santo Domingo, in the year 1500, he sailed back to Spain with manacles on wrists and ankles. Two years later, having equipped another expedition, he was denied admission to the harbor by Governor Ovando, though he applied on the eve of a disastrous hurricane from which he craved shelter and which he escaped by seeking a haven further down the coast. His little fleet survived the hurricane; but all the vessels save one composing the fleet then about to sail for Spain with the returning governor, Bobadilla, went down before the cyclone, carrying among others his arch-enemy to a watery grave.

Columbus was indeed avenged on Bobadilla; but the atrocious Ovando survived, to become the exterminator

of the Indians, and to bestow a reluctant welcome upon the Admiral when rescued from the perils of the terrible Jamaica voyage, in 1504. This was the year in which he sailed across the Atlantic for the last time—that in which Queen Isabella died—and only two years before he himself passed away.

Shall we not hold these memories interesting, and should we not accord to this old city on the Ozama's banks a place apart and high, from its association with one who—whatever his shortcomings—must be accredited with the "discovery" of America?

The settlers removed to the west bank the year of the great hurricane, 1502, and in course of time a massive wall was built, landward from the river and the sea, enhancing the strategic advantages of a position naturally very strong. This wall remains to-day, though four hundred years have passed since it was built, with mediæval barbicans, *fortalezas*, projecting sentry-boxes, and a gateway loopholed and battlemented. A plan of the city made in the first decade of the sixteenth century, shows this wall intact, also the old settlement on the opposite bank of the river, with the "*Torrecilla de Colon*," or tower in which Columbus was imprisoned, standing near the sea, adjacent to it the gallows tree with its human fruit, without which no Spanish settlement of those times was considered complete. In fact, it was one of the charges brought against Columbus when Bobadilla was sent out to supersede him, that he always had some one of his enemies hanging on the gallows. In this respect, however, he differed little from the other colonists of Santo Domingo, who when they had authority hanged and quartered without mercy or restraint.

Above the wall around the city rises, from the river's

steep bank, an ancient castle called the Homenage, which, though the local traditioner will tell you that Columbus was once a prisoner within its walls, was not, in fact, erected until about the year 1509, when this ill-used individual had been three years dead. However, it is interesting enough of itself, without being bolstered up by factitious traditions; architecturally a gem, historically a nonpareil, for it is indeed the oldest structure of its kind in America. The same year it was erected, Don Diego Colon, son of Columbus, having at last come into the rights for which he fought so pertinaciously, came to Santo Domingo as viceroy, bringing a lovely bride, Doña Maria de Toledo, allied to an ancient and powerful house, and with a splendid train of lords and ladies from the Spanish court.

It was the most glorious assemblage that the New World had then looked upon; and in sooth, poor old Santo Domingo has never looked upon its like since then. For the fortunes of city and island were then in apogee, the planters and merchants, the gold-seekers and the sailors, all, were in high feather, and it was widely rumored that the ladies of Don Diego's vice-regal court had all come out with a purpose, that purpose being to acquire rich husbands,—and none was disappointed. That is, no fair lady was disappointed in the getting of a wealthy husband; but as to the qualifications of those men who lorded it over "*encomiendas*" of servile Indians, perhaps the less said the better.

Still, the fact remains that Don Diego brought with him an elegant court, with gallant knights and maids of high degree; and another fact is incontestable, namely, that he caused to be built a beautiful palace, facing the harbor, midway between the river and the landward wall,

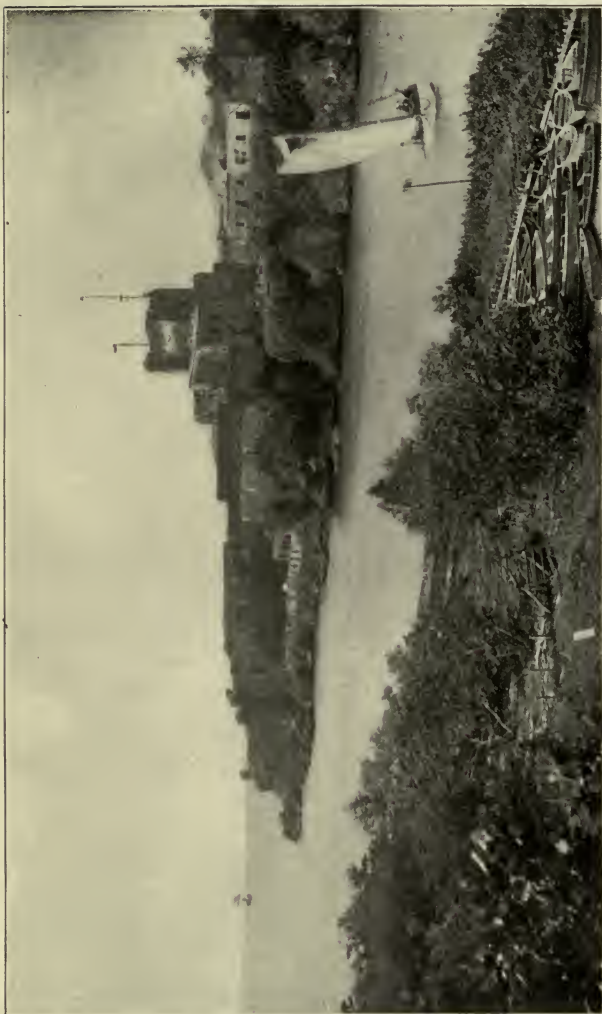
and connecting the two by means of massive fortifications. So far did he carry his defensive schemes, in fact, that his enemies later informed his sovereign that he meditated intrenching himself within this fortified palace and defying his King's authority. But that is a little story aside; we are concerned only about his palace, which he built so as to tower above all other structures there, save the grim Homenage, and adorned with the beauteous ladies brought from Spain.

One of Don Diego's contemporaries, the historian, Oviedo, wrote a description of Santo Domingo about this time, which, as translated and published in black-letter, in the year 1555, furnishes a quaint and probably authentic picture of the place:

"To speak sumwhat of the principall and chiefe place of the islande," says the historian, "whiche is the citie of San Domenico: I saye, that as touchynge the buildynges there is no citie in Spaine, so muche for so-muche, (no, not Barsalona, which I have oftentimes seene) that is to bee preferred to this generallye. For the houses of San Domenico are for the moste parte of stone, as are they of Barsalona.

"In the mydst of the citie is the fortresse and castle; the port or haven also is so fayre and commodious to defraight or unlade shyppes, as the like is founde but in fewe places in the worlde. The houses that are in this citie are about syxe hundredth in number, of the whiche sum are so fayre and large that they may well receave and lodge any lorde or noblemanne of Spayne, with his trayne and familie; and especially that which Don Diego Colon, viceroy under your majestie, hath in this citie, is such that I knowe no man in Spayne that hath the lyke, by a quarter, in goodnesse, consydyrynge all the com-





Homenaje Castle and Ozama River

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modoties of the same. Lykewyse the situation thereof, as beinge above the sayde porte, and altogether of stone, and havynge many fine roomes and large, with as goodlie a prospect of the lande and sea as may be devysed, seemeth unto me so magnifical and prince-lyke that your majestie may bee as well lodged therein as in any of the most exquysite builded houses of Spayne."

In this letter, written by Oviedo to Emperor Charles V., there was doubtless a grain of malice toward Don Diego Colon, with his "magnifical and prince-lyke house," which bore fruit later, when said Don Diego was summoned to Spain to answer for his extravagance and probable intentions. But here are the ruins of that house, some of its walls still standing in a good state of preservation, just above the entrance-way through the city wall. It is roofless now, this ancient *Casa de Colon*, and against its gray stone walls lean the tottering shanties, palm-thatched and squalid, of degenerate Dominicans. Its pillared corridors have long since fallen in, the great halls and banquet rooms are now partly filled with filth and occupied as stables for donkeys, goats, and horses. But the "goodlie prospect of the lande and sea" is still outspread before one so venturesome as to climb to the upper rooms and dare the noisome effluvia arising from the stables.

Outside the walls, close by the river, there is a spring known as Columbus's fountain, and a great ceiba tree is pointed out as one beneath which the Admiral himself once rested. The intramural city can boast more than a dozen structures still standing which date from the viceroyal period. Largest, and, in some respects, most fascinating of these is a vast and vine-draped pile entirely gone to ruin. It is all that remains of the first Franciscan

monastery founded in the New World, its corridors deserted, its cells, its chapel, and refectory alike roofless. But somewhere here lie the ashes of brave and gallant Bartholomew Columbus, once the Adelantado, or military governor, of Santo Domingo; and also buried in some obscure corner of the monastery chapel, now unknown, is another great-hearted adventurer, Alonzo de Ojeda. Their exploits filled the world, at one time, four centuries ago; they did much to achieve the conquest of the West Indies; but now, no one knows the spot that holds their dust. As a ruin, solely, irrespective of its historical associations, with its picturesque, vine-draped walls and cloister-arches, San Francisco is well worth a visit and inspection, for we have few such in the United States.

Then there are other buildings of equal antiquity, such as the *casa de moneda*, or the king's mint, with a fine façade; the convent-church of San Nicolas, founded in 1509, with a beautiful groined canopy over its presbytery; the quaint and original church of Santa Barbara, on a hill in an angle of the river-wall; and San Miguel, near by, which was built by the king's treasurer three hundred and eighty years ago; handsome Santa Clara, which has been restored, and San Anton, a mere shell falling to decay. But of the ecclesiastical structures within the walls, the convent-church of Santo Domingo, dating from Don Diego's time, is locally the most famous and possesses an interest absolutely unique because of its associations. Should any reader of mine ever visit Santo Domingo, I beg him, or her, to closely examine the tessellated pavement of the eastern transept, where may be found a large tombstone with a carved coat-of-arms, the *escudo* of some Spanish grandee who died centuries ago, consisting of a shield disporting thirteen stars, the number and the



emblems of our thirteen original States; but chiseled in that marble more than two hundred years before our famous Declaration of Independence.

But this old church, with its serpent-supported pulpit, its magnificent nave and tombs of Spanish worthies, has an interest attaching to it far beyond its own attractions, inasmuch as the same Dominicans who founded it at about the same time established adjacent the first university in the New World. The ruins of this university have been well-nigh demolished, existing only in a lamentable state of neglect; but they should be sacred to all lovers of learning for what they represent. In the structure once attached to the church, and now represented by mounds of crumbling stone, at one time resided that foremost man of his age as a philanthropist, Bartolomé de las Casas. He came here with Ovando, in 1502, lured hither, perhaps, by the tales told by his father, who was with Columbus on his second voyage. After going with Velasquez and Cortés to Cuba, in 1511, after his disastrous experiment at civilizing the Indians of the "Terra Firma," about 1521, he returned to Hispaniola and immured himself for years within the walls of this university and monastery. Here he produced that great monument to learning and industry, or at least began and carried well forward toward completion, his "History of the Indies."

There is, indeed, one structure alone which would repay all the discomforts of a pilgrimage—even assuming them to exist—and that is another sacred shrine of early American history, the noble cathedral, which was founded in 1514, and finished thirty years later. It has been shaken by earthquakes, sacked and bombarded by pirates, and at times all but abandoned; yet its massive walls still

stand, and its roof of Spanish tiles protects many a holy relic. Exteriorly, the cathedral is not impressive, perhaps; but its glorious nave and transepts, with massive pillars supporting groined and lofty ceiling; its lateral "chapels," twelve in number, filled with saintly relics in age from two to four centuries, and finally, its magnificent retable richly carved and gilded, rising behind an altar plated with silver, make up for all possible deficiencies in its superficial aspect. One of the most precious of relics here, in the estimation of the natives, is a fragment of the cross of La Vega, upon an arm of which an angel once descended, it is claimed, at the battle waged by Columbus with the Indians, in 1495. It is set in gold and inclosed in a silver casket, and is shown to the faithful only once a year. Then there is the first great cross set up on the site of the cathedral, in 1514, which is nine feet high, and is made of native mahogany. There are paintings here ascribed to Murillo, and portraits of the twelve apostles, which are probably the work of Velasquez.

Reference having been made to the fear entertained by the Dominicans of English pirates, it should be explained that it was Sir Francis Drake, the famous and piratical adventurer, of whom they stood most in awe. And with good reason, for at various times he assailed their capital and sacked it, a memento of his attack of 1586 being still preserved in the shape of a cannon-ball, once fired from his fleet, and which is imbedded in the roof of the cathedral. That assault of 1586 was unprovoked, as shown by Drake's own historian, who says:

"We spent the early part of the mornings in firing the outmost houses; but they being built very magnificently of stone, with high loftes, gave us no small travell to ruin them. And albeit, for divers days together, we ordeined

each morning by daybreak, until the heat began at nine of the clocke, that two hundred mariners did nought els but labour to fire and burn the said houses, whilst the souldiers in like proportion stood forth for their guard, yet did we not, or could not, in this time, consume so much as one-third part of the towne; and so in the end, wearied with firing, we were contented to accept of five and twenty thousand ducats, of five shillings and six-pence the peece [about thirty thousand dollars] for the ransome of the rest of the towne."

Soon after this attack, Santo Domingo fell into a decline, and the theater of action being transferred to Cuba, Mexico, and Peru, it never recovered. To-day it presents but a pitiful picture of its former self. Its residents speak the language of its original settlers; but they are mainly of alien, African descent, the white people being so few that they may be counted on one's fingers.

Still, what other city of America can boast as its one-time citizens a great discoverer like Columbus; a fifteenth-century humanitarian like Las Casas; a monster of depravity like Ovando, and a quartet of conquerors like Velasquez, who subjugated Cuba; Cortés, who conquered Mexico; Balboa, the explorer of Darien, discoverer of the Pacific; and Pizarro, who stole the treasures of Peru?

## XIV

### PUERTO RICO, SPANISH AND AMERICAN

My first glimpse of Puerto Rico — The policeman with the itching palm — Editorial amenities — West-Indian newspapers — Descendants of Columbus — What our Government has done — Ungrateful Puerto-Riqueños — The laboring classes, who do not labor — The gibaró and his hut of palm leaves — Inexpensive living in Puerto Rico — Suppose one were to adopt it? — Thanksgiving Day and its observance in the island — What the hurricane did — The natural resources available — Birds and quadrupeds of this island — Temperate and tropical regions compared — The population — No standard of morality — Possibilities in tropical agriculture — There is gold in the mountain streams — History of its discovery — What Agueynaba did to the Spaniards.

IT is a long look backward to my first glimpse of Puerto Rico, in the winter of 1879-80, yet I can easily recall many incidents of my voyage around that island, the interior of which was then a veritable *terra incognita*. I remember, for instance, that when I first entered the harbor of San Juan, on board the "Hadji," a British built "tub," sailing under American colors, the Spanish customs official, who had been put aboard off the harbor-entrance, promptly stepped in front of my camera when I attempted to photograph the Morro and the fortifications.

He was, in fact, put there for the very purpose of preventing inquisitive foreigners from making sketches or photographs of the ancient walls, and it was all I could do to preserve my property from confiscation. I had to



promise, under oath, that I would make no more exposures while in Puerto Rican ports, and was kept constantly under surveillance, not only at San Juan, but at Ponce, and other ports at which we touched.

I had a belated revenge, though, about ten years later, when I went to the island as the accredited representative of our Government, and received a special permit to photograph from the *alcalde municipal* of the capital. It was most grudgingly bestowed, to be sure, and I was cautioned not to turn my camera toward those obsolete fortifications. Still, I succeeded in securing some photographs of the same; but it was only after my friend, the policeman, who had been detailed to guide and watch me, had been told to turn his face the other way, and hold his hand behind him! He was so much impressed with the subsequent ceremony that whenever I pitched my camera, after that first operation, he voluntarily performed this act of courtesy, not once only, but several times, plainly showing that, like many another Spaniard, he was afflicted with the disease known as the "itching palm" for *pesos*. I had up to that time thought it peculiar to customs officials; but this experience convinced me that it was universally prevalent.

I think it is a contagious disease, also, for even the press of Puerto Rico seemed inoculated with its virus, at the time of my second advent in the island, I distinctly recall. The editors I met often reminded me of my friend, the policeman—they so frequently turned their backs and held their hands behind them! For example, when a member of the diplomatic corps called with me upon the newspaper fraternity, though I was received with apparent cordiality, there was yet a certain constraint which to me was unaccountable. My friend, the diplomat,

explained to me afterward that perhaps it might be well to insert an advertisement of my mission in the most prominent papers, and also purchase a goodly number of each issue containing it.

Acting upon this disinterested advice I at once sent word to each editor that I would like 50 copies of his paper when it should contain items of importance to the great American government! The result was that the next day all the important papers of San Juan vied with each other in most flattering notices of the "eminent commissioner, whose opportune arrival had caused such great excitement."

There was more than a column of this sort, showing plainly that vast leisure was the portion of the insular editor and that he was sorely put to it for news. I had felt sure that the receipt he sent me was more than ample recompense for the price of 50 copies without fulsome eulogy. The following is a literal translation of that receipt: "El administrador of the *Integridad National*, who kisses the hands of your worship, presents his compliments to Señor Don F. A. Ober and has the great pleasure of inclosing a receipt for the fifty numbers he had the distinguished honor of remitting to him yesterday of the above named periodical."

Now, that was an ordinary receipt for a small sum of money, and the editor wrote it himself, which speaks volumes for newspaper methods as they prevailed in the island before the capitulation.

There was a "crying need" for a good periodical printed in Spanish and English (it appeared to me); but if it existed, that "long-felt-want" has been filled, for a printing press went along with the advance guards of the American army of occupation. Hardly

had our gallant soldiers ceased shooting leaden bullets into the resisting Spaniards in Puerto Rico, on receipt of the news that the peace protocol had been signed, than they began firing paper billets at the inoffensive Puerto-Riqueño. Desire for the latter's enlightenment caused "the little red schoolhouse" to be erected on almost every hill in the island; and we know what an army of school-ma'ams and masters succeeded to the army of invasion!

As an index of West Indian enlightenment, the newspapers throughout the islands are likely to lead one far astray, for they are mostly edited with an eye to the advertising columns—strange to say—said advertisements consisting mainly of Spanish, French, or English proprietary medicines, chiefly pills and plasters. They are printed on coarse paper, and sold at a high price. As a means of disseminating information among a population largely composed of illiterates, they apparently fail to achieve their destiny.

This brings me to remark upon the characteristics of the Puerto-Riqueño. He did not seem to have any, before the arrival of the Americans, in 1898; or if he had any he kept them to himself, having been minded thereto by the long centuries of Spanish oppression. Not only could I obtain no expression amounting to an opinion from the average islander, but absolutely no information respecting the island itself save what was open to my visual organs. There was a great highway, the "King's Road," running over the mountains from Ponce to San Juan; several sporadic attempts had been made to build a railroad in various parts of the island, but little had been accomplished. There was no more information available as to the interior of Puerto Rico than there was at that time as to the unknown interior of Africa. A rumor was

prevalent that at one time a German naturalist had somehow worked his way to the interior hills and mountains; but he kept his mouth shut as to what he saw—and perhaps this was the price of his permission to explore.

At the outbreak of the Spanish-American war, one of the editors of a famous and popular magazine came to me with a request that I would write an article on Puerto Rico for that magazine, as I was the only man he could find “who knew anything about the island”! This may seem in the nature of an equivocal compliment; but I wrote the article, nevertheless, and illustrated it with some of the photographs I had taken when the policeman’s back was turned. At that time I drew all my material from Spanish sources, and that same year wrote a book on the island, which was probably the first work in English on the subject in more than half a century.\* Immediately the way had been opened by the army, there was a deluge of newspaper correspondents and “scientific” writers, who had been detached from the various departments in Washington, so that the great public, which had been presumably hungry and thirsting for information on Puerto Rico, was more than appeased. Hence, I feel that another chapter on the subject will be looked upon as somewhat supererogatory.

But, however much the island has been “written up” since the American occupation, there is still something left that may be considered worth the while to investigate. Regarded as a whole, and as our only possession in the American tropics, Puerto Rico has many charms for both student and casual tourist. It seems so to me; but I may look at it through glasses that exaggerate its importance. I will confess that since the mystery respecting its moun-

\*“Puerto Rico and its Resources,” New York, 1898.



tains and inland forests has been dispelled, the charms of Puerto Rico have lost their freshness. One should gather facts, even statistics, while the morning dew is on them, as one would gather strawberries. An oft-reiterated fact gets stale to nauseousness; there is no pleasure in following after a party that has beaten a trail to the mountain-top. My most blest experiences have been those face to face with what I then thought was primitive nature.

So with Puerto Rico: to visit it now, after other thousands have tramped its trails and raised the dust on its roads, would be wearisome. And if to me, why not, then, to others?

True, why not? Well, the only reason I can give, is that perhaps there may be some few who have not yet been in Puerto Rico! To such, perhaps, the island may yet gleam afresh in pristine loveliness. For, after all, we cannot expect the great Creator to make a new island or a new continent for every generation! It is our misfortune that the world was made so many years ago, and to us is now old, and to some of us, perhaps, somewhat stale.

I found in an old history of Spain, not long ago, an item to the effect that the King of Spain, Ferdinand, husband of Isabella, had signed a "capitulation" with Vicente Yanez Pinzon, quondam companion of Columbus on his first voyage, for the conquest and settlement of this island, subsequently known as Puerto Rico. Be that as it may, it was not until 1508 or 1509 that Ponce de Leon landed here, and soon after established a settlement.

After the Indians had been reduced to subjection the Spaniards were for many years harassed by foreign foes and by the buccaneers. Historic personages, like Drake and Hawkins, and two hundred years later Abercromby (who, like Admiral Sampson, in 1808, vainly bombarded

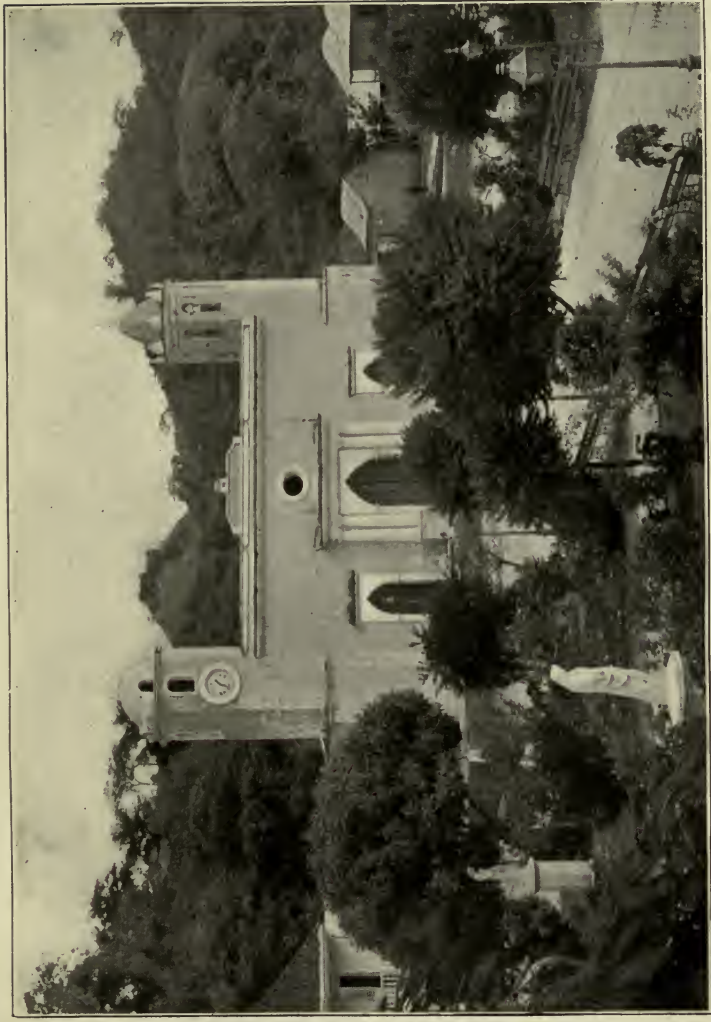
San Juan), honored the Spaniards with frequent visits. But, notwithstanding these persecutions, and the occasional hurricanes, which devastated the island, Puerto Rico continued to flourish. While Cuba was the prime milch cow of Spain, yet Puerto Rico yielded freely, and many an official owed his rise to a position here.

Past and present are inseparably linked, in the affairs of this island. For instance, in the *Presupuestos*, or estimates, for the fiscal year 1887-88, I found this curious item, under the head of *obligaciones generales*: "Article I—To Don Cristobal Colon, Duque de Veragua, three-quarters of the obligation acknowledged in favor of his defunct ancestor—*pesos* 3400. To Don Fernando Colon, Marques de Barboles, one quarter part of said obligation—*pesos* 850."

The Duke of Veragua, it may be remembered, was our guest during the Exposition year, and a suppliant for our favor in the shape of a pension or donation, in recognition of the doings of his reputed ancestor, Don Cristobal Columbus. He was not a bad-looking man, as I recall him, having the air of a well-to-do "Britisher," and in fact was a breeder of fine bulls for fighting in the ring. His degenerate brother, the Marquis de Barboles, was a shrunken, monkey-like apology of a man, who went about clinging to his elder brother's coat-tails, and frequently ejaculating, at intervals, "Where do I come in?" meaning, thereby, that he wanted his proportional share of the donation, whenever it might be donated. And these two, following after a long line of non-resident ancestors, depended upon Puerto Rican bounty for many years.

Spain did all she could to wreck the island; and yet after the United States government took possession, it

Small decorative graphic element consisting of a grid of dots.



Church and Plaza, Aguadilla





was charged that the Spanish market more than compensated for the Spanish stealings. After the great hurricane of August, 1899, it became the custom to charge all evil happenings to the change of ownership, and the new government was made a universal scapegoat. And yet, see what that government has done for Puerto Rico. Look at the schools it has founded, the money it has lavishly poured out, in an effort to make amends for the sins it never committed!

The enthusiasm with which the islanders received our army continued to sustain itself until it was seen, by one class, that the incoming Americans had not made them all independently rich, and by another that they had not freed them from their century-long condition of abject poverty. Having welcomed their "Heaven-sent deliverers," as they styled them, with effusive joy, and in the Spanish fashion invited them in to help themselves, the natives next looked forward to receiving an exceedingly great reward. But it did not immediately materialize, and they became, if possible, even poorer than before. Then came the hurricane, the most disastrous in centuries, and that, too, was charged against the Yankees. Thus, for a time the military government of the island had a very "hard row to hoe." But it hoed it, nevertheless—at the expense of our government. The Puerto Ricans were fed from our overflowing granaries, they received millions of rations gratis, and, after that, millions of dollars were returned to them which had been received as duties on their goods. Still, it is not a matter of record that the islanders ever murmured a single expression of thanks!

It was ascertained that most of the sugar-planters, instead of having been ruined by the hurricane, as was

pathetically reported, had actually benefited by it, owing to the sedimentation from the hill-washings, which was spread like a fertile blanket over their lowland acres, enriching their exhausted soils beyond belief. The coffee planters suffered more; but they soon rose from their ashes and joined in the general hue and cry that they had lost the market of Spain, without having received an adequate return. That they, in common with all others, had received the priceless boon of freedom, did not count for anything at all, in their estimate of results.

There remain the laboring classes, which comprise the bulk of Puerto Rico's population, and which were the recipients of charity from the United States to such an extent that the term "laboring class" was practically discarded. It was a misnomer, anyway, for there is no class in the island that has ever earned this distinctive appellation. They reside mainly in the mountain districts, but their mouth-pieces, the native politicians, dwell in the towns and cities of the coast, where they readily reached the ears and the purses of sympathetic Americans. Accepting their doleful tales, thousands of poor people starved to death during the military interregnum, and in proof of the truth of their assertions they dispatched carefully-coached delegations of emaciated men and barefoot women to San Juan, there to beard the governor in his castle.

To one who knows the island and its almost limitless resources, this story of starvation seems false on its face; but perhaps the best refutation of it—at least inferentially—is to recite why the Puerto Rican need not starve, instead of entering a simple denial.

In the first place, compare the climatic conditions of the tropical zone in which lies Puerto Rico with those of

our own so-called temperate region: perpetual summer on the one hand, contrasted with most rigorous winter on the other more than six months of the year. The Puerto Rican, then, has no winter to provide against, with its consequent expenses for comfortable habitation, fuel, and clothing. And by the Puerto Rican is meant the *gibaro*, or peasant laborer, about whom the politicians were so tenderly solicitous. He is the present representative of a long line of paupers extending through centuries, not one of whom ever possessed a dollar over night or had a voice in the management of insular affairs.

He is a veritable peon, or slave of ancestral and cumulative debt, and in probably nine cases out of ten is owned body and soul by the sugar, coffee, or tobacco raiser, who was clamoring so loudly that he should "have his rights," and so insistent upon the return of those "millions wrung as customs from unwilling contributors."

Well, without seeking to involve the *gibaro* in politics—except, perhaps, to show how he has been a contributory cause of discontent, let us show how nearly impossible it is for him to starve, or even to suffer severely, save through his own fault. In the matter of a habitation he is content with the merest shelter from the elements, and if he were ordinarily industrious (which he is not) the head of a family might erect such a shelter as suffices the average Puerto Rican in less than two days. First, four holes are dug in the ground, into which four posts are inserted and set erect. These are connected by frameworks of smaller poles, which are covered with palm leaves, and the "house" is made. This is the simplest type of dwelling, such as generally answers the needs of the peon. The floor is of hardened mud or clay, and

sometimes the wattled sides are plastered over with mud or mortar; sometimes the hut is constructed of palm boards, and well thatched with palm leaves or *yagua* shingles, made of palm spathes.

The *gibaro's* house costs him nothing but a little labor, and is mainly set up without nails, or any furnishings whatever from the stores. The palms, growing everywhere in the country, yield all necessary materials. For the simple utensils used in his domestic economy, the householder goes to another tree, the calabash, the fruit of which is converted into vessels of various sizes, such as dishes and water bottles, plates and spoons, while the *yagua* of the royal palm furnishes tubs for washing clothes in, cradles for the babies, wrappers for cigars, and all bundles that are to be kept dry, and even foundations for the rude beds which, when hammocks are not used, are spread upon the floor at night. From two species of palms, the royal and the cocoa, and the calabash, the Puerto Rican obtains ample material for his house and its equipment.

This hut is called a *bohio*, in contradistinction to the house of the town, which is usually built of stone, is much more pretentious and is known as the *casa*.

To establish the fact already asserted, that the natives of the island are extremely poor and shiftless, I will refer to the report of Brigadier General Davis, in which he says of these people:

“They live in huts made of sticks and poles, covered with thatches of palm leaves. A family of a dozen may be huddled together in one room, often with only a dirt floor. They have little food worthy the name, and only the most scanty clothing, while children of less than seven or eight years are often entirely naked. A few may own



a machete or hoe, but more have no worldly possessions whatever. Their food is fruit, and if they are wage-earners, a little rice and codfish in addition. They are without ambition, and see no incentive to labor beyond the least that will provide the barest sustenance."

We have seen that a newly coupled pair of Puerto Ricans just starting out in life incurred no expense whatever for a dwelling; and, judging from the statistics, furnished during Spanish domination, no great amount was squandered on the marriage ceremony; for out of twenty-five thousand births in 1887, for instance, eleven thousand were illegitimate.

Let it be assumed, then, that a pair of *giburos* may be established in domicile, or *en casa*, without the expenditure of a dollar. What will be the household expenses, as the months and years roll by?

House and furnishings they already have. The first necessity, fuel for fire (for culinary purposes only), lies in the fields or woods at or near their door. An iron pot has been begged, borrowed, or stolen, and no other kitchen utensil is actually necessary except a knife, which is supplied by the machete, universally carried by the peon, and which is never out of his sight or grasp. The machete is so much a part and parcel of the *gibaro's* outfit that he only attracts attention when it is absent. He acquires it early in life, and parts with it only through stern necessity, as, for example, when funds are needed for gambling or for betting on a favorite fighting cock.

With the machete the peon hews down the trees for corner posts to his hut, lops off the leaves of palm for thatch and bedding, digs holes for setting out tubers and plants, and sometimes, though rarely, removes the weeds from his garden.

“Fingers were made before forks,” is an axiom so self-evident that no peon ever gives it a thought, and the little toddlers that soon in time gather around the household hearth, or the fire-bed in the center of the hut, follow the example of their elders and eat without any other assistance than their own chubby hands, which they dip into the pot, like the others.

The only expense for garments is incurred by the adult members of the family, and probably does not aggregate \$5 a year. Until the age of seven to ten, the children go about as naked as they were born.

In order to impress my readers with the fact that the Puerto Riqueño, even the poverty-stricken *gibaro*, may have quite an extensive range to his dietary, I have ventured to imagine him engaged in celebrating the last of the *dias de fiesta*, or feast days, which has been bestowed upon him by a paternal government—our time-honored “Thanksgiving.”

Taking the island of Puerto Rico as typical of our tropical possessions, lying as it does nearer to our shores than Hawaii or the Philippines, and on a median line of latitude as compared with the others, we shall find Thanksgiving Day, or *Dia de Gracias*, as it is there termed, honored by the closing of government offices and appropriately observed. The stores are open on half-time only, the plantation works are idle, and the people of town and country seize the occasion for visiting.

As an excuse for idleness merely, the Puerto Rican laborer hails the *Dia de Gracias* with joy and promises himself indulgence in a *dansa*, or, perchance, a surreptitious cock-fight. Coming, as it does, at or near the end of the much-dreaded hurricane season, Thanksgiving offers even the punctilious Puerto Rican a good excuse

for joining in festivities, participation in which he might be averse to by training, though not from temperament.

Distant from the equator less than twenty degrees, Puerto Rico's Thanksgiving event takes place in sunny, summer weather, with the temperature somewhere up in the nineties. All nature is abloom at this season and the air is filled with the promise of harvests. Provided the season has passed without the visitation of a hurricane, evidences of the fruitful soil are on every hand. Along the coast the cocoa palm droops its head above heavy clusters of nuts shining golden in the sun; warm-hued bananas hang invitingly from their stalks; breadfruits are ripening on stately trees with deep-lobed leaves. Then there are oranges, limes, lemons, guavas, sapadillas, mangos, custard apples, etc.,—in fact, all fruits that are grown in equatorial regions. Prominent among the fruits native to Puerto Rico and the West Indies in general is the delicious pineapple, which the first Spanish conquerors found growing here, cultivated by the natives.

So far as the *gibaro's* table is concerned, it cannot be said, in the language of Pope, "Viands of various kinds allure the taste," for they certainly do not. The average Puerto Riqueño is a vegetarian, perforce; yet there are certain indigenous animals, both birds and quadrupeds, that would yield him at least a taste of flesh on occasion, were he possessed of any skill at all as hunter or trapper. While the fauna of Puerto Rico is not extensive and no large animals have there their habitat, there are a few small quadrupeds that would serve excellently to furnish the Thanksgiving table in the *gibaro's* humble hut. There is the agouti, for instance (*Dasyprocta agouti*), a little hare-like and inoffensive animal, with glossy, snuff-brown coat and a sensitive nose with which he sometimes ferrets

out the native tubers, like the yam and eddoe. Inasmuch as he prowls about the "provision grounds" on the borders of the woods and takes toll therefrom, it is no more than just that the native biped should make him pay therefor—always provided he can catch the agouti.

He would prove a welcome substitute for turkey, and so would another small animal which, like the agouti, is getting scarce in Puerto Rico, the armadillo. Properly cooked in his shell (which shell, according to Sir Walter Raleigh, "appeareth somewhat like unto that of a Rinocero"), the armadillo surpasses quail or turkey in the flavor of its tender flesh. It must be cooked by a master, though—a "real and truly" *chef*, one who has been bred on a plantation and taken a cruise or two along the Spanish Main.

There is but one meat tenderer than quail or armadillo, and that is of the iguana, the large arboreal lizard that inhabits the lowlands of all the West Indian islands. It should be stewed with yam, plantain, etc., to be perfectly palatable. The streams of Puerto Rico still yield abundantly of crayfish (in the Spanish islands called *camarones*), and in the hills are found the migratory land crabs, both crustaceans forming delicious adjuncts to a Thanksgiving *ménu* and eagerly sought by the natives. From the salt waters that surround the island a great variety of fish may be extracted, and there are mussels and oysters, but of inferior quality.

Leaving the native fruits aside, it is not likely that strangers temporarily resident in Puerto Rico, such as the soldiers and office-holders, will draw heavily upon the articles enumerated as provand for the "Dia de Gracias"; at least, not so long as the steamers connecting with the United States run regularly and cold-storage plants of



capacity exist at Ponce and San Juan. In point of fact, the non-resident Americans, as well as the natives of town and city, are becoming increasingly dependent upon cold storage, especially for viands of superior quality. Throughout the West Indies, not alone in Puerto Rico, fruit and fowl are generally regarded as "by-products," that may come up somehow, anyhow, in the nature of a providential dispensation. This may account for their general inferiority, for the tropical climate is particularly adapted to the raising of both, especially domestic fowl.

