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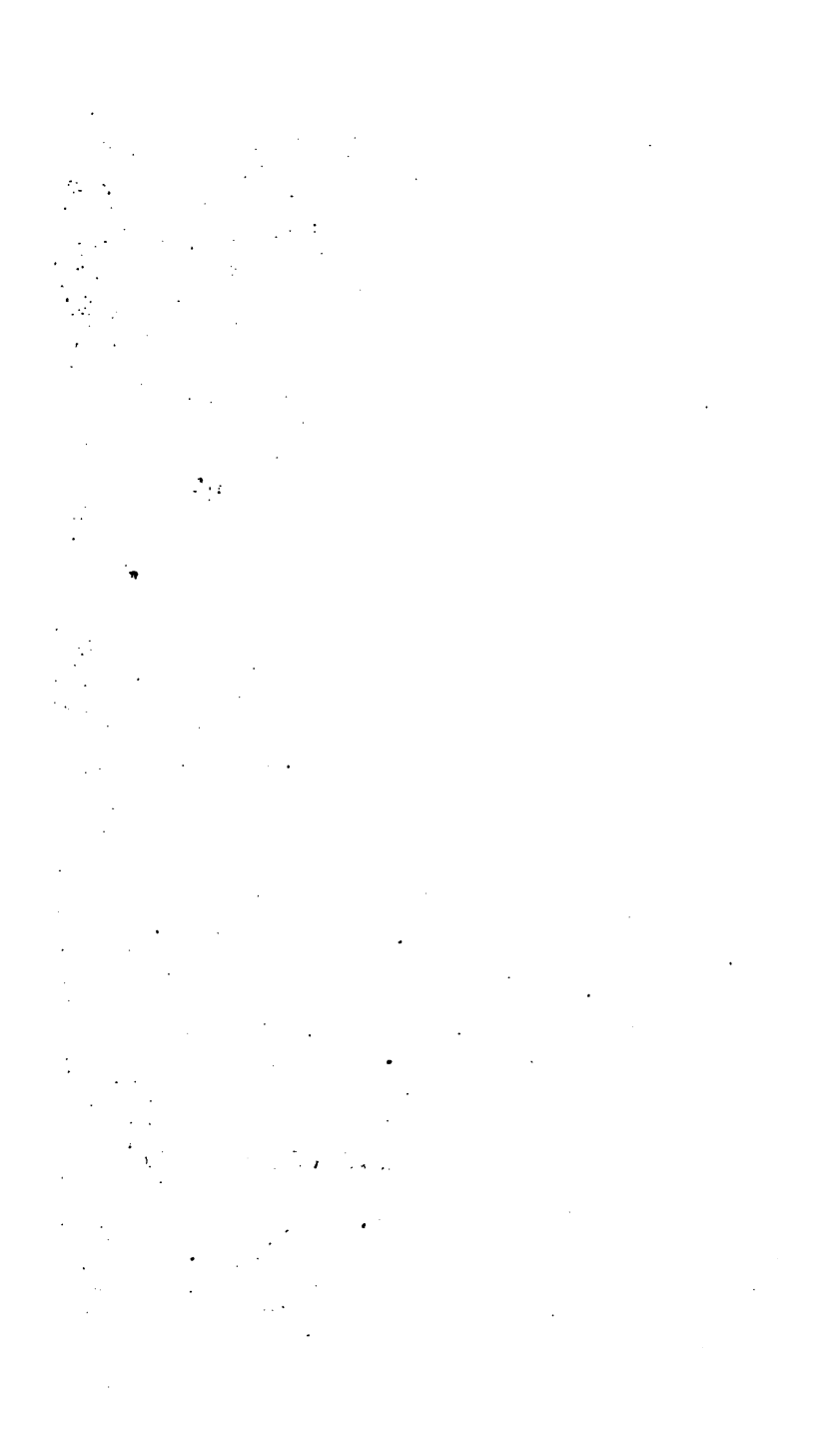


**SKETCHES**  
**OF**  
**B E R M U D A.**

---

Printed by W. WILCOCKSON, Whitefriars.







**SKETCHES**

OF

**B E R M U D A.**

BY

**SUSETTE HARRIET LLOYD.**

**WITH MAP AND PLATES.**

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TO  
THE HONOURABLE AND VENERABLE  
AUBREY GEORGE SPENCER,  
ARCHDEACON OF BERMUDA,  
THE FOLLOWING BRIEF SKETCHES,  
WRITTEN,  
WHILE ON A VISIT OF NEARLY TWO YEARS,  
AT HIS HOSPITABLE SEAT,  
ARE INSCRIBED  
BY HIS  
SINCERE AND FAITHFUL FRIEND,  
SUSETTE H. LLOYD.



## P R E F A C E.

---

THE recent changes which have taken place in the legal condition of the negroes in our West India colonies, having rendered any authentic information connected with the subject desirable at the present moment, it is hoped, that the following pages will not be deemed altogether uninteresting, especially since they refer to a country which, though the smallest of all our West India possessions, has attracted a greater degree of attention than others of larger extent, in consequence of its deviation from the emancipation bill, as passed by the mother country, and, with the single exception of Antigua, adopted generally by the colonies.

Bermuda, as if in contrition for the rigour which stamped her ancient slave laws, has been foremost to extirpate, without delay, every trace of slavery; and, prompted by a sense of the justice which she owed the negro, for the untold wrongs that for upwards of two centuries had been legally sanctioned against him, determined altogether to discard the system of apprenticeship, and at once to give entire and unconditional freedom to the whole body of slaves.

The local legislature was enabled to take so decisive a step with confidence and safety, partly because the mitigated form of slavery which prevailed here, could not generate such reciprocal feelings of acrimony or distrust as may have been awakened in the sugar colonies, and also because experience had proved, that a judicious system of moral and religious instruction had exercised a beneficial influ-



ence on the character and conduct of the slaves.

The Sketches which are here offered, make no pretension to research or laboured disquisition on the important and complicated question of slavery. The writer states facts simply, as they fell under her observation, without exaggeration of the evils inseparable from even the mildest form in which this odious system can be administered—without extenuation of any abuse of power in the master, or dereliction of duty in the slave.

The very scanty information we possess respecting these islands, is another motive which induces the author to publish the letters written to her friends in England, during her residence in Bermuda.

This little colony being, from its geographical situation, the key to our trans-

atlantic possessions, naturally acquires considerable importance, while the singularity of its formation, the beauty of its scenery, and the variety and interest of its natural productions, seem to entitle it to a more distinct notice than it has yet received in the casual allusions of different writers.

*London, June, 1835.*

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## SKETCHES OF BERMUDA.

### LETTER I.

At Sea, July 20th. 1832.

I write a few lines in the hope of meeting a vessel that you may have the satisfaction of crossing that I am become an excellent sailor. The fine weather has permitted us to enjoy the breeze, and I already begin to feel some beneficial influence—indeed I am very much stronger, and not in the least fatigued by sitting on deck for many hours together. The well-wishes and desires Mrs. Spence are quite well.—The boat is charming as ever, and we all rejoice in the bright sunny skies of these verdant islands.



## SKETCHES OF BERMUDA.

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### LETTER I.

At Sea. <sup>d</sup> July 20th, 1829.

I WRITE a few lines in the hope of meeting a vessel, that you may have the satisfaction of knowing that I am become an excellent sailor. The fine weather has permitted us to enjoy the fresh sea breezes, and I already begin to feel their beneficial influence—indeed I am very much stronger, and not in the least fatigued by walking on deck for many hours together. The archdeacon and dearest Mrs. Spencer are quite well,—Ella looks as charming as ever, and we all rejoice in the bright sunny skies of these mild latitudes.

It is now a month since we left the Isle of Wight, which the detention of the *Wanderer*, at Portsmouth, permitted us to visit for a day or two. I need not tell you how much we enjoyed the luxury of the shore, after having been tossed about in the Channel for a week. It is indeed a green spot to think upon, and the recollection brightens many a desponding hour when we are counting three knots—two knots. This has been the song ever since we passed the swell of the Bay of Biscay, where we encountered a very brisk gale, which lasted for some days. It seemed one succession of squalls, each more violent than that which had gone before. Our poor little bark pitched and tossed and groaned tremendously under her treble reefed topsails; the gallant-mast quivered, and the shrouds uttered a doleful music.

Having passed through my ordeal, I was able to be on deck, and enjoy this strife of the elements. We have nothing on land to compare with the awful grandeur and sublimity of a storm on the

ocean. The horizon was contracted, a rampart of waters hemmed us in on every side, and as the towering billows broke one over the other, and lifted us on the heaving swell, it almost seemed as if the parting wave must engulf us. The blackness which shrouded us above and around, was rendered still more gloomy by the contrast of the long ridges of white foam, which were tossed into the air, and then again dashed into the abyss, as the fury of the tempest caught up the huge waves, and piled them like mountains against the dark and threatening sky.

With so much of sublimity on deck, you cannot imagine anything more ludicrous than the contrast presented below—dead lights, flooded cabins, broken china, chairs and tables tumbling about in the wildest confusion.

Since the lulling of the gale we have had no wind whatever. For a whole week the ship has been lying in a dead calm—scarcely stirred except by the ocean currents, which are only carrying us further out of our course. To-

wards evening a slight rustling is generally perceptible; we fancy we descry in the horizon the swelling ripple, which is the harbinger of a breeze; we watch its approach with anxiety—a faint breathing of wind raises our hopes, but in the morning it again dies away, and the ship bends motionless over the blue mirror.

Do not, however, fancy that we are quite *ennuyés*—far from it. We are, in the first place, a most sociable circle, and happily know nothing of the larboard and starboard exclusiveness, which so often interrupts the harmony of a voyage. Our party, besides Archdeacon and Mrs. Spencer, Ella, Miss Parker, and myself, consists of Major and Mrs. Hutchison, with their little girl, the Rev. Robert Whitehead, Lieutenant Thompson of the 74th, and Lieutenant Young. We find ample amusement in reading till eight bells (12 o'clock), which is the signal for luncheon; and as the sea air will not suffer you to starve, we look forward to this summons with some sort of pleasurable expectancy.



Working, reading, and music, occupy the time till dinner, so that I really never feel the hours hang heavy on my hands; besides this, Major Hutchison, who is a great lover of natural history, is always providing some entertainment by drawing our attention to the many interesting objects that surround us. Then, too, we amuse ourselves with watching the hapless flying fish, which, in its endeavours to escape the pursuit of its relentless enemies, the dolphin and bonito, falls a prey to an equally persevering foe, the sea gull. But for its ambitious pectoral fins it might have been happy in at least one element, but now it seems to belong to neither.

The extravagant notions I had formed respecting these *volatile* fish have been somewhat sobered down. They are of the most delicate form, about the size of a herring; their colour is a beautiful dark blue, and their wings, which are rather longer than their body, are merely enlarged fins, of a very delicate, transparent substance, evidently not calculated for beating the air, but most

probably intended for steadying their flight, and supporting them when out of the water. They have none of the bold freedom of the bird in their motions, and rather jump than fly. Generally they go straight forward, sometimes merely touching the waves, at others rising considerably above the surface.

A few days ago one of my poor little friends, being hotly pursued by a dolphin and a gull, actually flew into my hands as I was watching it from the deck. It has the misfortune to be the favourite food of the dolphin and bonito, as well as of gannets, boobies, and sea gulls. It is, therefore, exposed to a double chase, and though we see the same thing over and over again, we still feel as much interested as we did the first time.