And as to turkey, that bird without which Thanksgiving Day would be considered lacking in the first requisite for feasting, it may be remarked that Puerto Rico probably received it many years before the territory now known as the United States was permanently settled by Europeans. It is generally conceded by naturalists that the first European turkey came from Mexico; though there are those who declare that the Cabots took it to England in the last decade of the fifteenth century.

This sketch of the island's resources in the matter of providing for the table from its own products suggests comparison with some land less favored by nature in the North, New England, for example. See what enormous natural advantages the former possesses over the latter. Note the great central range of mountains, rising 3600 feet in Yunque, with ramifications east and west, north and south; with its thousand rivers, short-lived, it is true, but with great possibilities for irrigation, electric and water power. There are scores of waterfalls, some of large size, and at least one stream has been found by American engineers capable of 1000 horse-power.

Compare these two regions climatically, and contrast

New England, with its rigorous winters and short summers, with the perpetual summer-land of Puerto Rico. Lying between the 18th and 19th degrees of north latitude, its climate is tropical along the coasts, but in the interior almost temperate. One can secure a radical change of climate by riding a few hours mountain-wards, as well as a change in fruits and vegetation.

The population of the island, about 900,000, and composed in great part of poverty-stricken half- and quarter-breeds, ignorant, even illiterate, we may also compare with that of New England, with its high standards of education and morality. There is no standard of morality here, all observers agree; but it is not altogether the fault of the simple-minded people. They found obstacles in the way of lawful wedlock, so they dispensed with the ceremony to a great extent.

They have felt the oppressive restrictions of a distant and severe government, so they have concluded it to be altogether futile to attempt the laying up of riches or the accumulation of worldly goods. Their *antepasados*, also, some of them leading back to paupers and criminals, transported at the state's expense, have not bequeathed to them a very hopeful heritage.

The Rev. Father Sherman, who traveled over the island shortly after we took possession, reported the children as quick to learn, precocious even, and very susceptible of becoming Americanized. He found the natives, though nominally Catholics, practically pagans; a large proportion of them illiterate, and resorting to most barbarous practices respecting the inhumation of their dead.

Church and State have gone hand in hand here in

Puerto Rico, as in Cuba, and the first step of our government will be—has been, in fact—to dissociate them, to the vast benefit of the people at large. Intramural inhumations will no longer be permitted and the people will no longer support a church which they have outgrown or discarded.

In attempting to predict the future of this island, one must base his assumptions upon its permanent possession by the United States, and the integrity of those delegated to authority here. We cannot doubt that, unless deprived of it by unforeseen casualties of war, we shall always hold it as an integral portion of our great Republic. We cannot assume otherwise than that those sent to rule it shall be actuated by the highest motives of patriotism and disinterestedness.

Here, then, are two factors making for success at the outset, and calculated to infuse new vigor into the jaded proprietors of overworked lands and estates. Scientific agriculture will become the hand-maiden of government, and there is not a square mile of the island that will not feel its beneficent influence.

There are, as we know, limitations to tropical agriculture in a small island like Puerto Rico, with its 3600 miles of area; but what, in my opinion, will be the most interesting, if not profitable, outcome of this acquisition by our government of a truly tropical possession, will be the opportunity for experimentation in a field entirely new to us. That is, we have never yet entertained the possibilities of tropical agriculture; we have devoted all the great resources of our agricultural colleges and departments to the exploitation of products solely of the temperate zone.

Does it not now dawn upon us that here before us is

outspread a limitless field for investigation and experiment? Tropical agriculture has never been subjected to the scientific harnessing, to the analysis of trained professors and experts, as it will be soon. I predict, in truth, that not many years will elapse before we shall have chairs of Tropical Agriculture and Horticulture in our colleges. A new world has been opened to us—whether we retain the Philippines or not; whether we continue in control of Puerto Rico or not—by the mere suggestion of their occupancy, be it permanent or temporary.

It is not on record, I believe, that our governmental geological surveys have ever located any great bodies of mineral lands; but there ought to be a field for an expert in the West Indies, one who could authoritatively inform us as to the existence of auriferous territory, if there be any. However, there is gold in Puerto Rico. There was gold there before its discovery by Columbus in 1493, as the golden ornaments of the natives proved. When, in 1508, Ponce de Leon, the famed seeker after the Fountain of Youth, first reached the island, he was hospitably entertained by the Indian cacique Agueynaba, who presented him with fine specimens of gold obtained from the river beds in the western part of the island. Ponce was so excited that he could hardly rest until he had sent to Santo Domingo, the island whence he had invaded Puerto Rico, for soldiers to accompany him in his search for gold in the interior.

It was gold that he was after, as well as Columbus and all the other Spaniards of their time, and that they got the precious metal in quantities the official records of the Spanish Government attest. The city of Caparra was founded in 1510, but owing to the strong desire of the Spaniards to search for gold it was practically



without inhabitants during the first two years of its existence, since every able-bodied man was sifting the sands of the rivers that came down from the mountains. The Indians were impressed at the very outset, and soon all those who came within reach of the white men were aiding the Spaniards in their investigations. At last it became so unbearable that Cacique Agueynaba resolved to either put an end to Spanish oppressions or himself receive his quietus.

He had been told that the Spaniards were immortal, and for a time he believed it, seeing them come up out of the sea in almost endless processions. But, like the canny Scotchman who lived in story afterward, he had his "doots" at last, and resolved to test the theory by an original application of the water cure. That is, he captured a Spaniard alone in the mountains, and held his head under the water of a stream for two or three hours. Then he took him to the bank and sat beside him for two days, or until he received incontestable evidence of his demise. Such heroic treatment put an end for a time to gold hunting in Puerto Rico, for, the Spaniards resenting it and getting after the cacique, an insurrection followed which was not put down until the Indians were practically exterminated.

Still, traditions of gold in the island lingered through the centuries, the stories stimulated every now and then by rich finds by natives who washed the sands in a shiftless manner with wooden dishes and without system. There are, in fact, people living in Puerto Rico to-day who gain a livelihood by gold washing, pursued in just the same way as their ancestors before them followed it, and as it is carried on, also, in the adjacent island of Santo Domingo.

The same conditions prevail in Puerto Rico as in Santo Domingo, though gold washing in the former island has not been so persistently carried on as in the latter, where the rivers are less numerous, but at the same time larger.

It is safe to say that the mineral resources of Puerto Rico have not yet been fully exploited, though the rivers may no longer pour down golden sands, as of yore. It is in the heart of the mountains, in the great Luquillo range, that search should be carried on, where many of the rivers running to the coasts have their origin.

## XV

### THINGS WORTH SEEING IN PUERTO RICO

How the writer is handicapped—The two great attractions of the island—San Juan, the Morro, and walls of circumvallation—Casa Blanca, one-time residence of Poncé de Leon—Whence he sailed to search for the Fountain of Youth—The courteous Puerto-Riqueños—When the Stars and Stripes were first unfurled here—The Governor General's palace—Suburbs of San Juan—The glorious views down the coast—A fragmentary railroad—Arecibo and Aguadilla—Monkey Island and the Mona Passage—Mayaguez, Hormigueros, and San German—Yauco and the port where American troops first landed—Poncé and its Parque de Bombas—Schools, teachers, and scholars of the island—The composite population—The Spanish-Arabic fonda and the siesta—The great road over the mountains—Mineral baths of Coamo—Aybonito, and the fighting there when the protocol was signed—Tropical scenery and temperate climate—Region of coffee, cacao, and royal palm—Descent of the mountains from Cayey to San Juan.

**S**INCE the island of Puerto Rico became an American possession, many meritorious works have appeared describing it and treating of every phase of life and nature there. As our first, and at present only holding in the American tropics, it has received particular attention, and like Cuba has, perhaps, been "done to death" by bookwriters and newspaper correspondents. Still, the newspaper article is ephemeral, and the life of a book scarcely ever exceeds two or three years, while new readers are constantly appearing; so I

will venture anew to exploit the attractions of an island which I was among the first, if not the very first, to bring to the attention of the American public.

The two great attractions of Puerto Rico, in my humble opinion, are the city of San Juan and the military road over the mountains between that city and Ponce. San Juan is the oldest city in the United States—assuming the island to be actually ours—as it is a contemporary of Baracoa and Santiago de Cuba, and forty years older than Saint Augustine, in Florida. It is also the only walled city within our jurisdiction, and is universally conceded to be among the finest specimens of military architecture in the New World. Situated as it is, upon an island standing well out from the main into the sea, with its massive walls of circumvallation from fifty to one hundred feet high, it presents a most imposing spectacle. Trapezoidal in shape, the city rises amphitheater-like from the peaceful bay within the curvature of its walls, while upon the ocean front of the little island upon which it is built heavy surfs of the Atlantic roll and thunder.

The seaward or western front of the island is so precipitous, and the water close to land so deep that one might toss a stone ashore as the steamer enters. Here stands the *faro*, or light-tower, which has for many years borne a lantern 170 feet above the sea, and is one of the first artificial objects to claim attention as the island is approached. This lighthouse stands within the citadel known as Morro Castle, which in Spanish hands was a small military town in itself, with chapel, barracks, bomb-proofs, and dismal dungeons down by the sea. It was completed as long ago as 1584, and is in shape an obtuse angle, with three tiers of batteries facing the sea, placed one above another, so that their concentrated fires shall



cross. This old citadel was the beginning of the vast wall which completely incloses the city, and which was planned in its entirety in 1630, but not completed until 1771. The complement of the Morro in the west end of the island is the fortress of San Cristobal at the east, which faces oceanwards and also guards the approaches from the mainland. It is entered by a ramp on the highest part of the hill, where its fortifications are cut out of the solid rock, and commands, with its tiers of guns, the city and the inner harbor.

Beneath the ocean wall of the citadel lies the cemetery, where, in old-world fashion, most of the dead are "pigeon-holed" in *Columbaria*, and where, until the American occupation, the graves of common people were merely rented for a term of years, at the end of which their remains were turned out to make room for others. All this is changed now, as well as the rigid rules relaxed by which the fortifications were rendered inaccessible to strangers. There is now no need for secrecy, and with a permit from the commandant one may ramble at will over walls and into casemates which at one time could only be visited at the peril of one's life.

While the churches, with their wealth of treasure and ornament, their priceless relics and ancient architecture, will claim much attention, of course, yet the structure that will most occupy one's thoughts will probably be the "Casa Blanca," one-time castle of old Poncé de Leon. It stands within a garden surrounded by a crenelated wall, upon a bluff, from which, through the cocoa palms, there is a glorious view of the beautiful bay and the distant mountains. Be sure to visit it at sunset, or by moonlight, and, sentiment aside, those who love the beautiful in nature will be well rewarded.

It might be well to inquire, at this point, into the historic values of this Spanish-American city, with its memories extending back to the days of Poncé de Leon and Columbus.

It was in November, 1493, that Columbus, then on his second voyage to America, first sighted the lofty mountains of this island, and called it San Juan Bautista. Its native name was Borinquen, and subsequently, in some way it came to be called Puerto Rico, or the Rich Port, after the harbor of Aguadilla, on the western coast. Columbus did not revisit the island, and for several years it was left alone by the European voyagers, who were now flitting to and fro in the West Indies. But in 1509 the governor of the eastern province of Hispaniola, or Santo Domingo, Poncé de Leon, made an expedition hither and discovered that the island was inhabited by a gentle tribe of Indians, who warmly welcomed him to their country. Wherever the Spaniard went war was inevitable, and soon the Indians suffered so much that they attacked the invaders in sheer desperation. The eventual outcome for them was extinction, and not one descendant of those people remains alive to-day. Having "pacified" the country, after the customary Spanish fashion, Poncé de Leon founded a city, which he called Caparra, and from which he removed to the site of San Juan, in 1511.

It was in 1512, as all Americans know, that he set forth on that romantic quest for the "Fountain of Youth," which resulted in the discovery of Florida, and it was on his return from this voyage that he built the castle now called Casa Blanca. It was from this castle that he went out on his last voyage, in 1521, and from which he never came back alive. Slain by an Indian arrow, on the coast

of Florida, his remains were borne back to his home in San Juan, where they have been kept in a leaden case, in the church of Santo Domingo.

Such are some of the fascinating historical reminiscences that recur to one, while looking out, from the citadel or from Casa Blanca, down upon the beautiful bay which has been the scene of world-renowned exploits. There is no other such spot within the confines of our country where such great names are linked with such deeds and scenery.

Within the walls of the city are gathered about 20,000 people, with perhaps half as many more in the suburbs outside; and it is among these natives that the visitor will find much material of interest for note-book and camera.

Although brought within the restraints of American rule, the natives still hanker for the pleasures of the bull-fight and cock-pit, and Sunday is their chiefest holiday. But they are mild and courteous, even the raggedest of them, and (unless their opinion changes) seem to think the conquering *Americanos* the greatest people on earth. It is in the plazas and the market-places that they should be studied, where many of the poorer people come with the produce of field and garden, and the richer come to buy. They are thoroughly Hispanicized, like their architecture, which is well adapted to the exigencies of the tropical climate.

It was on the 18th of October, 1898, that the Stars and Stripes first flew officially above the ramparts of San Juan and the Morro. On that day, at noon, the United States Commissioners, General Brooke, Admiral Schley, and General Gordon, met the officials designated by Spain, and coming out of the palace with many naval officers, formed on the right side of the plaza. At the report of

the first gun from the Morro, the flag of our country was hoisted, while the band played the "Star Spangled Banner." It was not until the 1st of May, 1900, that military rule in Puerto Rico was replaced, and the first civil governor, Mr. Allen, a native of Massachusetts, was installed. The ceremony took place at the palace, where the Spanish governor general had once resided, and was a function of considerable importance.

The governor general's palace, built upon the "plataforma" of Santa Catalina, San Juan, is now, as it was under the Spanish régime, the official residence of the military commander-in-chief and civil governor. It is a large and handsome structure, adorned with marble and elegantly furnished.

There are interesting suburbs within easy reach of the capital, such as Rio Piedras and Carolina, connected by tramway, the former with about a thousand inhabitants, a theater, *casa de recreo*, or country palace for the authorities, etc., and beyond which runs the great military road to Poncé. Then there is the hamlet of San Turce, the pretty suburb of Cangrejos, with its summer gardens and summer houses, and across the bay the quaint Cataño and Bayamon, in a district where lie the ruins of the first settlement, Caparra.

A week might well be passed in and about San Juan, but two or three days will suffice to exhaust its major attractions; though the time is coming when the city will be chosen as an all-the-winter resort, with its equable temperature of from 75 to 80 degrees, its cool sea breezes from the northeast "trades," and its most fascinating architecture.

The coast views are glorious, and may be enjoyed from the decks of comfortable steamers, or while travel-



ing by rail on land. A comprehensive railway system was at one time projected around the entire island, to be more than 300 miles in length, the first section being from San Juan to Camuy, 62 miles, passing through the flourishing town of Arecibo, in the roadstead of which the steamers stop for cargoes of sugar, coming out of the fertile valley that here descends from the Utuado mountains. The main stream, at the mouth of which lies Arecibo, is fed by numerous others, which form beautiful cascades and are overhung with luxuriant vegetation, while seven miles distant is a great cave, which is locally famous.

Aguadilla, the west end of the island, is the port at which Columbus landed in 1493, and is famous for its fruits, flowers, and tropical scenery. Off in the channel between Puerto Rico and Santo Domingo rises the solitary and unique island, Mona, or the Monkey, which gives its name to the Mona Passage between the two larger islands. It is apparently of volcanic origin, its shores rising perpendicularly to a great height, and at the north end is a bold headland capped by an overhanging mass of rock with the suggestive name of *Caigo o no Caigo*—"Shall I fall or not?" A few half savage fishermen, wild goats, bulls, and swine, inhabit the island, while waterfowl innumerable make it their home.

Next south from Aguadilla is Mayaguez, a larger city, ranking the third in the island after Ponce and San Juan as a commercial center, exporting large quantities of coffee, pineapples, and cocoanuts. The contiguous mountains reduce the temperature to less than eighty degrees throughout the year, and send down delightful streams, among them the River Mayaguez, the sands of which at one time yielded gold.

Beyond Mayaguez lies the straggling village of Hormigueros, eight miles from which is the city of San German, which lies astride a long, uneven hill above the double valley of Boqueron-Juanajibos, and has been compared to a vast garden, filled with orange, lemon, and tamarind trees, coffee, cotton, cacao, and sugar-cane.

Sixteen miles southeast of San German is the hamlet of Yauco, connected by railroad with the city of Ponce. It has a fine climate and good water, and has a cart road to the port of Guanica, which has a population of about 1000 people. The port, in fact, is better known than the town, for it was here that General Miles landed his troops, in July, 1898, when for the first time Puerto Rico was invaded by the Americans. Here began those military operations which took our soldiers as far as Mayaguez, and subsequently from the port of Ponce to Aybonito on the military road.

Ponce, which bears the name of the first Adelantado, is the chief city of the island, and has the most numerous population. It cannot be considered an attractive city, situated as it is three miles from its port right down in a dusty plain; but it may be worth visiting for the sake of comparison with other places.

The central feature of Ponce is its plaza, in the center of which is the *Parque de Bombas*, or firemen's parade ground, where the *bomberos* frequently come out for exercise, in all the pomp of uniforms and with antiquated "tubs." Without the picturesque accessories of San Juan, Ponce yet holds its own, its houses being well built, and its markets well supplied. During the heyday of Spanish occupation it boasted three fine hotels, three large military barracks, two excellent hospitals, two or three casinos, a municipal library, a bank, a home-of-refuge,

two churches (including the only Protestant church in the island), a town hall, parks, plazas, gas works, and two cemeteries. One of the first centers of population to feel and yield to American impressions, Ponce soon forged ahead at a lively pace, and promised great things for the incoming foreigners.

Here you will find some of the best schools in the island, which were established under American supervision. If there is one thing more than another that strikes the visitor with surprise, it is the wonderful advance the native pupils of the average schools have made in the acquisition of English. It was, to be sure, a novelty, and they seized upon it with avidity; but aside from this, it is an admitted fact that the Puerto Rican children are remarkably bright and acquisitive. This is shown by the fact that they mastered in six months all the studies usually allotted for a year in the schools of their grade in the States. This precocity does not necessarily indicate a high degree of intelligence, but rather an aptitude for elementary learning. There is no discrimination in the schools on account of birth or color, for these new neighbors of ours are strictly democratic in the best sense of the term.

As to the teachers, most of whom are natives of Puerto Rico, it may be said that they are competent, faithful, conscientious, and earnest in their endeavors to bring their work up to the American models. Several hundred of them visited the United States in the summer of 1904, for the purpose of study and sight-seeing. Photographs of the native teachers, as well as of the pupils, indicate that a large proportion of the island's population shows traces of negro or Indian blood; yet there are many families directly descended from ancestry of high degree

in Spain, as well as others of French, German, and Italian lineage. Nearly all are of a pronounced brunette type, the blonde being a rarity, as in old Spain. If there are any characteristics for which the ladies are distinguished, they are amiability, intelligence, and sweetness of disposition. They are not now so rigidly secluded and guarded as their sex in the mother country, especially since the advent of the Americans; but the best of them were not often seen outside their houses in the daytime, except at some festive or religious function, when they were usually accompanied by attendants.

It is not often that one may ride from the coast of an island to the summit of a mountain nearly three thousand feet, over easy gradients and without fatigue; but one may do it here. One of the most creditable works here of the Spanish engineers (perhaps the greatest since the fortifications of San Juan were built) is this wonderful highway across the island, connecting the two chief ports of Puerto Rico. The island itself is only one hundred miles in length by about thirty in breadth, and the distance between Ponce and San Juan not over 60 miles, in a straight line; but as the high mountain chain lies between them (and owing, as some say, to the fact that the road was built on contract, by the mile) the connecting highway is about 85 miles in total length.

The capital is due northeast from Ponce, but for nearly half the distance out from the former the course is almost south, with many a curve and twist, and then westerly, gradually approaching the southern coast. Although the Spaniards are not celebrated as road-builders, nor for the attainments of their engineers, yet this road is a monument to Spanish pluck and skill.

The first place of importance is the hamlet of Coamo,



which has most wonderful medico-mineral springs, supplying the baths of an establishment which has existed for centuries, known as the "Baños de Coamo." The water is thermal, clear, and limpid, with strong sulphurous odor, and gushes forth in great volume.

Coamo was entered by American troops, pressing up from Ponce, in August, 1898, and was quickly captured without resistance. It lies at an elevation above the sea so great that the breezes from the coasts are now appreciably cooler; but the highest point is reached at Aybonito (or Aibonito, meaning "How Beautiful?"), which is 3000 feet above the city we left in the morning. As Aybonito is about midway the journey, it would be an agreeable resting-place for the night, even though its buildings are not in keeping with its natural charms. At this elevation, nearly half a mile above the sea in perpendicular height, will be found much to enchain the attention of the traveler.

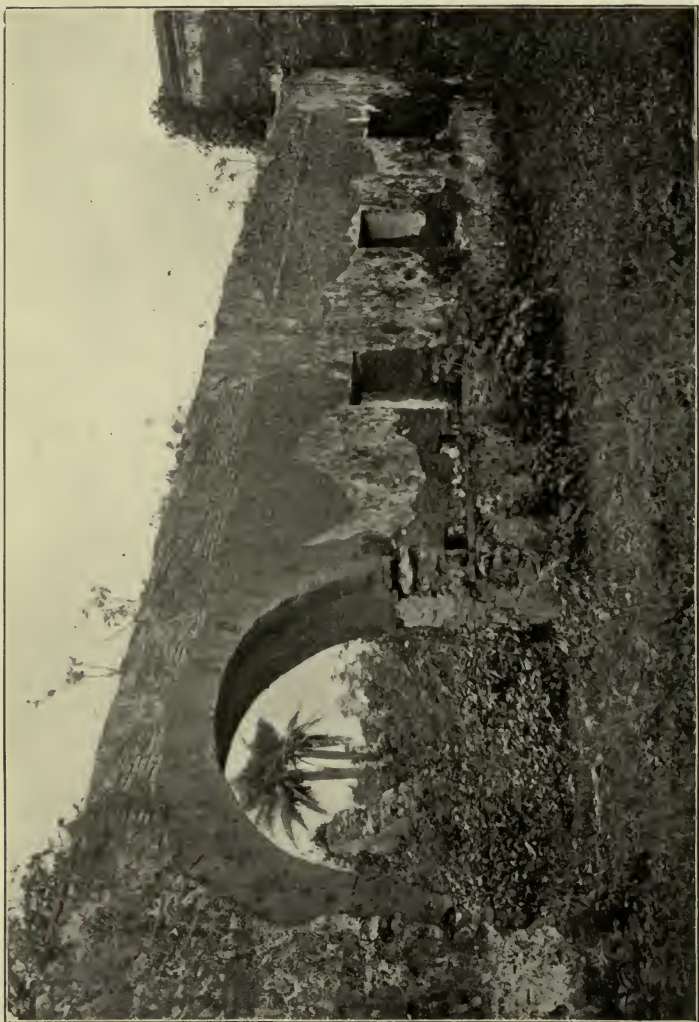
It was at Aybonito, the middle of August, 1898, that the news reached our army of occupation of the signing of the protocol that terminated hostilities between the United States and Spain.

At Aybonito we have reached an altitude equal to half that of Mount Washington, yet as it is within the tropics we find—instead of chilly winds, snow and ice, that half the year make the latter impossible of ascent—the flowers and plants of spring and summer time. We have left behind us the heated coast, with its fields of sugar cane and groves of cocoa palms, and are now in a region where the temperature is equable and delightful. The road dips into valleys and sweeps around the slopes of hills, crossing roaring streams over arched bridges of solid masonry, and plunges into the shade of sweet-scented forests. We

are now in the region of coffee, cacao, tobacco, and the royal palm, where the possibilities for agricultural operations seem limitless, though not half developed.

Passing over the crest that divides the southern from the northern slopes, with their hundreds of streams flowing in different directions, we descend towards the hamlet of Cayey, which is 2300 feet above the sea, and only 37 miles distant from San Juan. Here a road branches off to the coast, passing through Guayama to Arroyo. Cayey has a delightful climate, and is a favorite resort with those who wish to escape the heat of the coast.

About the same distance from Cayey as the latter place is from Aybonito, lies the town of Caguas, at a lower elevation, and the junction-point of several mountain roads, including one from Humacao and the southeast coast. All along the line, connecting with the great highway at intervals, are roads and bridle-trails, which lead away into fascinating *terra incognita*, to secluded valleys and isolated mountain peaks, which one is constantly tempted to explore. Horses and guides are not difficult to obtain, and if one should desire to break away from the paths of civilization and devote a few weeks to that unknown interior country, the adventure would be well rewarded.



Ruins of the Old Aqueduct, Caparra





## XVI

### THE DANISH ISLANDS AND VIRGINS

How Uncle Sam dashed the hopes of the Danes—Charlotte Amalia's peerless port—Some ports of Puerto Rico—Culebra as a coaling station—Santa Cruz and its scenery—When the "Monongahela" went ashore—Saint John and its haven, Coral Bay—An island of spices and fragrant forests—The attractiveness of Saint Thomas—Its capital and chief port, Charlotte Amalia—How Saint Thomas has changed, for the better and worse—Its harbor compared with that of San Juan—Best in the West Indies as a coaling and refitting station for war-ships—The attempt made by President Lincoln and Secretary Seward to secure it—Denmark's price and America's offer—An affair that dragged through three administrations—When the King of Denmark said farewell to his West-Indian subjects; and then took them back—What the latter think of Americans—Visits to Tortola, Virgin Gorda, and Anegada.

**W**HEN Uncle Sam appropriated Puerto Rico, as his reward for services rendered to Spain in divesting her of Cuba, he dashed the hopes of three islands in the Virgin group, lying fifty or sixty miles to the eastward. These islands are Saint Thomas, Saint John, and Santa Cruz, the inhabitants of which had been casting sheep's eyes at the United States for several years, hoping we would go down and possess them. Severally and collectively, they can boast many and varied charms; but the chief inducement they had to offer was the peerless harbor of Charlotte

Amalia, in Saint Thomas. At first the Danes asked fifteen millions for it, then ten, then dropped to seven, with the three islands "thrown in"; but when the harbor of San Juan fell to us, as part and parcel of the Puerto Rican conquest, it was no longer needed. For we then had not only San Juan, but the entire island of Puerto Rico, ten times as large as Saint Thomas, and vastly more fertile, with a population of 900,000, the traditional "thousand hills"—with cattle on them, too—sugar and coffee lands, rivers and harbors.

Intrinsically considered, the Danish West Indies are of small account to the rest of the world, but through their geographical position they are of inestimable value to a portion of it. Strategically, they hold the key to the West Indian and South American situation in case of war; they control, or may be made so as to control, the ocean pathway from our Atlantic ports to the projected Isthmian Canal, which in the future will be an appreciable factor in forming an estimate of values. They are situated within the tropics, and consequently beyond the ken of the average American citizen, who generally has contempt for things not within the range of his vision. Tropical they are; in situation and production; yet they are not physically volcanic, and have produced nothing worse than tidal waves and hurricanes.

The largest member of the Danish West Indian group is Santa Cruz, or Sainte Croix, depending upon whether the original Spanish name bestowed by Columbus is chosen, or the more recent French. Largest of the trio, being 19 miles in length by 5 in breadth, Santa Cruz is also the most fertile, yielding vast crops of sugar cane and some coffee; level in the main, with only one elevation over 1000 feet; containing a population of about

25,000 people, more than half of whom are to be found in the two towns of Christian and Frederichstaed.

Santa Cruz has a reputation (achieved by a single swoop of a hurricane and tidal-wave combined) which it may never outlive. It was acquired in 1867, when the old "Monongahela," United States war-ship of that period, broad of waist and rotund as to bows, was sent high and dry ashore by the forces aforementioned, and landed in a roadway quite a distance from the sea at its normal level. Not a small amount of money was necessary to return the old tub to her aqueous habitat; but the feat was accomplished, and she sailed away, to return again after many years and receive a royal welcome.

The island has proved so attractive to several Americans that they have forsworn allegiance to their flag and settled down here in the midst of bucolic delights. There are many things to allure, many to conjoin in fixing a foreigner to the soil, particularly if one be in search of the *dolce far niente*—for this is its home, they say.

The smallest of these tropical Danes is Saint John, which is only eight miles by four in area, or just about one-half the size of Santa Cruz. It is more rugged, however, is watered by numerous small streams, and its hills are covered with second-growth forests of woods like the bay and cinnamon, wild coffee, and mahogany, the infrequent plantations devoted to sugar cane being sandwiched in between. Its total population will not exceed 2000, all the people, with very few exceptions, being poor, and nearly all black, or colored, as to complexion.

Saint John, with its fragrant forests and numerous beaches of snowy sand, would be beyond all price were it more accessible; but at present it languishes in an obscur-

ity which has been unbroken for centuries. Only in the good old buccaneer times was Saint John well known, for it possessed, as it now possesses, a pearl of price in its landlocked haven known as Coral Bay. It is doubtful if the waters of this secluded haven were ever cleft by keel of craft larger than the droghers that sometimes flit along these islands coastwise, but within its confining hills, it is said, a small navy might find shelter.

It is reckoned as hurricane proof—that is, a safe anchorage during the season between July and November, when the tropic cyclones rage. It is a triple harbor, sheltered by a lofty promontory, with good anchorages in nearly every part, and with a depth of thirteen fathoms. These facts are mentioned because it is for the harbors they contain, and not for what their soil may be made to bring forth, or their people contribute, that these islands are esteemed as of prospective value to the United States.

There is still another island in this trio which owns a harbor far outclassing any other in that portion of the world. While both Santa Cruz and Saint John possess many natural attractions, their companion isle, Saint Thomas, has received far more attention than either. Saint Thomas is only thirteen miles in length by three or four in breadth, and has neither the fertility of Santa Cruz nor the beauty of Saint John, its soil having long since been washed from the hills by torrential rains and its forests having been converted into charcoal, centuries ago. But it has color and contour, and directly beneath its central ridge, about 1500 feet in height, lies the famous town of Charlotte Amalia, in a hollow of the hills, the buttresses of which run out into the sea and half inclose its peerless harbor.

There is no more picturesque town in all the West



Indies than Charlotte Amalia, and this is saying much when one has seen Havana and San Juan, Port au Prince, and Santo Domingo. Built upon and between three rounded hills, one of which is topped by a castle of buccaneer origin, with red-roofed houses standing in the midst of beautiful gardens reached by tortuous flights of steps, and with cocoa palms leaning over the beaches that border the bay, Charlotte Amalia is a shining example of what a West Indian town may become when it has the benefit of an unexampled location. It used to be scourged with cholera and yellow fever and it also used to be rich and running over with Mexican dollars; but now it is tolerably healthful and undeniably poverty-stricken; for a short cut through a coral reef created a current for the stagnant waters of its harbor, and the substitution of steam for sails has carried off its commerce.

It always was, and still is, a free port, and every article from foreign parts is cheap; but the bulk of Charlotte Amalia's population purchases little from foreign parts, owing to the fact that it has nothing to purchase with. The barrows laden with dollars that were once trundled through the streets have long since been trundled out of sight, and the chink of silver is rarely heard by the average citizen of the capital, which, as it includes nearly all the total of 13,000, may be said to represent the island.

But, poor and despised as Saint Thomas has become, it still retains its hold upon that magnificent harbor into which the Danish Charlotte dips her dainty feet. Its average depth is more than six fathoms, its entrance is open and about half a mile across, while within it is a mile in breadth and with sufficient accommodation for at least one hundred sail. On its west side is the "careening cove," where there is a large floating dock and a depth

of more than twenty feet of water. On every side rises a hill, except to the southward, where lies Santa Cruz, forty miles away, and, according to naval experts, the harbor might be made a veritable Gibraltar, with comparatively little expense to whatever government owned it. At present there are diminutive forts perched on the hills that guard the harbor mouth, and down at the water-edge of the town stands a small red fort with rusty iron guns pointed in aimless manner at the heavens above.

This is the harbor so highly commended by Admiral David D. Porter, many years ago, who told Charles Sumner that there was none other in the West Indies so well fitted for a naval station. As to its location, he said, it lies right in the track of all vessels from Europe, Brazil, the East Indies, and the Pacific Ocean bound to the West Indies or the United States. He called it "the keystone to the arch of the West Indies," as it commanded them all, and added that it would be of more importance to the United States than to any other nation.

The harbor of San Juan looks northwardly, that of St. Thomas opens southwardly; the one is already defended by massive fortifications, but the other can be made far safer by one-tenth the expenditure made by the Spaniards at San Juan during three centuries. Captain G. V. Fox, of our Navy, once reported: "This harbor of St. Thomas is one of the best in the West Indies, admirable for naval purposes, and fully equal to all the requirements of the commerce of those seas. . . The eminent strategic, geographical, and commercial position which St. Thomas occupies arrests the attention of the most casual observer of the world's chart."

This much as to the location of the harbor; now let us inquire into the movement made at one time toward its

acquisition by the United States. There was one Power, during the dark days of the American Civil War, always consistently friendly, and that was little Denmark, whose ports were open to our war-ships on the same terms that others obtained. Notably free to our naval commanders was the port of Charlotte Amalia, and there was established a coal yard for the use of our ships. It was the one port to which we could have free access, and, what is more to the point—egress, when a Confederate cruiser or blockade runner, having availed itself of this port for coaling and refitting, was about to depart.

When, therefore, a coaling station was thought of, and the subject broached to President Lincoln, in January, 1865, it was with the Island of St. Thomas in mind that Secretary Seward "broke ground." He lost no time in sounding the views of the Danish minister at Washington, and in inducing him to communicate with his government. He and Mr. Lincoln had agreed upon this particular island of St. Thomas, for the reason that it was most commandingly situated as to the other West Indian islands; also, it belonged to a nation friendly and, what is of importance, impecunious. It was shrewdly conjectured, by our astute Secretary of State, that Denmark might wish to sell this outlying possession of hers, for reasons of her own; at all events, that she would entertain the proposition in a friendly spirit. It so happened that Denmark was in need of several millions of dollars to strengthen her defenses; at the same time she did not dare risk offending her sister powers by openly assenting to a sale of even so small a portion of her territories as that bit of earth and rock in the far Caribbean Sea.

But her objections were finally overcome, although she was very coy at first, and insisted upon knowing just how

much Uncle Sam was willing to pay for her West Indian Islands before proceeding further. Her minister was instructed to obtain a reply, when there intervened that terrible tragedy by which our nation lost its President, and Mr. Seward himself was prostrated by the hand of a would-be assassin. A natural delicacy prevented the subject from being reopened by the Danish minister, and it was not until January, 1866, that Mr. Seward, having meanwhile made a voyage to the West Indies for the restoration of his health, resumed negotiations. He had visited St. Thomas, and all his previous impressions as to its being a desirable acquisition for our government were confirmed.

A basis of negotiation was finally secured, and our minister at Copenhagen was instructed to offer \$5,000,000 for the three islands—St. Thomas, Santa Cruz, and St. John. This offer was declined, but Denmark made a counter proposition, offering to cede the three islands for \$15,000,000, or St. Thomas and St. John for \$10,000,000, with an option of Santa Cruz for \$5,000,000 more. A compromise was finally effected at \$7,500,000 for the two first named—St. Thomas and St. John. It was in July, 1867, that Mr. Seward cabled to Copenhagen: "Close with Denmark's offer! St. John, St. Thomas, seven and a half millions. Send treaty ratified immediately."

But the Danes are a leisurely people, and it was not until October that the treaty was signed and concluded. Meanwhile there was a question as to the wishes of the inhabitants of the islands with reference to a transfer of allegiance, and an agent was sent by each nation for the purpose of taking a plebiscite. They arrived in St. Thomas about the middle of November, 1867; a few days later occurred a terrible earthquake and a tidal-wave,



which have become matters of historical importance, inasmuch as the tide of sentiment in the United States was doubtless turned against the treaty. It is not known that the island ever experienced a similar visitation of such terrible character; it certainly has never had one since. But this was sufficient to set in motion all the antagonistic elements of earth and sea, as if the very stars and planets fought against the project.