The other morning a large dolphin, which had been following the ship for some distance, and was sparkling most gloriously in the sun, suddenly detected a shoal of flying-fish rising from the sea at some distance: with the

rapidity of lightning he wheeled round, made one tremendous leap, and so timed his fall as to arrive fairly at the place where our little *protégés* were forced to drop into the sea to refresh their weary wing. A flight of sea gulls now joined in the pursuit; we gave up our friends for lost, when to our great joy we beheld them rising again, for they had merely skimmed the wave, and thus recruited, continued their flight. Their relentless foe pursued them with giant strides, now cutting the wave, which flashed and sparkled with the reflexion of his brilliant coat, and then giving one huge leap, which brought him up with his prey; they seemed conscious that escape was impossible, their flights became shorter and more flurried, while the dolphin, animated by the certain prospect of success, grew more vigorous in his bounds: exhausted they drooped their wing, and fell one by one into the jaws of the dolphin, or were snapped up by the vigilant gulls.

I wish that I could persuade myself that all

this was from mere sportiveness—that the poor little flying-fish was only rejoicing in the gladness of its heart, and leaping and diving from the pure delight of exerting those natural feelings of hilarity which a benevolent Creator has diffused universally throughout his works. That it frequently frolics in the sunshine, when neither dolphin nor booby are near, I freely believe; but that it is as frequently their victim seems equally certain.

The dolphin (*coryphæna hippurus*), with its splendid iridescent colours, is a beautiful object, sporting round the vessel. It varies from one to five and six feet in length, and justly merits its name of the dorado, for it is really one of the most magnificent creatures you can imagine. Its back is one sheet of pale green and silver, the tail and fins a bright gold colour, and its brilliant eye surrounded by radiant circles. Its exceeding beauty is heightened by the extraordinary swiftness and agility of its motions; it cuts the wave with inconceivable rapidity, and

when in pursuit of a shoal of flying fish, springs eight or ten yards at a considerable height above the surface.

The sailors say that the colours of the dolphin change and become more vivid as it expires. Though you know my repugnance to look upon this species of suffering, I resolved to ascertain the truth of the assertion ; and one day, when several had been caught, I went up to the place where they were lying. I could not, however, discover any sensible increase of brilliancy, unless, indeed, it might be the occasional flush produced by the heavings of the poor animal as it writhed in its last agonies.

In spite of the report of its poisonous qualities when cooked, I ventured, for the *éclat's* sake, and because I was really tired of sea-pie and twice-laid, to taste it ; and having never experienced any unpleasant effects, I would not advise any one to be deterred from enjoying the agreeable variety which this dish offers to the monotonous sea bill of fare. Indeed, I can eat

all things—even “*old wives!*” But lest you should fancy that I have become a cannibal, I ought to tell you that these are a small fish, a species of *Balistes*.

Then, too, I love to stand and look upon the everchanging play of light on the foaming waves, which, as they catch the sunbeams, now rise into brightly-tinted rainbows, and then again mingle in a shower of dazzling spray; to watch the sun leaving us to gladden another world; to see the vast ocean glittering in gold and purple, and, when all this brave show is over, to gaze upon the spangled heavens, while the waves around us are sparkling in brilliant phosphorescence.

The sailors have also caught a shark, which, with its inseparable companion, the sucking-fish, has afforded us considerable entertainment. I was much interested to see the porpoise (*delphinus phocaena*), the dolphin of the ancients, which constantly passes us in large numbers. As it seldom remains long above water, it is difficult to trace its form; but in its boundings and springs it often

assumes the graceful classic curve which painters and poets delight to give it.

Its figure, however, is by no means calculated to prepossess us in its favour. Like the rest of the whale kind, it has a large clumsy head, and a long pointed snout: and I cannot help wondering at the extraordinary predilection of the ancients for this animal. So far from retaining any claims to its former epithet of the *philanthropist*, its appearance, like that of "Mother Carey's Chickens," is now regarded by mariners as the precursor of a storm.

On coming on deck the first Sunday, I was agreeably surprised by the unusual air of comfort and cleanliness that pervaded every part. The sailors were attired in their holiday dress, and the officers and soldiers appeared in full uniform. All but the indispensable work of the ship was laid aside; and I noticed many quietly seated in a corner, reading their bible or prayer-book. I felt immediately, that though I had quitted the soil of England, I was still within the influence

of the religious habits and associations which characterize even those who have been brought up only in the outward observance of its sacred institutions. Part of the deck had been awned in with flags, and seats were arranged for divine service. The whole of the ship's company were present, and listened with the most serious attention to a beautiful discourse by the archdeacon on the Providence of God.

The weather was as delightful as we could desire; and though the ship was running ten knots an hour, its motion was so even that we were not once obliged to touch a rope. I do not think that I have ever been more struck with the impressive simplicity of our liturgy, its beautiful adaptation to all times, and feelings, and circumstances, and its almost irresistible tendency to make of one heart, and one mind, all whom its services unite, with one voice, to praise and glorify their Creator.

I am sure you will be pleased with the inclosed beautiful lines, the concluding stanzas of a poem



which Dr. Spencer composed last Sunday while walking on deck.

“ When ocean wears its halcyon hue,  
That matchless depth of native blue ;  
When wave on wave subsides to rest,  
Thy spirit broods upon its breast.

“ Or when those waves, convulsed and high,  
Urge stern revolt against the sky ;  
When winds and rain, in mingled might,  
More deeply cloud the frown of night ;

“ When masts are bow'd and sails are rent ;  
When skill and strength alike are spent ;  
When danger rears its giant form,  
Thy gracious Eye controls the storm.

“ Our hope, our comfort, staff and rod,  
Are but Thy presence, gracious God !  
In that confiding, safe we go,  
Nor dread the storm, nor fear the foe.”

July 23. Lat. 32° 33' N. Long. 37° 35' W.

A sail has just come in sight, and as we may possibly have an opportunity of communicating with her, I shall seal my despatches and commit them to her keeping. Perhaps they may reach you:—in that case you will, I dare say, be sur-

prised at the little progress we have made; and should this calm weather continue much longer, we shall, in all probability, be still eighteen or twenty days on the Atlantic. These mild Azorean breezes are quite delicious. You shall hear from me the instant we land; and

“ When the sun, with warmer smile,  
Shall light me to my destined isle,  
You shall have many a cowslip bell,  
Where Ariel slept, and many a shell  
In which the gentle spirit drew,  
From honey flowers, the morning dew.”

---

## LETTER II.

---

Saint George's, Bermuda. Aug. 16th.

\* \* \*. The almost incessant calms and light winds had protracted our voyage so much beyond the period usually calculated upon, that, being still at some distance from Bermuda, we were alarmed at the intelligence, that our stock of provisions was getting low:—one coop after another became tenantless, and soon the last duck was left quacking alone. But even this was not so terrible as the announcement, that we must for the future be put upon a short allowance of water. Never was I so forcibly impressed with the importance of this universal and kindly gift of nature, with which we are so lavishly provided. It pained me to see the precious beverage

doled out to the poor soldiers, who were parched with thirst beneath a burning sun and the thermometer at 85° below deck.

You may therefore picture to yourself the joy which animated every heart on board at the cry of land, from the mast-head, on the night of the 11th of August. For several evenings previous, we had regularly observed a very bright star rising just above the horizon, in the direction of Bermuda, which, after gladdening us for a short time with its cheering light, suddenly vanished in the ocean. Though we had been carried above a hundred miles to the south of Bermuda, we now stood direct in for it, and the captain's calculations tallied to a second.

We were thankful to be so near our destination; our only fear was lest we should be blown off the land by a sudden gale, as we were obliged to keep at a considerable distance, on account of the dangerous reefs which encircle these islands, and extend for many miles into the sea. I have been assured that there are few

places more difficult to make than the Bermudas. Being low (I do not think that the highest land rises above 250 feet), they cannot be discerned very far off, and some persons have sailed about for weeks in their vicinity without being able to find them. Many years ago, before they were quite so well known as they are now, their very existence was denied by a young lieutenant in the navy, who, having solicited an appointment, was ordered, as a trial of his seamanship, to proceed to the Bermudas. He returned without accomplishing his mission, declaring that he had three times sailed over the very spot on which they were supposed to lie.

You may conceive our anxiety to get a glimpse of this *terra incognita*. On ascending the deck early the next morning, I was however not a little disappointed to find it entirely shrouded from sight by a fine drizzling mist. Here and there only, where the land rose higher, or a white building lay more conspicuous, could my curiosity receive any gratification; but in a

short time the sun broke through the dark clouds, the veil was removed, and Bermuda, as if by magic, rose before us out of the blue ocean.

We enjoyed an uninterrupted view of the whole extent of its southern coast, with its gently rising hills of dark cedar, sprinkled with picturesque villas and cottages, and its many beautifully winding bays, some softly smiling in the sunshine, others meandering into the shore, and lost amid groups of mangroves, which overshadowed the banks; while in others the ocean was beating, with a wild and angry din, against the rocks, that lie piled in strange confusion along the shore. Some parts are very bold, and the more accessible points are defended by little forts and batteries. Between us and the land, as far as the eye could reach, arose a long, and, in some places, double line of coral reefs—nature's own imperishable ramparts, over which the waves dash with impetuous fury. Within the breakers the water was calm as that of a peaceful lake, and numerous little fishing-boats

gently gliding over the silver mirror, or resting in conscious security on its unruffled bosom, gave animation to the scene without disturbing its repose: the whole forcibly reminded me of those exquisite lines of Tassoni:—

“Tremolavano i rai del Sol nascente  
Sovra l'onde del mar purpuree e d'oro,  
E in veste di Zaffiro il ciel ridente  
Specchiar pareva le sue bellezze in loro ;  
D'Africa i venti fieri, e d'Oriente  
Sovra il letto del mar prendean ristoro ;  
E co' sospiri suoi soavi e lieti  
Sol Zeffiro increspava il lembo a Teti.”

Vessels generally make the land from the south, there being plenty of water close along the shore, from the south-west breaker to the entrance of St. George's Harbour.

Doubling the south-east extremity of the archipelago, we sailed toward the island of Saint George's, which commands the entrance of the only passage for large vessels. A negro pilot immediately came on board and took the direction of the ship. Without a skilful guide, it is

impossible for even the smallest vessels to enter the harbour of Bermuda, for the sunken rocks and shoals, which are thickly strewn in every direction, are known only to the native pilots; its numerous harbours, too, are very shallow in some places, and though there are many channels leading into them, there is only one passage for large ships into the principal anchorage. There is, indeed, an opening by Murray's anchorage, at the North Rock, which was used by men-of-war during the time of the American war, and was buoyed up by government; but being considered both difficult and dangerous, is now seldom used.

The harbour of Saint George's (when you are once safely within it) is said to be one of the finest in the world, and large enough to contain the whole British navy. It is completely land-locked, and well sheltered against the high winds which at times prevail here. The only difficulty attending vessels of large draught entering the harbour of St. George's, is a bar opposite the



mouth, which at low water is about nineteen feet in depth. The Wanderer, being a government vessel, was bound for the island of Ireland, and a small Bermudian boat was therefore despatched to bring us on shore.