Notwithstanding the predictions of the superstitious people of the island, however, a vote was taken, which was nearly unanimous, for transfer to the United States. Considering the preliminary convention as binding equally upon both parties to the agreement, the King of Denmark had sent out, by his commissioner, a royal proclamation, announcing the severance of their relations, beginning:

“We, Christian the Ninth, by the grace of God King of Denmark [etc., etc.], send to our beloved and faithful subjects of St. Thomas and St. John our royal greeting. We have resolved to cede our islands of St. Thomas and St. John to the United States of America, and have to that end, with the reservation of the constitutional consent of our rigsdad, concluded a convention with the President of the United States.”

Concluding:

“With sincere sorrow do we look forward to the severment of those ties which for many years have united you and the mother country, and, never forgetting the many demonstrations of loyalty and affection we have received from you, we trust that nothing has been neglected upon our side to secure the future welfare of our beloved and faithful subjects, and that a mighty impulse, both moral and material, will be given to the happy development of the islands under the new sovereignty. Commending you to God.

“Given at our palace of Amalienborg, the 25th of October, 1867, under our royal hand and seal.

“CHRISTIAN, R.”

The popular vote was taken on the 9th of January, 1868, which was made a universal holiday, and the American flag substituted for the Danish on every point of prominence, tower, and hilltop.

The treaty was submitted to the Danish rigsdad, and promptly ratified, the king affixing his signature the same day, June 30, 1868.

The position of Denmark, acting in good faith, and presupposing that the United States would do the same, now seemed irrevocable. She had offended several of her mightier neighbors, Germany, France, England, who looked upon this acquisition by the United States as prejudicial to their interests.

Over the subsequent proceedings we must draw the veil of charity, to avoid the use of harsher epithet; for the conclusion of this chapter is by no means creditable to the United States. Four months were allowed for the ratification of the treaty by our Senate, then extended to a year; again extended to the 14th of April, 1870, when the committee of foreign relations recommended suspension of action, and indorsed it adversely.

The affair had dragged through three administrations, and had been the sport of different sessions of Congress, only to be ignominiously smothered in committee and pigeonholed, with Denmark's royal signature affixed and the ratification of her Senate. Thus the treaty intention was ignored; thus the King of Denmark had the humiliation of recalling his disappointed but still loyal subjects; and the flag of Dannebrog yet waves over the islands of St. Thomas and St. John.

Associated as it has been with pirates, buccaneers, smugglers, men-of-war, and men-of-peace, the harbor of Saint Thomas has seen some strange, eventful happenings. Having sailed into and out of it several times, it may be impossible for me now to portray it as it should be, the novelty having worn off; but in another book of mine (which few, if any, ever read) is an account of my first impression, which I fain would quote.

It may be night when the steamer arrives at the harbor of St. Thomas, but the land-breeze brings off the fragrance of a thousand flowers, the strange, pungent odors of the terrene tropics, and you know that a new land is reached at last. New scenes await you, if it be your first trip to the tropics, and they cannot but interest and delight.

Arriving at the harbor at night, one might well imagine he had by mistake been brought to the borders of the infernal region, for flaring flambeaux illumine the dark waters, dusky forms glide about with discordant cries, yells, and whistlings. A weird procession of black and hideous hags, clad in ragged raiment, bearing on their heads great baskets, and shuffling clumsily up and down the gang-planks, has established connection with the shore and is supplying the steamer with coal. It is merely an episode in the life of the voyager; but it is a matter of vast importance to those wretched negresses, who get but a penny a basket for their toil, and who are always ready, by night and by day, to respond to the blast from the great horn blown by the contractor from the parapet of Bluebeard's Castle, on the hill across the harbor.

Making Charlotte Amalia headquarters, many a pleasant trip can be taken to the isles and islets in adjacent

waters, being sure not to omit beautiful Saint John, nor quaint and almost deserted Tortola, the Isle of the Dove; nor Virgin Gorda, the "Fat Virgin," which has a mountain 1300 feet in height well charged with gold and copper. The extreme tip of the Caribbean chain crops out at Anegada, the "Submerged Island," which lies just north of Virgin Gorda, and of old, like all the other Virgins, was the resort of buccaneers, having many secluded coves and hidden harbors into which they ran their vessels while the enemy was nigh. This island is, or was, famous for its great Flamingo Pond, the resort of the big birds in pink and crimson livery, which come up from the Orinoco regions at certain seasons of the year and enliven the landscape with color.

Great veins of silver and copper have been traced at Gallows Bay, and sometimes old coins and jewelry are found in the island, worth far more than their weight in gold, and probably left there by the pirates who used to rendezvous around the bay named after Sir Francis Drake.



## XVII

### THREE LITTLE DUTCH ISLANDS

Some islands decidedly Dutch—The northernmost isles of the Caribbees—Where to find the West-Indian volcanoes—Saba, an island unique—The town of Bottom in its crater-bowl—Bonaparte's Cocked Hat—The author's adventures in Saba—Left at the Ladder with strangers—The climb to the town in the crater—Homes of the sturdy Dutch sailors—Gardens two thousand feet above the sea—Saba's mountain peak and the view from it—Northern limit of the garnet-throat humming-bird—Sulphur as good as that from Sicily—Where the beasts of burden are human beings—In a land of yesterday—'Statia, the island sacked by Lord Rodney—Loot that amounted to \$15,000,000—A place that few travelers visit—Spending a night on a crater-brim—A hegira of the Hebrews—The author's passport in Dutch—The first salute paid to our flag by foreign people—Thirteen an unlucky number for 'Statia—A pendant for Miss Columbia's necklace—Curaçao, on the Venezuelan coast—Dutch islands and their area—A little Dutch Paradise—Papiàmènto, the pepper-pot language—The harbor-lagoon of Curaçao—How the island may be reached—A near neighbor of the Lake Dwellers.

**S**OUTHEAST of the Saints and the Virgins, which themselves lie to the eastward of Puerto Rico, stretches the chain of volcanic islands known as the Lesser Antilles. They are included within latitude 10 and 18 degrees north, and are arbitrarily divided into the Leeward and the Windward groups, the former lying to the north, and the latter to the south of north latitude 15 degrees.

The new moon in her earliest stages describes no more nearly perfect crescent than this "string of emeralds on a silver zone," which those prone to alliteration term "the crescentic chain of the Caribbees." Every island in this chain, beginning with diminutive Saba in the north, and ending with Grenada in the south, is volcanic in character, and the chord of the arc they collectively describe is about three hundred and sixty miles in length. Each island is practically a single mountain shot up from the ocean depths, the altitudes varying from 2000 to 5000 feet, and so evidently volcanic of origin that one may not err in ascribing it to old Vulcan, or whoever has been allotted to perform his work in the nether world.

Pinnacles, mountain-tops, spires, thrust up through the sea, suggest also (as remarked in Chapter I) the remains of a lost continent—or perhaps the beginnings of a newer one—and around them we may well weave myths, not only Antillean, but Atlantean. They are all volcanoes, in fact, and were thought to be extinct, until May, 1902, when occurred the terrible eruptions in Saint Vincent and Martinique, by which thousands of homes were destroyed and between fifty and sixty thousand people lost their lives.

At all events the silence has been disturbed, and most effectually. Atlantis may yet appear out of the débris of wrecked isles a resurrected continent, above the sea, and verify the Platonian legend.

But, should these islands be destroyed, and, in effect, disappear, one cannot conceive of their places being taken by any more beautiful. Doubtless God might have made better, and more beautiful isles—to paraphrase old Walton's remark anent a certain fruit—but doubtless God never did; or if He did, the writer never saw them. As



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every mountain shoots upward abruptly to an altitude that gives it practically the range of two climatic zones, temperate and tropical, every beautiful aspect of vegetation may be noted here. The sides of each partially submerged volcano, from base to peak, and even some of the crater-walls, are hung with richest tapestries in varying shades of green.

The northernmost of the volcanic islands—or to be exact, the northwesternmost—is Saba, a mountain rising above the ocean floor nobody knows how many thousand feet, but with about 2800 of them sticking up above the water. What nature intended it should become when finished is not evident, for it seems only just begun; but it is a Dutch possession now, has been for many years, and is Holland's smallest property in the West Indies, perhaps in the world.

What is rare in these islands, the majority of the population are white; and not only white, but Dutch, the good old-fashioned kind, with blue eyes, freckled sandy complexion, and flaxen hair. There are Dutch residents in San Martin, Saint Eustatius, and in Aruba, Bonaire, and Curaçao, off the Venezuelan coast; but they are not the sturdy, clear-complexioned Dutch of Saba Island. The secret of their sturdiness and their healthfulness is found in the altitude, at which they live; not one of them less than 800 or 900 feet above the sea.

In fact, when Nature made Saba, she forgot to indent the coast-line with a harbor, hardly a landing-place; least of all a spot big enough to build a house on, so all the Sabans live at an elevation above the sea, perforce, of near a thousand feet. Nine hundred and sixty feet, to be exact, is the height of the town of Bottom above the sea. That is where most of the Saba people live (those

that do not dwell there being still higher up, among the crags of the volcano). The town of Bottom is so called because it lies at the bottom of an extinct crater. At least, it is supposed to be extinct, and will probably be considered so, until some day the victims of a mistaken confidence in the quiescence of a volcano may find—if any survive—that the real bottom of the crater was considerably below the level of their settlement! Their dwelling here in fancied security illustrates the apathy that possesses all those who take up their residences in precarious places merely because they have advantages over others less exposed to danger. They know well enough that the volcano towering above their quaint little town once went on a rampage, and peppered the whole island and surrounding sea until the soil of the former was nearly hidden from sight, and the latter made to boil like a witch's caldron. The Saba people ought to know what volcanic rock and scoriæ are, of a surety, for they have had to painfully clear their lands of both, before planting the neat little gardens that surround their houses.

Saba, in olden times, was known to the sailors as "Bonaparte's Cocked Hat," and certes, there is no quainter country in the world than this same speck of an island in the Caribbean Sea, which forms one of the links in the chain connecting North and South America. Sweep the map with a glance, and you would be likely to overlook it entirely, so snugly is it sandwiched in between the others; but it has its own attractions, nevertheless.

A friend of mine, a geographer and man of learning, once congratulated me as the only man he had ever met who had visited Saba, and declared that the first thing he should do when he had leisure would be to follow in

my footsteps. Be that as it may, I can recall that no land I ever set foot on caused me to thrill with such satisfaction and pleasure as when at last I found earth beneath me in Saba's only settlement. Not so much on account of the quality of the earth, as from the fact that it *was earth*, and not bounding billows or tumultuous seas. For I had been two days tossing up and down in a small drogher plying between St. Thomas and St. Kitts, and was sick nigh unto death, when we sighted Saba's peak piercing the gloom of a tropic twilight.

The trade wind blew fiercely through the mountain gorges, and beat us off from the island again and again; but at last we got in near enough to launch a boat, into which I was tumbled, together with my belongings. Two stalwart black men pulled it within hail of the shore, and then, instead of landing, they split the darkness with shouts for help, yelling to some invisible person in the clouds to "come down." It was nearly an hour before a response was wafted out to the boat, and quite another ere someone shouted a welcome from the base of the frowning cliffs. He, she, or it, whoever or whatever, might have been a disembodied spirit, for all we knew, for nothing could be seen but the foaming breakers on the shore and huge boulders, dim and indistinct; but in we went, in obedience to the siren's call.

The boat shot ahead with terrific speed straight for the rocks, and just as the shock of the impact with those rocks sent me tumbling heels over head, a strong arm seized me, yanked me out unceremoniously, and set me upright at the base of the cliff. The process had been materially assisted by a thumping wave, which had whelmed the boat and smacked me in the back, at the same time setting my luggage all afloat. Other strong

arms pulled the boat upon the rocks, emptied her of my effects and sent her back again on the breast of a wave, before I had wiped the salt water from my eyes. So there I was, alone with several strange folk, number undetermined until a lantern was lighted, when it was reduced from a multitude to two.

They were black, both of them, and evidently friendly, for after piling my luggage at the foot of the precipice they took me by the arms and guided me to what they called the "Ladder," which was a narrow trail up the side of said precipice. It was fortunate for my shattered nerves that the darkness hid the dangers of that trail from sight, for when I afterward saw it by daylight no money would have tempted me to essay it. But up we went, my guides climbing like goats and never making a misstep, until at last we reached a path which was not quite so steep as the side of a house, and I sat down to breathe.

My sable friends assured me that the dangers were passed, and they told me that of the two landings which the island possessed this was the worse. When the wind was west they used the eastward landing, called the Fort, and when it was east they used the Ladder; but whichever was used, and whatever the weather or wind, the sea was nearly always rough.

Here, however, the sturdy Dutch sailors of Saba, many of whom are descended from men who had sailed with Van Horne and Von Trompe, when these seas were infested with pirates and buccaneers, had resided all their lives. It was lucky for Saba that most of them met their ends at sea, for really there is not soil enough there to bury them in. Still, no other place in the world had the attractions for them held by this small islet, and if per-



chance any removed to other parts they always came back, being homesick for their beloved mountain and its crater.

Faint from hunger and tottering with weakness, I was piloted to the harbormaster's house; for, though Saba had no harbor, yet it had an official who drew pay as captain of the port, and by him, after I had satisfied his curiosity as to my business, my birth, and my respectability, I was permitted to sleep on his floor. Strangers seldom landed in Saba, and the last one, a dozen years before, had come by daylight and with proper credentials. I satisfied him in the morning as to credentials, and after being taken to the governmental chief, who gave me a passport for two guilders permitting me to reside in the island without molestation, I was introduced to the widow of a departed mariner, who agreed to board and lodge me.

Her little house was neat and painted white, with a garden surrounding it filled with crotons, limes, and orange trees, and in front a paved walk with comfortable benches, from which was a general view of the settlement. This is the town of Bottom, and which I thought might better have been named the Summit, being so hard to reach. Though surrounded on all sides by steep hills, with breaks in the rim only at the east and the west, through which the landing-places are reached, yet the bottom of the ancient crater is quite broad and comparatively level. That the volcano once vomited out many million tons of rock and scattered them all about is only too evident, for the people here have had to pick up the rocks and stones and pile them in heaps before they could get any garden spaces. Each little garden is inclosed within walls so high that the one street and the bypaths wind between artificial cliffs.

Saba, as the most northern of the true volcanic islands, is the home of some birds not to be found anywhere nearer the temperate zone than here. It was the northernmost habitat, as I ascertained, of the beautiful humming-bird known as the garnet throat, which is one of the largest found in the West Indies, and has plumage like velvet, shot with iridescent and metallic hues of wine or garnet.

As the ascent is made above the ravine the tree ferns and mountain palms become very numerous, the wild plantains, with golden and crimson cups, hang athwart the path hewn by the cutlass, and a wilderness of orchideous plants covers the trees. There is no trail above the "provision grounds" for the natives of Saba, though the men make voyages round the world, and are constantly at sea, have no love for mountain climbing. As for the women, if they get from one door to another, and once a year or so make the trip of forty miles to St. Kitts, they think they have done wonders.

But the view from the peak is worth voyaging far and climbing high to see, embracing, as it does, a wide seascape dotted with the islands of St. Barts, St. Martins, and Anguilla to the east; St. Thomas, Santa Cruz, St. John, and the Virgin group to the north; St. Eustatius, St. Kitts, Nevis, and Montserrat to the south—all historic islands, and every one a gem.

Being a volcano, though quiescent, Saba yields, of course, the natural concomitant of lava and scoriæ—sulphur, and in a very pure state. It was claimed for the vast deposit, which was then being exploited toward the heart of the volcano, that it was the only mine of pure, cool sulphur in this hemisphere—the only one outside of Sicily, in fact. I have seen the sulphur of Popocatapetl,

Mexico, *in situ*, and it was to gratify my desire to see that of Saba that, one very hot day, I descended the eastern cliffs, nine hundred feet below the heights. There I found the black miners working heartily, in a temperature too hot to mention in polite society, at a level about two hundred feet above the sea. The great cliffs were seamed with veins apparently inexhaustible, and owing to the purity of the crude sulphur, it is blasted from their faces and shot down a wire tram to the holds of vessels anchored near the shore. Only in good weather is this possible, and even in the smoothest sea there is some danger, for the "trades" blow straight against the cliffs, and there is no shelter nearer than the west shore of 'Statia, fifteen or twenty miles away.

I once found myself in a land of yesterday, stranded on an island which the mutations of trade had left on the verge of the world, so far as modern progress was concerned. It is an island of the Caribbees, belonging to the Dutch, and lies about midway between Saba and Saint Kitts. When Christopher Columbus sailed this way, in 1493, he named it Saint Eustatius.

One of the earliest accounts I have seen calls it a huge rock rising out of the waves, in the form of a pyramid, about fifteen miles in circumference. It consists, in fact, chiefly of an extinct volcano and the detritus washed down from its cliffs, together with the eruptive matter from the crater. There is no real peak to this isolated mountain, but a circular crater brim, 1950 feet above the sea, and the sweep of its pyramidal sides makes it one of the most symmetrical natural objects anywhere to be found in the world.

Neither is there any harbor or good landing-place, and

the visitor has to take his chances of getting safely through the surf that beats continually upon its sandy shore. Yet, time was when this surf-pounded shore was strewn with the products of every clime, and merchandise of incalculable value lay unprotected on the strand.

About the middle of the eighteenth century, during the general war in Europe, the Dutch, taking no part in belligerent operations, were the greatest gainers, as they supplied the other powers with naval and military stores. And at the beginning of the last quarter of that century, when that little dispute occurred between Great Britain and her American colonies, the Dutch again, by sending out all sorts of stores and munitions to their West Indian colony of St. Eustatius, were of very material assistance to both France and America. John Bull suspected something wrong was going on, but could not prove it until, by the capture of an American packet, his eyes were opened to the true inwardness of the situation. Then, with a promptness that fairly took the Dutchmen's breath away, he declared all treaties between his court and Holland abrogated and sent out a fleet to investigate. In the roadstead of Port Orange, 'Statia's apology for a harbor, a large fleet of East Indiamen was congregated, laden with cargoes of immense value, and the beach was piled high with what former ships had landed there and for which there was no storage room.

A declaration of war against Holland and a powerful fleet under Lord Rodney had been sent out simultaneously, so that when the British admiral hove in sight, having on board his ships a large land force under General Vaughan, poor 'Statia was thrown into consternation.

The island was under the rule of brave old Governor DeGraaff, a creole of Dutch parentage, whose sympathies



were decidedly with the struggling American colonies, but whose forts and military force were inadequate to combat this immense aggregation and armament under Rodney. So he surrendered, of course, and the island, with its vast riches, all conveniently stored in the ships and piled up on shore, fell into British hands.

With an instinctive attraction toward the place that would afford the greatest loot, the British had pounced upon this island, and the plunder far exceeded their most sanguine expectations. It was estimated at more than \$15,000,000; but while Rodney and Vaughan were quarreling over its distribution they let slip the golden opportunity for crushing the rebellious Americans, and in the end the capture of 'Statia cost John Bull rather more than it was worth. In other words, if Rodney had sailed to the relief of Lord Cornwallis, then penned up at Yorktown, instead of tarrying at this little island, he might have changed the history of our Revolution. He tried to make amends afterward by the destruction of the French fleet under De Grasse; but that was more in the nature of revenge than a compensation for the loss of the colonies.

And again, it happened that as the riches thus acquired on this occasion were in transit to England, the ships containing them were intercepted by the French and twenty-one of them taken. The French, also, later captured the island and held it for some time; so after all the British made little out of their breach of faith with the Dutch.

As I went to 'Statia seeking rare birds, it was part of my province to explore the woods and mountain districts, so I passed one night on the crater brim, with an old black man as guide and companion, in order to acquaint myself with the phenomena of nature there. We slept on the

ground, and I had a blanket, but my sable friend had nothing between him and Mother Earth; yet in the morning he was awake with the dawn, and led me into the depths of the crater. It is like a huge bowl, the sides precipitous, but fringed with trees and vines, and at the bottom are immense ceibas and gommiers, with trunks two feet in diameter, showing that many centuries have elapsed since the last eruption there.

Once was the time when the island was like a vast garden, when fields of waving sugar cane covered the plains, tobacco, indigo, and cotton the foothills, and coffee groves the mountain slopes, even to the crater brim. Then there were 20,000 people living here, 5000 white Hollanders and 15,000 blacks; now there are but 1500, and the white man is a *rara avis*. The climate is healthy, but good water is scarce (I believe there is not a stream on the island), and frequent hurricanes have completed the ruin that Lord Rodney began.

SIGNATURE OF GOVERNOR JOHANNES DE GRAAFF

In the good old times before emancipation an acre of soil was reckoned to produce from four to six hogsheads of sugar of 1500 pounds to the hogshead; but to-day there is hardly that much raised on its seven square miles of territory. Most of the sugar land lies over on the windward or eastern side of the island, for the leeward or western is almost too hilly for that sort of cultivation.

There are several elevations of respectable height, as the White Wall, 900 feet; North Hill, 960; Signal Hill, 750; Round Hill, 500; Old Fort, 300, and the town of Orange itself is well set up above the beach, the tower of its Dutch Church being 175 feet above sea level. The old church, like the mansions of those who built it, has fallen into ruin, but when I was there the quaint sounding-board still hung above the pulpit, and the pew was shown in which the representative of their High Mightinesses, Governor Johannes De Graaff, used to sit.

The island is Dutch still, like Curaçao, but the language of commerce and common use is English. That the official language is Dutch, the passport, or permit to shoot, without which I was not allowed to wander around with a gun, and which cost me two guilders, amply testifies. It recites that *De Gezaghebber van St. Eustatius* hereby permits the bearer to carry abroad *een dubbel-loop achterlaad schietgeween* during his stay, and the police force of the island (one man strong) is cautioned not to interfere with my explorations, "which are in the interests of science," etc.

On the top of a hill was the caved-in magazine of the old fort, three hundred feet above the sleepy town, where a few rusty cannon of the last century poked their muzzles out of a tangle of cactus and acacia. They were obsolete and dismounted, not worth taking away as old iron, even, or they would not have remained in the fort so long; but what an interest attaches to those antiquated guns! What an interest to an American, I mean; for the salute fired from them on a certain day in 1776 was the ostensible grievance urged by England when she broke the treaty with Holland that precipitated Rodney, like a thunderbolt, upon this island.

I must not forget to mention that what John Bull made the greatest fuss over was the firing of a salute in honor of the American flag by order of the Dutch governor of 'Statia. And, moreover, it was probably the first recognition of the sort received by our flag in a foreign port.

According to the annals of the time, a certain privateer from Baltimore, named the "Andrew Doria," came here for supplies in November, 1776, flying a flag that had never been seen in these seas before. It was not the flag officially adopted by Congress, of course, for that was made a year later; but it probably resembled the naval flag of the Netherlands, with alternate red, white, and blue stripes. However, when the saucy privateer came sailing into Orange harbor, with its red, white, and blue flag fluttering, and gave the fort a salute from its guns, sturdy Governor De Graaff ordered the salute returned, and the old cannon on the hill, now so rusty and useless, spoke out loudly, thirteen times, in honor of the thirteen stripes and colonies.

But thirteen was an unlucky number for the governor and the island, whatever it may have been for our colonies, for before their High Mightinesses could comply with the British demand for a disavowal, along came Rodney and his fleet and put poor 'Statia out of the reckoning altogether. She was throttled, then and there, and our colonies obtained no further aid from her. Thus she suffered, in a sense, on our account, and that our freedom might be achieved.

And, as I sat amid the ruins of the old fort, and looked down upon the sad little town at my feet, I could not but feel that something was still due the island, in the nature of amends for the loss of that fifteen millions and departed prosperity. It would form a very pretty pendant to the



necklace of insular emeralds that Uncle Sam will some day throw about the neck of Miss Columbia!

If the American eagle ever should conclude to extend its protection to the islands south of us known as the West Indies, probably among the first to scramble 'neath the shelter of its wing would be those at present owned by the Dutch. Not that the Hollanders do not bestow upon them the best sort of a paternal government; but for the same reasons that the Danes are anxious to dispose of their own West Indian possessions—economic considerations. It is almost pathetic to observe the tenacity with which these once-powerful governments still cling to their tropical holdings in America. But it is possibly for the same reason that the hunter held on to the tail of the wild cat—because nobody would help him let go!

The Dutch possessions of the West Indies are comprised in the Islands of Curaçao, Buen Ayre, and Aruba, off the South American coast; Saba, St. Eustatius, and part of St. Martin, in the northwest Caribbean Sea. Their aggregate area is only 403 square miles, their population 50,000, and the annual deficit in their revenues is about 60,000 guilders, which is made good by the mother country.

The seat of government is at Curaçao, where the chief magistrate resides, and each outlying island is under an officer appointed by the sovereign, entitled the *gezaghebber*. Curaçao is the largest, 210 miles in area; Buen Ayre next, 95; Aruba, 69; the moiety of San Martin, 17; St. Eustatius, 7, and little Saba last with only 5 square miles to its credit, and about 1800 inhabitants.

It is nearly thirty-six hours' steaming across the Carib-

bean Sea from Puerto Rico, Saint Thomas, or Saba, to the island of Curaçao, for it lies almost-within sight of the Venezuelan coast of South America. It is only forty miles distant from that coast, on a clear day the continental mountains being discernible from the island.

Discovered by Vespucci, in 1499, Curaçao was held by the Spaniards until 1634, when the Dutch acquired it; but how, no man seems to know. They probably found it without an owner and simply annexed it, ever since holding it by right of possession. Curaçao's architecture shows that it has been a Dutch holding for many years, for it is that of Holland, most assuredly; and so are the thrift and cleanliness displayed in this "little Dutch Paradise"; which is hot enough, by the way, to be styled an Inferno.

Somebody, I think it was Kingsley, called Saint Thomas a "little Dutch oven of a place," and the name will apply equally well to Curaçao. It is dry and parched and in spots is barren; but yet it has a charm all its own. As a violent contrast to Saba and Saint Eustatius, it is a perfect success; but the inhabitants of the volcanic islands seem to manifest a preference for their own mountainous demesnes, notwithstanding the greater activity prevailing in Curaçao, and the more abundant lucre. It is difficult to tear a mountaineer from his country, poor though it may be, and few of the Dutch islanders in the northern Caribbean ever come to Curaçao "for keeps." Some of the governmental officials of the latter island are obliged to take the trip to Saba and 'Statia every few months, because of business; but otherwise there is scant interchange of visits. English is spoken in all the islands, though the official language is Dutch. In addition, there is spoken in Curaçao a barbarous mixture of Dutch,

Spanish, English, Indian, and African, known as *Papiamento*, which is a perfect pepper-pot, or hodge-podge, of a language, and peculiar to the islanders themselves.

In choosing Curaçao for their seat in the southern West Indies, the Dutch pitched upon an island reproducing the salient natural features of Holland more than any other in the Caribbean. There is none other with just such a landlocked harbor as that of the Curaçao lagoon, the entrance to which is so narrow that it is spanned by a bridge of boats, which is drawn aside for steamers to enter. Two old forts guard the passage-way, one on each side, where are mounted the most obsolete of cannon, and paraded the funniest of little Dutch soldiers, who hail each other across the inlet as they feel inclined.

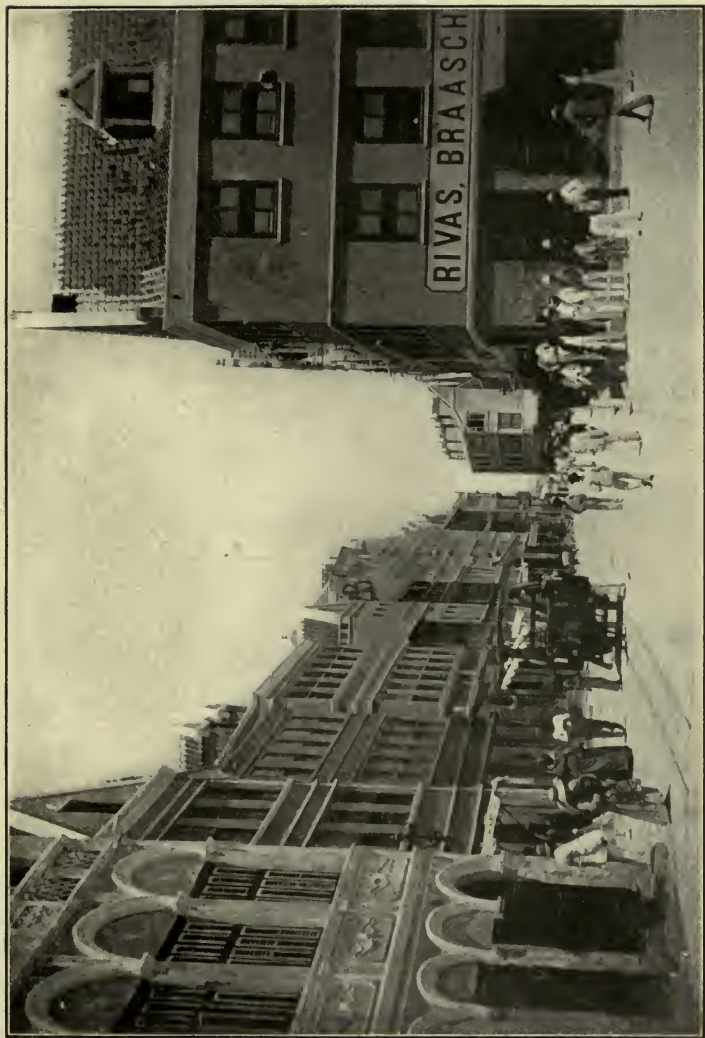
The inlet forms a capacious harbor half a mile long, but opens beyond into a great lagoon called the Schat-tegat, where the ships of a navy might float. This lagoon was anciently the retreat of the famous pirates of the Spanish Main, behind a high hill guarding which, capped by an old fort, they used to hide away their piratical craft. From the island's name is derived that of the sweet, insidious liqueur so grateful after dinner—curaçao; but only the orange peel with which it is flavored comes from here, none of it being manufactured in the island.

Decidedly Dutch is Curaçao, as anyone will say who has sailed into its harbor-lagoon between Forts Riff and Amsterdam, and looked upon the old houses ringing around that landlocked body of water—houses which might have been transported bodily from the Zuyder Zee, as doubtless the tiles that cover their roofs were, long ago. There is not much to see in Curaçao; but somehow, it gets a hold on one's affections, and I must confess to a

liking for the island, barren as it is, and dreary as its landscape is at times, from lack of rain and more than a sufficiency of dust. It is reached by the "Red D" line of steamers, which perform the voyage thither from New York, with a stop at Puerto Rico, in about six days.

As one is almost within touch of Venezuela, when at Curacao, it rarely happens that the traveler tarries long here, preferring to go on to Puerto Cabello, La Guayra, and Maracaibo on the coast of Venezuela. All are within a few hours' steaming, Maracaibo being the farthest and, perhaps, the best worth visiting, what with its historical scenes of buccaneer days, and its near neighbors, the famous Lake Dwellers, discovered by Vespucci, in 1499, and to-day living in huts over the water, exactly as he found their ancestors, four hundred years ago.





Principal Street and Tramcar, Curacao



## XVIII

### SAINT KITTS, NEVIS, AND MONTSERRAT

Saint Kitts and Mount Misery — Original home of the buccaneers — Nevis, Redondo, and Montserrat — Lofty mountains of the Antilles — Sea-surrounded volcanoes — Climbing Mount Misery — How the hospitable planters supplied me for an expedition — Through the high forests of the volcano — What was in the hamper — Water from the wild pines, nature's punch-bowls — Deferential darkies in attendance — On the peak and what was found there — Brimstone Hill, once the "Gibraltar of Saint Kitts" — Sandy Point and Basse Terre — In the crater of Mount Misery — The humming-birds' bath — Mammals of the West Indies — How the African monkeys got to Saint Kitts — What old Père Labat has to say about them — The skull in the soup — Sir Thos. Warner's epitaph — Relic of a regicide — "Bobby" Burns came near becoming a Kittefonian — The sunken city near Nevis — The barrister of Booby Island — Fig-tree Church, where Lord Nelson was married to the Widow Nisbet — The marriage register — More quaint epitaphs — An old-time sanatorium — Birth-place of Alexander Hamilton — Legends of the Amazons — Madanino, Island of Amazons — Identical with the present Montserrat — How Pat Mulvaney turned into a "naygur" — Home of the lime-juicers — Origin of lime culture — A fine old Quaker family — A new bird found by the author.

**W**HERE every island is a perfect gem, a gigantic emerald, embraced by bluest of waves and caressed by silvery clouds, it is most difficult to select that which might be termed the finest; but there is none more attractive from the sea than Saint Kitts, named by the modest Columbus

after himself, Saint Christopher. He discovered it, as indeed all these islands of the northern Caribbees, in the year 1493.

The highest peak in the island, about 4000 feet, is Mount Misery, which conceals a fine crater in its bosom—a crater that has sent out nothing worse than steam and sulphur fumes within the memory of man. Brimstone Hill, a detached peak 750 feet in height, was once fortified by the British and called their “West Indian Gibraltar,” a name now borne by Saint Lucia, to the south of Martinique. Saint Kitts possesses the richest soil in the West Indies, hardly excepting Cuba; yet its planters are now in the doleful dumps because we will not take them under our protecting wing, and sturdy black men are going begging at twenty cents a day.

The island was the original home of the buccaneers. Off its leeward coast a great naval battle was fought between English and French. Across a narrow channel rises the symmetrical peak of Nevis, like Mount Misery, forest-clad, and with a fertile, verdant belt around it.

Next south of Nevis lies Montserrat, smaller yet, and between the two islands the great rock of Redondo, a pinnacle shooting up out of the sea. Montserrat has a fine crater or “soufrière,” and before it was devastated by a hurricane a few years ago, was covered with groves of limes. Nevis has no well-defined crater, but has numerous hot and mineral springs.

There are lofty mountains in Cuba and Santo Domingo which have scarce been climbed; in Jamaica, the Blue Mountains, above 7000 feet, and in our own Puerto Rico peaks of not much lesser altitude. Although the Island of Haiti-Santo Domingo was discovered in 1492, and the first American cities of European foundation were



attempted on its shores, yet the mountainous interior contains summits never scaled, and valleys which have been invaded only by Indians and fugitive blacks.

Mountains there are, scores of them, above 5000 feet in height, awaiting the coming of the intrepid explorer; but the true volcanoes lie eastward of the Greater Antilles, in the chain of the Caribbees. These islands are known as the Lesser Antilles, and have been arbitrarily divided into the "Windward" and "Leeward" isles; but as a group they have always retained the name they derived from the cannibal Caribs by whom they were occupied when discovered.

Inclusive of the Virgin Islands, just east of Puerto Rico, between latitude 18 and 19 north and the Island of Trinidad, 10 degrees from the equator and off the Orinoco delta, these Caribbees describe a perfect crescent. The outer isles are mainly coralline, low-lying and featureless, but sheltered within this great barrier chain lie the true Caribbees, an archipelago of sea-surrounded volcanoes, extending over six degrees of latitude and ranging from 2000 to 6000 feet in height.

I never knew until I had tried to gain its summit, why the great central mountain of Saint Kitts was called "Mount Misery." Then I understood; for, although the hospitable planter with whom I was temporarily residing made most elaborate preparations for me, yet the discomforts of the ascent were multitudinous. The same old negro who had guided me in search of monkeys, and who was the watchman of the estate, was detailed to accompany me up the volcano. He called me at four in the morning, but I was already awake, having been kept so nearly all the night through by the "bête rouge," or minute red bugs that infest the forests and cling to the

limbs of intrusive strangers. An hour later we were off, and, after riding about five miles, as far as the pony could carry me, I dismounted, and the beast was turned loose in the mountain pasture, where he browsed about until our return in the afternoon.

We were joined here by two men who claimed to be more familiar with the mountain trail than old Tucker—black Jim Bass and “Yaller Charlie”—and the former marched ahead to “cutlass out” a path, while the latter divided with my old man the transportation of the provisions. The commissariat, by the way, is the most important feature of a West Indian expedition, and no generous host like my dear friend Mercer would allow a guest to set forth without ample stock of provand. Having seen to it that his cook had filled a huge hamper with cold fowl, cassava bread, crackers, etc., with an imposing array of bottles containing various liquors, such as gin, native rum, and “beer” or Bass’ ale, he even followed me out to the garden gate as we rode away and shouted: “Have you got a corkscrew?” I had a corkscrew, having been in the islands long enough to know the importance of such an article, and he went back contented.

It was three years since anybody had been over the trail to the mountain-top, and Jim Bass had hard work cutlassing out a path through the ferns and the razor grass, which latter is here known as “cutnannie,” and inflicts terrible gashes upon unprotected limbs. It took an hour to rise clear of the wild pasture and reach a lateral knife-edge ridge of the mountain just wide enough for the trail.