A party of officers from the garrison came on board to welcome the new detachment, but being dressed in white nankeen and palmetto hats, I mistook them for officious custom-house officers, and was anticipating a general ransack, when I was agreeably undeceived, and assured that none of the dreaded *espions* would pay us a visit. Many little boats filled with negroes came around us, and brought the welcome intelligence that the islands were free from all disease.

It was not till we had sailed through the passage, that the romantic beauties of this isle-girt harbour burst upon our sight in all their peculiar loveliness. The ocean, bright and blue as heaven above, reflected on its crystal surface, with wonderful effect, the many elfin islets which lay cradled on its bosom, and as we were gliding

along, the rocks at times rose so near the surface, that the keel of our little bark almost seemed to touch them. The day being singularly calm and clear, we could plainly distinguish the coral bottom, which presented all the varied and beautiful images of the kaleidoscope. I was so much enchanted with this delicious sub-marine landscape, that I scarcely heeded the bright and laughing panorama which floated above it. Some of the islands are merely verdant plateaux, but they give beauty to the scene, particularly when enlivened by the graceful play of the little Bermudian cedar boats. The most considerable islands about the harbour, St. George's, David's, Smith's, and Longbird, form a nucleus, round which the smaller ones lie scattered.

We passed Buildings Bay, which tradition points out as the place where Sir George Somers built the vessels in which he sailed to Virginia after his shipwreck; also the forts and batteries of St. Catherine's, Cavendish, Queen's, Smith's, &c.

The town of St. George's has a pretty effect

as seen from the anchorage : an extended line of low houses, with gay verandahs, runs along the water-side ; here and there clumps of trees relieve the white cottages lying on the declivities of the hills, which rise behind the town, while the harbour presents a busy scene of shipping, soldiers, negroes, and sailors.

Not wishing to disembark at the public landing-place, we went on shore at a private wharf, and after having had nothing but a plank to walk on for two months, I was glad once again to place my feet on *terra firma*. The weather was oppressively hot, and not a cloud in the sky to mitigate the scorching rays of the sun ; the reflection, too, from the dazzling stone houses and sandy roads was distressing to the eye, and as we ascended the steep eminence leading to Rose Hill, the seat of Mr. William Tucker, I thought very feelingly of the spreading oaks and elms of England. We met groups of negroes, whose curiosity seemed to be not a little excited by the unexpected appearance of our party, but

when they recognised Mrs. Spencer, they all vied with each other in giving some news of her family. I was pleased with the apparent kindness of their dispositions; some were rather good-looking, and one or two were decked with a variety of trinkets: their head-dress struck me as picturesque, it consisted of a gaily-coloured handkerchief twisted into a turban, much after the fashion of the Savoyards.

We soon reached the summit, where we found ample compensation for our fatiguing walk, in the beautiful landscape which lay stretched at our feet. Many new islands now became visible, forming one continued undulation of hill and vale, clothed with cedar groves studded with neat and pretty-looking white cottages, some scattered along the margin of the water, others leaning against the sides of the hills, or perched on their summits, while here and there rose a little battery with its waving colours. But the sun is very hot, so you must accompany me into the cool verandah of this charming villa. Here

we enjoyed the sweet fragrance of the flowers, and the comfort of spacious apartments, after having been so long pent up in our narrow cabins. Mr. Tucker invited several of the inhabitants to meet the archdeacon at dinner. We had some fine melons, grapes, peaches, and bananas; the last I thought very pleasant, though I was told that few persons like them at first.

I had the pleasure of being introduced to the family of Nea, celebrated in Moore's Odes. Nea is no more, but she still lives in song, and in the fond recollection of her friends. From a likeness which I saw, I should judge her to have been a fine woman, but it is said that she was indebted for her fame less to her beauty, than to the fascination, and easy gracefulness of her manners. I saw, also, her eldest son, on whom Moore wrote the lines beginning, "The first ambrosial child of bliss." Notwithstanding all the poetry associated with her name, Nea is repre-

sented, by those who knew her, as having been domestic in her habits, and exemplary in the discharge of all the social duties.

It was full moon, and I shall never forget its soft beauty as it rose over St. David's. The little islands sleeping in its beams rose in tiers one beyond another, and the rippling waves which divided them looked like so many lines of silver. I was delighted to watch the white sails as they merged into light, and then again disappeared in shade. All was so still, so calm, broken only by the hum of human voices in the ships below, the shrill chirping of the cigala, and the distant sound of the bugle horn from the barrack hill. Our souls were filled with serene and happy thoughts; and when I looked upward, and saw the clear moon, I thought with the poet, that could I

— “ write my thoughts, my wishes there,  
How many a friend, whose careless eye,  
Now wanders o'er the starry sky,

Would gaze upon thy orb to meet  
The recollection kind and sweet,  
The reverie of fond regret,  
The promise never to forget ;  
And all my heart and soul would send,  
To many a dear-loved, distant friend."

Such was the first evening I spent in Bermuda.

Early the next morning we took a ramble to the north side of the island, where we saw the extensive tanks which have been erected for the supply of the navy; there being no natural springs in the islands, the rain water is carefully caught in large, deep reservoirs, which are closely covered in. There are two or three tanks near every house, with pipes conducting into them from different parts of the roof. They are built with an inclined top, so that the water runs down and is collected at the bottom, whence it flows into the tank. They are now said to be nearly dry, and people are going about begging for water from those who may be so fortunate as to have a larger supply. These cisterns are commonly built close up against the houses,

to catch the rain from the roofs, and pipes are conducted into them from every part. They are constructed of the stone called Bermuda rock, which, though extremely porous, becomes hard on exposure to the atmosphere, and when covered with lime or strong cement, is impervious to the rain or damp.

I was much pleased with our walk; some of the trees are really beautiful; the Arabian jessamine (*nyctanthes*) with its ample foliage and profusion of fragrant pink blossoms,—the splendid scarlet blossom of the Barbados flower-fence,—the graceful crown of the date palm,—the fantastic forms of the papaw with its leafy coronets,—the banana with its long shiny leaves, relieved each other in pleasing variety, and gave a tropical character to the scene.

On Sunday the 14th of August, I heard once again the sweet sound of the sabbath bell, and as the light breeze gently wafted its vibrations from the valley below, soothing thoughts of the home I had left stole over me. There was also



something unspeakably interesting in the reflection, that the glad tidings of the Gospel had been carried to these remote isles, and that, at this moment, thousands and tens of thousands of rejoicing beings were offering their tribute of grateful adoration to the Creator of the Universe.

There was an early service for the garrison, and afterwards one for the inhabitants. The parish church of Saint George's has a very pretty appearance as you approach it through the churchyard. There are some fine spreading cedars, and the narrow pathway which winds among the tombs, is planted with the same tree, which here, from association, acquires all the melancholy interest of the cypress or the yew. A country churchyard is at all times an object of interest, with its many mingling graves of the bemoaned and the mourner—of the aged pilgrim and the infant of a day; its holy texts, and the sacred communion between the living and the dead: the rich and the poor meet together—but

I cannot, in this instance, add—the bond and the free, for here, as in the other West India islands, where slavery draws the broad line of demarcation, they are interred in distinct burying grounds.

The church was well attended. The negroes and coloured people occupied a place by themselves in the gallery, and I was sorry to observe the extraordinary vanity of dress displayed by some of the black women. I am told that they will make any sacrifice to gratify their love of finery. There is a good organ, which was well played, and some of the ladies who accompanied it had very sweet voices. There are several good monuments; one or two by Bacon.

I know you are looking for my opinion respecting the condition of the slaves; but I do not as yet feel competent to judge. I will, therefore, defer it till I get into the country, when I shall have better opportunities of becoming acquainted with the state of society.

The Bermudians are particularly fond of boating, and I have several times enjoyed a sail

in the harbour. It is a diversion, however, which is occasionally attended with danger; for in one of those sudden squalls which are common among the islands, the vessel often becomes quite unmanageable, and accidents frequently occur. The boats are built of cedar, and sail very close to the wind.

You will receive my next letter from Roselands\*, the Archdeacon's villa, as we are going to leave our kind friends in Saint George's this week.

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\* This has since been altered into Woodstock.

### LETTER III.

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Roselands, August 27th.

ON leaving Saint George's we sailed through the ferry along the northern coast, but were unable to enjoy even a glimpse of the country; for a heavy squall came on, which completely veiled every thing, and obliged us to take refuge in the cabin. We landed at Spanish Point and proceeded to Mount Langton, the government house, where we rested after our little voyage. The house stands in a fine commanding situation, on one side overlooking the Atlantic, and on the other the low vallies and swelling hills of Pembroke. The house itself was very desolate, owing, I suppose, to the absence of the governor,

Sir Hilgrove Turner, and his family, at Halifax.

I saw here the model of a floating bridge, proposed to be constructed to facilitate the conveyance of carriages and horses across the ferry between Saint George's, and what, by way of distinction, is styled the Continent, being by far the largest portion of connected land. This is called Bermuda, and forms the whole of the s. and s.w. coast. It is divided into the tribes or parishes of Devonshire, or Brackish-pond; Pembroke, or Spanish-point; Pagets, or Crow-lane; Warwick, or Hearne Bay; Somerset, or Sandys; Southampton, or Portroyal; Smith's, or Harris' Bay; and Hamilton, or Bailey's Bay; for all the parishes have two names, an ancient and a modern; and they are called indifferently by either.

The archdeacon's residence is situated in Paget's; and as you will receive many letters written beneath its friendly roof, you will like a description of it. Well, then, picture to yourself a very pretty cottage, which, like most of the Bermudian houses, has only one story, and

a verandah running along the whole front, covered with multiflora roses, noyau, and other creepers. It lies on a smooth, level plain, in the midst of a valley, shut in on the north-east and west, by hills covered with cedar, and sprinkled with numerous white-roofed houses, which have an exceedingly pretty effect when seen at a distance, rising from amid groves of cedar, with here and there a bright orange, or waving palmetto. The foreground is relieved by magnificent orange and shaddock trees, covered with golden fruit, and scenting the air with their rich perfume. The lawn is skirted with hedges of geranium, the pomegranate with its splendid scarlet fruit, the classic olive, oleander, coral trees, pride of India, and a variety of flowering shrubs.

Towards the south, the house commands an extensive view of the Atlantic, whose blue waters wash the rocky shore which bounds the lawn. It is pleasing to watch, from the terrace, through vistas of cedars, vaulted like gothic arches, the

spreading sails of a fine man-of-war proudly riding the waves.

In my next letter I will give you a few particulars relative to Bermuda, which I have been at some pains to collect from various authentic sources.

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## LETTER IV.

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Roselands, September.

“Where the remote Bermudas ride  
In the ocean’s bosom.”

THIS notice of the Bermudas by the famous old poet Andrew Marvel, and the appropriate characteristic of the “still-vexed Bermoothes” given them by Shakspeare in the *Tempest*, together with Waller’s description of the Summer Isles, prove that they must have become well known soon after their discovery. They lie in 32 20’ N. lat. 64° 50’ W. long., and are between six and seven hundred miles from Cape Hatteras, in North Carolina, the nearest point of land.

They form an isolated archipelago, which rises like a speck in the Atlantic, and are the work of



that industrious little island-building zoophyte the coral worm, which, by its unwearied perseverance, has accomplished works of such vast magnitude. Above this foundation lies a thick stratum of sand and shells, which, by the operation of the air, forms the indurated sandstone of which the surface of the islands is chiefly composed. They are encircled by an elliptical belt of coral reefs, which at its inner circumference measures about twenty-seven miles at the largest axis, and fourteen at the smallest. It is said that there are as many islands as days in the year, but of these the greater number are so small that they have neither name nor inhabitants.

The principal are St. George's, the chief military station of the colony, and formerly the capital; Bermuda, or the main land, the present seat of government; Somerset, and Ireland, in which last are the dock-yards, convict-ships, &c. These, with very little interruption, form a continued chain which runs from north-east to south-west, in the outline of a shepherd's crook, the

convex side of which lies towards the s. w. and w. The whole occupies a space of fifteen to twenty miles in a straight line, though it is considerably more measured round the curve. St. George's is three miles and a half in length, Bermuda fifteen, Somerset three, and Ireland three. Its breadth in the widest part (the western extremity of Devonshire) is two miles, and in the narrowest not above one-eighth of a mile. Of this chain, St. George's lies at the eastern, and Somerset and Ireland at the western extremities.

The minor islands are St. David's, Cooper's, Smith's, Longbird, Nonesuch, &c., and everywhere form numerous picturesque creeks and bays, several of which are very large and deep, such as the Great Sound, Castle Harbour, Harrington Sound, &c. Some are from ten to fifteen miles in circumference, and give to the *tout ensemble* very much the character of our lake scenery.

The northern coast, except at the dangerous passage by the north rock, is rendered com-

pletely impregnable by the heavy surf and the long chain of breakers, which extend above ten miles from the shore\*. The channel leading to St. George's is, as I have already told you, very narrow and intricate, and flanked by many strong and well-defended batteries. The south coast is protected in the same manner by a double zone of coral reefs.

They are called Bermuda from their original discoverer, Juan Bermudez, who saw them about the year 1527; some say that they received this name from the great number of black hogs which were found upon them—Bermudas, in the old Spanish language, signifying black hog. This derivation is certainly incorrect, since the fact upon which it is founded is erroneous, for there was not a single hog upon these islands when the Spaniards first visited them.

\* These rocks rise but little above the surface of the water, with the exception of one called the North Rock, which, from its conspicuous situation, serves as a mark for ships.

The earliest authentic account which we possess respecting Bermuda, is that of Henry May, the first Englishman known to have been here. He was cast ashore on the north-west end of Bermuda, in the month of December, 1593, while on a voyage from Laguna in Hispaniola, to England, and out of a crew of fifty men, only twenty-six escaped to land. They found several wrecks, which, from some inscriptions, proved to be those of unfortunate Spanish, Dutch, and French vessels. They lived here for five months, subsisting chiefly on turtle, and bread prepared from the palmetto berry. Immediately on their arrival, they commenced building a bark of 80 tons, and fitted it out with stores which they had saved from the wreck, and arrived in England in 1594.

For their name of Somers' isles, the Bermudas are indebted to Sir George Somers, who, while proceeding to Virginia, of which he was appointed deputy-governor under Lord Delaware, was separated in a storm from the rest of the fleet,

and with the two other deputy-governors, Sir Francis Gates and Capt. Newport, was wrecked upon them on the 11th of August, 1609. Fortunately no lives were lost, and they were able to save a considerable part of their stores and provisions. He took possession of the islands for the crown of England, and such was the spontaneous bounty of nature, that one hundred and fifty people subsisted in abundance for ten months on an uninhabited island. The number of birds was so great, that we hear of a thousand being killed with sticks in a couple of hours by two or three men. They likewise found various kinds of fruits, such as mulberries, &c.

Eager, however, to escape from this *ultima thule*, where they were cut off from all intercourse with the rest of the world, they built two small cedar vessels, in which there was not any iron, except a small bolt in the keel, and in these they embarked to rejoin their friends in Virginia. On arriving there, they found the government in considerable confusion, and the

colony much embarrassed for want of live stock. To obtain a supply, the admiral, Sir George Somers, was dispatched to Bermuda. After much difficulty, he once more found it, but soon after his arrival, worn out with his many dangers and fatigues, he expired here at an advanced age.

He charged his men to proceed direct to Virginia, for the relief of the suffering colony; but wishing to return to their native country, they sailed for England, and arrived at Whitchurch, in Dorsetshire. They had on board the body of Sir George Somers, having left his heart in Bermuda. Another account says that his heart was conveyed home in an urn, and his body interred in Bermuda. Twelve years afterwards Captain Butler erected a monument over his remains, which is still preserved in St. George's church.

These men, on their return, gave so favourable an account of Bermuda to the Virginia company, that they entered into a negotiation,

and sold the islands to one hundred and twenty persons, who obtained a charter from King James, confirming their title. Among these proprietors were the Earls of Warwick and Pembroke, Lord Paget, and several other noblemen and gentlemen, some of whom are supposed to have been here.

During Sir George Somers' first stay, he left behind him two men who had been guilty of some heavy crime; they were still here at his return, and had built a hut of the large, fan-shaped leaves of the palmetto in St. George's. They made various excursions to the different islands, and on one of these occasions found among the rocks the largest piece of amber then known, weighing upwards of eighty pounds, besides many smaller specimens. This discovery so elated them, that they resolved to leave Bermuda and repair to some place where this treasure could be turned to account. They accordingly built a large boat, but they were defeated

in their purpose by the unexpected appearance of the brother of Sir George Somers, who came with a little colony of sixty persons to form a settlement in 1611.

The first governor was Mr. Moore, who selected a plain in St. George's to erect his palmetto hut, and the rest of the adventurers following his example, it soon became a considerable town. In 1614 he defeated a plan formed by the Spaniards for making themselves masters of Bermuda, and they never after made a similar attempt.

He was succeeded by Capt. Daniel Tucker, who established a regular form of government, laid out plantations, and considerably increased the exportations to England. He also organised a militia, and put the islands into a posture of defence, in the event of any hostile attack.

The strictness of his administration, however, was obnoxious to some; and five men, more daring than the rest, formed a desperate plan for leaving



the country; and, knowing that the governor would not give his consent to their departure, they had recourse to stratagem.

Having learnt that Captain Tucker had a great desire to fish out at sea, they offered to build him a large boat, properly fitted up, to keep out in stormy weather. The governor consented, and they began building in a remote spot, and laboured with so much diligence, that when he sent to enquire what progress they had made, neither the boat nor the builders were to be found. All that he could learn was, that having finished their boat the night before, they went to sea to try how it would sail.

They had obtained a compass, and with this guide resolved to cross the sea to England—a distance of above 3000 miles. They had fair weather for twenty-one days, when they encountered a violent storm, which drove them considerably out of their course. The wind soon, however, became favourable, and they proceeded cheerfully on their toilsome passage.

Having met with a French privateer, they went on board to beg some relief; but the ungenerous crew, instead of helping these gallant men, plundered them of their little all, even taking away the compass. In this miserable plight they re-embarked in their frail boat—their strength was almost exhausted—their provisions spent—their fire-wood gone—when, in the very hour that in their despair they expected to perish, they descried land in the horizon. Their drooping spirits revived, they exerted their remaining strength, and soon reached the coast of Ireland. The voyage lasted forty-two days, and of these five men only one was a regular seaman.

Having received a large accession of settlers, the colony began to flourish, and during the times of the civil wars in England, many persons, who were banished by the ruling party, sought an asylum from the tumults of the world in these secluded islands.

The memory of several of these exiles is still

preserved here ; among others, that of Edmund Waller, the author of the " Battle of the Summer Isles." Some persons have doubted the reality of his visit, but his descriptions are so local that one would almost, from that circumstance alone, be inclined to believe that he was actually a sojourner here \*. Waller lays the scene of his battle

" Within the bounds of lordly Warwick's share ;"

but tradition assigns this honour to a little cove, called Fort Bay, in the adjoining parish of Pagets.

It is one of the most romantic little bays in the world. Its entrance is defended by a small battery, built on an eminence, overgrown with

\* Mr. Moore, too, is of opinion that the poet visited Bermuda ; and in his farewell he says—

" May Spring to eternity hallow the shade,  
Where Ariel has warbled, and Waller has stray'd."

And some persons maintain that his celebrated Saccharissa was a Bermudian lady—indeed there is an old lady here who boasts of being her descendant. What would the haughty Dorothy of Sunderland have said to such claims ?

stunted cedar and wild maritime plants—but methinks that it scarcely stood in need of such an artificial defence, for nature herself has fortified it with strong walls and ramparts, over which the waves rush in torrents. Within the little nook all is serene and unruffled; its sleeping quiet only now and then interrupted by the gentle ripple of a sunny wave, or the splashing of the fisherman's oar. It is quite a haven of rest, and whenever I feel my own mind agitated, I go to my little bay, shut out from the world and all its busy scenes, and think of that shore whose still waters no storm can ruffle.

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## LETTER V.

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Roselands. October 5th.

YESTERDAY I had the pleasure to receive your kind letters of the 4th of August. I had been anxiously looking for the packet, and when on our return from church we heard that the telegraph had announced the arrival of the mail, we were so eager for our letters that we drove to Hamilton to enjoy the pleasure of having them an hour earlier.

Our Bermuda letters always go round by way of Halifax, and it is not a little singular that the packet generally makes its appearance on a Sunday morning. As it remains here only forty-eight hours, it behoves us to be very expeditious in answering our despatches, so that you must not expect a long letter on this occasion.

I do not find the heat so oppressive as in St. George's, nor is the glare of the white houses and roads so trying to the eyes; but, what is infinitely worse, thousands of mosquitos swarm and buzz all round me. The first night of my arrival in the country, the negro servant omitted to let down the mosquito net, and when I awoke in the morning, my face was frightfully swollen by the bite of these ravenous tormentors. They are particularly fond of stinging the feet and ancles, and mine were so extremely painful that for a whole week I was unable to leave the house.

An old African woman, in pity to my sufferings, recommended me to lay a large branch of the sage-bush near me; "They'll all settle on it, Misse," said she, "and never think of coming to you." How did I rue the advice thus kindly meant, for its only effect was to attract them in swarms. Even at this moment I am writing with an oleander branch in my hand, to keep at bay the mosquitos, which are

humming and flitting in whirling mazes, and seem to take a malicious pleasure in the torment they inflict. You can form no idea of the multitudes which hover in the vicinity of sofas or lounging seats, where they will not permit you to enjoy a moment's peace.

They may indeed be excluded at night by means of the mosquito net; but negro servants are not very particular, and unless the net has been well brushed, one more determined than the rest will contrive to elude detection—all your endeavours to catch him are in vain—he keeps singing and buzzing in some nook, till, quite tired out, you give up the pursuit, and suffer him to enjoy his feast.

Roselands is particularly infested with them, which I imagine is owing to the great quantity of flowers that grow about the verandah and gardens. The Bermudians seem scarcely to suffer from their bite, and they endeavour to reconcile me to this painful annoyance by assuring me that if I stay here another summer I

shall not mind them. The negroes say, that it is the "roast beef English blood" which makes the mosquito like us so much on our first arrival. I find bay rum the only application which affords relief.