Soon after reaching it we passed through a natural opening in a giant fig tree, which straddled the path, leaving a portal higher than our heads, hung with vines

and plastered with air plants, and which my guides called the "gate." Beyond the "gate" the various earthquakes with which the island has often been visited had shaken the earth away from the ridge until in spots only a narrow blade was left, with deep ravines on either side, filled with dense vegetation of gommiers and mountain palms.

The upper edge of the forest was reached an hour before noon, and, as they had had nothing to eat or drink since their morning coffee, six hours before, my men unanimously declared that we must halt and breakfast. "Mus' feed de ole man in ma belly," said Bass.

"Ma belly tech ma back; him mus' t'ink ma t'roat cut," added Tucker.

"You t'ink yo' mos' dar," said Yaller Charlie to me, "but lemme tell yo', we on'y begun de climb. Dem climbin' ferns yander de wus t'ings in de wuld fer get t'ro'. When I make de fus' track I hab on pair new briches, and when I come back dey mash to cuss."

The peak was then in sight, it seemed to me, and I wished to push on and breakfast on the summit; but my men were obdurate. The huge basket, nearly three feet across, and which Yaller Charlie had carried on his head over places where I had to cling with both hands to ferns and trees, and so carefully balanced that not a glass was broken or a bottle disturbed, was let down to the ground and our breakfast spread out on wild banana leaves.

Upon examining the hamper I found that while three kinds of liquor had been provided, there was not a sign of water. Neither was there any spring or stream within a mile or more. But while I was debating with myself what I should do old Tucker took a cutlass, and, stepping to the nearest tree, severed from one its horizontal limbs a great wild pine which sat astride of it, and from the

cavities within the leaves poured out more water than was actually needed for diluting the cane juice in the bottles. This water was clear, cool, and refreshing, and the wild pines, which are called "punch bowls" by the natives, are never without a supply.

I told Tucker to take one of the bottles of rum and divide it among the trio. He needed no second invitation, and receiving the bottle from me deferentially, retired with it behind a clump of palms, where it was soon emptied, without recourse to water from the "punch bowls." Heartened by this *al fresco* lunch, and blessing my good planter for his providence, we soon set out for the peak again, this time stumbling and wallowing through masses of climbing ferns and slipping over dank fields of mosses many feet in depth.

It was well we had refreshed ourselves at the forest-edge, for there would have been no opportunity thereafter, and it was full three hours before the peak was reached. The last half hour was the worst climbing I ever did in my life, it seemed to me, for I had to hold on with both hands and dig my toes into the slippery mosses on nearly perpendicular rocks, while about us the fog was so dense that we could not see five feet ahead. Through it all, however, Jim Bass hewed out the old trail so truly that, though obliterated, he disclosed the old blazes every now and then, and Yaller Charlie followed jauntily in his wake, balancing the hamper on his head. He would not listen to me and leave it behind, saying that it was no trouble at all to tote it, and we might need a bite when we reached the summit, as sure enough we did; not only a bite, but a nip, to keep the filmy fog out of our throats.

"By de holp of de Lawd we reach dat top," said Bass,



fervently and encouragingly; and reach it we finally did, casting ourselves down, quite exhausted, on the ridge above the crater.

“When Mr. Norton reach heah,” said Tucker, “he done bus’ right into teahs, and den he pray, and sing ‘God Save de Queen.’”

I could understand Mr. Norton’s enthusiasm, though for the life of me I could not see what the queen had to do with it. Fancy Queen Victoria, or King Edward, either, as to that matter, waddling to the peak of Mount Misery! Neither of them ever saw it; though the Prince’s sons, George, and his late lamented brother, once visited the islands as midshipmen, and had everywhere a royal reception.

The dense fog sweeping in from the Atlantic hid from sight all the windward side of the island, from which we had ascended, but to the leeward lay the encircling forest just about the cone, beyond which were the sugar plantations, divided into squares of light green where the cane was growing, and brown where it had been cut or the ground had been freshly broken. No bit of paradise could appear more beautiful; and as to its fertility, I knew that I was looking upon one of the richest tracts of cane land in the world, where the volcanic soil is so deep as to be inexhaustible.

Beyond the inclosing plantations, with their brown and verdant checkers of cane and their tiny windmills with slow-waving arms, lay the all-encircling sea, blue as the clearest sky and flecked with vessels white and beautiful. I could see Saba and ’Statia, Antigua Nevis, Montserrat, and a score of lesser islets, lying like cloudbanks on the wave, when the fog lifted and revealed them, and each one was a vision of beauty.

The driving mist that so rapidly scurried over the verge of the volcano was only now and then dispelled by the sun, affording but transient glimpses of the gloomy chasm that lay beneath us. The walls on this side were too steep to descend, being almost perpendicular; but I vowed that I would reach the crater, even if I took another trip as hard as this to accomplish it. A week later I was on the leeward coast of the island, and at six in the morning skirting the base of world-renowned Brimstone Hill, crowned by its fortress known as the "Gibraltar of St. Kitts."

From the coast settlement of Sandy Point it is a hot seven miles to the borders of "Sir Gillis' Estate," in the pastures above which I left my horse and found a guide.

Sandy Point, which lies at the north end of the island, ten miles from Basse Terre, obtains its water supply from springs in the hills at this place, and thence there is a trail through the dense forest, up steep ridges, finally turning the crest and descending the crater wall at an uncomfortable pitch, but accompanied all the way by clumps of tree ferns, wild plantains, and mountain palms. The descent is steeper than that into the "bowl" of 'Statia, and, like that, it is lined with tropical vegetation, even large trees finding a home here, and the distance from the brim is about 700 feet.

In ordinary seasons there is a small lake here which varies in depth, sometimes drying up entirely, and its water, when there is any, is blackish-green. Above the crater bed rises Mount Misery, the highest peak of the surrounding wall, steep, precipitous, and on the opposite side is a large body of palms. Amateur geologists say that the adjacent Brimstone Hill looks as if it had been cast out of this crater at some far-distant epoch, and that

if it could be turned upside down it would exactly fill it.

Under the cliffs of the east side is the "Sulphur," a steaming pool, where the surrounding rocks are stained in various colors—red, yellow, brown—and the trees near by are blanched quite snow white, their leaves scorched and shriveled. Throughout the bed are numerous black fumaroles leading far into the bowels of the earth, from which sulphur fumes are belched, as in Dominica and Guadeloupe, while a stream of acidulous water runs from the great "Sulphur" into the lake.

At the spring in the forest, which I reached at mid-afternoon on the return journey, I found "Mannie, the Portugee," awaiting me with a basket full of solid and liquid nourishment, sent by the proprietor of the Wingfield estate, nearly nine miles distant. He had trudged all the way in the tropic sun, and the beer was warm; but as I had eaten little and drunk nothing since morning, and the sulphur water in the crater was not exactly palatable, I did not mind a little thing like that. The water of the crystal spring was delicious, and far preferable to any "bottled goods," while the cold chicken and guinea bird were as tender as the proverbial "Billy's mother"—who, I believe, was the widow of a sailor.

While refreshing myself in this delightful spot I was entertained by the antics of a gilt-crested hummer, which not only flew under the sparkling drops as they fell from the rocks, but also alighted and clung to the saturated moss, allowing the water to run over his glistening back. This seemed to be, in fact, the chosen bathing place of the humming-birds, for while I was there more than a dozen came and dashed into the water. The black rock was clothed in soft mosses and ferns, the deep recess in

which the water dripped was overhung with begonias having sea-shell tints, and above my head palms and trumpet trees interposed their leaves between me and the sun.

Down by the sea, near the base of Brimstone Hill, the bottom of the bay is said to be unbearably hot, and the sea-water charged with sulphurous gases, so it would seem that the name is not inapplicable to this spot so famous in West Indian history.

As I was inspecting the place a crowd collected, and one old darky explained to the rest that I had "come to take de dimensions ob Sandy Point side," meaning that I intended to write about it; and he was not far wrong, after all.

It is a curious fact that, while there is abundant cover for large game in the West Indies, few big animals are found in a ferous state. Almost all of the little found there has sprung from game animals imported many years ago. When the first Spaniards arrived at Cuba they discovered the natives in possession of a small quadruped called the "dumb dog," which not only was held in high esteem for the table, but was cherished as a pet. Its chief peculiarity was its inability to bark or make any sound above a grunt or moan.

There are, strictly speaking, no large arboreal animals, if we may except the few species of squirrels, 'possums, and 'coons, and the most noteworthy hiatus in the insular fauna is the almost entire absence of monkeys throughout the West Indies.

Until within less than a score of years the presence of monkeys in these two islands and their entire absence in other and larger, was a puzzle to the naturalists. It is believed that no skins, even, of these monkeys were to be



found in the United States, until the writer succeeded in obtaining some, in the year 1880, and sending them to the Smithsonian Institution. Then it was ascertained that the St. Kitts species was the African green monkey, known to scientists at the *Cercopithecus callitricus*, and comparatively common. But for some time after this announcement the naturalists cudgelled their brains to find out how this species came to be so plentiful in an island thousands of miles away from its accustomed habitat.

This was a poser, until I enlightened them by giving them the results of my investigations. In an old history of travels by Père Labat, a Frenchman, who voyaged through the Antilles in the early part of the eighteenth century, reference is made to some African monkeys that escaped from captivity, and, having gained the forests, there propagated with great rapidity, until they had become a nuisance to the planters.

Then the wise men breathed more freely, for the problem was solved at last; the origin of an African monkey in American islands was determined. The difference between the monkeys of the old and the new world are many, the most noticeable being shown in the shape and uses of their tails. For, whereas the old world species is stiff-tailed and has little use for that appendage which has been such a stumbling block to the promulgators of the evolution theory, the American species has a prehensile tail and thus has many advantages over its cousins across the water.

Speaking of the uses to which the early planters of St. Kitts put the ravagers of their cane fields, the monkeys, who used to descend in troops and eat all before them, the old historian narrates how the planters aforesaid applied the old aphorism and made "like cure like."

He says: "Being one day invited to dine with one of the planters, I was horrified, when the soup was brought to the table, to see what looked like an infant's skull bobbing about in the tureen. But I was assured that it was not that at all, but merely the skull of a monkey, which had been deprived of skin and eyes and carefully cleaned."

He goes on to say that he finally overcame his repugnance and ate with gusto of the savory dish before him, which could not have been surpassed. Indeed, he took care that it should form a feature of his repasts while in the island, for the worthy father was a great gourmand. The moral of which is, or should be: When monkey soup is brought before you, shut your eyes and ask no questions.

One would hardly expect to find in two small islands like St. Kitts and Nevis, which together cover little more than one hundred square miles, names that have become familiar to all readers of American and English history. As St. Kitts was the mother of the English colonies in this part of the West Indies, and her immensely fertile soil was easy of cultivation, many sons of distinguished families came out here to seek their fortunes.

The founder of the colony was a Sir Knight, as is shown by his quaint epitaph, which is still to be seen in an ancient cemetery in the center of the island:

"An Epitaph upon the most honourable Noble and much Lamented Gent Sir Thos. Warner, Kt., Lieutenant General of Ye Caribbee Islands and Gov'r of ye Island of St. Christ, Who departed this Life the 10th of March, 1648."

The colony was always loyal to the English crown, in

consequence of so many "gentlemen" having been employed in its foundation; but one of the judges who signed the death-warrant of Charles I. somehow found refuge there. In the possession of a family of planters is a silver tankard, inscribed with the initials of this "regicide," "J. N. H."—his name was Hutchingson—and the date, 1662.

Another family holds as a choice relic a letter from Robert Burns, written about a hundred years ago, in which the Scottish bard gravely considers the possibilities of bettering his condition by removing to St. Kitts. It is a credit to his sense and his loyalty that he should have remained in comparatively sterile Scotland, for there is no denying the fact that "Bobby" was inclined to a land that was generous and where good liquors were to be had.

The literary remains of these islands are few and far between, and they shine rather with a reflected radiance than with an original luster of their own. This may particularly be said of the Island of Nevis, separated from its mate by a sea channel less than three miles wide. The islands were at one time contiguous, it is thought, and a submarine passage exists from one to the other. This is founded upon the statement of the monkey hunters, who declared that they have chased troops of monkeys to a cavernous region on either side, where they disappeared as if swallowed up by the sea. It is a well-known fact that monkeys are never numerous on both islands at the same time, for, while they are ravaging the cacao groves and cane fields of one island those of the other are usually exempt. On the Nevis side of the channel, under the grassy slopes of Hurricane Hill, the water covers the site of Jamestown, the sunken city. It was submerged during a hurricane, like Port Royal in Jamaica, and for more

than a century the waves have covered the roofs of its houses. In midchannel rises a huge rock inhabited only by sea birds and known as Booby Island.

An arrogant young barrister being asked by a certain judge where he practiced, airily replied: "Oh, between St. Kitts and Nevis." "Ah," said the judge, "on Booby Island, I presume!"

Two events have happened in Nevis which will cause the island to be kept in remembrance for many years to come. Here was born the great American statesman, Alexander Hamilton; and here Britain's peerless seadog, Lord Nelson, fell victim to a widow's wiles and was married.

In the year 1782 Horatio Nelson, then but twenty-four years old, was appointed to the command of one of his majesty's ships and sent to New York. The commander-in-chief, Admiral Digby, congratulated him on this appointment to a station where large sums of prize money were to be obtained, when the young captain replied: "Yes, sir; but I prefer the West Indies as the station of honor." He was, though unwittingly, taken at his word, and sent to the West Indies, where he became acquainted with the best people of those hospitable islands.

Two years later, having made several voyages, and acquired the confidence of his sovereign, Nelson was again appointed to the West Indies, as a commander of the twenty-eight-gun frigate the "Boreas," sailing from Spithead the 19th of May, 1784. He carried with him the rear admiral of the fleet, Sir Richard Hughes, and his family, and, after their transfer, assumed charge of the squadron assembled at Nevis. This island was then a prosperous sugar-producing colony of Great Britain.

It was during this West Indian voyage that he met and



won the fair Widow Nisbet, relict of a resident physician who had practiced in Nevis. They were married, as the register of Figtree Church affirms, on the 11th of March, 1787. The marriage register is still in evidence, though the leaves of the old book are tattered and worn, and can be seen by visitors to the Island of Nevis. The entry is as follows:

1785

*Decr. 20. Thomas Erskine, Gentleman, to Dorah Vincent, Spinster*

1787

*March 11. Horatio Nelson, Esquire, Captain of his Majesty's Ship the Boreas, to Frances Herbert Nisbet, Widow.*

*May 19. Andrew Hamilton, Esquire, to Martha Herbert, Spinster*

1789

*April 30. George Douglas, free Mulatto, to Mary Herbert, free Mulatto.*

That is all. The unknown recorder of this affair could not peer into the future and perceive that he was then in the presence of one of England's greatest captains, for the young man had not then won his successive titles of Baron Nelson of the Nile, Duke of Bronte, etc. He was plain Horatio Nelson, Esq.; but doubtless considered a good catch by a West Indian widow of little means.

In the cemetery attached to the little Figtree Church are some very interesting epitaphs. One of the early ones is that of an English gentleman who died while on a visit to the island, as set forth:

"Here lyeth ye body of Mr. Arthur Ploner, of ye city of Bristol, who departed this life ye 15th of May, 1702, aged 38 years.

"Tho' in ye grave ye widowed Carcasse lyes,

His Soul is living still; yt never Dyes.

This too shall one day mount upon ye Wing,  
As from dead Winter does ye vig'rous Spring;  
So both, we hope, will meet at last in Joy,  
And live in Pleasures Yt have no alloy."

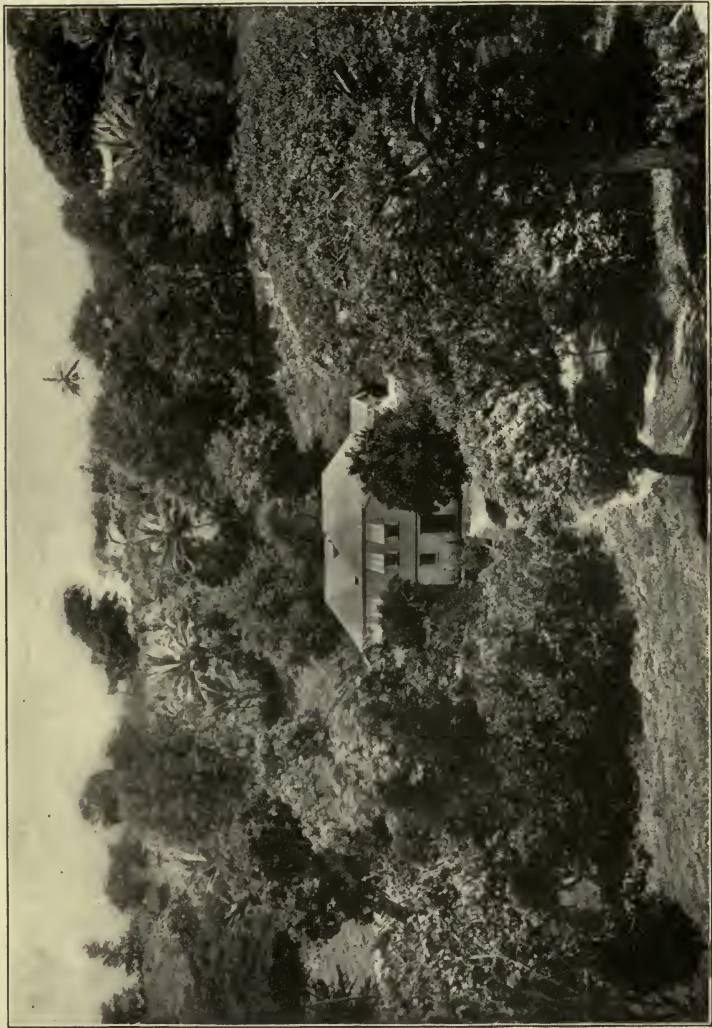
The next is in the nature of an advertisement, as follows:

"Here lies the body of John Huggins, Esq., who died 6th Dec., 1824, aged 58. Not many years before his death he became proprietor of the neighboring hot springs, over which, out of good will towards his fellow creatures, and not for any advantage of his own, he erected convenient baths, and at a short distance a large and expensive stone edifice, for the accommodation of invalids. This stone was put up by his widow."

The sanitarium so ostentatiously alluded to in the epitaph is in existence yet, but merely as a mass of ruins. The good intention of its builder miscarried, for though the hot and mineral waters, which here gush forth from natural springs, are renowned for their curative properties, yet they are not availed of as they should be. The house itself is occupied by some wretched families of black and colored people, who live here in a state of squalor and misery. From the ruined parapet of the castellated structure lies outspread a beautiful view of Nevis: the mountains sweeping up from the sloping lower land, where the town lies hidden in cocoa palms and with St. Kitts, blue and misty, beyond—a fair picture, in spite of the desolation.

Immediately below are the baths, in the open air, beneath date palms and mango trees, with a tepid stream running from them to the sea. Here the sound of blows attracts attention, and soon the visitor finds that he has invaded the sacred precincts of the washerwomen.

As the air is hot and the water is warm the women see



A Planter's House in the Hill Country





no need for attire of any sort, and most of them are in a state of nudity. There are old black crones and young brown matrons, slips of maids and skinny pickaninnies hopping about and wading in the water like so many black birds in the Garden of Eden.

On a hillside slope above the only town in Nevis are to be seen the ruins of a once magnificent "great house," which once pertained to an estate of vast extent. Around it spreads a terraced garden filled with the remains of stately tropic trees and ornamental shrubbery. A magnificent grove of mango trees, their dense crowns spangled with golden fruit, surrounds the ruined house and garden, isolating them completely. Some of the mangos climb the hill and enter the forest which runs down from the mountain and thus form a connecting link between the different kinds of vegetation.

The upper cone of the mountain is completely encircled by a forest of great trees, composed of giant gums, silk-cottons, mountain palms, and matted together by miles of vines and bush ropes. This is the natural home of the monkeys, from which they go out on foraging excursions to the deserted plantations. The nearest living neighbors, in fact, to the house and plantation we have described, are the wild monkeys of the northern forest; and yet that ruined house, so desolate and fallen to decay, is pointed out as the birthplace of Alexander Hamilton.

The father of Alexander Hamilton was a Scotch merchant, who had married a young French woman, and their son was born in Nevis, the 11th of January, 1757. Here the boy lived until eleven years old, when he was sent to Santa Cruz, whence he soon made his way to the United States, never to return to his native island.

There is probably no legend of the Greek mythology that dies harder than that of the Amazonas or Amazons, fierce fighting women, who have held man at bay for so many centuries. They were located in various parts of Asia, and finally in Africa, but long after the crystallization of the myth into the Grecian stories of gods, heroes, and heroines, the tale survived, or rather reappeared, in the new world.

Columbus, as we know, when seeking a passage across to Asia, was all the time dwelling upon old-world traditions, and had in mind only what had been written by voyagers and travelers in the east. In the Island of Cuba he sought the court of the Grand Khan, in Haiti the Cipango of Marco Polo, and throughout his first voyage to America looked for the verification of Oriental fables and expected at every turn to come across their fabulous monsters.

Near the termination of that voyage, when in the Bay of Samana, on the north coast of Santo Domingo, he heard of something that set his blood tingling and caused him to shape his course southward instead of toward Spain and the home port. Some of the Indians captured there told him of an island of the Caribbees that was inhabited solely by women, and, taking them aboard as pilots, he steered in the direction they indicated, resolved to add the discovery and conquest of the Amazons to the fruits of that memorable voyage.

The prevailing trade winds, however, were baffling, his provisions and water ran short, and instead he turned about and bore up for the Azores and Spain, taking along with him the unfortunate Indians.

But he did not lose sight of the story, and when, nearly a year later, he set sail from Cadiz with his fleet of seven-

teen ships and caravels he was so far influenced by the reports of Caribs and Amazons to be found nearer the equator than the island he had discovered on the first voyage, that he went several degrees farther to the southward, and discovered the island of Montserrat.

When a successful settlement was started by the English in the near Island of Nevis, an overflow portion went to Montserrat, allured by the rich lands suitable for sugar cultivation. It was the discontented part that left Nevis for Montserrat, and composed mainly of Irish Catholics. In proof of this, although the event occurred as far back as 1632, may be pointed out the fact that many of the present inhabitants, even the negroes, speak English with a brogue, having an Hibernian accent perfectly delicious.

It is told of a modern exile from Erin, who had concluded to seek a refuge in Montserrat, that as the ship he was on cast anchor in the harbor of Plymouth, the only town of the island, he leaned over the rail and entered into conversation with a black bumboatman, who came out to sell his provisions.

“Say, Cuffee, phwat’s the chance for a lad ashore?”

“Good, yer honor, if ye’r not afraid of wurruk. But me name’s not Cuffee, an’, plase ye, it’s Pat Mulvaney.”

“Mulvaney? And do yez mean to say ye’r Oirish?”

“Oi do.”

“The saints dayfind us. An’ how long have yez been out here?”

“A matter uv tin year or so.”

“Tin year! An’ yez black as me hat! May the divil fly away wid me if I iver set fut on this ould oisland. Save me sowl, I tuk yez fer a naygur!”

Montserrat has been in continuous British possession

ever since 1784, and until about forty years ago its people were almost exclusively devoted to the raising of sugar cane. About that time some merchants having business with the island conceived the idea of planting a few unprofitable estates that had come into their possession with lime trees.

Over in the adjacent island of Dominica a resident physician there, Dr. Imray, had made the experiment with great promise of success; and the physical characteristics of both islands are the same. Each one consists mainly of a mass of mountains thrown up from the sea, with deep gorges running up into the central range and a belt of exceedingly fertile soil around the coast.

Owing to the restricted area of soil suitable for sugar plantations they had long since ceased to pay, one after another becoming saddled with a mortgage that the owner could not raise, and falling into the hands of London merchants who had advanced money for their working.

The taking up of the lime industry saved the little island from actual distress, and to-day a single firm owns more than 600 acres, and exports annually 100,000 gallons of concentrated lime juice.

When I was in Montserrat a few years ago the leading planters were the Sturges, English merchants of Quaker stock, celebrated for their philanthropy. One of the family, Joseph Sturge, was a friend and correspondent for many years of the poet Whittier.

Beautiful Montserrat is associated in my mind with the discovery there of a new species of bird. It was in 1880, on my second trip to the West Indies, that I first heard the note of this bird, issuing from the tree-ferns of a ravine near the Soufrière summit. My ear had been



trained to a nicety in detecting strange bird-calls, and this one, I knew at once, I had never heard before.

Carefully parting the vegetation that obscured my vision, I peered into the ravine and there saw a bird in black and orange plumage, a modest imitation of our golden oriole, poised upon a branch. The sad sequel is that I shot it, and ultimately it was sent to Washington, where it was pronounced absolutely new and was named after its discoverer. The genus to which it belonged was well known, but not the species, so to the generic name, *Icterus*, was affixed my own as the specific appellation, making it the *Icterus Oberi*, by which it is called by ornithologists to-day, after having existed unknown and unnamed ever since the world and all living things were created.

## CHAPTER XIX

### ANTIGUA, BARBUDA, AND OTHER ISLES

Antigua, capital of the Leeward Islands—Saint John and its cathedral—The valley of petrifications—English Harbor, a forgotten naval station—Barbuda and its history—The Codrington game preserve—An island of sinister fame where many wrecks have taken place—Wild cattle, fallow deer, guinea-fowl, pigeons, and doves—Buccaneer tower and the great house—Two white residents and eight hundred negroes—Shooting wild guinea-birds—Feathered thunderbolts—Toothsome pullets with tropic concomitants—Tramping over the island—The parson takes the author out deer-hunting—The trip to Bat Cave—Migratory white-headed pigeons—The sea-grape fruit—Shooting birds by moonlight—What the West Indies got from Africa—Trolling for kingfish and dolphins—The beach with blushes of carmine—Anguilla, Sombrero, Saint Barts, and Saint Martins.

FOR governmental purposes, the British islands of the Caribbees have been arbitrarily divided into the "Leeward" and "Windward" groups, the former lying to the north and the latter to the south of north latitude fifteen from the equator.

The seat of government and residence of the governor-in-chief is Antigua, an island about a hundred square miles in area, devoted to agriculture in general, and to sugar, molasses, and rum in particular. It can boast of having been a British possession for 270 years, and, like Barbados, has never been anything but English since it was first settled.

It was, the aboriginal Caribs said, too dry for them, having no natural springs and streams, and it has proved not much better for the British planters; but they have stuck there with more than praiseworthy pertinacity, and to-day its capital and only town of Saint John is a place of some attractions and consequence. By a strange mischance, however, the capital has been located on the worst sort of a harbor; while the only good natural port in the island, English Harbor, seized long ago as a naval station, has hardly more than a single inhabitant.

I wish I could convey to the reader an exact estimate of Antigua's charms; but that, I fear, is impossible, for one must have been there to appreciate them, as they were of the hospitable sort. The island has few natural attractions; but there is a wonderful valley of petrifications not far from the capital, and at the right season the lagoons and meadows afford fine plover, duck, and curlew shooting to one inclined that way, while the fields and pastures are always inviting—provided water enough has fallen from the clouds to make them green. With a gently rolling surface, rarely rising into hills, and with large areas of sugar-cane in cultivation, dotted with mills and habitations, Antigua is refreshing to view, as a decided contrast to the more rugged islands of the chain.

I do not desire to treat Antigua slightly; but, taking a general survey of its attractions,—or, rather, lack of them,—there does not seem to be enough in the aggregate to warrant a visit. And yet, if one should go there furnished with the proper credentials to some member of its official society, I doubt not that a month could be passed very agreeably indeed. It may be my misfortune—perhaps it is my fault—that I incline more to the lesser-known islands, and those seldom visited, shunning cities

and society in general, and "taking to the woods" whenever opportunity offers. But I have held, for many years, and hold to the opinion still, that the out-of-the-way places are the best worth investigating. Now, there is an island about thirty miles north of Antigua, of which it is a dependency, where the steamers never touch (except they run against some one of its numerous reefs, and then they remain for good and all) and where the tourist never goes. This island is Barbuda, about ten miles long, with an area of seventy-five square miles, the greater portion covered with dense forest or chaparral.

About thirty years after the planters had settled in Antigua the French from Martinique combined with a band of Carib Indians to ravage the island with fire and sword, taking away all the negro slaves and plundering the white people of everything they possessed, even to the clothing on their backs and the shoes on their feet. For several years after this event the Antiguan were unable to make head against their many calamities, but about the year 1674 there came here, from Barbados, a wealthy and honorable gentleman of distinguished family, Colonel Codrington, who set an example to the others by planting the waste lands with sugar-cane. He was later made captain-general and commander-in-chief of all the Leeward Islands, and thus was the first of a long line of sub-governors, which has existed to the present time.

To Colonel Codrington Barbados owes its charming seat of learning, Codrington College, founded by him about 1710, and in many other ways he showed his public spirit and interest in the welfare of these islands.

Colonel Codrington, it seems, had an eye to personal aggrandizement, and early in his rule obtained possession of the outlying island of Barbuda. It was not long



before he had stocked it with cattle, sheep, fallow deer from England, and guinea-fowl, so that we may safely say that the island was made a game preserve more than 200 years ago. And, as those cattle, sheep and deer soon ran wild, while the island was the natural home of doves, pigeons, plover, curlew and many other birds, it goes without saying that Barbuda became so well stocked that royalty itself would not scorn to own it and to shoot there on occasion.

Some negro slaves and an overseer were sent over at the time of the first settlement, and they, too (at least the blacks), obeyed the injunction literally to increase and multiply. At the beginning of this century there were 200 negro residents and one white; on the occasion of my visit, a few years ago, there were about 800 black residents and two white men.

In the year 1813 the British man-of-war "Woolwich" was wrecked at Barbuda in a furious hurricane. The officers and crew escaped to the island, which was described by the captain, who wrote that it had, at that time, few blacks resident there, and one white man, the overseer or lessee. An income of about \$35,000 was annually derived from wrecks and sales of live stock. Almost the entire island was covered with wood and the stock ran wild—reckoned at 3000 cattle, 40,000 sheep, 400 horses, and 300 deer. Bull-hunting was a sport frequently indulged in with blood-hounds from Puerto Rico. By means of cordons of negroes vast flocks of sheep were driven upon narrow necks of enclosed land between arms of the sea, and thus easily captured when wanted for market. The wild cattle, when caught, were lashed to the horns of tame oxen, who were then turned loose, and never failed eventually to conduct them to

headquarters. Guinea-fowl, even then, were to be found in profusion; also wild duck, plover, and snipe in their season, pigeons, turtle-doves, etc. Captain Sullivan mentions the stone castle, built by the buccaneers, who used to resort here as a rendezvous, after the dispersal of the French and English of St. Kitts about 1630.

The first object that attracted my attention as the little sloop in which I had taken passage from Antigua arrived within sight of Barbuda was a quaint old martello tower, which once pertained to a castle, erected by the buccaneers. There were no other structures of note in sight, and only after a weary walk of about three miles was I cheered by arriving at the "great house," built in the flourishing times of the Codringtons. A great wall had accompanied me along the road, broad-topped, high and deeply based, showing that compulsory labor was at one time abundant.

The white gentlemen residing there had leased the island from the Crown and were "working it for all it was worth." One of them was a clergyman of the Church of England, and the other a planter bred to the raising of sugar-cane and the oversight of laborers; so both together made a very successful combination. As the "parson" was pledged to attend to the spiritual needs of the black people and the overseer to their physical wants, the blacks were not neglected. They worked hard in the fields six days in the week, under the eye of the superintendent, and on the seventh attended services at the chapel.

As the island had been without news from outside for many moons, I was made more than welcome, and immediately my wants were made known I was furnished with a horse, a sable servant and dog, who accompanied

me on my excursions afield. Our first visit was to a vast inclosure where the guinea-fowl were said to be abundant, and we arrived at their scratching ground about mid-afternoon. The dog put up a fine male bird and I let go both barrels at him without touching a feather. It was the same with the second and the third bird that got up and sailed away into the dim distance, like a railroad train making up for lost time.

Puzzled and ashamed at my poor shooting, I vowed that the next flock I saw on the ground should not be allowed to take wing without a pot shot, anyway; but even then there was somehow a discrepancy between my anticipations and realizations. I never before in my life saw such fast birds on the wing nor such rapid ones afoot. They were thoroughly wild, and probably had been for many generations.

At last, as the sun was sinking behind the sea-grapes on the shore, we approached an old field where, my guide said, there was sure to be a flock "dusting," and if warily approached could be taken easily. This time, as the chattering fowl hurled themselves into the air, I caught two of them, right and left, by firing ahead of them about half a rod, it seemed to me. Anyway, they tumbled end over end, and I was rewarded for my hours of toil beneath the ardent rays of a tropical sun. The pair weighed seven pounds, and that night we had the tenderer of the two, a comely pullet, roasted for dinner. It was brought to the table garnished with all sorts of good things, the huge platter on which it lay being borne aloft upon the head of a grinning cook who could boast lineal descent from the very first of his line brought to the island by "Massa Codrington."

And it was toothsome—the pullet—despite the haste

with which it had been divested of its feathers and driven direct to the spit. This hurried mode of preparation was not due to any exigency of the occasion, but to the culinary customs of the tropics. The people of the islands have no cold storage, hardly any of them refrigerators. The journey from the coop or fowl yard to the pot or spit is only delayed long enough to deprive the victim of such portion of its tegumentary covering and internal arrangements as are considered superfluous; and the hen, cock, or chicken that gazes up at you so unsuspectingly as you arrive at the great house, an hour or so later may be reposing on a platter with its toes turned up to the ceiling. The smaller fowls, particularly pigeons and chickens, are generally roasted with their feet on, and as they lie on their backs in supplicatory pose they present a most affecting spectacle.

After a refreshing night beneath the mosquito curtains, at dawn next morning I was called for a bath, and then, swallowing a biscuit and cup of strong coffee, was off with my guide for the deer preserve. Whatever may be the heat of the day in those islands, the nights and early mornings are delightfully cool; so we tramped through the lanes and cross the fields to the woods as vigorously as though taking a spin in the north. The woods were dense, and we merely skirted their borders, keeping well in their shadows, for at that hour the deer would be feeding mostly in the open fields. Finally my man pointed eagerly ahead to a bunch of wild cattle grazing quietly about 300 yards away, and exclaimed: "Look dah, sah; yander's a fine buck, right close t' dat ole bull. My heart, what ho'ns he got!" Unfortunately for the success of my plans, the cur dog with us, who always joggled at our heels when wanted ahead on the trail, saw or sniffed the



deer at the same time, and immediately straightened out his crooked legs and darted off in the direction of the herd, yelping in a way that would have waked the dead. Of course, no deer in possession of his faculties would wait for us after that rude salutation, and there was a lightning-like stampede, not only of three bucks and does, which had been feeding unobserved, but of the wild cattle in whose company they were.

We tramped all that morning, saw several deer at a distance, and signs of an innumerable multitude; but the only real satisfaction I experienced was when William Jack, my guide, after a hard chase, captured and "lam-basted dat fool dawg" until he begged for mercy.

Said Mr. Hopkins, the overseer, as we sat on the veranda after dinner: "Day after to-morrow is Sunday, and the only day I have off. Just keep shy of the parson and I'll put you up to a bunch of deer that have never been shot at. But mum's the word, my boy."

Said the parson, as he lighted me to my room that night: "I've got my sermon finished and not much to do to-morrow. I'll take you with me over to Bat Cave, and if we don't get a fine, fat buck, going or coming back, there will be something amiss."

When the overseer saw us ambling off, "an hour by sun," on Saturday morning, he put his tongue in his cheek and nodded significantly, as if to say: "So ho, if you go with the parson to-day then you'll have to attend chapel with him to-morrow." But he took it good-naturedly.

It was a most enjoyable ride we had along the shore to Bat Cave, where the Caribs once encamped and left behind their stone implements of warfare as tokens of their presence here in the distant past. Then we routed

and followed for a while a flock of wild sheep, finally arriving at a big ceiba tree in the corner of a wall, where the shade was grateful and the protection complete.

Directing our sable attendant to take the horses back a bit on the trail, the parson told me to creep up to the wall and peep through a chink between the stones, at the same time making no noise. I did so, wonderingly but still alert, for I knew there must be method in his proceedings, and was rewarded by seeing something that caused me to tremble and clutch my gun convulsively. I glanced back at my friend to assure myself that he was not playing a joke on me; for, there in front of me, not forty yards away, was a fallow "buck complete," as big and as stately as any that ever coursed through any English park.

The wind was from him to us, so he suspected nothing, and, with the suspicion still upon me that the parson was putting me up to a domesticated deer, I asked him with my eyes if I should shoot. He nodded yes, and shoot I did, with the result that the spare horse we had brought along—and at the sight of which Hopkins, the overseer, had laughed himself almost ill—was laden with the biggest buck of the season as we returned homeward that forenoon.