The cockroaches (*blatta Americana*) are very numerous, and of extraordinary size: they have also a highly offensive odour, which is rendered still more disgusting by the close contact into which they come with you. They are particularly troublesome in the evening, when they fly about the room, dash with much violence against the lamps and candle-shades, flap your face with their cold disagreeable wings, and crawl upon your dress, from which it is difficult to shake them off. They are also destructive to furniture, and have already taken a mighty fancy to the binding of some of my books: I have therefore taken the precaution of laying among them strips of russia leather, which the cockroach shuns.

Ants swarm in millions. Every article of



food must be placed out of their reach, and put in vessels insulated in water, though sometimes they will even contrive to pass over this. They place regular sentinels, which are always on the look out for the fall of a crumb, a piece of sugar, or, above all, the demise of a cockroach. Immediately on the occurrence of such an event, they carefully reconnoitre the spot, and if several ants are present, one or two are despatched to the head-quarters; they return, in a short time, at the head of the little army, which is divided into companies, each preceded by an ant seven times the size of the rest, which, by way of pre-eminence, is here called the captain.

The ants never stop to devour their prey; in an instant they surround and cover it; some get underneath, some on the top, while others again help to drag it forwards by pushing along the sides.

It frequently happens that there are half a dozen cockroaches on the scene of action; in this case their generalship is really amusing; the cap-

tains, after a sort of consultation, (which seems to consist in an uncommon rapidity of motion) divide their forces, and if they are sufficiently strong, the whole body moves off in regular battalions, one never interfering with the other, and each under its respective leaders. If, however, their numbers are too small, they combine their forces, and return, after having dragged off their first victim, until the ground is cleared.

I have stood for hours admiring the intelligence which subsists among the whole party—their extraordinary dexterity—the knowing way in which they commence operations, and the celerity and union of strength and efforts by which they convey a body above a thousand times their own size, to a distance of many yards. This, I beg to assure you, is no poetry. I have never seen ants attack any insect while yet alive. They are very much like our English ants in appearance, only that they are a little larger.

Another species of annoyance are the enormous spiders which crawl about on the roofs and

floors: some are five or six inches in length, including their long sprawling legs. I am sometimes amused by hearing the negroes call them triangles, a corruption I suppose of Tarantula, to which they may have heard them compared. I am told, that if irritated, they will bite very sharply, otherwise they are familiar enough, and one kind is so beautiful—a bright yellow with brown spots—as to take away all feeling of disgust.

I have just been superintending the selection and packing of some fine specimens of cedar for Mr. Lambert, of which lieutenant Young has obligingly offered to take every care.

The Bermuda cedar (*Juniperus Bermudiana*), resembling the cypress of Italy, is I believe celebrated all over the world. It is confined to these islands, and gives a peculiar and decided character to the landscape, for it forms entire groves, and clothes all the vallies and the hills from the water's edge to their very summit; only in sheltered, or more cultivated spots, is it relieved by the brighter and fuller foliage of other trees.

It attains a height of about forty feet, is generally very straight, though at times curiously bent; is of rather slow growth, and does not seem to require much soil, for in many places it springs out of the naked rock. It is just now beginning to look beautiful, having thrown aside its brown autumnal tint, and the berries which it puts forth in the spring being almost ripe. They are of a bright purple colour, with a bloom like a plum, and exactly resemble the berries of the common juniper. They are by no means unpleasant to the taste, and a rich syrup is prepared from them, which possesses various medicinal virtues.

The wood has a very fine and close grain: it is heavy, and has a highly fragrant scent, which it retains for many years. Nothing can be more refreshing than to walk through a grove where cedar has been felled—the air is really perfumed to a considerable distance. It furnishes an admirable material for the building of ships, which, though perhaps rather expensive, are the most

durable in the world. Insects, I believe, shun the cedar, and I have seen beams and rafters taken out of houses above an hundred years old free from all decay, and retaining the strength and firmness of the new tree.

The Bermudians may literally be said to clothe themselves with cedar, for their houses, though now indeed only partially, were formerly entirely built of this wood, and from the massive beams and cornices in some of the older mansions, the cedar must anciently have attained a much greater height and girth than it does at present. Some aged cedars which are still seen in churchyards look like the gigantic remains of a former world by the side of their degenerate offspring.

The wood, particularly the root, is beautifully veined, and is much employed in cabinet making. The branches, &c., are used for fuel, and it is impossible to conceive anything more delicious than a cedar fire.

“ The lofty cedar, which to heav’n aspires,  
The prince of trees ! is fuel for their fires ;  
The smoke, by which their loaded spits do turn,  
For incense might on sacred altars burn ;  
Their private roofs, on od’rous timber borne,  
Such as might palaces for kings adorn.”

The cedar appears to be of two sorts—the prickly cedar, which is of the brightest green, and the berry-bearing cedar (the female tree) which is considerably taller. Two different kinds of rosin ooze profusely out of its bark. In warm weather the tree diffuses considerable heat, and emits a strong resinous smell. It is superior to the Barbados cedar both in durability and firmness of texture.

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## LETTER VI.

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November 23d.

We drove, yesterday, to our parish church of Pagets, or Crow-lane, of which the archdeacon is rector. It is a plain neat structure, with a spire just like one of our country churches in England. It is built in the form of a cross, and stands on a rising bank at the foot of high hills. Behind it is a large pond or marsh, which flows amid an extensive plantation of palmettos, various species of fern, reed, &c., and after running along banks of mangrove, loses itself in a pretty little lagoon, inclosed by rocks. Footpaths branch out in various directions; some leading around the curve of the hill, others winding over rocks, among picturesque cottages, to the sea-

shore; but, after all, the beauties of the surrounding landscape probably derive their deep interest from the association of higher hopes and feelings than the scenes of nature alone can prompt; and often as I have visited this spot, I have never thought it so lovely as in the stillness of a Sabbath morning, when all the hills and vallies were scattered with mingled groups of bond and free.

We have no organ here, but the parishioners are making a subscription to obtain one from England. I am sorry to tell you that dogs are permitted free ingress into the church; and I was not a little disconcerted on discovering a huge creature close by my side during a solemn part of the service. I wish that some regulation were made to exclude these four-footed intruders; and I have prayed an honourable member to issue an order in council to this effect.

The negroes here are more quiet in their manner, and less showy in their dress, than at St. George's. Many appeared to be earnest in



their devotions. They are all anxious for instruction, and gladly attend the Sunday-school, which is held in the church.

You will be happy to hear that the infant school for negro and coloured children, which the archdeacon has just established, at the expense of the "Ladies' Society for Promoting the early Education of Negro Children," promises to become very flourishing. We were fortunate in meeting with an excellent young woman as teacher, who was soon initiated into the mysteries of the system.

Considering how much these children had to unlearn, how totally different every thing they saw and heard was from their former habits, I am really astonished at the progress they have made within a single month. There are several who, during this short period, have learnt by heart Mrs. Gilbert's beautiful hymns, merely from hearing them repeated five or six times; and it is gratifying to listen to the manner in which these little creatures, some of whom, only

a month ago, did not know their right hand from their left, or even whether they heard with their mouths or their ears, telling, in their own simple way, the scripture stories which had been read to them. It would, indeed, almost seem as if a gracious Providence vouchsafed a more eager desire for instruction, and a greater quickness of apprehension, where opportunities are slender and time short.

The other morning, an old negro woman, who had been an attentive listener at the door, seemed as if she could no longer repress her feelings, and, lifting up her hands, in astonishment exclaimed, "Well, if you don't go to heaven, you *deserve* to go to the bad place!"

In fact, the benefits of instruction are not confined to the school-room; the children, who are eager to obtain information, are equally anxious to communicate it to others; and I have heard of a very pleasing instance, where one of these little negroes was actually of important service to his white owner.

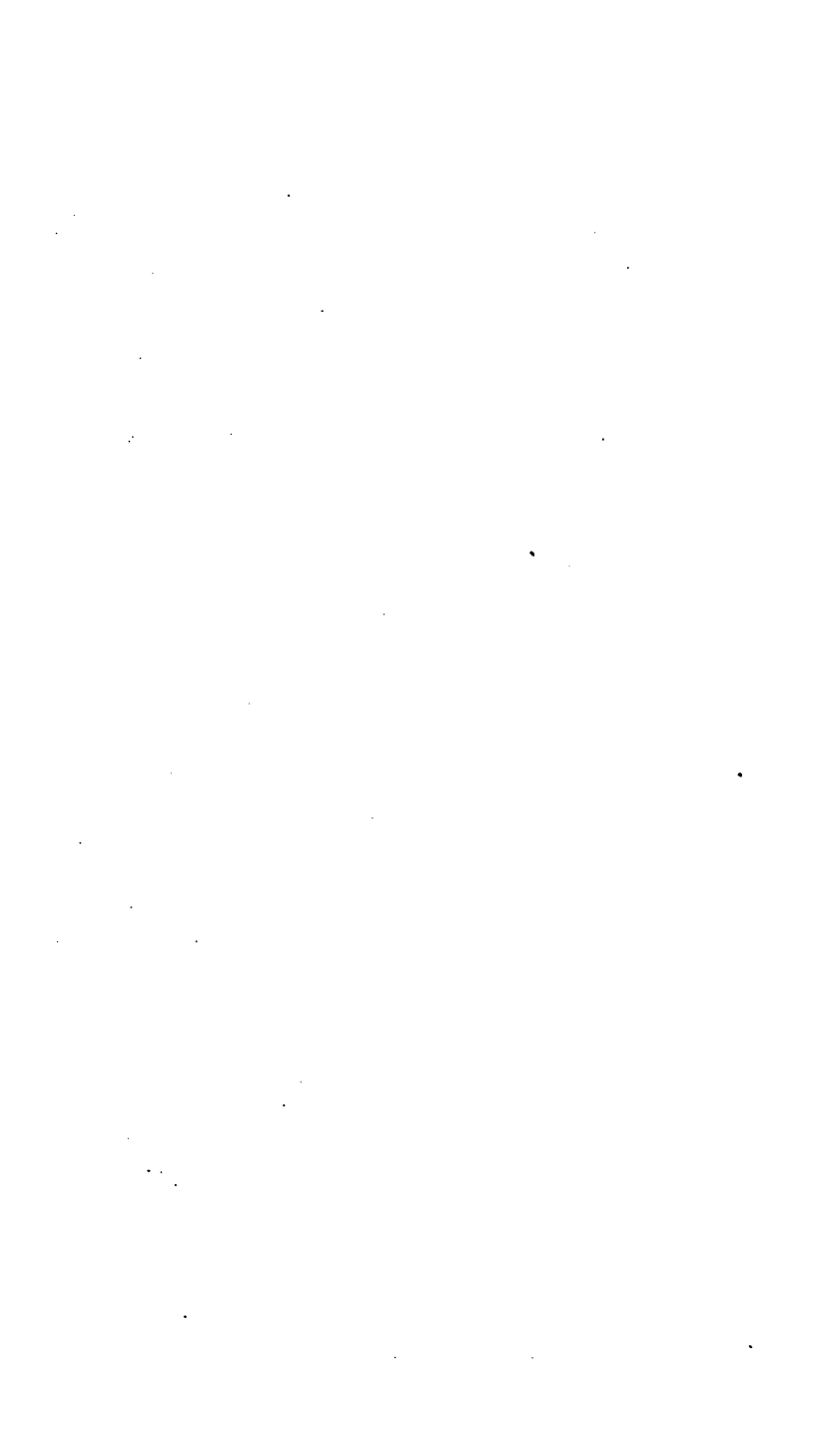
So quickly have they caught the spirit of the system, that Dr. Spencer invited the chief-justice and several of the principal inhabitants, to be present at an examination last week; and they who had never before seen such young children brought under instruction, were astonished and delighted with the correct manner in which they repeated their lessons, and the readiness with which they answered a variety of questions.