Toothsome venison that night for dinner, together with the omnipresent guinea-bird and concomitants of tropic vegetables and fruits, made a feast fit for anybody, the remembrance of which, even at this day so far distant, causes a thrill of pleasure, thinking of what I once enjoyed, though now debarred. And the next day not only did I attend chapel (so grateful was I to the parson), but also induced the overseer to go with me, much to the joy of our clerical friend, who was nearly overcome by the unusual happening.

I do not know if the genial overseer, Mr. Hopkins, is yet alive, nor if the hospitable parson who "put me on to" the fallow deer is still caring for the unregenerate blacks; but if they are not, doubtless they left successors, who will accord the visitor a most generous reception. One thing is certain, there is no island of the West Indies better stocked with game of the sort I have mentioned than this of Barbuda.

Along with the negro, when he was torn from his native Africa and transported to the West Indies, came some products of the animal and vegetable kingdoms not enumerated on the manifests—as, for instance, a stock of African superstitions and religious customs which have developed into the serpent sorcery practiced by the mountaineers of Haiti and other islands; guinea-grass, guinea-corn, and finally guinea-birds or fowls, all of which have done well in the American tropics.

Like the negro, the guinea-fowl has found the climate and productions of the southern islands just suited to its warm-blooded and vivacious nature, and in certain parts of Cuba, Puerto Rico, Jamaica, and other smaller islands, has become the leading game bird of the country. There is, in fact, no wild feathered game to rival it, either in size or quality, throughout all the West Indies.

Barbuda is not the only island of the Caribbees out of touch with steamers and civilization, for there are some much larger and more populous to the west and north-west, like Sombrero, so-called because it resembles a gray felt hat at a distance; Anguilla, the salt island; Saint Barts, which was once owned by France and Sweden conjointly, but now belongs to the latter country, though the inhabitants all speak English; and Saint Martin, which, though only thirty-eight square miles in area, is

divided between the French and the Dutch. Of them all, perhaps, the island of Saint Barts, or Bartholomew, is the best known, though the phosphate workings on Sombrero have made it somewhat celebrated; for Saint Barts was anciently the eastern headquarters of the buccaneers, especially of the fierce Montbars, the "Exterminator," who made its sheltered and beautiful port his rendezvous. Along with 'Statia and the Dutch islands generally, Saint Barts became the resort of privateers, as it had been of buccaneers during the American Revolution, and lost, it is said, more than two million dollars' worth of contraband goods in 1782, which were seized by Admiral Rodney. The island is practically defunct now, having lost all but its prestige and its natural beauties of surface and shore, being merely a dependency of Guadeloupe.

Saint Martin is the finest of the group, with lofty hills, and one mountain, Paradise Peak, nearly 2000 feet in height. The French population of its northern half reside in or near the quaint old town of Marigot, while the Hollanders occupy the port of Philipsburg, on the south shore, as their capital.

These islands may be reached by sailing vessels from Antigua, Guadeloupe, or Saint Kitts, and to the student of nature and man have much to offer in requital for slight discomforts on the way thither and on shore.



## CHAPTER XX

### GUADELOUPE AND THE DIABLOTIN

Guadeloupe, largest island of the Caribbees — Famous navigators who have sailed these waters — French thrift as contrasted with Creole mismanagement — How the French islands are governed — The preponderance of the blacks — A menace to the Caribbees — The gendarmes of Guadeloupe and Martinique — French colonial system not yet perfect — Arson and pillage by the blacks — The two parts of a twin island — Pointe à Pitre and Basse Terre compared — The magnificent mountains — Matouba and the coffee region — The Governor's retreat in the hills — Hot baths and high-woods — Climbing to the crater of the great Soufrière — On the trail of Père Labat — Hunting the devil-bird, or diabolotin.

**A**BOUT one-third down the Caribbean Chain lies Guadeloupe, the largest island in it. The distance from Saba to Grenada, these two islands representing the extremes of the chain, is just six degrees of latitude. Guadeloupe is about the same distance from Saba as it is from its sister French island of Martinique, or nearly 100 miles; Barbados, off to the windward, is about as far from Saint Vincent as the latter is from Grenada, and the last named equally distant from Tobago and Trinidad.

Discovered by Columbus in November, 1493, the island called by the natives Turuqueira was named by him Guadalupe, since its occupation by the French being known as Guadeloupe. For a while after the voyages of Columbus made this region known, the Spaniards had

it all to themselves; but about thirty years after its discovery the French and English swarmed into the Caribbean Sea, and began to squabble over the islands as if they alone were entitled to them all. French corsairs and British privateers made the Caribbee Isles their rendezvous, while both combined to plunder Spanish galleons coming up from the isthmus of Panama laden with silver.

Of the score of islands which France won by her sword and settled with her colonists but five and a half remain to her now, within the confines of the Caribbean Sea. The five are Guadeloupe, Martinique, Désirade, Marie Galante, the Saintes, and a moiety of the insignificant island, Saint Martin. Thousands of lives, millions of treasure, have been wasted in acquiring and defending these islands of the West Indies, yet to-day not one is profitable to the nation owning it.

Of the two large islands owned by France in the West Indies Guadeloupe is the greater in area, consisting properly of two islands—one an immense mountain mass, with beautiful valleys and forest-covered hills, an inactive volcano, hot and mineral springs, and coffee plantations. Separated from the mountainous island by a sluggish creek, the Rivière Salée, running through mangrove swamps, is the lowland portion, called the Grande Terre, with level surface, rich soil, and plantations of sugar-cane. All over and throughout this double island are the best of roads, even running up to the woods that border on the gloomy crater of the quiescent volcano.

Here, as well as in the sister colony of Martinique, will be noted the thrift and good management of the French, as contrasted with the shiftless methods of the Spanish formerly in Cuba and Puerto Rico. Wherever the

French go, there they carry with them good roads and generally good government. We may truly term them the Roman road-builders of the present day, for throughout all their domains, colonial as well as continental, they construct broad, straight highways, smooth as marble and as hard as iron. The writer has seen them in these islands as well as in Algiers, on the borders of the Sahara, their smooth surfaces a delight to the eye and a joy to travel over.

Although Guadeloupe is French all the way through, French the language spoken, and a French *patois* the speech of the lowliest, yet there are comparatively few natives here now of La Belle France. In the matter of government the island is more at the mercy of the national system than at fault through local blunders. That is, since all Frenchmen persist in calling their compatriots, home and colonial, "men and brothers," it has finally come to pass that the local legislatures and assemblies are controlled by the blacks, who are in a vast majority.

Their preponderance has become a grave problem, in fact, not alone in the French islands, but in the English, Dutch, and Danish. Whatever men may say to the contrary, it is the tendency of the black to revert to primitive conditions, finally (as in Haiti) to lapse into a state of semi-barbarism, unless held in check by a superior body of whites.

Now, this is not a theory, but a very serious condition, and it confronts the West Indians, menaces them continually, despite the fact that they have labored hard to bring their respective colonial dependencies to the high level of the home countries. It is only by the most earnest and aggressive sort of work that they have been able to keep their noses above water, even; and, as it is, they

have been forced to witness a constant degeneration of moral tone in communities and a persistent deterioration in realities.

Their only salvation, they now realize, lies in maintaining the integrity of appointments by the home government as checks upon the extravagance and prospective lawlessness of the local assemblies. Thus, the head of the insular government, the governor, is appointed from France—invariably a white man of high standing—as are also several of the higher officials. Again, to further offset the possible centralization of power in the hands of the island police, who are mainly black and colored, in each important center, town, or village is quartered a squad of picked gendarmes, recruited in the home country.

Respecting the French colonial system as applied to the West Indian islands, an American resident at one time in Guadeloupe wrote me: "Any system of government primarily intended for the benefit of a colony will, if persisted in, ultimately result in good for both colony and mother country; but no system which is liable to constant change, and which is consistent only in seeking the immediate benefit of the home country, can result otherwise than as here. Every new Minister of Colonies in France brings to his work the superb courage of utter ignorance. He demolishes the half-completed labor of his predecessor and leaves his own rough foundations and scaffoldings to be destroyed by his successor.

"They all alike seek to make something out of the colony merely, and have not the courage to work on broad, generous lines for the benefit of both colony and motherland in the future. The history of this unfortunate colony amply proves this. To-day we have a horde of







emotional negroes, drunk with a little learning, crazed with anger against the ill-concealed scorn of the whites, furious under a false equality they cannot sustain, blindly seeking redress more for imaginary than real evils, and, African like, finding their readiest remedy in blood and fire (as in Haiti). They have sworn to drive the white man hence—and they will do it yet! It will mean ruin to them; but they cannot see that; they see only the immediate destruction of the white man's property, and himself, also—if possible."

This letter was evoked by the fact that incendiary fires in Pointe à Pitre, the capital of Guadeloupe, accompanied by a rising of the blacks, had worked ruin and destruction in that city. Arson and pillage are not new troubles with which the island government has to contend, for, looking back to my first visit to Guadeloupe, more than twenty years before this letter was written, I recall that even then they were going on. And yet, on the surface, Guadeloupe appears to be the best governed and most refined of the insular colonies.

Its chief port is that of Pointe à Pitre, which is in the Grande Terre portion of the double island, and sheltered, but right in the path of the hurricanes; so that between the incendiaries and the cyclones the "Pointe" has suffered considerably. Writing twenty-five years ago, on the occasion of my first visit there, I remarked: "The loss of life in these successive disasters (of hurricanes, earthquakes, and fires) has been fearful; but these courageous Creoles have faith in the future of their city, and I doubt if they once give a thought to the mighty power against which they are contending—that they are fighting forces controlled by nature's laws, that will always operate in the same manner and place, without

regard to the little doings of mankind." The sequel has proved that they had better have abandoned their badly-situated capital once for all, especially as it is at times fever-stricken, and always plagued with mosquitoes.

Then, as now, Pointe à Pitre was the center of business and the outlet of the sugar industry, at that time even boasting the second largest "usine" or central sugar factory in the world. The Grande Terre portion is almost entirely level, having a similar geological structure or composition to Antigua, but being more fertile. There are miles and miles of sugar-cane in that low-lying portion of Guadeloupe, and nearest to it lie the immediate dependencies, Désirade and Marie Galante, while the Saintes are further to the south.

These are extremely picturesque islets, being elevated and terraced, some of them having thermal springs, and formerly in repute as watering-places. Historically, they belong to the most interesting islands of the Caribbees, for they were among the first of any discovered by Columbus on his second voyage in 1493, and still retain the name he bestowed upon them, changed only from the Spanish to the French, like the great island of which they are dependencies.

A small steamer trips over to the islets once a week, and there is a semi-weekly local connecting Pointe à Pitre (through the Rivière Salée) with Basse Terre, which is the seat of government and capital. There is also a diligence route along the southern and eastern shores of Guadeloupe proper, by which a pleasant journey may be made between the two points in about eight hours, including a steam launch across the Cul de Sac of Pointe à Pitre.

Basse Terre was found in 1703 by that good old



preacher and traveler, Père Labat. He was known as the "bellicose White Father," the traditions state, because he could fight as well as preach. The town is full of his monuments—such as the hurricanes have spared—chief of which is the old Basilique of Basse Terre. Situated on an open roadstead, Basse Terre has not the advantages of the Pointe; but it is better worth seeing, being so near the mountains as to partake of their attractions. It has a plaza, in the center of which is a fountain supplied with water from the mountain streams, and surrounding which are substantial houses of stone.

As the heat along shore is always intense, and particularly in our summer months, all the white people who can do so take refuge in the hills and mountains. Guadeloupe has a vast range with numerous peaks rising above two or three thousand feet, while its chief elevation, the volcano or Soufrière, is about 5000 feet. Good roads lead into the hills and all the summits are more or less accessible, especially the cone of the volcano.

During my first visit here I hunted in the hills and scaled the Soufrière, sought out the beautiful waterfalls, and bathed in the tepid streams; so I may be allowed to speak as if "by the card" of Guadeloupe's various attractions. My first venture was at a little mountain hamlet overlooking the Caribbean Sea called Matouba, where for ten days I roamed the hills and valleys in quest of birds. Learning that there was a gentleman who spoke English in the neighboring commune—of which he was the mayor, in fact—I one day wended my way thither, to be greeted cordially by Monsieur Saint-Felix Colardeau, a graduate of Yale, who had lived for several years in the Northern States. Having fallen heir to a beautiful coffee estate amid the foot-

hills of the Soufrière, he had abandoned his practice of medicine and settled down to a life of seclusion.

Though a perfect stranger to him, he insisted that I should take up my abode with him until I had secured the birds I wanted and explored the volcano. This I did, of course, and am indebted to my good friend for many an hour filled with information respecting things new and strange to me then. A dozen years later, when I revisited the island, M. Colardeau, who was then director of the Jardin des Plantes, introduced me officially to the Governor, M. Nouet, who invited me to spend a week or so at his "hotel" at Camp Jacob.

The Governor's country seat in the mountains was in the vicinity of M. Colardeau's estate, where I had passed so many happy hours, and whence I had made my ascent of the Soufrière. There were at that time more than a thousand coffee estates in Guadeloupe, all, of course, in the mountainous island, and the air was fragrant with coffee blossoms, the hillsides covered with plantations. Governor Nouet had opened trails and bridle-paths through the "high-woods," as the great mountain forests are called, to the hot springs and baths therein concealed. One of these is known as the Bain Jaune, probably so called from the color of its water, which is tinged as well as impregnated with sulphur.

This bath is near the skirts of the woods that cover a shoulder of the Soufrière, above which is barrenness and desolation. As the Governor and I were taking a dip in it one day, and he was telling me of the beauty of the ferns above on the trail to the crater, I asked him if there were any descriptions extant of the Soufrière which would inform me as to its salient features. I recall that his eyes twinkled, while mine dilated, as he

replied that the first description he had ever read, and which inspired him with a desire to achieve the ascent of the volcano, was one written by myself!

Of a truth, I had forgotten it, and was going to "tackle" that volcano as if it were something I had never seen. But, as the Governor reminded me of different passages in my description of the ascent, it all came back to me. I recalled the kindness of good Madame Colardeau, who provided me with a knapsack full of cooked provisions, and the thoughtfulness of her husband (dead, now, and gone to heaven, rest his soul!), who furnished an Indian coolie as a guide.

What joy was mine as I plunged into the fresh, dank vegetation of the high-woods and essayed the climb up the heights beyond! There were the mighty gommier trees, with broad buttresses twenty feet across, and leafy crowns that merged in the common canopy a hundred feet above my head. And the lianas, the vines and bush-ropes, which descended to earth as if dropped down from the skies, were, some of them, as large as hawsers and cables, and adorned with a world of aërial blossoms.

Reaching a stream the waters of which were warm, I traced it to its source in a spring that gushed from under the hill, coming straight from Nature's arcanum in the heart of the volcano. I followed it up, finally striking the trail to the crater-cone, my guide going ahead and tunneling out a path through the ferns with his machete. For hours, it seemed to me, we burrowed through the dank, dwarfed growth, then suddenly daylight looked in and I saw before me the cone of the volcano. Imagine, I wrote at the time, an immense pyramid truncated by some internal force, that has rent its sides at the same time, leaving the summit-plane around strewn with huge rocks,

and a mighty chasm where 'twas reft in twain, and you have the Soufrière of Guadeloupe to-day.

That "to-day" is now yesterday, a quarter-century gone; but, so far as I can ascertain, the crater is unchanged. Ravines seamed the sides of the cone in every direction, some spanned by bridges of natural rock; but that to which I constantly recurred was the great central gorge, with its wicked-looking throat, from which there have been only two eruptions recorded within little more than a century: one in 1797, and another in 1815. Doubtless it may again act as the vent for the internal ebullitions of mother earth—as I wrote at the time in my journal—but during the eruptions of Pelée and the Soufrière of Saint Vincent, in May, 1902, the Guadeloupe giant held its peace. I have since climbed Popocatepetl, in Mexico, and also nearly all the volcanoes of the Caribbees; but over no ascent was I so elated as on this occasion—probably because it was my first one.

How the solfataras puffed and snorted, the sulphur crystals gleamed, the blasts of hot air smote my face, as I rambled over the area of desolation within the crater! When the mist lifted, at intervals, I caught glimpses of the forests down below in which, more than four hundred years before, some of the company with Columbus were lost. It was still a sloping plain of verdure, almost as unbroken and impenetrable as in the last decade of the fifteenth century, when it resounded to the blare of trumpets and firing of arquebuses.

Below me lay the Saintes, a cluster of islets, seemingly close to the cliffs of the volcano, discovered and named by Columbus on All-Saints' Day, 1493. Northeast from me lay Désirade, the first island he sighted on that second voyage, and almost due south again rose dear old



Dominica, the island of Sabbath Day, which was the next to greet his vision. Ere the curtains of mist drew together and condensed into rain, which was late in the afternoon, I had penetrated to every accessible part of the crater, not only in my pursuit of old Vulcan, but in search of a bird which, according to tradition, used to have its haunts here. Its life-story begins away back in the seventeenth century, and was first told to the public at large by the jolly Père Labat, roving priest, *bon vivant* and *littérateur* withal, who journeyed through the West Indies more than two hundred years ago.

I have his book before me as I write: "Nouveau Voyage aux Isles de l'Amérique," published 1722, and crammed from cover to cover with interesting facts. And the good old Père (whom I have always loved, though never have seen in the flesh), among other adventures, gives a detailed account of his quest for the mysterious *Diablotin*, or "Little Devil," a bird that lived in the craters of the Caribbean volcanoes, and went forth only at night—which devil-bird I thought probably identical with the "Vedrigo" of Saba, or related to it, at least generically. That it was not does not prove anything, for I went in search of it, just the same, about one hundred and eighty years after old Labat, and in the same localities.

The bird had been discovered by another priest, one Père du Tertre, about 1640, and he had left such an enticing account of the delicacy of its flesh that Père Labat must fain go also in quest of it. And he found it, too, and ate of its flesh, which he pronounced very fine—though savoring somewhat of fish—which is not to be wondered at, as that was its sole subsistence.

After a toilsome journey up the sides of this very

Soufrière of Guadeloupe, Père Labat arrived at the crater-brim, where the devil-birds lived. The first day he and his chasseurs obtained fifteen, which they killed and cooked on the spot. They camped over night in the crater, where the hunters built a frail shelter for the priest; but the latter could not sleep, on account of the great noise made by the Diablotins, as they went out to sea and returned in the darkness. The next day Labat and his black hunters caught 150 devil-birds, and ate their fill before descending the volcano to the settlement at Basse Terre.

My first hunt for the bird was in the island of Dominica, which has a mountain about 5000 feet in height; but I did not find it, because, as I was told, it had been exterminated by the manacou, a native 'possum, which had sought it out in its holes and devoured its eggs. Neither was I successful in Guadeloupe; though I had hoped the bird I found in Saba, another volcanic island, might prove to be the veritable Diablotin.

The bird I never saw—or, at least, never knew it if I saw it—was the impelling motive for many a hard climb up the steep sides of those Caribbean volcanoes, and in my search I ascended them all, from isolated Saba in the north to the Soufrières of Saint Vincent and Grenada in the south. I passed a night one time on the brim of Saint Eustatia's perfect crater-cone (as already narrated) for the sole purpose of observing the nocturnal sounds, and if possible scenes, as I lay there wrapped in my blanket, with the fierce winds whistling around me. I thought I heard the voice of the Little Devil, in the air above me, and anxiously peered into the darkness, gun a-poise; but no form of bird rewarded my vigil, and in the morning I returned empty-handed to the coast.

## CHAPTER XXI

### DOMINICA, AN ISLAND OF WONDERS

The largest island of the Caribbees—Mentioned in the "World of Wonders"—Things that make Dominica fascinating—An island beautiful—My first glimpse of it—Its fatal gift—What Anthony Trollope said about it—How he spurred me to exploration—Roseau the island's capital—Former residents in Dominica—The foremost scientist in the Lesser Antilles—Wooing Dame Nature in the woods—Zizi, my mountaineer guide—Iguanas, trembleurs, mountain whistlers, and humming birds—The sunset bird, which received my name in "hog Latin"—Anecdote of Lucy Larcom and Whittier—The region of the Boiling Lake—When it was discovered, and when first photographed—An ajoupa in the wilderness—Taking an old-time photograph—The *petit soufrière*—Hot streams, cold streams, and boiling springs—First glimpse of the Boiling Lake—The rent in the wall through which Martinique was visible—The tragedy in Dominica five months before the eruption of Mont Pelée—A night march with corpses through the forest—The guide who was scalded to death—Boiling eggs and yams in the hot springs.

**D**OMINICA, largest and loftiest of the Lesser Antilles, is only thirty miles in length by fifteen in breadth, yet contains within its confines so many natural attractions as to have received merited mention in an English publication called the "World of Wonders." Its wonder-in-chief is a geyser in the mountains known as the Boiling Lake; but the mountains themselves, with their tarns embedded in tropical vegetation more than two thousand feet above the sea;

the cascades and waterfalls that gleam against their lofty walls of rock; the forest-covered *mornes* and vine-hung precipices; the Edenic vales filled with lime-trees and fringed with cocoa palms, and the rivers that flow through them and mingle their sparkling waters with the foaming surf on silver-sanded beaches—all these combine to make Dominica fascinating.

In my mind, for many years, Dominica has been mirrored, pictured, as the ideal "island beautiful," because, in days when I was younger, I made within its forests my first camp in region purely tropical. Sailing out of the ill-fated port of Saint Pierre, Martinique, one evening of a December long ago, with a fair land-breeze from the mountains and a smart gale drawing through the channel between the islands, the drogher I had taken passage in arrived off the southern end of Dominica at midnight. Then the wind died away, being cut off by the mountains, and for twenty hours we drifted hither and thither on a glassy sea.

During those twenty hours I had ample opportunity to study the contours of the island, from curving shore to central cordillera, and to watch the changes that came over it as the sun dissipated the mists around its peaks and in its valleys. The hill summits were blue and purple in distance, within them a cordon of lower elevations, guarding valleys deep and dark, with a planter's house here and there gleaming white, a palm-bordered beach curving between frowning promontories. Dominica, one writer has said, possesses the "fatal gift of beauty," meaning, I suppose, that she has too many charms to be useful; but this is not quite true. While her mountains are lofty, her valleys traversed by swift and turbulent rivers that often overflow their banks;



and while miles and miles of forest cover the hills, she has yet many thousand acres of level, fertile soil, much of which has been brought under cultivation.

She has entered, her residents say, upon a career of prosperity long-delayed, but now in sight, despite her "fatal gift of beauty."

Some time before I first visited Dominica I read the work of Anthony Trollope on the West Indies, and was so much impressed by something which he said could not be done that I straightway attempted it.

"To my mind," he said, "Dominica, as seen from the sea, is by far the most picturesque of all these islands. Indeed, it would be hard to beat it either in color or grouping. It fills one with an ardent desire to be off and rambling among these mountains—as if one could ramble through such wild bush country, or ramble at all with the thermometer at eighty-five degrees. But when one has only to think of such things, without any idea of doing them, neither the bushes nor the thermometer are considered."

I not only thought of "such things"—as, for instance, camping out in the mountains and rambling through the forests—but, after living a while in the coast town of Roseau, just long enough to get acquainted and take my bearings, I hied myself to those same mountains which Mr. Trollope intimated were to be classed as among the impossibles.

Roseau, the reader must know, is a little dead-and-alive town, lying along the shore at the mouth of the river from which it derives its name. It is exceedingly picturesque, but still is not overwhelmingly attractive as a place of residence; though I am acquainted with some very worthy people who have resided there for more

than the average span of life. All were friendly to the young naturalist who came to them a stranger, all assisted me to achieve my ambition, which was to go camping in the high-woods; but particularly was I indebted to a young physician who had then but recently come out from England as assistant to Doctor Imray. He had been there three or four years at the time of our first meeting, and, except for intervals of vacation now and then, he has lived there ever since, or nearly thirty years in all. Moreover, he has pursued as active a career as most of his *confrères* in temperate climates can boast, working night and day at his profession and at scientific research. Since I shall not directly mention his name, I may say that he is recognized as the foremost botanist and medical authority in the West Indies, and that his attainments brought him an honorary title from the British Crown a few years ago.

With that we have nothing to do, of course, except that it is an indication of the great work this physician has performed, and in an enervating tropical climate, that it should have attracted attention at the British court. His predecessor, Dr. Imray, was for many years a friend and correspondent of that famous botanist, Sir Joseph Hooker, and he has followed in his footsteps, having not only a perfect acquaintance with the West Indian flora, but a practical knowledge of tropical agriculture, on which as a topic he has written an authoritative work of surpassing value.

Having started out to give little Roseau a first-class "character," I must not omit mention of its superlative situation, at the foot of a glorious *morne*, its government house, botanical gardens, and experiment station (where so much has been done toward improving tropical agri-

culture), its library, and its picturesqueness. Now let us hasten to the woods and mountains; for towns are towns, all the world over, attractive according to the manner in which man has fitted them to their environments; while the hills and forests—are they not of God? For the blessed privilege of living many months in communion with nature in her most lovable moods and most beautiful garbs, I have always felt grateful to my Creator, who directed my wandering footsteps toward this island of Dominica.

Through my friend in Roseau I secured a guide to the mountains that formed the central system of Dominica's chain, and from one of the mountaineers, when arrived at the little hamlet in the forest clearing, I secured a cabin, where I lived for several weeks, in a sense isolated from my kind. This hamlet was called Laudat, and was at that time forest-surrounded, within sight of the sea, but hidden from the distant town, and two thousand feet above the Caribbean at its level. Here, let me remark, instead of rising to eighty-five degrees, as Mr. Trollope suggested, the thermometer rarely indicated more than sixty-eight or seventy. I know, because I had one hanging in my hut for months, and frequently referred to it.

These mountaineers are colored people, bronzed as to complexion, and very much mixed up as to ancestry, in their veins the blood of three races mingling—that of the French, the African, and the Carib Indian. They speak a French patois, like all the islanders in English Dominica and Saint Lucia, as well as in French Martinique and Guadeloupe. They are faithful, honest, untiringly zealous in serving, and as woodsmen are unsurpassed. The embodiment of all the servingman's vir-

tues was old Jean Baptiste, of whom I hired the cabin, and who, a few years after, lost his life by venturing too near that devil's caldron, the Boiling Lake. Zizi, as he was called at home, had an overwhelming regard for the white man—the white man whom he could respect—who, he said, was next to the *Bon Dieu*. “White man he next to God; I tank ze *Bon Dieu* eef I can speks ze Eengleesh.”

To the worthy Zizi I was indebted for my first taste of iguana, the arboreal lizard which looks like an alligator with a serrated back and whip-tail. The flesh is not always good, but in the spring of the year, when the iguana comes out of its dens and feeds on grass and leaves of trees, it is savory, tender, white, fit for any table.

Zizi and a small host of half-naked urchins, animated creatures, yellow-bronze in hue, were my guides to haunts of bird and beast. They showed me where the delicious mountain crabs and crayfish lurked, the quaint “trembleurs,” or birds with quivering wings, had their nests; the “siffleur montagne,” or mountain whistler, trilled its melodious songs, in organ notes; and above all, where the brilliant humming-birds disported, lighting the somber forests with their gem-like plumage.

The primeval state in which this forest wilderness then existed may be understood when I state that I secured here six or eight new birds, which had never been seen even by naturalists before, and among them one which had the reputation of being a “jombie” bird or sort of feathered spirit. It was also known as the *solcil coucher*, the “sunset bird,” because it uttered its cry only as the sun went down at night. This bird, which I captured by the aid of my boys (who were in a state of trepida-







tion when I did it, fearing ghostly vengeance), was named after me, the *Myiarchus Oberi*, making the second species to which my name was applied, in "hog Latin," by the ornithologists at Washington, when it was sent home to them for identification.

The discoverer of the bird also received a valued tribute from a poetess whose sweet voice is now hushed forever: Lucy Larcom, a close friend of John G. Whittier, and a writer of distinction. Meeting her soon after returning from my first voyage to the Antilles, and narrating to her the story of the Sunset Bird (doubtless with many embellishments, to suit the poet's fancy), she was captivated with the subject and wrote a poem about it.\* Shortly after, I remember, we both rode over from my home to Danvers, where Mr. Whittier then resided most of the time, and Miss Larcom mentioned the theme to him. After she had concluded, the dear old Quaker poet fell into a reverie, from which soon awaking he said earnestly: "Does thee know, Lucy, that strikes me as a good subject for a poem?"

Miss Larcom laughed merrily as she replied, shaking her finger at him playfully: "Oh, you can't have that, for I've already written about it!"

I fancied that Mr. Whittier looked disappointed, but he, too, laughed as he rejoined in the same vein: "Ah, Lucy, thee is always getting ahead of me!"

But, returning to our island, after this digression into which I was led by reminiscence: there is still another reason why Dominica should be regarded as almost a *terra incognita* until within a comparatively recent

\* "The Sunset Bird of Dominica," in "Wild Roses of Cape Ann," Boston, 1881.

period. It is found in the existence within its sierras of a gigantic geyser, which had blown out steam and water, rumbled and roared, in uninvaded solitude for ages, perhaps, undiscovered and unknown until the last quarter of the last century had nearly arrived. It seems incredible that in an island with scarce one hundred miles of coast line, and containing only three hundred square miles, there could exist not only a lake of boiling water, detonating frequently with loud reports, but a large area of volcanic activity, without any human being being aware of the fact through several centuries.

Moreover, I trust I may be pardoned for remarking, I was the first American to look upon it, and the first of any nationality to take a photograph of Dominica's since-famous Boiling Lake. An engraving from this photograph was published in the *London Graphic* of April 19, 1879, the first, I believe, to appear. Throughout the islands (I may add) at the time I carried a "wet-plate" photographic outfit, by means of which I secured the originals of the illustrations that appeared in my first book, before the era of "process pictures" and direct reproductions.

One of the Laudat people had been the first guide to the Boiling Lake, when it was discovered by Dr. Nicholls, in 1875, but it was first sought by a local magistrate, Mr. Edmund Watt, who was lost in the forest the year before, in an attempt at exploring the mysterious region. Mr. Watt came near losing his life, and he also came near discovering the lake; but failed through the defection of his men, who left him alone in the trackless forest. Then, as one of my boys narrated to me: "M'sieu Watt he walk, walk, walk, pour .ree day; he lose hees clo's, hees pants cut off; he make



nozing *pour manger* but root; he have no knife, no nozing; hees guide was town neegah; zey was town neegah, sah, and leab him and loss him. *Bien*, he come to black man's *ajoupa* in wood, an' ze black man sink he *jombie* an' he run; when he come back wiz some more men for look for *jombie* M'sieu Watt he make couple of sign—for he have loss hees voice and was not to spek—an' zey deescovair heem."

It was none too soon, either, that this first seeker for the lake was rescued, for he was nearly gone. He had the pleasure the next year, however, of setting eyes on the phenomenon, as one of the party led by Dr. Nicholls.

When my friend Zizi finally announced that "to-morrow make weddah" for the trip to the Lake, I had been waiting for that same weather to "make" for quite two weeks; so there was no delay in starting out. Four Laudat boys, two sons and two nephews of Zizi, went with me as guides and porters, two of them being necessary to carry the photographic outfit, consisting of dark-tent, chemicals, and camera. Each of them also carried a gun, as well as a machete at his side, and the muzzles of the muskets were constantly, though not intentionally, pointed at my head, thus adding zest to the occasion throughout the trip. And it was a most wonderful journey, consuming two days and a night, even starting, as we did, from the mountain hamlet well on the way to the lake. Plunging at once into the forest, I found myself in the home of magnificent tree-ferns, which is between fifteen hundred and three thousand feet above the sea. On the way up to the hamlet from Roseau one may see tree-ferns occasionally; but not such rare specimens as the great forest contains. These and the mountain palms accompanied us nearly all the way, until near

the *petite soufrière*, or little sulphur valley, was approached; as also the "mountain whistlers," gaudy insects, and rare types of humming-birds. It was late in the afternoon that we reached the *soufrière* region, where all vegetation had been blasted by the sulphur fumes, and the stench from sulphureted hydrogen was nearly overpowering. The silver coins in my pocket and the brass mountings of my camera were soon discolored to a blue-black hue by the fumes; for we were now amidst several sulphur streams, and clouds of vapor drifted continually across the valley.

Referring to my notes, I find that the heat was made ten-fold oppressive by the moisture-laden atmosphere. We descended between huge boulders and dead blanched trees prostrate on the ground to a stream of marvelous beauty, and entered a ravine through which flowed other streams from above, their currents now mingling, hot and cold together, where the scene changed as if by enchantment. Everywhere plashed most musical cascades, and from every side came pouring in rippling rivulets, some cold and sparkling, others boiling hot, with wreaths of steam above them in the air. Along their banks were all sorts of tropical plants, such as tree-ferns, wild-plantains, orchids, and air-plants, the last hanging in mid-air to lianes and lialines which formed a perfect network alongside and across the streams. On the sloping hillside here my boys chose a spot for a camp, and two of them stayed to make an *ajoupa*, while the other two went with me to the lake.

In the bottom of a vast bowl, with walls a hundred feet in height around it, I finally found the object I had come so far to see—the Boiling Lake of Dominica. But, though all other visitors had seen it in a state of violent

ebullition, when I first looked upon it there was hardly a ripple on the surface. There was the geyser's token, the swelling ripple in the center; but otherwise it was quiescent. That was fortunate, as I viewed it, for otherwise I could not have taken the photograph, which I obtained by scrambling down the bed of a dried-up river and pitching my camera at the lake marge, just as the sun's last rays gilded the mountains and hill-crests beyond the crater.

When the lake had quieted down nobody could tell, of course, for visitors to the region were not frequent those days; but I was the first to secure an unobstructed view of its surface without intervening clouds of steam, or to listen at the solfataras without having the ears assailed by violent detonations.

Opposite the spot where I had set my camera was a great gap in the inclosing wall, through which the overflow from the lake had generally poured forth in a torrent of sulphur water that descended to the coast. Through this aperture, which was about fifty feet across, I could look off, across and over verdant mountains, southerly to the isle of Martinique, gleaming in the mist and waning sunlight twenty miles away. There is situated grim old Mont Pelée, which, in May, 1902, overwhelmed Saint Pierre and destroyed so many thousand people. During that eruption and for some time after it was feared that the Boiling Lake, which is a vent or safety-valve for the internal volcanic forces, would explode and devastate Martinique's sister island of Dominica; but on the whole it behaved very well and proved an agreeable disappointment. It roared and fretted, now and then, and when the island was enveloped in smoke from neighboring Pelée and the lake sud-

denly subsided, many of the natives feared an overflow to the valleys below; but nothing of the sort happened, and to-day (or by last accounts) the Boiling Lake presents no new or startling feature.

There have been victims of its insidious gases, however—two men, one a young Englishman, Wilfred Clive, a descendant of the celebrated Lord Clive, and the other his guide. The accident happened in December, 1901, five months previous to the eruptions of Pelée in Martinique and the Saint Vincent Soufrière. Mr. Clive had reached the lake and was setting his camera in position near or at the spot I had selected years before, when one of his two guides, who was sitting on a rock near a stream, was overcome by lethal gases and toppled over into the water. The other guide was also affected; but when young Clive discovered the first in an apparently dying state he immediately dispatched the second to Laudat for assistance. The insidious nature of the deadly gases may be inferred from the fact that Mr. Clive was himself stricken as he was ministering to his guide. He should have been on his guard; but when the relieving party arrived from Laudat, many hours after, they found both men dead, the guide propped against a boulder, and Mr. Clive in a recumbent position.

The rescue party arrived that night, but the sulphureted hydrogen was so strong in the ravine where the corpses lay that two days passed before they could get them out. During two long days and terrible nights they maintained their grewsome death-watch on or near the hillside where, twenty-four years before, my boys had pitched my camp and built our *ajoupa*. Through the wild forests which we had traversed so light-heartedly, over the rough trail beneath the giant trees, amid the dense,



tropic growth, the relief party made their return march by night, lighted by torches of gum wood, and bearing their ghastly burdens in hammocks between them. Years before a similar party had borne to Laudat poor old Zizi, my guide and friend, another victim of the Lake, who was scalded to death in its waters.

The temperature of the water when I was there, in 1877, was under 100 degrees; but both previous and later investigators have found it nearly 200, or very near the boiling-point, at an elevation of two thousand feet and more above the sea. Within the volcanic area, the Soufrière region, there are many hot springs, and in one of them, on the morning succeeding to our night in camp, my guides cooked our breakfast, then spread the repast on the broad leaves of the wild plantain, and we feasted merrily (I find recorded in my journal), though half-strangled by the sulphur fumes.

## CHAPTER XXII

### THE LAST OF THE WEST INDIANS

Where the last of the West Indians are to be found — Caribs, or Cannibals, discovered by Columbus, in 1493 — My first acquaintance with those of Dominica — The Carib reservation — History of the aborigines in epitome — Proofs that the Caribs were anthropophagi — Their defensive weapons — The people described by a writer of the seventeenth century — Their beliefs in a God and the soul — The late Doctor Brinton's theory of their origin — Probably derived from Orinoco region of South America — If we could summon their shades back to earth? — Only ritual cannibals at the most — Why the Caribs rarely ate the Christians — The writer's quarters in Carib country — Madame Jo and her shock-headed children — A solitary life in pursuit of birds — Favored guest of hospitable natives — Who had more virtues than vices — How I became godfather to a descendant of cannibals — A feast for the quondam hunter of birds — The responsibilities of a godfather — What Time had done to Madame John — Old and decrepit at forty — Time and rum too much for Meyong — My rediscovered relatives — The Carib tongue spoken only by a few old Indians — Where French has supplanted both Carib and English.

**T**HE last of the aboriginal West Indians, descendants of the people found here by Columbus more than four hundred years ago, are to be found only in the islands of Dominica and Saint Vincent, those comparatively obscure members of the Antillean chain. Very few remain in the latter island, having been practically exterminated by the outburst

of the Soufrière; but there are between two and three hundred in Dominica. They are the last remains of the Caribs, Indians discovered in 1493 and by Columbus denominated cannibals after he had found what he claimed was evidence of their man-eating propensities, in the island of Guadeloupe.

More than a month was spent by me in the forests of Dominica before I ventured over to the Atlantic coast of the island where the Caribs lived. I had heard of them, and from them, for now and then some of the Indians made the journey across the mountains from the windward to the leeward coast, and in doing so always diverged from the trail at Laudat and passed some time with their friends in that hamlet. While I was photographing the beautiful Mountain Lake, which fills with its pure cold water one of the four dead craters existing in Dominica, and is 2200 feet above the sea, I was surprised by the approach of a stalwart, buxom girl of twenty years or so, who swung along the trail with long strides, in company with an older woman.

"Look, look, M'sieu," exclaimed my assistant, pointing at the girl, "that Indian, one of the Charaibes!"

She had just passed by us, but hearing this exclamation turned, and with a broad smile on her bronzed, chubby face said in *patois*: "*Oui, moi Charaibe; moi faim, aussi*"—"Me Carib; me hungry, also." This latter remark was probably intended to suggest an invitation to join in the repast which my boy had spread within the cave in the clay-bank opposite the lake and at the side of the trail. At any rate, the girl and her companion were invited, and they both returned and sat down, without any ado whatever at the lack of formal introductions. They enjoyed immensely the sardines and *paté de*

*foie gras*, the British beer and Danish butter and the American welcome they received, which were doubtless novelties in their experience, and after an hour or so departed with the assurance that if I would visit Carib country they would endeavor to requite my hospitality.

After dispatching my collections of rare birds to the coast, thence to be shipped to the States by sailing vessel, I packed up my belongings at Laudat, and in company with two of my boys and two strapping girls, who carried my luggage on their heads, started for the so-called Carib country. There are few roads of any sort in Dominica at the present time, and there were none at all in the days I write of, the only trail being a foot-path up the mountains and down the vales, frequently interrupted by rivers and at times skirting the brinks of precipices. Two days it took me to perform the trip, but it might have been done in shorter time, perhaps, if the people by the way had been less inclined to hospitality. Most of the Indians had heard of the white man who had cut loose from civilization and became as one of them with the mountaineers, and so they were well inclined toward me in advance of my coming. It was with many a tarry by the way, and many a halt at huts of smiling natives, that I pursued the journey with my corps of attendants, all of them bearing big burdens on their heads.

I found my resting-place at last, finally reaching the Carib reservation, which extends from the River Mahoe to the River Écrêvisse, three miles or more along the Atlantic coast, and away back into the mountains as many miles as the people chose to make their provision grounds.

It has been often stated that the people of the United States, when our pioneers came into contact with the



Indians of the frontier, took all the good lands for themselves and gave the red men the remainder. How false this is we who have been in the Indian Territory and seen the accumulated wealth of the noble red men there can aver; but whether this be so or not, in the Lesser Antilles the white men practiced this policy centuries ago. First the Spaniards, in Cuba, Jamaica, Haiti, and Puerto Rico; then the French and English, in the southern or volcanic islands of the Lesser Antilles.

At all events, the Indians of the Greater Antilles were long ago exterminated, after first being deprived of their lands, and only a miserable remnant of the Caribs of the lesser islands remains in existence to-day.

The Caribbeans, says an author of the seventeenth century, are a handsome, well-shaped people, of a smiling countenance, middle stature, having broad shoulders and large hips, and most of them in good condition. The description he gives of the Caribs will apply to-day, for they have changed but little, except through intermixture with the negroes and colored people during the past 200 years. Their mouths are not over large, he says, and their teeth are perfectly white and close. Their complexion is of an olive color, naturally; their foreheads and noses are flat, not naturally, but by artifice (that is, artificially flattened), "for their mothers crush them down at their birth, as also during the time they suckle them, imagining it a kind of beauty or perfection."

"They believe in evil spirits and seek to propitiate them by presents of game, fruits, etc. They believe that they have as many souls as they feel beatings of the arteries in their bodies, besides the principal one which is in the heart and goes to heaven with its god, who

carries it thither to live with other gods; and they imagine that they live the same life that man lives here below. For they do not think the soul to be so far immaterial as to be invisible, but they affirm it to be subtle and of thin substance, as a purified body, and they use but the same word to signify heart and soul."

If we could but summon the shades of their cannibal ancestors before us it is probable that (shades, ghosts, apparitions, spooks, jombies, being supposed to tell the truth) they might plead guilty to having been anthropophagi; but only in the "religious" sense. Like the ancient Aztecs (who, though they had sacrificed thousands of their enemies before grim Huitzilopochtli on their temple-pyramid and had partaken of their flesh, did not resort to cannibalism when pressed by famine at the siege of Mexico), the Caribs sometimes ate human flesh at their ceremonials. But it was merely a matter of taste, so to speak. If an enemy fought well and displayed unusual valor, they saved his arms, legs, and other portions as tidbits, by "boucanning" them over a slow fire, for their religious banquets.

Later on, after they had well-nigh exterminated the Arawaks of the more northern West Indies, they applied the same process to the invading Christians. But never to any great extent, because, as one of the Carib chieftains is said to have naïvely explained: "The Spaniards and Frenchmen tasted of garlic, and the Englishmen were too strong of tobacco!" So the Christians "saved their bacon"; though they rarely saved their lives when, through the fortunes of war, they were taken prisoners by the Caribs.

In the process of time, and through the drastic methods of Spanish and English "civilization," as the Caribs

became decimated they lost their warlike nature, as well as their desire for tasting human flesh; and when, nearly 400 years after their discovery by white men, I found my way to their settlement, on the windward side of Dominica, less than 300 altogether, and hardly more than a dozen of pure blood, remained alive.

As a naturalist, interested mainly in birds and incidentally in anthropology, I became domiciled in their midst at that time, and as the only white man resident in their settlement I was the recipient of overwhelming attention. The palm-thatched hut which they had built for the priest to occupy in his semi-annual visits was assigned me, and the middle-aged woman who generally ministered to the holy man's creature comforts, by cooking the food furnished by his parishioners, was charged with the same duties in behalf of the white hunter from the United States.

This woman, with her husband and a family of black-eyed, shock-headed children, occupied a little hut on a promontory overlooking the boisterous Atlantic, about a mile distant from the priest's house, which, having another within gunshot, was considered to be in the heart of the settlement.

And yet it was lonely, as I remember, when, having attended to her daily duties, "Madame Jo" cleared away the table, fastened up the cookhouse adjacent to the hut, and left me alone, to listen over night to the sougling of the ever-blowing tradewind and the monotonous beat of the fierce waves upon the rocks. But I was then young, active, and industrious, every morning rising at day-break to range the forest all the forenoon for birds, after a sunrise dip in the river; and so busy during the afternoon writing up notes and preparing my "specimens,"

that soon after dusk and dinner I became oblivious to the solitary nature of my surroundings.

My guide and companion was an Indian lad called Meyong (contraction of Simeon), who knew all the haunts of bird and beast on shore and in the mountain forests. As the smoke arose from the little shack in which Madame Jo prepared my morning coffee, Meyong sauntered up in time to make way with the portion left for him, and then led me away to the scene of the day's investigations—it might be for iguanas and agoutis, among the wild guavas of a deserted plantation, or yet, farther afield, for wild parrots and great blue-headed pigeons; but we never returned empty-handed to the hut, nor without having tramped for hours in the sweltering atmosphere of the tropics.

Now and again we had Madame Jo put up a larger portion of food than usual, and then wandered for days and nights in the mountains, searching for the great "imperial" parrot (the *Chrysotis augusta*) and that somewhat mythical creature, the *Diablotin*, or "Devil Bird." At such times we were accompanied by Meyong's intimate friend, Coryet, who carried the culinary implements and made the ajoupa in which we slept at night. And it was while I reclined upon the springy bed of palm leaves, beneath the lean-to, in the light of a fragrant fire of gumwood, with pencil and note-book in hand, that my Carib friends repeated to me tales of the "loup-garous," or were-wolves, and strange Indian traditions.

Happier days and nights have never fallen to my lot than those I then experienced in the "high-woods" of that tropical island in the Caribbean Sea. Ardent and enthusiastic, I entered with eagerness into the life of my Indian companions, hesitated at no venture they pro-



posed, and endured gladly all the hardships incidental to that wild existence. Charmed by its romanticism, fascinated by its novelty, I possibly idealized the simple folk among whom I lived, and this in turn may account for the manner in which they served me, which almost verged upon actual worship.

Aside from the fact that the Caribs felt in honor bound to supply the stranger in their midst with all their lands afforded, they liked me because I became for the time as good an aboriginal as any of my men, hunted and fished with them, and took the keenest interest in their welfare. And, indeed, they were a lovable people, honest, affectionate, true to each other, and hospitable. They had vices, alas! but they were those begotten of a tropical climate, and an imperception of moral obligations; negative, not positive; yet inimical to their well being.

In short, they had received me as one of themselves, and when, just before the time arrived for my departure, after two months in the Carib hamlet, the husband of Madame Jo desired me to stand godfather for a female child, which she had recently presented to her liege lord, there could be but one answer to this request. The ceremony took place in the little chapel at Saint Marie, and having paid the customary fee exacted from the sponsor for a new-born child on such an occasion, I took leave of the assembled Caribs, and departed for other isles, amid a chorus of lamentations.

It is rarely that civilized man, however savage his forebears may have been in the distant past, suffers a recrudescence of barbaric proclivities, and becomes atavic. With most of us, the liking for a semi-civilized state of existence is but a phase, which we outlive, and which passes away with the bounding pulse and headstrong

ambitions of youth. And so in my case; though I spent several years in seeking adventure of some sort, chiefly in roaming tropical forests in quest of rare birds, the time came when I naturally settled down to soberer pursuits.

Now and again, as time rolled on, came a word of greeting or a fragmentary message from my old friends of the forest life; but fifteen years elapsed before the opportunity offered for revisiting the scenes of my early exploits. When it came I seized it eagerly, and with what emotions I once more gazed upon familiar scenes of that long-past period, when I had roamed the woods and gleaned the streams for prey, may perhaps be imagined. My first disagreeable shock was experienced at the mountain hamlet where I had made my first camp, when I was told that my good old guide, Zizi, had been scalded to death in the Boiling Lake.

I also learned, at this hamlet of Laudat on the Caribbean side of the island, that the residents of the "Carib country," or the windward side, had heard of my arrival and had planned a royal reception for "M'sieu Fred," the quondam hunter of birds. At the same time I was reminded of the responsibilities I had once assumed in standing sponsor for Madame Jo's child, by a letter from my *commère*, which also told me that her prænomen was not "Jo" at all, but Marie Antoinette. At all events, she was, and always would be, my "*commère*," or god-mother, and equally I was, and always would continue to be, whether I liked it or not, her *compère*.

After a two days' journey on horseback, over the mountain backbone of Dominica and down its windward coast, I at last reached the vale of Saint Marie, its beautiful prospect before me and the sounding sea in my ears.

The little hamlet of three huts seemed as lone and world-forsaken as when I had left it fifteen years before. As I forded the stream that ran in front of the hut out burst a little old Carib woman, faded and wrinkled. The name she gave me, "Madame John," brought no trace of recollection, but when she added: "I used to tell you old Indian words, 'member?" I recalled then Evangelina, the pretty maiden who could speak both French and English and who assisted me in making a Carib vocabulary. But she was such a shapely, graceful girl; and this woman—why, she was already old, decrepit!

And then Meyong, who came limping down the path from his hut to meet me; Meyong, who was a frisky boy when he led me to the haunts of pigeon and parrot, was now the staid and sober head of a family containing seven "olive branches." It was high time, his neighbors told me, for if he had not developed a desire for rum distilled from sugar-cane he would not have lost all the toes of one foot, which he had inadvertently chopped off while under the influence of drink.

These two, Madame John and Meyong, had scarcely installed me in the priest's house, with its two diminutive rooms and roof of thatch, before I was greeted by my *commère*, who had walked two miles in the blazing sun to meet me.

"At last! at last!" she exclaimed, falling upon my neck and weeping tears of joy. Then, having plentifully bedewed my shoulders, she pointed to a comely maiden standing near and said: "Look, Compé, look you god-child! Come, child, come kiss your dear godpapa, who come such long, long way to see you."

The maiden shyly advanced, and, after imprinting a chaste salute on my cheek, placed her little brown fingers

nervously in mine, the while regarding me with frank, wide-open eyes.

And this was my Carib godchild, whom I had not seen for fifteen years; this pretty, bronze-tinted girl, with great black eyes, red rounded cheeks, and supple figure already with the promise of womanhood. Old Time, the indefatigable, had labored hard since I had left this hamlet, though but for these human documents I, myself, should hardly have known the years had passed.

And as if to support the illusion, there came Evangelina's sister, the very image of what Evangelina was when I used to know her—sweet seventeen, with arched pouting lips, merry eyes, lissome shape in gaudy calico, ready to sing for me and to tell me the Indian traditions. When I went next morning down to the river that flowed into the sea, to the wave-worn hollow in the great black rock, erstwhile my favorite bathing place, a half-nude Indian boy, a miniature of Meyong in golden bronze, followed after with a towel and sat while I bathed, as his father used to do on similar occasions in the years ago.

The great waves still sang in a fierce monotone, the scurrying trade winds tore through the palm groves, lashing the dead leaves against the trunks; the gilt-crested humming birds still built their cup-shaped nests in the rose apples and flitted among the banana plants. All these things were as of yesterday; but there was the godchild grown almost to maturity, the wrinkled mother, the decrepit father; and of the old Caribs, who alone could speak the ancient language, not ten remained.

The Caribs have forgotten their original tongue, and in the island patois may be said to have a form of speech not recognized by the schools of Europe or America. Thus, as my *protégée* is one of these, I may claim the



unique honor not only of being godfather to a descendant of cannibals, but of one who cannot understand, or converse in, my own language, and whose speech is but little used outside the island in which she was born.

An occurrence in August, 1904, by which the British Government took possession of Aves Island, which lies about 127 miles to the westward of Dominica, in the Caribbean Sea, brings to mind an entry I made in the journal of my first camp in the latter island, away back in 1878. There are times, I wrote, when the sea does not rise up to meet the sky, but spreads out for miles and miles, until I almost fancy I can see to Aves—that solitary islet far west in the Caribbean Sea, where a colony of birds breeds on the sands.

Aves was rarely visited, except one had the misfortune to be wrecked there, and save by the infrequent fishermen and turtle-catchers; but it figures in Froude's "English in the West Indies," as well as in old Père Labat's "Voyages." The good old "Father" was once, in fact, ashore there with a French buccaneer, who captured an English cruiser, after a brisk fight, previous to which the bellicose "Père Blanc" had bestowed his blessing upon him and his crew.

Canon Kingsley has a song referring to Aves, called the "The Lay of the Last Buccaneer," which may have been suggested by this incident, of which the second stanza is:

"There were forty craft in Aves that were both swift and stout,  
All furnished well with small-arms and cannon all about;  
And a thousand men in Aves made laws so fair and free  
To choose their valiant captains and obey them loyally."

## CHAPTER XXIII

### MARTINIQUE AND MONTAGNE PELÉE

Windward approach to Martinique—How the mass of Pelée dominates the island—Flying-fish, cascades, and sandbeaches—The city of Saint Pierre from the sea—Its houses, streets, and people, years ago—Running streams in the streets, and babies in the gutters—Bizarre dresses of the creole women, and their profusion of jewelry—The light-hearted population—The fer de lance, or yellow serpent—Morne Rouge as the writer saw it when hunting birds in Martinique—Rivière Roxelane and the laundresses—Montagne Pelée viewed from the seaport—Climate and scenery of lotus land—Brief mention of the island's history—Creole patois and characteristics—The "empire gown" of Josephine's time—Birthplace and haunts of Napoleon's first wife—Present society contrasted with that of the past—The catastrophe that desolated Martinique—Saint Pierre overwhelmed and destroyed—The sole survivor—Aggregate loss of life in the island—Neither saints nor prayers availed—Saint Lucia, southward from Martinique—The harbor of Castries—Features of the island and its history—A sickly place and one to be shunned—Great fortifications erected here—Diamond Rock, which was once rated and held as a war-ship—Battles that have taken place in Saint Lucia—The island's inferno, and the picturesque Pitons.

**W**HILE my reminiscences of Martinique, the island next south in the Caribbean chain, are quite as pleasurable as those of Dominica, yet they are clouded over by the horrors of that cataclysmal catastrophe, the eruption of Pelée, and seem unreal, weird, as though of a world and people that have passed

away. Viewed in retrospect, as through the telescope inverted, I see the island now as I approached it from the Atlantic side, coming down from the Bermudas, where our vessel had been wrecked and detained a month.

My first view is a long time to look back upon; but no one who has seen the north end of Martinique, with the black, frowning mass of Montagne Pelée rising from the sea, its base wreathed in tropical vegetation, its denuded peak peering through evanescent clouds rolled up from the ocean by the ever-blowing "trades," can forget the picture.

Pelée, in fact, is the dominant feature in that picture, rising as it does above a congeries of minor mountains, its four thousand five hundred feet altitude giving it prominence. Referring to my notes of that time, I find it alluded to as an extinct, at all events quiescent, volcano, whose last sporadic eruption, when it threw out smoke and ashes only, occurred thirty years before. Approaching the island from the Atlantic, the "windward" side, the volcano appeared as a mass of dark-green with a serried outline, cleft into ravines and black gorges through which ran swift-flowing rivers by the score, gushing from internal fountains and seeking the sea beneath tall cocoa palms.

Rounding the northern end of the island, of which Pelée is the outpost, we sailed from the rough waters of the Atlantic into the smoother seas of the Caribbean, the hills and mountains at once affording a lee, and the beautiful flying-fish, hundreds of which had skimmed the crests of the Atlantic waves, now disporting by thousands. The great basaltic cliffs, which towered above crescentic, palm-bordered beaches of golden sands, cut off the breeze, and our sailing vessel scarce had wind

enough left to make the roadstead of Martinique's commercial port, Saint Pierre. The "trades" still blew, however, strong and moisture-laden from the windward coast, as evidenced by the pattering showers educed by condensation against the mountain-sides, and a glorious rainbow spanned Saint Pierre's mile-long bay from northern to southern headland, bathing the picturesque city, tier upon tier of tinted houses topped with ferruginous tiles, in a golden mist.

It may be owing to the fact that Saint Pierre was the first tropical city I had ever seen that it appeared to me the most fascinating; but of a truth it possessed many quaint charms all its own. It occupied a narrow belt of shore between high, cliff-like hills and the strand, its stone-walled houses, white, red, yellow, terra-cotta, solidly embanked along the shore and, higher up, scattered in picturesque confusion among clumps of tamarind and mango trees, with here and there tall palms waving their fronds aloft. It very much resembled the city of Algiers, minus the mosques and the Kasba, but plus the palms. Algiers, as I saw it first, beneath a full-orbed moon, impressed me as the most beautiful city I had ever looked upon, but I think that if Saint Pierre had not been so closely compressed between the encroaching hills and the sea it could well have vied with the African city. Still, nothing could compensate for the loss of that magnificent wall of living green which served as the background for Saint Pierre's architecture.

I cannot but admit that the city was disappointing at close view, for most of the buildings were quite tropically disregardful of appearance, being without windows, sans chimneys, of course, and made of conglomerate materials. Nature had done much—in fact, everything—for the



commercial *entrepôt* of Martinique; man had made a few feeble attempts at adornment. The streets were narrow, save along the sea-front, where there was a broad quay paved with basaltic blocks. The harbor—or, rather, the roadstead, for it lies wide open to the sea—is deep enough to have been the crater of old Pelée itself, all approaching vessels having to run out an anchor at a short distance from the land and then moor by a hawser ashore. There they lay, their noses pointed seaward, lazily floating upon the placid bosom of the Caribbean, with water just outside their berths a hundred fathoms deep.

This depth of water is not a peculiarity of Saint Pierre's roadstead, however, for it is found off Roseau, in the island of Dominica, next adjacent north, off Kingstown in Saint Vincent, and especially in the harbor of Saint Georges, Grenada, which is indubitably an old crater invaded and filled by the sea.

Having visited Saint Pierre several times since my first arrival there, and having retained the impression that it was a beautiful, though not exactly an attractive, city for residence, I think this must be correct. It is said that old Montagne Pelée probably blew its own head off, through the generation of steam from water that had percolated through its crater-sides. Well, this may be a correct assumption, for *certes* there is water enough in the island—or there was—and to spare. The atmosphere is ever moisture-laden, streams and rivulets run everywhere and in all directions, descending from the central mountain masses. The strongest feature in Saint Pierre was the abundance of water, running through side channels in its streets at right angles to the quay, overflowing in numerous fountains and oozing out above the city.

In the beautiful *Jardin des Plantes* adjacent to the city

a glorious cascade dropped over cliffs into a basin bordered with palms and tree ferns. But for the water, in fact, the city would hardly have been very desirable to live in; for, as it was, the odors at times were very nearly overpowering, especially in the wee sma' hours, when the domestics threw open the portals of their respective domiciles and bore forth the garbage, which they dumped in the streams flowing through the gutters. They appeared only at appointed hours, the city being as well regulated as any of its prototypes in France; but when they made their exit all the sailor folk in the harbor knew of it, from the noisome odors exhaled. Later on, about an hour after daybreak, the breakfast dishes were often washed in the clear water running past the *trottoirs*; still later, most attractive babies, variously colored, from ebon and chocolate to *café au lait* and old gold, but all happy as the morn and shrieking from overplus of joy. Should breakfast-dish or baby be released but for a second, down the steep incline it would glide, to be recovered, if at all, only at the shore.

The public buildings of Saint Pierre—such as the theater, the cathedral, bishop's palace, the great barracks for the troops—were all massive structures and in good taste. The *magasins*, filled with European products, were sufficiently numerous, and the city was well equipped with all the fittings demanded by an ambitious metropolis of the twentieth century.

The greater portion of Martinique's inhabitants are black or colored, the African-derived element being vastly in preponderance and increasing year by year. The female colored creoles of Martinique, particularly of Saint Pierre, were celebrated for their quaint and bizarre costumes—flowing robes of silk or calico, always

loose and open and of the brightest colors. The dress most affected by the domestics, hucksters, and even by women of the better class, was designed especially for a tropical climate and cut with the waistband well up under the shoulder-blades. It was locally known as the "costume de Josephine," after a tradition that this famous daughter of Martinique adopted it for negligée in the seclusion of La Pagerie.

A love for bright colors and profusion of jewelry is characteristic of the creole, quadroon, and octoroon, even the "Sambo" negress being very particular as to her turban, which must be fashioned of the gaudiest bandannas and ornamented to the extent of her means. She must have coils of beads, gold brooches and pins, and earrings, consisting of golden fasces as big as a baby's fist.

Many of the mixed peoples were handsome withal, and some of the girls who come over from the farther side of the mountain, doing their twenty or thirty miles to market and home again every day, were models of symmetry. I used to see them swinging over the country roads with long, easy strides, immense loads of produce, such as bananas, plantains, tancias, piled high upon their heads, their forms erect as lances and their torsos such as might have excited the envy of a sculptor. These people, and in truth all, were contented and happy, prone to laughter, filled to overflowing with an unfailing *bonhomie*. As I recall in memory these mountain maidens that used to come to town from the windward coast with their burdens of produce, I see their supple forms swaying, their bright eyes and white teeth gleaming, and hear again the ripples of musical laughter and their cheerful "*Bon jours*" and "*Bon soirs*" floating on the morning or

evening air. They were the brightest of the Martinicans, truly *sui generis*, and it seemed to me that in them the country and the climate had found a perfect type, as suited to the tropics as the mango or the pomegranate.

As I was hunting birds those days, my first voyage to the Lesser Antilles having been in the pursuit of ornithology, I was always more in the country districts than in the city, and so became acquainted with the simple, joyous country folk. They were always willing to assist me, and frequently a man cutting cane in a field would stop his work to show me the haunts of some bird or reptile, or one of the mountain maidens would lay down her heavy load to point out a humming-bird or to warn me of the serpent's lurking-place.

It was the "serpent" of Martinique, and the serpent only, that the natives feared. They gave no heed to Mont Pelée, believing it harmless; but they were ever on the alert as regards the "fer de lance," that most venomous of American serpents, which makes its particular habitat in Martinique and the near island of Saint Lucia. It was their one haunting fear, by day and by night, for its bite meant death. The serpent itself was so numerous as to invade the houses even of Saint Pierre, and so aggressively venomous as to seek out its victims—in this respect being different from all others of its family.

When hunting in the Jardin des Plantes, which was practically within the city limits, and one of nature's beauty spots—with its tall "palmistes," its cascades, its artificial lakes with every variety of tropical foliage mirrored in them—I was always accompanied by an attendant sent especially to warn me when in the vicinage of the dreaded "lancehead." In one of my journeyings I made my headquarters at the little village of Morne



Rouge, from which I went out on hunting excursions every morning soon after daybreak. I ranged over the hills, such as Morne Calabasse and Morne Balisier, even up and over the slopes of great Mont Pelée, without seeing any serpents, though having several "close calls," my native attendant told me.

The name "morne" is applied throughout the French West Indies to the high hills and low mountains, but not to the greatest elevations; so there are many "mornes" in Martinique, but only one "montagne," that of Pelée, which is further distinguished now from having caused the greatest catastrophe within a century. This mountain was the focal point of all views at the north end of the island, visible all the way from Saint Pierre to Morne Rouge—as one crossed the Rivière Roxelane, where toiled half-naked washerwomen laundering their "washes" with clubs; across the *savane*, the level field where military reviews were wont to be held; through vast cane fields and among luxuriant gardens—ever in view was the Montagne, sweeping grandly up from sea to cloudland.

I used to watch it, together with some of the few white French people of Saint Pierre, sitting in the Jardin or on a bench beneath the mango trees not far from the Grande Rue. Twenty-five years ago the white population of the island was relatively numerous; ten years ago I found it lamentably shrunken, and now it must be practically extinguished. First the black flood having its origin in Africa, then the lava flood from the heart of Pelée, swept the land; now those French-born people, some of them of lofty lineage, are almost extinct.

Not a few travelers have asserted that the island of Martinique, when at its best, came as near to realizing the

ideal paradise on earth, so far as climate and scenery could make it, as any portion of this mundane sphere.

The popular conception of an earthly paradise is always a tropical one. Eden, the country of the blest, has a climate of perpetual summer, where snow and ice are unknown, except in refreshing confections and beverages; where stately palms wave their golden fronds in an atmosphere of eternal calm, and verdure-clad mountains raise their sun-kissed peaks to an azure sky in a land that is "always afternoon."

That was the lotus land of Martinique, as the casual visitor saw it. Situated midway in the volcanic chain of the Caribbees, and about half way between the equator and the northern tropic, it was one of the Titanic stepping stones that connect the temperate North with the tropical South. It possessed all the qualifications for the traditional earthly paradise. Climate and scenery were unsurpassed; it had noble palms in ranks and groves, o'ertopping silver-sanded beaches laved by sapphire-tinted waves; and, to complete the Edenic simile, it had its serpent. No other fragment of a continent, torn from its parent land and set adrift in mid-sea, can boast such a venomous, pestiferous serpent as the terrible *fer de lance*, or yellow viper, of Martinique.

In the last decade of the fifteenth and the first of the sixteenth century, Spain discovered more lands than she could very well populate, and many small islands, particularly of the Caribbees, were left in solitude, unvisited for many years, some of them finally falling into the hands of French or English, Danes or Dutch. France happened to appropriate this beautiful island, and the numerous river valleys being filled with fertile soil, the French colonists prospered exceedingly. So great was

their prosperity, in fact, that it attracted the attention of English adventurers, who coveted and intended to own the riches of the Antilles.

From the days of Drake and Hawkins to those of Rodney and Bonaparte, both France and England poured out unstinted gore and millions of treasure in the taking and re-taking of the insignificant Caribbees. Martinique, as well as some others, passed like a shuttle-cock from one owner to another, and, as the eventual outcome of the protracted conflict, France now possesses five or six islands of the chain, and Great Britain nearly all the rest.

Still, in one sense, as already intimated, the French have triumphed over their erstwhile foes, for, though they can show fewer terrestrial possessions in the Lesser Antilles, their speech has been so strongly impressed upon several of the islands, from which the British ousted them in centuries past, that the language of the common people is almost universally a French patois.

As the people of Martinique have a dialect of their own, so also their appearance is distinctive. French creoles, especially those of the mixed caste, are famous for their beauty, and in Martinique they seem well nigh to reach perfection. There is, or was, a subtle alchemy, either in the air or in their strain of blood, that gave them a birth-right of physical charm. Whatever the cause, the island had good reason to be proud of its beautiful octoroons and quadroons, known generally as *métis*, with the purple sheen of their long, abundant tresses and their deep, searching, melancholy eyes.

The most beautiful types were to be found in the country interior—in the very district that has been devastated by the eruption of Pelée; but they were often seen in St. Pierre, the city destroyed on the fatal 8th of May,

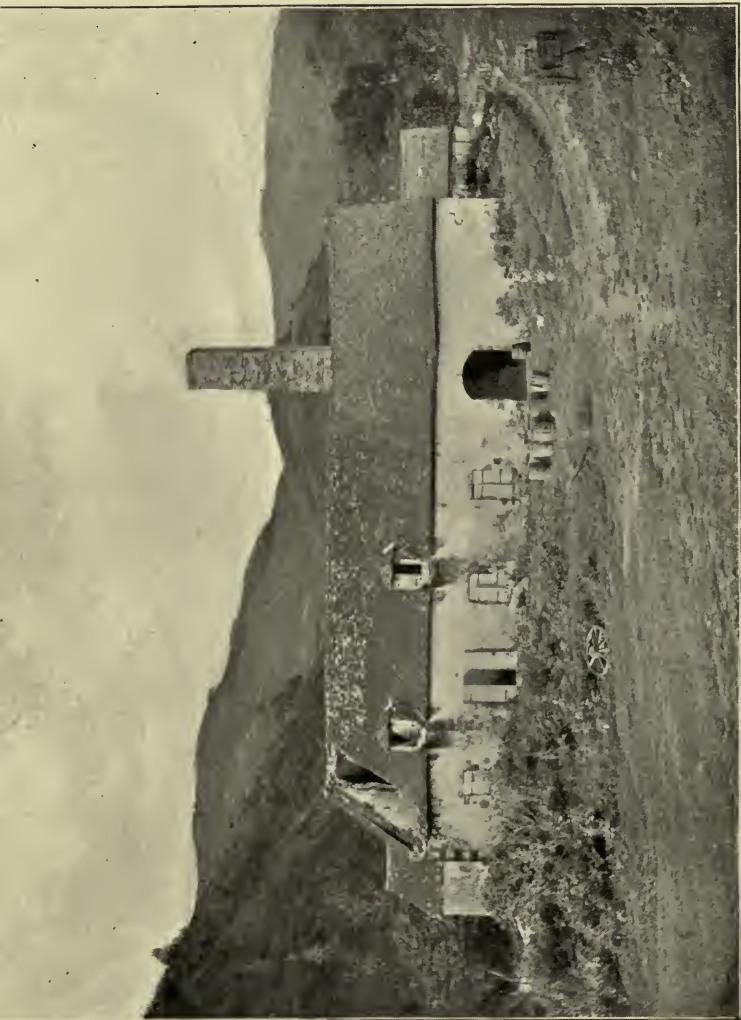
1902. Tall, straight as palms, yet with a languorous elasticity of movement and a graciousness of manner peculiarly their own, the native women of Martinique were a very fascinating quantity in the personal equation of the island.

It is possible that their attractiveness was enhanced by the costume they wore—else, in truth, why should they have adopted it? The distinctive style in Martinique had as its most marked feature a loosely flowing robe, high waisted and short armed. It was, as someone has said, the original conception of the “empire gown”; but its fabric disported the most startling colors ever conceived by art, the effect of which was generally accentuated by a gorgeous bandanna turban.

No less interesting, though not quite so picturesque, were the white creoles native born in Martinique. The white women were not so much in evidence as the others, save at the band concerts on the *savane*, at church, or at an occasional ball; but to one who, like the writer of this chapter, knew many of them in their homes, their gracious charm is a memory most precious. The Martinicans were pleasure and laughter-loving, light-hearted, hospitable in the French way; mindful of the aristocratic ancestry some few of them could boast; and, whether black or white, jealous of their island's traditions.

Perhaps no one life can so well exemplify the peculiar fascination of Martinique's fair daughters, and at the same time present, as in epitome, the vicissitudes of the French colonists' fortunes, as that of the Empress Josephine, first wife of the great Napoleon. Everyone knows that she was a native of Martinique; that, like Napoleon, she was island born, and a creole in the true sense of the word. Her grandfather, M. Tascher de la





The Sucrierie, Where Empress Josephine Lived



Pagerie, had come to Martinique in 1726. He settled in the island as a planter; but that he was a personage of rank was shown by his application, in 1730, for the registration of his letters of nobility. His eldest son, Joseph, in 1761, married Mlle. Rose Claire des Vergers de Sannois, to whose beautiful sugar estate the couple retired soon after the marriage.

Standing in the midst of the *savane* at Fort de France, the capital of Martinique, and at present its largest center of population, is an exquisitely carved statue of pure white marble, representing the Empress Josephine in her prime, when she was the wife of Napoleon. It has stood there more than thirty years, or ever since it was presented to the people of Martinique by her grandson, Napoleon III. The statue fronts the entrance to the harbor of Fort de France, but the face of Josephine is turned aside, her wistful gaze being directed towards a low range of hills across the bay, about five miles away, behind which nestles the valley in which she was born. There lay the estate of Sannois, to which Lieutenant Tascher de la Pagerie took his bride, and where his daughter, Josephine, first saw the light, on the 23d of June, 1763.

A typical creole, Josephine was lithe of limb and delicate of figure, with the perfect grace and freedom of movement that comes from an outdoor life and an infancy innocent of the restraints of the conventional garb of civilization. From childhood she possessed a surprising winsomeness that fascinated men and made women jealous or suspicious. Her early years were not without hardship. She was only three when a great hurricane swept over Martinique, destroying much property and many lives. The "great house" of the Tascher estate

was razed to the ground, and the whole family fled to the *case à vent*, or hurricane cellar, from which they emerged, after the storm was over, to find every structure but the sugar mill without a roof. Discouraged at the prospect of rebuilding his dwelling in a land of hurricanes, M. Tascher took up his residence in the *sucrerie*, or sugar house, and in the upper room of this massive and picturesque building the future empress, Josephine, lived during nearly a decade of her youth. Later she passed a few years in Fort de France, mainly at a convent school, and as the guest of an aunt. At fifteen she went to France to become the bride of Beauharnais, and afterwards the consort of Napoleon.

Thus sails beyond our ken the most fascinating daughter of Martinique, and the best known in history. She found fame as well as fortune—good and ill—in the home of her ancestors; but she often turned towards the island of her birth as the scene of her happiest days.