Whatever may be the difference of capacity between the negro and the European, I certainly think that the former has the advantage of the poorer native whites. He possesses a greater degree of energy and vivacity of character, and a stronger desire for information, which may, perhaps, be the effect of ambition, but is certainly a proof, that a finer mental capacity has not been denied him. You never see the poorer whites cultivating the ground, or doing what they call *nigger's work*. This induces an indolence and inertness of character which naturally tends to dull the intellect.

It appears to me that the infant school system, by its variety, the graphic manner, if I may so express it, in which it presents an idea to the mind, is more than any other suited to the genius of the negro; and we may look forward to the general, though judicious, diffusion of this class of schools for the younger negroes, as a means of extensive good among the slave population in the West Indies.

There was at first some prejudice to the proposed school; many thought, that in proportion as you instructed the slaves, they would be bad members of society, and wholly unfitted for their station; but this prejudice is gradually giving way to a conviction of the great utility of the plan, and many proprietors now send all their troublesome little *niggers* to the infant school.

The children appear grateful for the interest we take, and it is pleasing to watch the different groups on leaving school; some embarking in the little boat which conveys them to the op-





posite bank, some dancing along the shore, others climbing the hills and singing, with high glee, the songs and hymns they have just been repeating.

The situation of the school-house is exceedingly picturesque. It lies on the left bank of the Hamilton Water, which is an arm of the sea running far into the land between two chains of hills. In its course it washes the numerous verdant islands that lie cradled on its bosom, and ripples with murmuring softness in many a calm and silvery creek. The ridge of hills on the left shore is crowned with the elegant villas of the attorney-general, Sir William Fahie, and other wealthy inhabitants; while numerous small negro huts, half hid amid plantations of palmetto, aloes, and cocoa, fringe the margin of the inlet.

For about a mile along its shores is my daily walk, and every time that the bay opens to my view, I feel how inadequate is language or pencil to represent the entrancing love-

liness of the scene. We children of the north know nothing of such verdure as the eye here rests on, nothing of such undimmed splendour of sunshine as here illumines every object; our imaginations cannot realize such intense and glowing azure of sky, such lucid and transparent water, which, in the full blaze of the meridian sun, looks like one vast lake of burnished gold, and reflects the whole landscape with a distinctness and brilliancy almost surpassing that of the objects themselves.

*Ma tutta insieme poi tra verdi sponde  
In profondo canal l'acqua s'aduna,  
E sotto l'ombra di perpetue fronde  
Mormorando sen va gelida e bruna ;  
Ma trasparente sì, che non asconde  
De l'imo letto suo vaghezza alcuna.*

The gaily painted schooners of the Americans that are at anchor in the bay seem to hover over their own reflected image, and the stillness of the scene is scarcely broken by the little boats as they glide smoothly along, except by the dull



plash of an oar, or the flapping of the sails as the breeze dies away.

Far as the eye can reach, island rises beyond island, till they are at length blended with the horizon.

The opposite shore is occupied by the town of Hamilton, which consists of one long row of houses with green and red verandahs; and though, like most towns, it loses much of its beauty on a closer approach, it forms an interesting feature in the landscape, especially as seen from the point of view from which I have taken the accompanying sketch. The background is formed by barren and dreary-looking hills, on one of which stands the court-house, a cold, uninteresting building.

The quay, which runs in front of the street, is planted with a row of the pride of India, which affords an agreeable shade, and scents the air with its perfume.

The largest vessels unload their merchandize at the very doors, and it is amusing to watch

the bustle which the arrival of a ship occasions in this unbusiness-like looking town. It has deprived St. George's of its former pre-eminence; the meetings of the Members of Council, the Court of Chancery, the House of Representatives, &c. are now held here: it has, however, no appearance of trade, for all the business is carried on in magazines or stores, as they are called.

Here you may purchase a barrel of flour or a pair of kid gloves, for there are no separate shops for any of these different articles: the consequence is, that you seldom find exactly what you want. Some of the prices, too, are high—I mean of English manufactured goods; thus, for instance, muslin worth eighteen-pence a yard sells for a dollar (four shillings sterling); shoes of the commonest description, two and three dollars; gloves a dollar; and silks are exorbitantly dear, so that were Bermudian ladies to go shopping as we do in England, they would soon ruin their husbands. Better, that is, cheaper times,

however, are in prospect, as there is a general opinion that the ports will be opened to the Americans\*.

Generally speaking, I do not think that provisions, such as flour, rice, sugar, coffee, salt-meat, &c. are expensive; they are imported from America and the West Indies, and some are decidedly cheaper than in England. Fish may always be had in abundance, but the meat, which is nearly all brought from America, is inferior to ours. There is a good supply of poultry, particularly turkies, which are remarkably fine, and sell for about a pistorine (tenpence sterling) per pound.

I am rather disappointed in the fruit. None of the luscious fruits of the West Indies are cultivated here. The melons are certainly delicious and very plentiful, the lime, sweet orange, mulberry, peach, grape, strawberry, water-lemon,

\* This has been effected since my departure from Bermuda, and the prices of articles of every description have been very much reduced.

sugar-apple, and one or two more are good, but rather scarce. The banana is extremely pleasant, and as it is of rapid growth, there is a continual supply.

Large quantities of apples, oranges, shad-docks, forbidden fruit, cocoa-nuts, &c. are imported from the West Indies and America. And yet the early accounts of Bermuda are warm in the praises of its fruits; the orange was prized, even above that of India, and I was told by a gentleman that, in his younger days, grapes were so abundant in Tucker's Town, a place which now does not produce a single vine, that for a quarter-dollar you might gather and carry away as many as you chose.

This deterioration of the soil is general: districts which formerly yielded two crops of Indian corn in the year, are now barren downs; tobacco, coffee, and cotton, which grow wild, are no longer cultivated, and Bermuda depends upon other countries for a supply of its wants: in return for which she sends only cedar, arrow-root,

onions, and a small quantity of honey and wax. The soil is evidently impoverished, and I think it would be no bad plan to ballast their vessels with fine rich mould from America.

Bermuda presents peculiar facilities for the growth of indigo, of which I have seen some flourishing patches; the cochineal, too, might, probably be cultivated on the millions of the prickly pear (*Cactus Opuntia*), which, it is said, possesses all the valuable qualities of the true cochinifer, to which it has some resemblance. This mode of obtaining the cochineal is, I am told, followed with success in some parts of Spain, and there seems no reason why it should not answer equally well here. The rich raw silk which hangs across the road in long festoons from one cedar to another, and is the production of a very beautiful silk spider, might, without much trouble, be also made a profitable article of commerce.

But the land is usurped by a stranger, and the alien sage-bush (*Lantana salvifolia*) supplants

the native and kindly children of the soil. The Bermudians say that this shrub was imported into their islands, many years ago, by a vessel from the West Indies; it immediately took root, and now luxuriates on every spot where the diligent hand of industry is not persevering in eradicating it on its first appearance: the roots cling to the rock with so much pertinacity, that if they are suffered to grow, it is extremely difficult to remove them. There ought to be a general extermination, for the wind quickly disperses the seed, which immediately takes root: however, as it is almost the only sort of fuel the poor people can obtain (cedar being very expensive), this is not likely to be effected. The plant has a scarlet berry, in form resembling the blackberry, and a pretty flower, much like the heliotrope.

The facility with which the Bermudians obtain supplies from America, makes them regardless of the resources of their own islands, which, however small, are still large enough to yield a much greater produce than they do at present.

Of the 14,000 acres which the Bermudas contain, only 400 or 500 are brought under cultivation : of these, about 50 acres produce onions, 51 arrow-root, 197 potatoes, 57 barley and oats, 106 vegetables; the rest are occupied by extensive groves of cedar, waste land, and large ponds or marshes, which would certainly reward the trouble and expense of draining, whereas they now only render their vicinity unhealthy by the exhalations which they give out, especially after the heavy rains.

One great drawback to a more extended cultivation, seems to be the stigma unfortunately fixed upon field labour, which, in the eyes of the poorer whites, appears to be identical with slavery. Perhaps the cultivation of these beautiful islands may be reserved for that glad day when this reproach shall be taken away, and when the industry and energy of the negro shall be no longer checked by the withering influence of slavery.

## LETTER VII.

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December 2nd.

WE have just entered upon December, and are now beginning to enjoy something like winter—that is to say, the heat is not so great as it was in August and September, otherwise there is nothing in the appearance of nature to indicate any change. The “snow spirit” never visits here; the flowers blossom with the same luxuriance, and the sky retains its halcyon hue during the perpetual summer of these fair isles. The seasons, however, are divided into February, March and April, for spring; May, June, July and August, for summer; September and October, for autumn; and November, December and January constitute winter.

I am told that, however beautiful the winter may seem, it is not to be compared with the love-



liness of spring; and yet I can scarcely imagine anything more delicious than the present season. It seems the very perfection of climate: the orange and lemon-trees, which display the opening blossoms of the spring, along with the ripened fruits of autumn—the lofty palmetto, with its graceful crown, among which the slightest breeze rustles with murmuring monotony—the banana, with its long velvety leaves and yellow fruit, curiously clustered beneath the foliage—the clear azure of the sky—the surpassing brightness of the water—the softness of the air, and the unclouded splendour of the starlight nights;—all these present images of genial warmth and beauty, which we are not accustomed to associate with the season of winter.

If the lark sung in Bermuda, I should tell you that Catherine and I rose with her to enjoy these exhilarating northerly breezes in a beautiful little bay within a few minutes walk, which tradition points out as the scene of Waller's Battle of the Summer Isles.

This is the birthday of my sweet Sophia, and while roaming along the sea-shore many kind thoughts were sent across the wide ocean to a beloved sister; and as the clouds sailed along, I was reminded of those touching lines of Schiller,—

“ Eilende Wolken! Segler der Lüfte!  
Wer mit euch wanderte, mit euch schiffte!  
Grüszet mir freundlich mein Jugendland!”

The thermometer is now generally at 55° in the shade; one day it was as low as 50; this was considered very cold, especially by the negroes, who are exceedingly sensible to the cold, and wrap themselves up in a variety of strange garments. We can now go out during any part of the day, and I am so much stronger, that I take long walks without fatigue: I will not deprive Bermuda of the credit of effecting this, by ascribing it to the voyage hither.

The climate is salubrious though very sultry during the summer months, which is occasioned less by the actual degree of heat than by the

dead calms which commonly prevail at that season. In consequence of its low situation, Bermuda does not, like the other West India islands, catch the sea breeze which they regularly enjoy after sunset. With all this, however, it is certainly favourable to European constitutions, and I am told peculiarly suited to consumptive persons.

Several invalids have lately arrived here for the benefit of a milder climate. Among others, Sir Peregrine Maitland, Governor of Nova Scotia. He had heard at Halifax so unfavourable a report of the climate of Bermuda, that he passed it and went to Barbados. There he fortunately met with some friends, who gave it so different a character, that he immediately resolved to try its effects, and he is now every day improving in health, and able to enjoy the romantic scenery in the vicinity of Mount Langton.