At the time of the English attack upon Martinique, in 1762, there existed in the island a society which could boast connection with the highest and the best of La Belle France, for many of the colonists, like Beauharnais and La Pagerie, were noble by birth. And, so late as the second empire even, the island was noted for its aristocratic colonists and numerous settlers of good lineage. But within the last forty years the white population has steadily dwindled—as, indeed, it has in all the islands of the West Indies—and to-day only the scant remains of the past attest to what made the French possessions great and prosperous. The French islands were more carefully nursed than the British, and have been made to yield more; but now that the volcano has destroyed Saint Pierre, with its beautiful *Jardin des Plantes*, its museum,



cathedral, seminaries, schools—its centers of culture and education—poor Martinique has fallen far to the rear.

It was on the morning of May 8, 1902, that the catastrophe occurred in Martinique, almost inconceivable in its magnitude, and more disastrous than any similar the Western Hemisphere has known. Mont Pelée had been wearing its "smoke cap" for several weeks, but the inhabitants of the north end of the island attributed the phenomenon to the volcano's vagaries, and paid little attention to the matter. At last, however, on the 5th of May, there was a tremendous eruption, by which vast volumes of mud were thrown far up into the air, and a sugar factory overwhelmed, with a loss of one hundred and fifty lives.

The people of Saint Pierre were moved from their apathy to send a commission of investigation, composed of local scientists, who returned from the district of disturbance and reported the worst as over. They had hardly made this report, however, than there was a recurrence of the strange tremors of the earth, caused, probably, by jets of steam from internal sources being forced through the crust or crevices in the rock. There were warnings in plenty, but they passed unheeded; for, had not the "volcan" stood there, within plain sight of Saint Pierre, as long as man could remember?

Pelée had blustered and sent out incipient eruptions fifty years before, but nothing serious had resulted from the demonstrations, so when at last the showers of ashes, which had been falling continuously, though lightly, for days past became so dense that the sun, on the morning of that fatal 8th of May, was hidden from sight, even then the people were not universally alarmed.

Suddenly, however, out of the darkness came a terrific

detonation, as if the plutonic forces enchained within the volcano had loosed themselves at last and torn the mountain from its base. The terrified inhabitants of Saint Pierre had hardly time to exclaim: "Pelée has blown his head into the sky!" when the doomed city was overwhelmed by a veritable cloud of fire, accompanied by molten rock, poisonous gases, incandescent sand and scoriæ. The hot blast consumed the people ere they could escape, and the fiery cinders covered the entire area of the city with a pall of desolation. Within the space of thirty seconds more than thirty thousand people were wiped out of existence utterly, sixteen out of the eighteen vessels in the roadstead were either sunk at their moorings or consumed by fire, together with everybody on board, and property to the value of one hundred million dollars was destroyed.

In addition to the city of Saint Pierre and its suburbs, six other centers of population were then and later destroyed, including the beautiful hill-town, Morne Rouge, the total aggregate of lives lost being not less than fifty thousand.

The obliterated towns were scattered chiefly along the northern and northwest coast, and contained all the way from two thousand to eight thousand inhabitants each. The capital city of Martinique, Fort de France, on the leeward coast, about twelve miles southeast of Saint Pierre in an air-line, lay beyond the area of devastation, and towards this city the various relief expeditions were sent, the United States generously leading, for the succor of the terror- and famine-stricken refugees. Rescue parties were sent from Fort de France to Saint Pierre as soon as they could endure the terrible heat emanating from the cinder-buried city, and their worst fears were

more than realized. A few wretched survivors were snatched from the shore immediately after the eruption, most of whom died; but the only actual survivor rescued from the city itself was that miserable negro found in a dungeon, who afterward came to the United States and was exhibited in the dime museums.

Mounds of ashes and calcined rocks, mud-plastered walls and blasted trees, hideous as caricatures of nature's one-time beautiful productions, together with windrows and heaps of contorted corpses, met the gaze of the awe-stricken explorers amid the ruins of Saint Pierre. Nature has since clothed some of the trees in verdure, and brightened the ghastly gray and formless masses with flowers; but Saint Pierre will ever remain a dead and buried city. Never more will its streets be gay with laughter-loving creoles, or resound to mirth of any sort; for the tragedy was too vast, too terrible, for even light-some natives to forget.

One might have expected to hear of accompanying volcanic disturbances either in Dominica, to the north of Martinique, or in Saint Lucia, next adjacent, to the south; but the first rumblings were heard from the subterranean recesses of Saint Vincent's "Soufrière," about one hundred miles, as the crow flies, southward from Martinique. Between the two islands lies Saint Lucia, which is as exact a duplicate of its northern neighbor in scenery, general physical formation (and also in the habits and speech of its people) as can be imagined. Only this feature Martinique and Saint Vincent have in common: that each island's volcano is near its northern coast; while Saint Lucia's soufrière, or sulphur mine, as it is locally called, is at the south, near its wonderful "Pitons," or pointed mountains.

Like all the other islands of the Caribbees, Saint Lucia consists of a mountain mass, volcanic in its origin, thrown up abruptly from the sea. This congeries of hills and mountains is covered with the beautiful vegetation peculiar to the tropics, with palms and plantains, banana and sugar-cane along the coast, tree-ferns and a wilderness of gigantic trees in the hills. Although the island is little more than twenty miles in length, with a breadth of about ten, yet it contains many wonders, not alone of vegetable growth, but in its physical features as well.

The mountains rise to various heights, some of them 3000 feet above the sea, while deep valleys indent the coast, containing lands of exceeding fertility. Numerous bays, with beaches of yellow sand, lie embosomed among the black, basaltic cliffs, and here are the small villages, that are sprinkled around the bases of the hills.

The extreme fertility of Saint Lucia is the bane of the planter, as well as his source of revenue; for the island is afflicted with terrible endemic fevers, arising from the rich, deep soil and its decaying growth of vegetation. Ever since its discovery, or say for 400 years, Saint Lucia has been a scourge to the settler and soldier.

Thousands of brave men have left their bones in this rich soil, and have drenched almost every hillside on the northern shore with their blood. For, not only the native fevers have decimated the garrisons during the centuries this island has been in European possession, but they have been subjects of attack from other foes. For nearly two hundred years Saint Lucia was a bone of contention between England and France. First one power and then the other would prevail, until at last, in



the early part of this century, it was finally taken from the French by Sir Samuel Hood, and has remained in British hands ever since.

Its history is that of nearly every island in the Caribbean Archipelago, except Barbados, for there is not one of them that has not cost a hundred times its value in blood and treasure. Although a long time in British possession, yet it is only within a few years that Great Britain has done anything to make this strong position an impregnable one.

All these volcanic islands have, owing to their sheer, abrupt mountain walls, running directly down into the sea, deep water right up to their shores. Now and then, as in the case of Saint Lucia and Grenada, there are deep, fiord-like fissures running up into the land, forming excellent harbors. We may safely say that there is not, anywhere in the West Indies, a better harbor than that of Castries, on the northern coast of Saint Lucia. It is a mile or so in depth, by a quarter of a mile in width, and is completely sheltered and land-locked.

It was into the harbor of Castries that the crippled "Roddam," the only vessel that escaped from Saint Pierre's harbor on that dreadful day in May, 1902, came steaming slowly, courageous Captain Freeman holding the helm with burned and blistered hands. He and his men went into hospital, and from the ship were taken 120 tons of ashes, showing the effects of that "cloud of fire" which enveloped and nearly destroyed it. Here is his story: "A burning mass thrown up by the volcano struck my steamer broadside on. The shock was so terrible that it nearly capsized the vessel, big as she is. On hearing the awful explosion that had preceded the shock to ourselves, and seeing what looked like a great wall of

flame rapidly approaching us from the volcano, all of us on board sought shelter wherever it was possible to get away from the terrible hail which then began to fall around us. I myself ran into the chart-room, but the burning embers were borne so swiftly upon us that they swept in through the door, almost suffocating me and scorching me very badly. I managed to reach the deck, where I mustered a few survivors and ordered them to slip the cables. While this was being done I leaped upon the bridge, and instantly we were clear I rang to the engineer for full speed astern. The second and third engineers as well as the firemen had escaped injury. They bravely did their part at this awful time, but the downpour on the deck was so terrible that the men could not work there. The steering gear became choked by a mass of *débris* that had fallen on the ship and clogged up every part of her. Accordingly, after running for some time astern, I rang again and went ahead, and continued this until the gear was cleared from the ashes and dust that seemed to block everything."

Seven hours later the "Roddam" entered Castries.

At the head of the harbor is the principal town of the island—Castries—composed of some good public buildings, a few hundred shabby dwellings, and a public square and botanical gardens. The water is so deep that the largest ships can steam directly up to the wharves; but, having said that the harbor is safe, deep, and sheltered, one has said all there is to say in its favor. For, owing to the very contiguity of the protecting hills, and the obstruction to the free play of the air, this harbor is one of the hottest and sickliest in southern waters.

Only the natives can live for any length of time in this pestiferous hole. The choosing of this port for a gov-

ernment depot was made the subject for parliamentary inquiry, its insalubrity was so notorious. It is only the fact of the almost impregnable strength of its position, and its advantageous situation as regards the north coast of South America, that has warranted the choice. English engineers have declared that, so far as natural situation and features are concerned, the crest of the *vigie*—the line of hills immediately above Castries—is unsurpassed for the purpose of fortification.

Under their direction during the few years past a system of fortification has been planned which, experts declare, rivals anything on the American continent, not even excepting Quebec. Perfect secrecy has been maintained during these operations, and no outsiders have been admitted within the line of defense as marked out by the engineers. All the laborers are guarded; and, as few of them ultimately escape the deadly fever, most of them have carried the secret with them to the grave.

Visitors are permitted to ascend the hills above the town as far as the government house, about half way up, and thence the view is magnificent. A goodly portion of the island is within view, and also the shores of fair Martinique, across the channel of clear water. Between Saint Lucia and Martinique, beyond the channel, rises an immense mass of basalt, called Diamond Rock. This isolated rock was at one time seized by the English during their war with the French in the last century, provided with a garrison and fortified. It was entered on the admiralty lists as "His Majesty's ship, Diamond Rock"; and for a twelve-month the crew of gallant English tars held to their perilous position, bombarding everything that passed between their ship and the main. They were at last compelled to capitulate, their admiral

having gone off and forgotten them; but not until all their provisions were exhausted.

Right across the channel from Diamond Rock, and almost within sight of the *vigie* of Saint Lucia, lies the estate of La Pagerie, once the home of Josephine. The ruins of the house in which she was born are yet pointed out, and the pool in the stream where she used to bathe may still be seen beneath the silk-cotton trees.

One should not leave this tropical island without making a visit to the far-famed Soufrière, or sulphur deposit, at the other end of the island. Saint Lucia's *inferno* is only about fifteen miles from Castries, and there you encounter sulphurous smells, but far preferable to those of the hill-beleaguered town.

The Soufrière is, in fact, the crater of an extinct, or at least quiescent, volcano, about 1000 feet above the sea level. It covers about three acres; a vast caldron of sulphur water is in constant ebullition. The shell covering the infernal hole beneath must be remarkably thin, judging from the rumblings beneath and the heat. Now and then a person breaks through this brittle dome, and gets his foot well scalded. An old negro was pointed out to me who had lost a leg in this manner; in fact, the individual was begging for pennies with which to purchase a wooden leg to take the place of his original member.

Near the Soufrière rise those remarkable mountains, the "Pitons," or cone-shaped hills, about 2500 feet in height. They shoot straight up from the sea, a beautiful bay between them, looking at a distance, as the sailors in those seas say, like a pair of donkey's ears.



## CHAPTER XXIV.

### SAINT VINCENT AND ITS SOUFRIÈRE

A camp on the summit of the Soufrière — A volcano that seemingly slumbered — But awoke in 1902 — The eruptions, ninety years apart, very similar in their phenomena — How the Carib country was destroyed — The settlements of Yellow and Black Caribs — Hemmed in by boiling lava rivers and unable to escape — The devastated third of Saint Vincent — Destruction of the Wallibou and Richmond estates — Friends of the author killed by deadly fumes — When I was a guest at Richmond estate, and climbed the great volcano — An essay on a mule — Crossing the dry rivers made by former eruptions — A lunch in the high-woods — My camp 4000 feet above the sea — Aspect of the two craters of the Soufrière — A venturesome feat — In search of a mysterious bird — How we lived in a cave five days and nights — A Christmas dinner at high altitude — Man Toby springs a surprise — A descent to Yellow Carib country — Old friends with whom I had fished and hunted — An Indian giant's descendant — A banquet hall in the open and a varied menu — How to catch the iguana — Food of the Caribs and their beverages — The Indians now extinct as a community — A race with death — Brained by the volcano — Kingstown the capital.

ONE of the strangest of my adventures occurred in a spot which can no longer be located, except relatively to its former surroundings, for it has been removed from the earth. I refer to the summit of the Saint Vincent Soufrière, as it existed before the terrible eruption of 1902. If that eruption had taken place some twenty-five years previously it would have deprived me

of an unique experience, and the scientific world of several rare birds, for, in the last month of 1878, I was encamped in a cave in the volcano's crater-brim. At the period of my ascent the volcano was only a harmless giant with a past, gloomy and forbidding of aspect, towering above the coast and range of interior mountains in majesty, but formidable only through tradition.

It was noted as the last West Indian volcano from which the nineteenth century had witnessed destructive eruptions, in the year 1812, the same day that Caracas, in Venezuela, was destroyed, having let loose its internal forces and devastated the north end of Saint Vincent. Ten thousand people perished in Caracas that day, but in Saint Vincent the loss of life was small, though the island was covered with ashes, cinders, etc., and many estates were ruined. Then the giant returned to its seemingly sempiternal repose, during ninety years giving no sign of the terrible potential energies which were to be used against the unfortunate dwellers on its seaward-stretching flanks and spurs.

Saint Vincent, as I knew it in 1878 and '79, had changed little when I revisited the island in 1891-92; but ten years after this latter date it had been converted from an abode of terrestrial delights into an isle of semi-desolation. On the occasion of neither visit did I detect any evidence of activity, present or prospective, in the quiescent Soufrière that towered above the north end of the island, one hundred miles due south from Pelée, the eruption from which was synchronous with its own. At the time of the eruption of 1812, "a century had elapsed since the last convulsion of the mountain, or since any other elements had disturbed the serenity of this wilderness besides those which are common to the tropical tem-

pest. It apparently slumbered in primeval solitude and tranquillity, and from the luxuriant vegetation and forest growth, which covered its sides from base to summit, seemed to discountenance the fact and falsify the record of the ancient volcano."

Nearly another century rolled round, or, to be exact, within ten days of ninety years, before the giant stirred again, turned over in his sleep, and crushed the pygmy dwellers within the radius of his activity. The second time, within the memory of man, human beings were caught napping, and human lives were lost, through a disregard of this giant's warnings.

Nearly three months before the last eruption took place the people resident at Balaine and Windsor Forest, on the flanks of the Soufrière, felt repeated shocks of earthquake and heard fearful grumbling sounds proceeding from the earth's interior.

They were disquieted, though not to the extent of leaving their homes; but when, on Saturday, the 3d of May, 1902, earthquakes occurred continually, they began to pack their belongings; and on the 6th, when smoke and flames were seen to emit from the old crater, the more thrifty of the Caribs living on the leeward coast started to trek to places of safety.

They started too late, for by that time the rivers running down to the coast were boiling hot, the mountain slopes were enveloped in dense clouds of smoke and vapor, shot through with brilliant flames which rose high above and all around the original crater of the Soufrière. All available boats were seized by fleeing, terror-stricken people of the leeward coast, who hurried toward Kingston, the capital, with tales of dreadful happenings. On Wednesday, the 7th, the noises from

the crater were like the heaviest thunder, or the roar and rattle of incessant cannonading. Vast columns of thick, ropy smoke were belched forth from the crater, while the volume of pumice, grit, calcined earth, and stones was so vast and was expelled with such force as to fall on the roofs of Kingston, a dozen miles away, like a terrific shower of hail. The roar and rattle of the falling stones was deafening.

The grandest sights were witnessed from the town of Chateaubellair, on the leeward or western shore of the island, beginning at about noon of the 7th, with a magnificent column of smoke rising toward the zenith, climbing, ever climbing, and illumined by multiform electric flashes darting in every direction. "Sometimes, like thin ropes of golden hue, they would rush, rocket-like, up through the mighty pillars of smoke, through which darted continuously the most awful flashes of forked lightning." According to the reports of observers, the phenomena were exactly the duplicate of those which occurred in 1812, and an account of the former would answer for the latter.

The later eruption, however, was of longer duration than the former, for the Soufrière simmered and boiled, muttered and growled, intermittently, for days, weeks, and months, keeping the inhabitants of the island in a state of constant terror and suspense. When the first outbreak had somewhat subsided, it was found that fully one-third the island, north of a line drawn from Chateaubellair on the western coast, to Georgetown on the eastern, had been devastated, while the eventual total of victims killed amounted to more than two thousand. A larger area had been overwhelmed than in Martinique, but, as it was less densely populated than the former, there



had been a lesser loss of life. The chief loss fell upon the Caribs of the island, who were practically exterminated.

The "Carib Country" of Saint Vincent comprised—on paper—all that portion of the island on both coasts to the north of a line drawn across from the town of Chaateubellair on the leeward coast to Georgetown on the windward; but in point of fact the Caribs possessed but a small fraction of the lands. There were two colonies: one settlement of "Black Caribs," as those were called in whom the negro blood was predominant, and another of "Yellow Caribs," who had less negro blood in their veins, and some of whom could boast an uncontaminated line of descent from cannibal ancestry.

Strange to say—and at the same time it is a reflection upon the manner in which the British have treated these brave people—the comparatively pure-blood Caribs had no reservation in tribal or individual name, but were compelled to rent land of the white proprietors of Saint Vincent. Their principal settlement was at Sandy Bay, in the most secluded part of the island, at the northeast end. The Bay settlement took its name from a beach of gray sand guarded by volcanic rocks, overtopped and tapestried by tropical vegetation. The seas are heavy here on the windward coast exposed to the fierce Atlantic, and the Caribs, though expert watermen, were sometimes weeks without fish food of any kind. Around their wattled huts of palm, however, they all had gardens filled with tropical vegetables and fruits, their chief cultivation being cassava and arrowroot, for which there was a good sale.

The Black Caribs lived on or near the northwesterly tip of the island, at a place called, from the shape of a

high hill there, Morne Ronde. In habit and disposition they were similar to the Yellow Caribs, but there were many so black as to be hardly distinguishable from negroes. Both settlements were on the slopes of the volcano, from the Yellow Caribs' country the great Soufrière resembling a gigantic lion *couchant*. With lava rivers descending both flanks of the volcano, and their escape cut off by sea, it is not strange that nearly all perished in the great "Terror."

History repeated itself in this latest eruption, for, as in 1812, it began with terrible detonations, followed by dense columns of smoke, and then the crater burst its confines and overflowed the adjacent country with molten mud, with an accompaniment of poisonous gases which killed whomsoever were not whelmed by the flood of mud and lava. The Soufrière, in fact, surpassed all previous performances, and slew hundreds of people where it had killed only scores before. The estates on the leeward shores nearest to the volcano, Wallibou and Richmond, which suffered somewhat in the olden time, were in this latter instance utterly destroyed. A torrent of boiling mud swept over the sugar mill of the Wallibou estate, and then, in the midst of night's darkness through the obscuration of the sun by smoke and vapors, the "great house" of Richmond was carried from its foundations, eight people perishing in its ruins.

In that same Richmond great-house, then occupied by the hospitable Evelyns, I had stopped for a week on my first visit in 1878; and on my second, thirteen years later, I was the guest of a jovial Scotchman, Alex. Fraser, and his wife, both of whom were killed in the eruption of 1902.

In response to my inquiry, about a month after the

first volcanic éruptions, there came a letter telling me that while most of the white people I had known were alive, though in straitened circumstances and in a constant state of alarm, all the Carib Indians of my acquaintance had been killed by the deadly fumes.

“The only white people killed whom you formerly knew,” my correspondent wrote, “were the Frasers, who had just removed from the Richmond estate, on the leeward coast, to Orange Hill, on the windward. They had been at the latter place only three weeks when the eruption took place, and they both fell victims to the poisonous fumes. Mr. Fraser was found sitting in an easy chair in his gallery, with a smile on his face, and his wife in the garden, both dead. Just a few hours before a friend of the family tried to persuade them to leave the plantation, as the crater was showing signs of eruption; but they would not, though the friend escaped.”

“The physical features of Richmond and Wallibou,” wrote my correspondent, “have changed entirely, the latter presenting the appearance of one broad stretch of limestone, with only scant remains of the sugar factory; while the former shows hardly more than the foundations of the house. The heat during the first few days was so great that no one could approach the scene of devastation; but when finally surveyed, it was found that the shore had receded, and deep water covered spots once accessible by foot or on horseback.”

How different was the aspect of the region when, one Christmas week, I found myself a guest at Richmond great-house. The season's festivities had well begun, work in the sugar mills was entirely suspended, and (aside from the difficulties of securing a guide for the trip) the time was auspicious for an ascent of the Sou-

frière. The rains that always accompany the hurricane season—extending from July to November—had entirely ceased in the low lands, and the weather was serene.

I made a preliminary ascent and return one day to ascertain the necessary equipment for a prolonged stay on the summit, and two days afterward essayed the final journey. My host had provided a mule for me to ride and a black man as servant and burden bearer, while a small boy trotted alongside, laden with a huge hamper or Carib basket filled with good things to eat and drink, which he carried well balanced on his head.

We followed, first, the road along the shore, at the base of great cliffs and between clumps of gru-gru palms, then forded the turbulent river, which was entirely extinguished by the last eruption, finally arriving at the bed of the "dry-river," a channel filled with lava in the outpouring of 1812. The steep banks on either side this lava river were like hanging gardens of vines, palms, tree ferns, and wild plantains; but the broad, rocky beds were barren of all vegetation as well as without water. After passing through an attractive cane-field (which is now but an area of desolation) we reached the still more attractive foot-hills, where the real climb began, over a ridge dividing two beautiful valleys, at that time verdant and smiling, but now denuded of all vegetation, lava-choked and blasted by fiery gases.

Two hours' riding took me to the forest edge, well within which was a vast "gommier," locally known as the "maroon," or picnic, tree. Here custom ordained a halt for breakfast. My man unpacked the smaller hamper and spread out a fine repast which had been prepared in advance by the good people of Richmond. We were then in the "high-woods," or forest belt, that engirdles



all the hills of the island above an altitude of 1500 feet. The heat of the lowlands was here tempered by altitude and the cool breezes that played through the leafy canopy overhead, while the gloom beneath the great tree was enlivened by the play of humming-birds' wings. In the tree tops cooed the wood pigeons, from a distance came the subdued chatter of wild parrots.

Another mile of climbing over a steep but well-made trail took us along the back-bone of the ridge, well above the high-woods, where the surface was covered with a densely woven carpet of ferns and lycopodiums, and when we had reached an altitude of about 4000 feet wafts of sulphur fumes warned me that we were near the crater's edge. Here my mule balked violently, either at the narrow, tortuous trail ahead or the objectionable fumes of sulphur, and I had to dismount and proceed the rest of the way on foot.

Suddenly I came upon the crater, descending from the narrow brim upon which I stood like an amphitheater, nearly circular, and about a mile in diameter. It formed an almost perfect bowl, with sides, in places, almost perpendicular. There were two craters, in fact, divided by a jagged escarpment, one known as the "old," and the other, which is said to have been formed by the eruption of 1812, called the "new." It used to be a feat of venturesome sailors to swarm across the dividing wall, one of the famous personages to attempt it, in 1861, being the late Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha. The double crater was lowest at its northeast brim, over which, in the last eruption and in that of ninety years ago, poured the floods that devastated Morne Ronde.

I watched the placid lake during the greater part of a week, for in a scooped-out hole just under the dome-

shaped summit of the southern wall (by courtesy called a cave, though scarcely ten feet deep) I took up my abode. It was a crazy thing to do—granted; but I had an object in camping there which (at least at that time) seemed to me worthy the means I was compelled to adopt. In brief, the real object of my trip was not so much to study meteorological or other conditions on a volcano summit in the tropics, four thousand feet above the sea, as to obtain a new bird.

This was about the end of my first year in the West Indies, and I had already been fortunate enough to find several new species of birds. So, when I was told in Kingston, the capital of Saint Vincent, that there was a bird resident on the Soufrière which no man had ever seen, much less taken, alive or dead, I was inspired with the desire to get it. In my preliminary trip I had heard, but had not been able to find, the “mysterious Soufrière bird,” as it was called; hence the second ascent and the camp in the crater.

My black man, Toby, was late in arriving at the cave, burdened as he was with an enormous load of provisions, and the sun had set before our preparations were finished for the night. I had made many camps before, and by my direction Toby planted four small trees, which he hewed down with his cutlass, about eight feet apart, over the crotches of which I stretched a line and hung my hammock. A pole above served to spread a square of canvas, which was fastened at the corners to pegs driven into the soil, an army blanket was bedding, and an old overcoat served as a pillow.

As for Toby, he crouched in a sheltered corner of the cave, after we had munched sardines and crackers and drunk some coffee, and from the way he snored I fancy

he did not much concern himself as to his environment. He was a philosophic negro, and after passing the first night in some discomfort he next day built a shelter of sticks and balisier leaves, accepted, though not without protest, one of my blankets, and seemed perfectly content—or he was until he learned the object of my visit—the shooting of the Soufrière bird—when his belief in jombies and obeah asserted itself so strongly that it was with difficulty I persuaded him to remain until the end.

After three days had passed without even a glimpse of the “invisible bird,” and I had suffered considerably from bruises received by falling into pot-holes and ravines concealed by the dense matting of ferns and lycopodiums, Toby asserted “him was jombie-bud, sah; him bring yo’ bad luck, ef yo’ don’ watch out!”

I was then anxious to shoot the bird, if only to prove to Man Toby the fallibility of his argument, and at dawn of the fourth day, after passing a restless night drenched by the mists from the “trades,” I wandered out, determined to get the bird, if it lay in my power to do so. Fortune favored me, at least to the extent of granting my desire, and before ten o’clock I held in my hand the first bird of its kind ever seen and identified by man. I had brought it within range by a bird-call the Dominican Caribs had taught me, and which I had forgotten to use before on this trip. After the capture of the first bird I merely waded into the dense growth of ferns, keeping myself concealed, and called others of the species to me, procuring in this manner a sufficient number for my purpose.

The fifth morning of our stay dawned, like all the four preceding days, with the mountain and crater wrapped in mist. Having my birds to skin and notes to write up, I had concluded to refrain from hunting, especially as it

was Christmas morning, and we had a long afternoon journey to make down the windward coast to Carib land. Toby sat in the cave's mouth, gloomy and glowering. As I rolled out of my hammock, he said:

“ Massa, you know what day dis is? ”

“ Yes, Toby; it is Christmas, and a mighty gloomy one, too, it seems to me. ”

“ Dat am fac, massa. Ain' seen de sun good sense we come heah, fo' truf. But de sun am gwine ter shine, sah, 'bout noon. Now, me massa, me ax as 'tic'lar favah dat you go 'way about er houah while I gits de brekfus' ready. I'se gut a s'prise fo' you, sartin shuah. ”

Loath as I was to leave camp, I could not but see that Toby had some particular reason for desiring my absence a while, and so humored him. Taking my gun, I wandered away to the verge of the western crater, where I was given, as the sun dissolved the mists that hung about the mountain-top and over the valleys, what seemed to me then like a foretaste of heaven, in the view outspread below. The leeward coast was drawn out for miles, and looking over a vast expanse of verdure-clad hills and valleys, beyond the glittering waves of the Caribbean Sea, I saw the pointed Pitons of Saint Lucia, with a water-spout trailing along between the islands, connecting sea and sky.

When I returned, Toby had the cave newly swept and garnished, while on the balisier leaves spread upon the ground (which served us in lieu of table) was a Christmas breakfast fit for anyone to eat. As we were to be on the move in the afternoon, Toby had combined dinner and breakfast in one meal, so there was the inevitable “ guinea-bird, ” plump and browned to bursting, flanked by a small English plum-pudding and a pile of fruit. A



glass of java-plum wine stood by my plate (which was of tin, by the way, though it shone like silver), and a bottle of "shrub," a liquor distilled from rum and lime-juice, was conveniently at hand. In the background, standing beneath the over-hanging roof of our cave, was Toby, rubbing his hands with glee at sight of the astonishment depicted on my face.

"Um t'ought you'd be s'prised, me massa. Um done keep da guinea-bud an' da pudden secret all to mase'f. Massa Ebelyn an' missus done sen' 'em up wid da compliments ob de season, sah. Dey bery nice pussons down at de gret-house on Richmond 'state, sah."

"Indeed they are, Toby, and here's to their health," I said, taking up my glass. "Fill your dipper with shrub, my man, and we'll drink to them: Long life and prosperity for the generous people on the Richmond estate!"

After breakfast was over, the bird skins prepared, and notes written out, we broke camp in our cave on the crater, and shortly after noon took the trail for the windward coast and Carib country.

Christmas week was well along toward its ending when I descended the windward slopes of the Soufrière and sought the shores of Sandy Bay, where lived the last remnants of the Carib Indians. But the Christmas rejoicings were by no means over, for they last a fortnight in that favored land down near the equator; and, moreover, word had been sent and passed along that I was coming, so if necessary the festivities would have been protracted. For this was my second visit to the Caribs; and as on the first one I had remained for weeks, had hunted with them, fished with them, eaten at their tables, and, in fact, had been as good an Indian as I knew how to be, on this my second coming I was more than welcome.

I was met at the "dry-river" (a stream the bed of which had been filled with lava from the volcano in a previous eruption) by the sub-chief, old Rabacca, who conducted me to Overland, a village of mixed Indians and blacks, whence my trip to Sandy Bay was a continuous ovation. Rabacca was descended from an Indian giant, who, after killing many white men of the island more than a hundred years ago, was finally captured and gibbeted in chains, surviving a week in dreadful torment and dying with imprecations against the English on his shriveled lips. Rabacca, however, had inherited no animosity against the white man, his worst enemy being that West Indian substitute for "John Barleycorn," aguardiente, or native rum. When not in his cups Rabacca was the best worker on the windward sugar plantations, none other, be he white, red, or black, being his equal at loading a "moses boat" in the heavy surf that beats continuously on the island's east shore.

Rabacca conducted me to a little hut of reeds, wattled and thatched with palm leaves, where, after my hammock had been swung and my effects installed, he acted as master of ceremonies and reintroduced me to the old friends of many years ago. This done, I was invited to accompany the assembled Caribs to the banquet hall, a little distance away, where the feast was already set out that had been prepared against my arrival. The "hall," by the way, was merely a vast roof of palm thatch set upon stout poles, open on every side, shaded by palms, with entrancing views outspread around of smiling sea and gloomy, forest-clad mountain slopes. Beneath the thatch was a long table of rough boards, covered with plantain leaves, upon which were spread not only such products of land and sea as bounteous nature has lavished

upon dwellers in the tropics, but many viands imported from abroad. For instance, there was "tinned" mutton from London, genuine Southdown, flanked with heaps of breadfruit, roasted as well as boiled. And, by the way, if there is anything more palatable—at least to a hungry hunter—than boiled breadfruit with Southdown mutton and drawn butter, it is that same fruit similarly served after having been roasted in the ashes of a campfire.

As to farinaceous foods, the Caribs, as well as all the natives, revel in them, as well as in all kinds of tropical fruits; for what with yam, the eddoe, the banana and plantain, the cassava, arrowroot, etc., they can boast an inexhaustible supply. Their chief source of reliance, however, is the cassava, from the tubers of which they prepare "farine," or flour. In their raw state the tubers are exceedingly poisonous, but after they have been deprived of their outer cuticle, thoroughly washed and grated into farine, which is baked in thin cakes over a quick fire, they form a wholesome and nourishing food. The farine cakes are made about two feet in diameter, and after having been hung out in the air to dry they will keep a long time.

Besides the omnipresent cassava cakes, we had that day another product of the root, or rather an article in which it is the chief constituent, the renowned West Indian pepper-pot. Now, the genuine pepper-pot is something that must be made in tropical countries to be at its best, for its peculiar quality depends upon the "cassareep" that is in it, and this is derived from the juice of the cassava. The poisonous juice, its noxious principle dissipated by heat, forms when concentrated a preservative peculiar and powerful, which is the basis of the pepper-pot. After a certain quantity is placed in an earthen ves-

sel its antiseptic property serves to preserve fish, flesh, and vegetables for an indefinite period. As a consequence the pepper-pot jar is always at hand, into it being thrown the odds and ends of repasts—in fact, “any old thing” in the way of food. The Spaniards call the mess an “*olla podrida*,” literally “rotten pot,” but nevertheless the pepper-pot will continue to hold its own as a piquant comestible for a great many years to come.

The Caribs of St. Vincent are now extinct as a community, their settlements at Morne Ronde and Sandy Bay having been completely obliterated. Of all those who received me so hospitably, setting forth nearly all their substance at this Christmas dinner, not one remains alive to-day. They have perished from the earth, and everything they possessed has been utterly destroyed.

On that fateful 7th of May, 1902, when the crater was ablaze, torrents of boiling mud rolling down the sides of the Soufrière, and millions of stones hurtling through the air, the Caribs of both coasts were engaged in a race with Death—and Death won! Twenty-six were killed in a single house, one man was brained by a stone thrown by the volcano nine miles from the crater; hardly any Caribs within the “death zone” escaped alive, for the demon of the Soufrière seemed resolved upon their extermination.

I would there were space in which to mention all there is in Saint Vincent worthy description; then the remainder of this book would be devoted to that island. Its capital is Kingstown, with a normal population of five thousand, and picturesque dwellings scattered through groves of palms lined up around a curving beach. A fort is perched upon the northern promontory of Kingstown bay, six hundred feet above it, and valleys run back



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Government House and Botanic Garden

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into the hill country filled with all sorts of tropical trees. Near to town is the old botanic garden, in which are nutmegs and other spice trees which have been long in cultivation, for this is the oldest botanical station in the Lesser Antilles. There, also, is situated Government House, where, in the old times, I was a guest of good Governor Dundas, and where to-day the Administrator resides.

The peak of Morne Saint Andrews overlooks the town, and the mountain ridges run down the leeward coast, jutting out in promontories between which lie the most beautiful of valleys filled with sugar-cane and arrow-root plantations. One of them, Rutland Vale, has been bought by the Government with money contributed in England and the United States, and devoted to the refugees from Carib country, and others, who were domiciled there and assigned lands for cultivation. The land is rich, and the scenery beautiful, as I recall the estate in its prime, having been there once for a month while convalescing from a fever, the guest of a noble Scotchman, James Milne, who, with his good wife, has gone to join the great majority. Their graves are in the churchyard at Kingstown, but their blessed memory is alive in many hearts.

## CHAPTER XXV

### BARBADOS, GRENADA, AND TOBAGO

An island highly cultivated—A bit of Old England—Where people are poor, but happy—The Old Man of Africa—Rotating the seductive swizzle—B'ados once visited by George Washington on his only foreign voyage—Typical tropical homes abounding in hospitality—Bridgetown and Carlisle roadstead—Codrington College—The beautiful country districts—Grenada and Grenadines—The Carib's "jumping-off place"—Grenada's capital, Saint Georges—Its interior region of delights—Land of the "black proprietors," who are thrifty and thriving—Colonial officialdom in the islands—Fruits and spices—Tobago, the true Crusoe's Island, and facts to prove the same—Where Crusoe was wrecked—Brief mention of history—Perhaps the original home of tobacco—At least some people think so—A tropical island with fine forests—The author once camped in Tobago, à la Crusoe, and had adventures of the Crusonian kind—Tobago's scenery and products fit Defoe's wonderful story.

**N**EARLY one hundred miles to the windward of Saint Vincent lies the coralline Barbados, a flat but fascinating isle, almost one vast sea of sugar-cane, at least a hundred thousand of its 106,000 acres being in a high state of cultivation. Unlike the majority of the Lesser Antilles, Barbados is mainly level, without good harbors, and indefensible as a military station; but at the same time it is one of the most important of Great Britain's possessions in the Caribbean Sea. It has been English—and so thoroughly English that it seems like a bit of Old England taken out bodily



and dropped down into the Tropics—for nearly three hundred years, never having been taken by a foreign foe.