There is great diversity of opinion, especially among naval officers, whether Bermuda pos-

sesses any claims to beauty. Some laud it to the skies, while others again, who may happen to arrive during a south wind and remain pent up with the fleet in sight of the barren rocks of Ireland, wonder how a person of taste can see any beauty in 'broom-stick cedars, stone hedges, and islands so puny, that you might as well be shut up in the gun-room of one of his Majesty's frigates.' Whoever looks for grandeur in the scenery of Bermuda, will certainly be disappointed; it possesses none of the elements of sublimity—no cloud-capped mountain—no thundering cataract—no deep-mouthed ravine or majestic river. The gently undulating contour of its hills—the sequestered silence of its vallies—the meandering curve of its silvery bays—calm, but do not elevate the mind; all is soft and smiling—a miniature heaven, the still small voice which awakens only emotions of silent complacency or soothing pleasure; the very air you breathe induces a feeling of repose, an entrancing stillness, which makes you long to

indulge in all the *dolce farniente* of the Italians—such is Bermuda; and I cannot help thinking that he who is alive to the beauties of nature must admire its scenery.

My ears are beginning to be in some measure reconciled to the loud shrill note of the cigala, which, however pretty it may sound in poetry, is in reality only a monotonous and disagreeable noise, quite as inharmonious as that of our less pretending crickets and grasshoppers. It is here called the *singer*, in compliment, I presume, to the poets of old, who ascribe to it such wonderful musical powers. I must confess that I have in vain listened to its song with the hope of finding in it some confirmation of the elegant fable of the rival musicians; one of whom, we are told, having the misfortune to break a cord, a cigala settled on his lyre and by its own sweet note supplied the defective string.

The cigala generally sits among the foliage of the trees, where it continues its shrill chirping throughout the day, with scarcely any intermis-

sion ; it is, however, most annoying in the evening, when, perhaps attracted by the light, it takes its station in some corner of the room, or in a shrub near the verandah, where it sets up its chirp, at first rather softly, and then louder and louder as you raise your voice in order to make yourself heard. Suddenly a deafening sound breaks forth from all sides, the whole chorus raising their piercing chirp to the highest pitch ; this continues for two or three minutes, a pause, then ensues, after which they again resume their noise with renewed energy.

It is impossible to admire sufficiently the extraordinary mechanism of an apparatus which can produce so piercing and continued a sound from so small a body.

The lady-cigala, however, is the quietest being in the world, which gave rise to the wit-ticism,—

“ Happy the cicadas’ lives,  
Since they all have voiceless wives.”

The birds are not much more musical than

the cigala, and I find *some* truth in the remark, that in Bermuda 'the birds are without song, the flowers without scent, the fruits without flavour, and the women without colour.'

The red bird (*loxia cardinalis*), or Virginian nightingale, is really a splendid creature, but it loves to display its gay plumage upon a dark cedar instead of delighting us with the sweet note of our sober warbler. The blue bird (*fringilla cyanea*), with its bright lapis lazuli wing and gentle eye, is a beautiful object, but, like the red bird, it can only chirp. These, with the ground dove, blackbird, and chick of the village, nearly complete the ornithology of Bermuda, unless we include the king fisher, tropic bird, and the innumerable sea-fowls which abound on the coast. There are some ravens, hawks, plovers, &c., but they are not common, and the great variety of birds, wild swans, and bats, of which we read in the early accounts of Bermuda, has disappeared. I suppose that some of the kindred of Milesius must have sojourned here in

the course of their migrations, for, like Ireland, Bermuda is exempted from poisonous snakes and serpents; there are only some harmless snakes of very brilliant colours.

I have already told you my opinion of the fruits; with respect to the flowers there are here many whose bright tints charm the eye, but few which regale us with their perfume. There are no native roses, but several foreign varieties have been completely naturalized; such as the sweet rose, and China cluster, but the multiflora, monthly, and several others which twine round the porch and windows of the poorest hut, and bloom throughout the year, have but little scent.

Many of our European flowers, when transplanted here, retain their odour only for a time. Lest, however, you should fancy that there is no redolence whatever, I must remind you of the exquisite perfume of the orange and lemon, shaddock and lime blossoms, which scent not merely the garden, but even the roadside. Then, too,



there is the pride of India (*melia azedarah*), with its fragrant lilac clusters; the delicate acacia, 'bright with streaming gold;' the geranium, which forms entire hedges eight or ten feet high; the jessamine, the clustering woodbine, and many more.

Among those which please only the eye, I must mention the coral-tree (*erythrina corallo-dendron*). In Bermuda it does not attain a height of more than eight or nine feet; its light greyish stem is surmounted by a crown of very beautiful ternate leaves, beneath which grows the flower, resembling in shape bunches of red coral. It has long pods containing many large scarlet glossy seeds, which are said to be poisonous; on pricking the stem, a thick white juice flows from the puncture.

The changeable rose (*hibiscus mutabilis*), well merits its name of *flos hororius*; for its flowers, which are of a delicate white in the morning, gradually assume a deeper tint till the sun attains the meridian, when they are of a beautiful pink;

towards evening they are of a reddish purple, and then fade. The flowers resemble the hollyhock, and the leaves are not unlike those of the vine. It grows to a height of about twelve feet.

Then, too, we have the olive tree, which, when in full bloom is a magnificent object; the almond tree, the standard peach, and fig; the scarlet cordia; the American bell-apple; the Barbadian flower fence (*poinciana pulcherrima*); Indian cane; the palma christi (*ricinus communis*); the oleander, or south sea rose; pomegranate, althæa, Arabian jessamine, (*nyctanthes*); the cochineal plant (*cactus coccinellifer*), &c. Besides these, I may mention the calabash, (*cre-scentia cujete*), palmetto, date, cocoa, and sago palm, the locust tree, banana, and papau (*carica papaya*).

This latter is a very singular looking tree, and at first sight resembles a palm: it attains a height of about fifteen feet, and has a soft and curiously tatoed trunk or stem. The leaves are between two and three feet in cir-

cumference, something like those of the fig, only rather more pointed. There are commonly about fifteen of these leaves, which are supported by long stalks, issuing in a tuft from the centre of the tree. The papau is classed into the male and female tree; the former may be immediately recognized by its long projecting footstalks, which are upwards of two feet in length, on which the flowers are ranged, and also by its never having any fruit. The blossoms on the latter, which are of a pale yellow colour, and very fragrant, are succeeded by a pear-shaped fruit, about five inches long. It is generally gathered before it is quite ripe, and when the caustic milky juice has been extracted, is served as a vegetable, or made into preserves.

The last assertion, that 'the women are without colour,' I cannot treat as I do the remarks on birds and flowers, for you will expect something beyond a mere description of their persons. Like the plants, they languish in the summer, and when

we landed, I saw but few whose cheek retained any tint of the rose; the children, in particular, struck me as having a sickly appearance. But this month of cool weather has already restored their bloom to many. They are tall and slender; though there are a few handsome brunettes, they are generally fair, with light hair and full blue eyes. I have seen some who are really lovely—but it is that evanescent loveliness which does not survive the first bloom of youth. The young girls, who at the age of fifteen or sixteen are just merging into the woman, have an air of charming simplicity—a certain *naïvete* and winningness of manner, which is very pleasing to strangers. They are amiable and affectionate, exemplary in the discharge of the domestic duties, and extremely quiet and retiring; which surprised me, when I heard that, with but few exceptions, the young ladies receive their education in a boys' school. In several of the grammar-schools nearly a third are females, some of whom learn to construe Greek and Latin. As

they are great sufferers under a system which prevents them from acquiring the more feminine accomplishments, I am glad to find that several ladies' seminaries are about to be established in Bermuda, which will call forth the talents they undoubtedly possess, and open a wider field for intellectual and agreeable conversation.

The gentlemen are very domestic, distinguished for their hospitality and attention to strangers, and for the uprightness and integrity which characterize their commercial transactions. Many of them have been called to offices of high trust in other colonies, as well as in the mother country.

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## LETTER VIII.

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December 21st.

WE were lately at an elegant *fête* given by the Hon. Captain Townshend, on board the *Columbine*. The day proved singularly fine, and as the ship was lying off Ireland, we drove as far as Spanish Point, and then enjoyed a delightful row across the sea. The deck was hung with flags, forming a tent, from which lamps, wreathed with flowers, were suspended, and the whole had an exceedingly pretty effect. The company consisted of all the *ton* of Bermuda: the governor, Sir Hilgrove Turner, and his family, Sir William and Lady Fahie, Sir William and Lady Burnaby, Sir Peregrine and Lady Sarah Maitland, besides a host of military and naval officers.

It is now Christmas; and while you are gathering round a blazing fire, I am scrambling over rocks in a muslin dress, or sitting in 'my bower so bright,' reading the *Tempest*, and endeavouring to realize to my mental eyes that beautiful creation of the poet, the delicate Ariel,

“ . . . . who in brighter hours  
Lived on the perfume of these honied bowers,  
In velvet buds at evening loved to lie,  
And win with music every rose's sigh.”

The 'still vexed Bermoothes' claim the poetical distinction of being the birthplace of this sweet airy being. But it no longer does its gentle spiriting, and now lives here only in the imagination, and in the name of a little girl who is called *Miranda*. Some have fancied that the scene of the *Tempest* is laid in Bermuda; but the tenor of the play contradicts this: perhaps its early name of the "Enchanted Island," "Isle of the Devils," and the marvellous tales of its fearful tempests may have given rise to this supposition.

Some most Caliban looking negroes have

just been dancing on the lawn ; for in this season of general festivity, they are all permitted to indulge in the wildest mirth and revelry. The oldest among them participates with the child in the delights of their Gombey—a show which reminds me of the ‘Jack-in-the-Green’ scenes of our May-day chimney-sweepers. Here nature clothes them with their dusky livery, and they endeavour to heighten the effect by a plentiful bedaubing of red and yellow paints, scarlet cloth, flowers and ribbons. They completely besieged my room, which opens on the garden, so that I was forced to remain a close prisoner, and listen to their rude songs, which I should fancy must be very much like the wild yelling scream that we read of in African travels. How much would the diffusion of true christian principles do for these poor people, by teaching them the real nature of rejoicing, and the folly of all these superstitious festivities.

The most famous Gombey parties are those of Hamilton and Hearne Bay ; they were pre-



ceded by really tolerable bands, composed of negroes dressed in a neat white uniform with scarlet facings. These musicians are all self-taught, and play many favourite airs with great accuracy. This is the more surprising, since they do not know a single note in music. They learn and play every thing by ear, and certainly have great natural taste, and love for music.

When engaged about their work, or walking along the road, they generally beguile the time with a song; and in the evening you frequently hear the sounds of a flute or violin from a negro cottage. Many also possess the talent of extemporaneous composition, which they exercise in finding words for *Di piacer* and various Italian airs. Others content themselves with singing the last new song, and 'I'd be a butterfly,' and 'Oh, no, we never mention her,' are beginning to be general favourites.

There is a black woman here who ranks high as an improvisatrice; every passing event, every one who is so unfortunate as to incur her

displeasure, is made the subject of her verse. A slave, an industrious man, to whom she does not bear a very friendly feeling, had the misfortune, a short time ago, to be robbed of a bag in which he had been hoarding some doubloons towards the purchase of his freedom. All pitied the poor fellow; when he one day came up to me in tears, saying that no one would credit his story since Piny had been making a song upon him, which had got all over Hamilton; and when he attempted to enquire after his doubloons, the negroes answered him by singing this song. These verses are of course very uncouth, but possess a great deal of wit.