To the “windward” of Saint Vincent it is situated, the great aërial river called the “Trades” flowing westerly toward the former island; yet during the great eruptions from the Soufrière, in 1812 and 1902, it was covered with a thick layer of ashes from that volcano, and the atmosphere above it was obscured for days. These trade winds, blowing continuously from the eastward over a vast area of ocean, keep Barbados in good health all the time, and, in fact, are about the only medicine the poor people can afford. For, people *are* poor in Barbados, enduring a poverty such as is hardly known elsewhere, even though the island is rank with rum and sweet with sugar. There are quite 196,000 of them, nine-tenths of the number black or nearly so,—mostly so, in fact,—or about 1200 to the square mile. As the total area of the island comprises but 166 square miles, and is incapable of expansion, while the population goes on recklessly reproducing itself regardless of the consequences, there is certainly a reckoning coming in the future. The home government has sent out missionaries to labor with the inconsiderate blacks, but without avail; it has tried to get them to emigrate; but the proudest boast of the black Barbadian is that he *is* a “B’adian bawn an’ bred, sah,” and he chooses to continue in his native island. And while the birth-rate goes up, the great and only staple, sugar, persistently goes down, carrying wages along with it, until big, brawny blacks are going begging at twenty cents a day, for males, and half that wage for females.

Dear old Barbados, with its spread of goodly acres ringed around by the ever-smiling sea, its palm-dotted landscape, its wind-milled sugar buildings, using ancient

processes for extracting the sweets from cane; its old English society and system of education; its traditions of century-long loyalty to Britain; some time—let us hope a far time—it must succumb beneath its terrible burden. For, it cannot go on carrying that Old Man of Africa on its shoulders much longer; he is getting too ponderous; he is a dead weight that even a more prosperous colony might stagger under.

Still, the blacks of Barbados are, to all appearances, happy—probably because they have not brain enough to be otherwise. The “divine discontent” of the “Buckra man” has not yet found lodgment in their craniums. All classes there nobly cling to and support each other, realizing that when one goes, all go, to the bad together.

Living in the Tropics, where every sort of fruit necessary to man's subsistence can be raised with least labor, yet the natives are ever close to starvation. But they are not afraid of it, they laugh in its face—and fight. Yes, they fight—not among themselves, but the stranger coming to their shores. They fight and they beg, both lustily and without shame. I once saw a body of boatmen in Carlisle Bay fight over and drown a passenger whom they were trying to get into their respective boats. They overturned his boat, and while he and a woman drifted away from the steamer, wildly waving their hands and shouting for help, they continued their squabble, until and long after one of the two was drowned.

The stranger arriving in Bridgetown, capital and only port of Barbados, may consider himself fortunate if he be allowed to land without losing some portion of his raiment, or some article from his outfit. Once landed, however, he will desire to divest himself of what remains, for

the heat is something terrific, the sun is truly a "scorcher," in Bridgetown, and rules the day throughout. But there is the "ice house," a combination of boarding-house, hotel, and café, where things to eat may be had, but more especially things to drink. And it is at the ice house that bibulous man quenches his raging thirst, perhaps for the first time imbibes the seductive cocktail, which is concocted by experienced "druggists" after a recipe handed down from past generations. It is then stirred with a "swizzle," a pronged stick that fits into the bottom of a large tumbler, and is rotated rapidly between one's two hands. It is not solely the rotation of the stick that gives the renowned "swizzle" effect, but some saponaceous quality in the cambium layer of the wood. Whatever it is, it seems to "fill the bill" with the majority of experimenters, and generally one may find, among the effects of the returning voyager to the Antilles, a bunch of swizzle-sticks.

There is a real hotel out on the strand, where the smooth sand-beaches of Hastings invite the traveler to rest, and as the only railroad in the island affords a most attractive ride to the highlands of "Scotland," one should by all means include both in his itinerary.

There is one feature of Barbados that cannot be overlooked: its substantial air of permanent residence. The original settlers of B'ados were not all good men, nor were they great. Many of them, in fact, were sent out here much against their inclinations, and of some it may have been said, as of others that came to Saint Kitts: "They certainly are a parcel of as notorious villians as any transplanted this long tyme." But, when they got here, they stayed here, and their descendants after them, so that B'ados and its "Bims" are more in the nature of

permanencies than any other island and its people in the West Indies. The Badians used to claim that they had the longest pedigrees, and their cats the longest tails, of any existing people and cats whatever. This statement, however, must be taken on trust, for the world at large is not sufficiently interested to measure either the tails or the pedigrees.

One thing the Bims should be everlastingly proud of—though really they don't seem to be aware of the honor that was done them—is that the only foreign voyage ever taken by one George Washington was to their island of Barbados. He had not then become the Father of his Country, for he was only in his twentieth year when he and his brother Lawrence came to Barbados for the benefit of the latter's health. They were very well received by the landed proprietors, themselves belonging to that class, and many were the dinners and entertainments that George attended, and afterwards admiringly wrote of in his diary. Many, that is, in the short time at his disposal; for after he had been two weeks ashore—the voyage having consumed five weeks—he was taken down with the smallpox, the marks from which he carried all his life in that face which has become so familiar to all Americans.

Even at the time of Washington's visit the planters were becoming embarrassed, many of them being in debt, as he records in his journal. "How persons coming to estates of two, three, or four hundred acres can want, is to me most wonderful," he wrote at the time; but that was before he had himself entered into possession of Mount Vernon, which was bequeathed him by Lawrence, who died a few months after his return from Barbados.



It is the country region of Barbados, more than the town and city, that fascinates the visitor open to impressions of the sturdy home-life here implanted. It will be indeed a sad day for civilization, as well as for Barbados in particular, when the presumably inevitable breakup comes to pass. For here are homes, in every sense of the word they are homes, albeit tropical ones, which are the bulwarks of the white race and its religion. From Farley Hall, the Governor's residence, to the home of the planter of moderate income, there is a harmony in architecture as well as in hospitable sentiment, that suggests the "mother country." The churches and chapels of ease, the cemeteries, the parks and gardens, all carry out the suggestion of English influence in the higher aims of life. Then there is Codrington College. Have you ever seen it?—that seat of learning nearly two centuries old, with its environment of tropical trees, of palms holding their golden coronals a hundred feet aloft and circling about the great stone buildings?

When Mr. Froude was in Barbados he found the model habitation in the home of Sir Graham Briggs, "perhaps the most distinguished representative of the old Barbadian families"; a man of large fortune, whom it was my privilege to meet, one time, at Nevis, where I was his guest for a night and a day. Speaking of Sir Graham's magnificent house in the country, Mr. Froude says, after mentioning the rare and curious things there gathered together: "There had been fine culture in the West Indies when all these treasures were collected. The English settlers there, like the English in Ireland, had the taste of a grand race, and by-and-by we shall miss both of them when they are overwhelmed, as they are likely to be, in the revolutionary tide. Sir Graham was stem-

ming it to the best of his ability, and if he was to go under would go under like a gentleman.

“A dining room almost as large as the hall had been once the scene of hospitalities like those which are celebrated by Tom Cringle. A broad staircase led up from the hall to long galleries, out of which bedrooms opened, with cool, deep balconies and the universal green blinds. It was a palace with which Aladdin himself might have been satisfied, one of those which had stirred the envying admiration of foreign travelers in the last century; one of many then, now probably the last surviving representative of Anglo-West Indian civilization. Like other forms of human life, it has had its day and could not last forever. Something better may grow in the place of it, but also something worse may grow. The example of Haiti ought to suggest misgivings to the most ardent philo-negro enthusiast. . . . Hospitable, generous, splendid as was Sir Graham’s reception of me, it was nevertheless easy to see that the prospects of the island sat heavy upon him.”

Yet these two, both Sir Graham and his distinguished guest, have gone to join the silent host, while Barbados and its teeming population still exists—and casual visitors (like myself) still “point a moral and adorn a tale” with their prospective woes. “I’ve had a deal of trouble in my time,” mused the old man; “but most of it never happened!” Perhaps Barbados will never collide with its expected catastrophe; perhaps sugar will go up, and blacks will cease from troubling; so the end may never come! Let us hope so, for there is a great deal worth the while in isolated Barbados, and should it be wiped out a lamp of British tropical civilization would have been extinguished.

In the Carlisle roadstead of Bridgetown many ships assemble, at times, and it is one of the busiest places in the West Indies. As the rendezvous of the ships of the English Royal Mail, and a port-of-call for the Quebec and other lines, Bridgetown is easily accessible, as well as readily left when the time comes for departure.

Returning to our route of travel down the Caribbees, we shall find in the islands of Grenada and the Grenadines the exact antitheses of B'ados in every respect of surface, soil, and scenery. The Grenadines begin right at the door of Saint Vincent where it opens south, and stretch away for sixty miles or so, sometimes their tops above the water a few feet; sometimes, like Bequia and Carriacou, large, cultivable, and habitable. They are all interesting, of course; but what boots it if one cannot reach them without the discomforts of a sailing voyage, in stale and dirty droghers?

Best of all and richest of all is Grenada, southernmost of the volcanic Caribbees, an island whose history has been repeated in that of Dominica, Martinique, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent. Like the first named and the last two, Grenada is British, and has been so for many, many years. It is said to have been bought from the Caribs, originally, by the French, for two bottles of rum. After the rum was gone, although they had signed a formal treaty with the keen-witted Frenchmen, the Caribs made war to recover their insular paradise; but in the end were defeated and driven away, never to return. Their last "jumping-off place" is shown at the north end of the island, the "Morne des Sauteurs," or hill of the leapers, for here they leaped from a precipice into the sea and were drowned.

The capital of Grenada is Saint Georges, a town astride

a hog-backed peninsula, guarding one of the finest harbors in the chain, occupying the crater of a volcano considered extinct. Since the "bobbery" in Saint Vincent, however, no crater and no volcano is held to be more than quiescent; for the Soufrière had a big lake in its crater and yet blew it off into steam at the slightest provocation.

Saint Georges is picturesque, and is also the entrance gate to a country yet more so. Had I space, I might tell of an interior region of terrestrial delights: a crater with a blue lake in its bosom, only a few hours' ride from town; of forests haunted by the most gentlemanly and ladylike monkeys man ever hunted, who live at ease in the tree-tops, descending occasionally to deprive their common enemy of cacao, bananas, and sugar-cane, etc., etc. But the delights of Grenada are those of Saint Vincent and Dominica—plus the monkeys.

There is also one other attraction—to the native—which consists in the beautiful surplus the island treasury contains, at the end of each fiscal year! Grenada used to have a deficit, like all its sister islands; but some time ago it quietly abandoned the sugar cultivation, to which for many generations it had been chained, and began the culture of cacao, nutmegs, and all kinds of spices. It is now known as the island of black proprietors, for three-fourths its residents are individual owners of estates, small but profitable, from which they ship annually great quantities of special products. I will not give the statistics, because, in the first place, I abhor them, and in the second, I haven't got these handy. But no matter; none of my readers wants to go to Grenada and engage in cacao cultivation, and thus, perhaps, be the means of depriving some poor "black proprietor" of his daily chocolate. Truth to tell, though, there are worse forms of solitary



confinement than isolating one's self on a cacao plantation, amid scenery that is grand and decorated with all the "frills and fancy fixings" of the tropics. And Grenada is a tolerably healthy island, too, with streams of sweet water, forests of gum and liquid-amber, fairly good roads to the country districts; but with its prospects beclouded (for the white man) by that horde of "black proprietors."

It is the truth, and nobody can refute it, that the fairest islands in this archipelago—in fact, all the islands of the West Indies, south of Cuba—have been practically abandoned to the black man. But this island of Grenada has yet a white man at the helm—mark that!—and so long as he remains, there will be no danger of a lapse into conditions prevalent in Haiti. British officialdom in Grenada is not so expensive a luxury as in some other islands, though it is the seat of government of the so-styled Windward Islands, consisting of itself, Saint Vincent, and Saint Lucia. In Grenada the colonial secretary receives a salary of only \$3000, against \$4500 paid the administrator of Saint Vincent, and \$6500 paid the same official in Saint Lucia. There has been a mighty protest against the stipends paid these strangers in the West Indian islands, who are there only by courtesy of the natives, and of late years there has been shown a tendency to scaling down their salaries. Thus, the governor of Barbados gets only \$14,500 now, when a few years ago his salary was \$18,000, which is more than most of our ambassadors receive.

It may come as a surprise to some, and be resented by others, to be told that Robinson Crusoe, the hero of the great eighteenth-century story of adventure, never

saw the island of Juan Fernandez, on the coast of South America. Even were he real or fictional, the scene of his adventures was not there, but nearly forty degrees farther north, on an island in the West Indies. And had he lived till this time he might find himself a neighbor of ours, for his insular domain lies only five hundred miles to the southeast of our newly acquired tropical island, Puerto Rico.

Yes, the place where Defoe wrecked his hero, and where for twenty-five years or so he lived a solitary life, is the British island of Tobago, which lies about twenty miles from Trinidad, and one hundred from Barbados. Can I prove it? Most assuredly, and out of the narrative itself. If my readers have not forgotten their "Crusoe," and can remember the opening scenes of his adventures, they will recall that Robinson ran away to sea when he was quite young. After being wrecked on the coast of Africa and living for two years as a Moorish captive, he escaped and finally arrived off the coast of Brazil. A great gale overtook his vessel, and they were driven before its fury until—"the Storm abating a little, the Master made an Observation and found that he was in about eleven Degrees (11) of north Latitude, so that we were gotten beyond the coast of Guiana and beyond the river Amazonas, toward the river Oroonoque [Orinoco] commonly called the Great River."

This quotation from "Crusoe" shows the approximate latitude just before the wreck of his vessel, and totally precludes the supposition that he could by any means have doubled Cape Horn and reached the island of Juan Fernandez, forty degrees to the southward of his last observation.

There is no doubt whatever that Selkirk's island is the

real Juan Fernandez, for he was left there, did live there four years, was rescued by an English captain of repute. This much is authenticated; but further than this, and that perhaps his yarn suggested the Crusoe story, that island has no connection whatever with the real and genuine "Robinson Crusoe." And after all, what a ridiculous story it is. Defoe had never been at sea—at least, not as a sailor—and he makes poor old Robinson do all sorts of silly things. For instance, he first strips him of all clothing (at the time of the wreck) and then has him swim ashore with his pockets full of biscuits! He saves a chest full of fine clothing, yet weeps over the loss of all his clothes; Man Friday was well acquainted with the habits of bears, yet there never were bears in either island; he dresses the sweltering Robinson in garments of goatskin, in a tropical climate, where no clothes at all were preferable; he makes him carry a hand-saw, a broad-sword, two big guns, a hatchet, brace of pistols, etc., whenever he goes out of his cave, even to feed the goats; he has him climb up into a tree, "much like a Firr, but thorny," where he sits all night trembling for fear of wild beasts, when there was not a harmful creature on the island. But he is true to nature in at least one instance, when Robinson, real sailorman that he is, finding a jug of rum in the cabin, takes a "bigge, bigge Dram," with a capital D, to be sure.

Imprimis, then, that island is Tobago, and lies off the mouth of the Orinoco, within sight of Trinidad, as it lay when it got in the way of Crusoe's ship and brought him temporarily to grief. It was discovered by Columbus, in the year 1498, but was not inhabited then, and the first attempt at settlement, by white people from Barbados, was repulsed by Indians who had come over from Trini-

dad. For nearly two hundred years thereafter it was the sport of whatever nation chose to take a hand in its affairs. First the Dutch, then the French, then the English made settlements there, only to be driven out with slaughter.

In the year 1632, the date of Crusoe's birth, 200 people from Holland came here, but were driven away by the savages. In 1677 the Dutch again attempted to live there, but were set upon by the English under Sir Tobias Bridges, who took 400 prisoners. So it will be seen that the history of Tobago and probably its resources were well enough known at the time Defoe wrote "Crusoe," just prior to the year 1719. As late as 1684 it was uninhabited, and by treaty between France and England made a "neutral island," for Indian settlement, and to be visited by white men only for food and water. In fact, an ideal residence for a hero—a desolate but fertile island, teeming with all the bounties of nature, and upon which the foot of civilized man had left no impress.

To conclude these historical references of Tobago: the island in 1802 had a voice in the election of Bonaparte, and the same year was the residence of John Paul Jones, the gallant privateer. There is a dispute between philologists and botanists as to whether Tobago gave its name to tobacco, or whether it was derived from the weed itself. It has been said that Sir Walter Raleigh got his first seductive whiff of nicotiana out of dried leaves sent from Trinidad and obtained in Tobago; though the weed was introduced in Europe long before his time. The plant is a native in Tobago, and grows well there, as well as all the products of the tropics. The climate of the island is tropical, situated, as it is, but eleven degrees north of the equator, but not altogether healthy.



A mountainous and forest-covered island, its fertile soil is but partially cultivated, though there are many valleys covered with sugar-cane which yield prolifically. Tobago is about 114 square miles in area, with a total population of less than 18,000, most of the inhabitants being descendants of the freed negro slaves, and very few white people living here. There are but two towns on the island, the larger of the two, Scarborough, the capital, situated on a broad bay, having about a thousand inhabitants. There is no hotel here, and but an indifferent boarding house, where "all the luxuries of the season" are conspicuous by their absence.

Shall I produce further proof in support of my assertion that the real "Crusoe's Island" lies, not in the South Pacific, but in the Caribbean Sea, within six days' voyaging of New York? Well, then let me cite another, though modern, hero of literature, Charles Kingsley, who, in his "At Last, A Christmas in the West Indies," declares: "Crusoe's Island is almost certainly meant for Tobago; Man Friday had been stolen in Trinidad."

When I read that, I determined to go there myself. I took a copy of the book along, and not only covered the ground entirely, but actually lived as Crusoe lived two hundred years before. I had my hut by the seaside, my camp in the forest, my "poll parrot," and my hammock under the palms. I had everything, almost, that Crusoe had, and a great deal more than he; for much has been discovered since he flourished. I had no Man Friday, in Tobago; but, a few months before going there, I had lived with the Caribs of Dominica and Saint Vincent, the only descendants of the tribe to which he belonged.

Tobago is a beautiful island, with tropical forests, interesting birds, and a fine climate. The scenery almost

exactly fits the story, and I used my camera in obtaining mementos of my visit. It is comparatively accessible, and the language spoken there is our own. To reach it, take steamer for Barbados or Trinidad, and transfer to a smaller craft which plies among the islands. Its inhabitants, who are mostly of African descent, know nothing of Robinson Crusoe, probably owing to the fact that their ancestors were brought there long after he left the island.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### TRINIDAD, AND THE ISLANDS' RESOURCES

Southernmost of the West Indies—English for two hundred years—An expensive government—Port of Spain and the botanic gardens—Forestal attractions of Trinidad—Sir Walter Raleigh and the things he saw in Trinidad—The story he told Queen Elizabeth—Why he lost his head—Why he deserved his fate—His description of the great pitch lake—How he missed becoming a millionaire—Excursions in the Gulf of Paria—Islets and caves near the Boca—As to the future of the islands—Old and new times—A contrast—Coolies and John Crows—The numerous fruits of the West Indies—Where crown land can be obtained—Area and population of the West Indies.

**T**RINIDAD, an island lying between the tenth and eleventh degrees of north latitude, may be called the southernmost of the West Indies; but properly speaking, it really pertains to South America, for its physical characteristics, its fauna, and its flora are continental, and not insular. At some time, quite remote, it was probably cut off from the northeast coast of South America, from which it is now separated by two straits. These channels of turbulent waters were first seen by Columbus in 1498, when he was on his third voyage to America. He called the island Trinidad, after the holy Trinity, having made a vow previously to sighting its mountains that he would so name the next land he discovered.

Toward the end of that third voyage Columbus imagined himself drawing near some sub-tropical *inferno*, for he had sailed farther southward than on any previous voyage, and was within ten degrees or so of the equator. Reasoning from what he had read in the books of speculative philosophers, he expected to find all the vegetation parched by the heat, and the inhabitants of such lands as he hoped to discover black as jet, from continued exposure to a tropical sun. Reasoning thus, he was not alarmed at the heat which opened the seams of his ships and drank up the contents of his water-casks, for it was no more than he expected.

As he approached the land he argued, according to an old historian of his voyages: "The earth is not round, after the form of a ball or an apple, but rather shaped like a pear as it hangeth on the tree; and this region is that which possesseth the supereminent or highest part thereof, nearest unto heaven. Insomuch that he contended the earthly paradise to be situated in the tops of those three hills, which the watchman saw out of the topcastle of the ship; and the outrageous stream of fresh waters which did so violently issue out of the Gulf of Paria and strive so with the salt water, fell headlong from the summits of said mountains."

Columbus entered the Gulf of Paria, which lies between Trinidad and the mainland of South America, through the southern channel, which he named the *Boca del Serpiente*, or the Serpent's Mouth; and the northern exit of the gulf into the Caribbean Sea (which he reached after coasting the western shores of Trinidad) he called the *Boca del Drago*—Mouth of the Dragon—because both were filled with rushing, roaring waters that nearly overwhelmed his ships



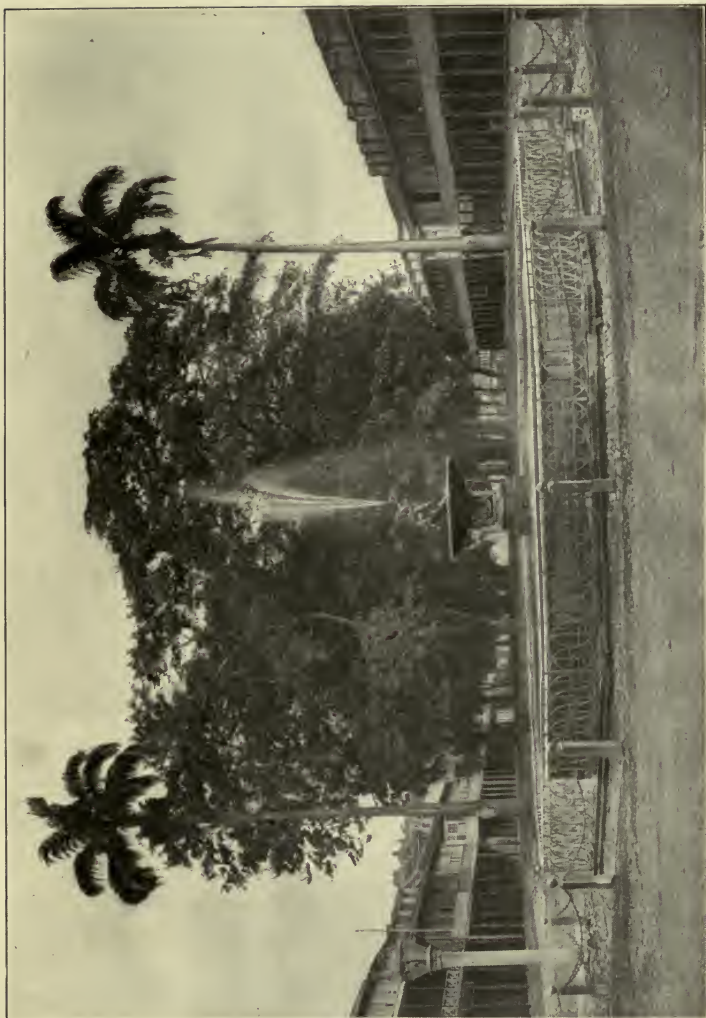
Ninety years elapsed before the Spaniards colonized Trinidad, and they held it two hundred years, or until it capitulated to the British under General Abercromby, in 1797. Ever since this last date it has been in British hands, having been confirmed to them by the treaty of Amiens, in 1802, and is now, as is well known, one of their most important possessions, with its commanding situation off the Orinoco's mouth, at the northeast tip of South America. Fifty-five miles in length by forty in breadth, with an area of about 1750 square miles, Trinidad is ten times as large as Barbados, yet has only eighty thousand more inhabitants. But much of its territory is mountainous, and some is swampy and malarious, unlike clean-skirted, breezy Barbados, with nearly all its acres available. About two hundred thousand acres are under cultivation; devoted mainly to sugar-cane, cacao, cocoanuts, spices, and tropical fruits in general, and as the island has an equatorial range of fruit and vegetable products, with rich soil in unlimited tracts, and a climate, in the highlands, not inimical to white people, it should prove attractive to settlers.

Great and varied as are the resources of Trinidad, yielding a revenue of nearly \$4,000,000 annually, the island does not progress as one might expect it to, for its expenditures more than keep pace with its income. This, however, is not to be wondered at, when its official list is scanned, with a governor at \$25,000 per annum, an attorney-general at \$7500, a colonial secretary and a director of public works at \$6000 each, and fifteen other public "servants" with salaries ranging from \$3000 to \$5000 apiece. Think of a relatively insignificant country like Trinidad, with less than half a million inhabitants, and most of these blacks, coolies, and colored people,

living from hand to mouth, paying their "governor" a salary half as large as that received by the President of the United States! And the Trinidadians wonder why they cannot save up something for a rainy day, and why their debt has continued to grow and grow, until it is now many million pounds!

When, only, as Mr. MacNish, of Jamaica, truly says, the British West Indians become wise enough to pay salaries commensurate with services rendered, and ship back to England their high-priced and purely ornamental officials, may they enter upon the paths of progress. But they cannot save anything from their revenues so long as the "wise sharps of Downing Street" have the handling of them. So long as there is a tempting revenue to exploit, like that of Trinidad, just so long will these non-working, non-producing, non-residents absorb the whole of it—and a little more.

The governor's residence, in the beautiful botanic garden, near Port of Spain, is not "half bad" for an exile from the mother country to be quartered in, with or without a salary attached, and the domiciles of the under officials are by far the best in the colony. That may not be saying too much, for Port of Spain is not the handsomest city in the universe, nor the most attractive. It has bravely wrestled with many natural disadvantages, including the shallow, filth-contaminated harbor, where steamers of any size have to anchor miles from the shore. It has been burned to the ground several times, but has not suffered from storms to any extent, being below the hurricane line. It need not be affirmed of Port of Spain that it is hot, perhaps unhealthy, for it stands with its feet in hot water all the time, in the northeastern bight of the great Gulf of Paria. It is a busy place withal, as well as



Fountain and Avenue, Port of Spain

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an ambitious one, forty steamers making calls here, going north among the islands and to the States, east to Venezuela, south to Orinoco towns, and to the chief ports of the continent. This British port is the first of importance near the Orinoco's many mouths, and draws from the great river stores of gold, hides, woods, and medicinal plants. There is a line direct from the United States, as well as another that calls here on the way to Demerara, while small steamers make the wonderful voyage up the Orinoco as far as navigation permits.

Hot, but not notoriously unhealthy, Port of Spain simmers calmly in the tropical sun without complaint, takes its siesta at the noon hours, wakes up toward evening, becoming as active as a temperature of eighty-five or ninety will permit, and settles down to silence only after the midnight hour. Its people are famous for their gambling propensities, horse-racing, and even athletic games, like cricket and base-ball. They like to picnic and pleasure-seek, in the beautiful forests back of town amid the mountains, where are many bowers of beauty and waterfalls uncounted.

But the forests of Trinidad are too vast for us to essay them. Canon Kingsley almost filled a book about them thirty years ago. Get it—"At Last, a Christmas in the West Indies"—and if you read it you will have acquired much information on tropic vegetation. Kingsley was an enthusiast, and that trip down the islands, with Trinidad as his principal tarrying-place, was his first to the tropics—also his last, more's the pity. The first time I looked upon Port of Spain was one Fourth of July, nine years after Kingsley's visit, and there were many people who remembered him and his exuberant enthusiasm; some few who took his criticisms much to heart, but none

who dissented from his estimate of Trinidad's attractions.

It would be unpardonable in me not to make mention of the greatest Englishman who preceded Kingsley to Trinidad, one Walter Raleigh, who first sailed into the Gulf of Paria in 1595; who, like Columbus, made note of the "oysters" growing on the mangrove trees, and, unlike Columbus, was kind to the natives whom he met ashore. He was then in search of El Dorado, the Gilded King, who was said to have his residence on an island far up the Orinoco; and though he did not find him, nor even catch a glimpse of his wonderful retreat, he informed Queen Elizabeth, on his return, that he not only had an interview with the Gilded One, but that he, at sight of her portrait, had fallen in a faint from sheer admiration. Inasmuch as the great Bess had "a face that would stop a clock," as the saying is, she swallowed the story entire, and richly rewarded Sir Walter for his fib. He was compelled to swallow it himself, twenty-two years later, when that "wise idiot," King James, sent him back to verify the yarn. But it stuck in his throat, and on his return the King felt constrained to cut off his head to get it out. At least, he deprived poor Sir Walter of his caput, ostensibly on account of having fought the Spaniards at Trinidad when it was more in accord with British policy at that moment to keep the peace.

To cruise in Spanish waters and invade a Spanish colony without getting into trouble was, as King James well knew, quite the impossible thing—and that is why he sent Sir Walter out to Trinidad on his second adventure. He lost his son, young Sir Walter, in the fight with the Spaniards; he lost his reputation, and finally he lost his head—all which must have been rather disquieting to

Sir Walter; and it must have convinced all who were cognizant of the facts that, in the words of our great professional humorist, "when in doubt one should always tell the truth."

Certain wealthy Americans should erect a monument to Raleigh, provided they be penetrated with the gratitude they should be penetrated with, because of his, the first, mention of that wonderful Pitch Lake which is to be found right where he discovered it more than three hundred years ago, at about sixty miles distance from the present Port of Spain. Many a description of it has been written since his was penned, but none, perhaps, that describe it better: "We came to anchor at Tierra de Bri, short of the Spanish Port some ten leagues. This is a piece of land some two leagues long and a league broad, all stone pitch or bitumen, which riseth out of the ground in little springs or fountains, and so, swimming a little way, it hardeneth in the air and covereth all the plain. There are also many springs of water, and in and among them many fish. . . . There is that abundance of stone pitch that all the ships of the world may therewith be laden from thence; and we made trial of it in trimming our ships to be most excellent good, and melted not with the sun as the pitch of Norway, and, therefore, for ships trading with the south parts very profitable."

Trinidad's deposit of asphalt has most assuredly proven very profitable to the syndicate that works it, paying the government \$60,000 per annum for the privilege, on a forty-years' lease; and that "all the ships of the world may therewith be laden from thence," is as true now as it was in good Sir Walter's time. Verily, it seemeth bottomless, he might have said, for the more the exploiters

take out of it the more they may, some occult force continually pressing it up from beneath. A million tons, in all probability, have been taken out of the "lake," and millions more remain.

Alas that Sir Walter told that fib about the Gilded One! for it profited him nothing to romance in that manner to a vain old spinster who, by accident, wore a crown. What opportunities, forsooth, he threw away! One of the first to exploit the Trinidad asphalt, and also first to smoke and appreciate tobacco, he should have formed a company, issued unlimited stock—and exploited the stockholders. He might thus have lived a life of ease, and died an honored millionaire; but, he never formed a trust! No wonder he lost his head. Some there be, in sooth, who think he richly deserved his fate for twice turning the cold shoulder to Dame Fortune.

A substance similar to the Trinidad "pitch" occurs in Barbados, where it is called "manjak"; but not in such quantities, being found in shallow beds only a few feet in width; while the lake at La Brea contains more than a hundred acres, and is practically bottomless. A small steamer runs down from Port of Spain once a day, and the Quebec Line excursionists are usually taken thither; but it should be stipulated that the trip be made so as to arrive at the landing-place early in the morning, as the heat of mid-day is something almost beyond belief. So, too, are the odors which greet one there, as well as the sights. In fact, the pitch lake must be regarded as a monstrosity, solely, and viewed in that light, one will be willing to endure discomforts in getting a glimpse of it.

Several interesting excursions offer from the Port, besides the trip to La Brea, as, for instance, to the islands in the Gulf, which are extremely picturesque, some of them



occupied as summer watering places, where the bathing, boating, and fishing are excellent. Then there is the wonderful cave at Huevos, the abode of the Guachero Bird, or Diablotin, a species of goatsucker, by some highly esteemed as a *bon bouche*, and which may be found by the thousands. It was first described, I think, by Humboldt, and is particularly mentioned by Kingsley, whose guide to the cave was yet living a few years ago. The islands near the Dragon's Mouth, like Monos and Huevos, are washed by the waves of swift currents, worn into caves and draped with vines, but have beaches of fine sand in cliff-sheltered bays.

Stretching away westward from the Boca may be seen the point of Paria, a bit of South America's mainland, beyond which are the once-famous Pearl Islands, Margarita and others, whence Vespucci and Ojeda, in 1499, and after them many other voyagers, drew large supplies of pearls, from which they made their fortunes. These islands are difficult to reach, and moreover can hardly be claimed as West Indian, since they are but detached portions of the great continent, at the northern coast of which our voyage comes to an end.

A final word as to the prospects, resources, the possible future, of these islands seems imperative in this connection. There is no denying the fact that, with the exception of Cuba and Puerto Rico, possibly of Trinidad, the West Indian islands have retrograded in the past century. They have grown poorer, the British islands especially, their population blacker, hence they are less desirable as places of residence for white folk. Time was when there were vast plantations of cane, which, converted into sugar at \$150 to \$200 per ton, and rum at \$1.50 to \$2.00

per gallon, supported in idleness a luxurious aristocracy, who lived in London or at the capitals of Europe and allowed their agents to manage their estates. So it fell out finally, after the slaves were freed, and after beet-sugar competition brought down the prices, that most of the sugar estates became the properties of those thrifty agents, or "attorneys"; but eventually even these sharp lawyers failed to make them pay.

Sugar is just as sweet, and rum as insidious, as ever; but demand has fallen with sharp competition. The importation of coolies to supply the places of lazy negroes has not proved entirely successful; though these former now swarm in Trinidad, and form a most picturesque element of the population. In fact, the coolies in the country and the "John Crow" scavengers at the Port add greatly to the attractive features of Trinidad. The first were imported, under contract, to work nine hours per day at tenpence *per diem*; the latter are natives and work for nothing; but both support themselves mainly on the refuse of the island.

In some of the islands the attention of proprietors has been turned from sugar-cane to the raising of fruits and the "small cultivations," such as cacao, bananas, nutmegs, and spices generally; limes, oranges, pine-apples, and arrow-root. It is in these "cultivations" that young men going to the islands with the intention of establishing homes therein will find their fortunes—if at all; and it will be through the failure of the islands to continue sources of revenue to their present possessors that they will consent to their passing into the hands of a contiguous country capable of making them tributary to her greatness, and at the same time raising them to prosperity.

All sorts of fruit—perhaps it is needless to mention—may be raised in those favored islands, as the grape, date, fig, orange, lime, lemon, sapadilla, pine-apple, shaddock, mango, cocoanut, citron, guava, plantain, banana, star-apple, pomegranate, plum, cherry, mammie, custard-apple, avocado pear, tamarind, mangosteen, chrimoya, water lemon, bread-fruit, sugar-apple, sour-sop, acajou,—their name is legion. At ordinary elevations all the vegetables, such as eddoes, yams, peas, parsnips, cabbage, beans, spinach, radish, egg-plant, beet, celery, maize, cassava, sweet potato, mountain cabbage (from the palm), pumpkin, melons, ochra, etc., etc. There are, in addition, many special products, like coffee, cacao, cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, vanilla, pimento, clove, aloes, arrow-root, bread-nut, tea, tobacco, etc., which either cannot be raised in the United States, or else only in certain restricted areas; though in the West Indies everywhere prevalent, according to altitude and the character of the soils.

Lands for settlement and cultivation are available in Cuba, Santo Domingo, nearly all British islands except Barbados, and in some few of the English isles crown lands may be obtained in small or large tracts, as in Dominica, Saint Vincent, Tobago, and Trinidad. Dominica has a particularly choice tract of land, about 60,000 acres, known as the Layou Flats. This has but recently been opened to settlement, by the construction of a good road from Roseau, and already quite a number of young Englishmen have availed themselves of the low price of ten shillings per acre to establish themselves as planters of limes, coffee, cacao, and tropical fruits in general.

It happens by a fortunate chance that both crown lands and good climate are found in Dominica, and also good government, while the population, though very dark com-

plexioned in the main, contains some very vigorous examples of Old England's best stock, who have been transplanted to a tropical clime, where they thrive to perfection.

Here are the islands of the West Indies, proper, with their respective areas and populations given approximately, from latest statistics:

	Area in square miles.	Popu- lation.
Cuba .....	45,872	1,573,800
Bahamas .....	5,450	66,400
Jamaica .....	4,000	740,000
Haiti .....	9,240	1,240,000
Puerto Rico.....	3,600	950,000
Santo Domingo.....	20,590	600,000
Danish West Indies—St. Thomas, Santa Cruz, and St. John.....	142	33,000
French Islands—Guadeloupe, Martinique, and smaller islands.....	1,100	360,000
Leeward Islands—Antigua, St. Kitts and Nevis, Montserrat, Virgin islands, Dominica .....	641	130,000
Windward Islands—St. Lucia, St. Vin- cent, Grenada, Grenadines.....	510	136,000
Barbados .....	166	198,000
Trinidad and Tobago.....	2,000	290,000
Dutch Islands—Curaçao, Saba, St. Eustatius .....	436	52,000

THE END



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