A thoughtless gaiety of disposition characterises the negro; and it has perhaps been wisely bestowed to counterbalance the pressure of the religious and moral degradation under which he labours. In proportion as this is removed, will his mind be open to more serious impressions.

The islands of Bermuda were first colonized in the year 1612, and were soon afterwards sup-

plied with Negroes, partly from the coast of Africa, and partly from the West Indies, which had been previously settled. The population of Bermuda consists of about 10,000 souls, of which the proportions of white and coloured are nearly equal.

The latter are mostly in a state of slavery, not above seven hundred and forty having been emancipated, or born free. Instances of manumission are not frequent, and it was only during a late session of the local legislature, that a law was passed which gave the slave a legal right to property that might purchase his emancipation.

It must be confessed that in these islands slavery wears the mildest aspect of which that pitiable condition is susceptible. The character of the Bermudians is kind and humane, and their slaves enjoy many secular advantages of which the poor in our own country are frequently destitute. To the enslaved Negro all the wants of nature are amply supplied. He is, under every contingency, clothed, fed, and attended in

sickness, at his master's cost. The ancient laws of slavery, odious and merciless as they are, are never enforced against him, and instances of domestic or private cruelty are, I believe I may venture to assert, almost unknown. Indeed, in many houses the young Negro grows up with his master's children, and is considered as one of the family.

Still, however, after all these concessions, the coloured inhabitants of Bermuda are bondsmen, and have long suffered the two heaviest ills of bondage, a political incapacity to receive equal justice, and a spiritual privation of religious instruction and happiness.

The gleam of Christianity which penetrated the dreary dungeon of their African superstition, was at first so faint that it served rather to discover the gloom than to dispel the darkness which shrouded them; and having embraced the profession of the gospel, they adopted its name without receiving its influence in their heart. It is only within the last five or six

years that any *regular* system has been adopted to give the coloured people instruction in schools connected with the church of England. This blessing is now imparted to nearly 1000 persons, in which number I do not include those who are educated in the schools under the dissenters, some of which are very flourishing.

When the attempt was first made to instruct the slaves, there were strong prejudices to contend with, as many dreaded that its only effect would be to make them repine at their lot, and unfit them for their station. The opposition, however, was judiciously met by a conciliatory spirit of temperance and forbearance, and the moral influence of instruction soon became so obvious in the altered lives of many of the slaves, that the zealous labours of the clergy are now, in several instances, supported by their early opponents.

As there are no plantations of sugar-cane, the negroes are employed in light agricultural labour, but principally as domestic servants. The entire wealth of many individuals often

consists in two, three, twelve, or more of these slaves; and if the owner has no occasion for their services himself, he hires out one as a carpenter, another as a mason, house-servant, &c. They regularly bring their full wages to their master, who commonly allows them a small proportion of their earnings. The price of labour varies from a pistorine (tenpence sterling), to a dollar (four shillings sterling) per day.

In their spare hours they (I mean the mechanics) are permitted to work on their own account; and it is by no means unusual for slaves to work out their freedom.

A singular circumstance occurred a short time since. A slave, after having obtained his own freedom by his industry, went to his master to purchase his wife. When her owner offered to give him her deed of manumission, the man positively refused to have one drawn up: and thus the wife is literally her husband's slave. Surely, if slavery knew no other evil, the abuse

of such a power as this would prove the iniquity of the system.

Some of the free negroes are industrious and respectable; every thing, as among us, of course, depends upon individual exertion. If the negro is inclined to work, there seems to be no reason why he should not be as successful as an English labourer. That slaves are frequently so little disposed to labour, is probably because they know that, whether they work or not, their master is bound to support them. The slothful are therefore not made to feel so sensibly the consequences of their idleness, while the upright and conscientious have only the very abstract motive of their master's interest to encourage them to diligence and fidelity:—altogether the system of slavery is a sad check upon active industry and persevering exertions; and I am convinced, that, even with a temporary loss, the slave-owners would ultimately be infinite gainers by the introduction of free labour, and the power of employing only such workmen and

servants as should produce a given quantity of labour for fair and stipulated remuneration.

It is a great misfortune to a slave if he happens to be married to a free woman. His time is of course his master's, and yet he must find a house, food and clothing for his wife and family. There is a poor man here, a native North American Indian, who is in this situation, and his family are consequently in great poverty.

The price of a slave varies from 25*l.* (but these are of the very lowest class,) to 70*l.* and even 100*l.* currency. But there are some who are above all price, and whom their owners would not part with for any sum.

I know a slave, a religious and well-informed young man, who is a carpenter by trade, and being an excellent workman, can earn one dollar per day—that is, about 100*l.* currency, or 70*l.* sterling per annum. This sum he takes regularly to his owner. As it would of course enable him to maintain himself respectably, he is very anxious to be free, and has offered any



sum that may be asked, but his master refuses to listen to any terms. As he has laboured faithfully many years, he naturally feels himself aggrieved; and yet such is the strength of his Christian principles, that he never speaks of his master but in terms of the highest respect. To such a character as this, who can doubt that emancipation would prove a blessing?

Several persons have given freedom to their slaves—oftenest I think to a female. But should the poor woman happen to marry a slave, she is in most cases a sufferer, as all her children are of course free, and dependent upon her for support.

I do not think that there are above three or four native Africans in Bermuda, the rest are born here. One of these Africans is a female, who has her face curiously slashed and tattooed; another, a man, who lives near us, and is one of the most good tempered, gay, and thoughtless beings in the world. He one day told me a long story of his having been carried off in a big ship

while playing in a garden with his brothers and sisters. But I rather suspect there was some little romance about this. Having by chance seen my guitar, he now comes frequently and begs for some of my 'fiddle strings,' promising that in return he will play me the bravest tune at the gombeys. I had often remonstrated with him for not attending church; when he one afternoon made his appearance there, and told me very gravely the next morning that he had put the date into the little book which I had given him; that he would look at it every Sunday, and that when he died he would have it laid upon his heart and buried with him. 'And surely,' said he, 'if I can find legs to go every morning to Hamilton to get the doubloons for my mistress, I may as well get a bit of good to my soul by going to church on Sundays.'

A Negro is the most loquacious being on earth—he seems to talk in spite of himself, and is a very child in the expression of his feelings. I was much amused the other day in watching

from the garden the delight and amazement of an old Negro, on hearing the sounds of a musical box, which we had purposely placed in his way. He looked cautiously through the window—then drew back—looked again—till, unable to repress his curiosity, he crept along on tiptoe, as if fearful of disturbing the music, put his head in at the door, and not seeing any person about, went into the room. Finding the piano closed, he looked into all the corners, examined every article of furniture, and at length stopped at the table on which the box was playing. He started back as in fear—then again slowly approached, without however having courage to touch it. He seemed to regard it as some living thing, which it might be dangerous to handle; yet the temptation was too strong; he put out his hand, but instantly drew it back, as if wondering at his own temerity. Finding that the music still went on, he made one great effort, and seized the box. His delight now knew no bounds; he held it to his ear, capered,

laughed, shouted with the wildest glee, clapped his hands, and ran out of the room.

But notwithstanding all this good humour, the passions of the negro are violent, and his anger easily roused. A few evenings ago a fine and generous hearted youth, whose complexion may vie with the raven's wing, felt his honor mortally offended on being called a *black nigger* by a negro a few shades lighter than himself; he instantly seized a knife that was lying before him, and would have plunged it into the man's breast, had not some one providentially held back his arm. To be called a Black Nigger seems to be considered the very acmé of insult, and, like the 'Dummer Junge' of the German students must be avenged.

## LETTER IX.

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January 3d, 1830.

ON the first day in the new year we went to the neighbouring parish church of Warwick, to hear a funeral sermon on the death of the widow of the late President of Bermuda. The custom of preaching funeral sermons is general, and they are always attended by large congregations, particularly of blacks; and it is usual for ladies not only to be present at funerals, but even to bear a part in the ceremony. On this occasion the pall was borne by six ladies, the wives of the principal inhabitants, who followed the procession on foot. The coffin was placed in a small hearse, resembling Nelson's car. The church was hung with black, and nearly the whole of the congregation appeared in mourning.

I had never before been present at a funeral. The solemnity of the service, the wild flickering of the lights, which just served to make the darkness visible, and shed a faint gleam over the bier—the foreign countenances of the Negroes—the loud sobs of the female relatives, all combined to make an impression I shall not easily forget.

In Bermuda the corpse is interred, at the latest, the day after the decease, and sometimes even earlier. This painful haste is probably rendered imperative by the climate; but it is a custom to which my feelings cannot become reconciled; it is the victory of the grave almost before we are conscious of the sting of death.

An epidemic, which threatens to be very fatal to the coloured population, has just been brought here in a vessel from Quebec. When it arrived at Bermuda there was a corpse on board; the proper officers, therefore, went immediately to institute the necessary inquiries, and desired the captain to take the customary oath that the man had

not died of a contagious disorder. No testament, however, was to be found on board, and the captain therefore pledged his word to that effect, though it is supposed that he was fully aware of the cause of his death.

Various opinions were at first entertained respecting the nature of the epidemic; but it is now ascertained to be the small-pox, and the governor has sent Captain Townshend to procure vaccine lymph from Halifax. We are anxiously waiting his return, as the disease is now spreading rapidly both among the whites and negroes.

Cedar fires are kindled near the infected houses, and when seen amid the darkness of the night, associated with all the circumstances of terror occasioned by the ravages of the disease, they produce an awful effect.

Poor little Clarissa, whom I have often mentioned to you, died a few days ago, at the island to which all those infected with the small-pox are removed. She was a great favourite of mine,

and really seemed much attached to me. On enquiring of her sister, who recovered, whether Clarissa had been sensible that she was near her end—‘O, yes, Missie,’ said she, ‘and when I was lying by her she kept singing, over and over again, every verse of the hymn you taught us about being God’s child at last.’

Yesterday we went to Pembroke Church, but it was almost deserted from the dread of the small-pox. The church is a neat modern building, in the Gothic style: it has an excellent organ, and within the railings of the altar are two handsomely carved chairs of cedar. The accommodations for the coloured people are very well arranged.

In the afternoon we went to Devonshire Church, which lies in a romantic valley, near a large marsh, whence its name, of Brackish Pond. In front of the church is a venerable cedar, the largest I have yet seen; and the church not having a belfry, the bell is suspended from a branch of this ancient tree. The churchyard,



with its white tombstones glistening amid the sombre foliage of the cedar, and the numerous winding paths, which all meet at the foot of the primeval tree that summons the natives to one loved spot, were scattered with groups of people. I remarked many more aged persons than I have seen elsewhere in Bermuda; they also looked healthier, in spite of their great marsh; and I have since heard that this is considered the most salubrious spot in Bermuda.

We had to ascend and descend, in our way, some very steep hills. The road is but just finished, and it seems strange that, as the Bermudians are really good road makers, it should not have occurred to them to render it somewhat less fatiguing, and at the same time to make the church more accessible, by cutting it a little deeper in some places. I wish that some good Pastor Oberlin were here to remind his parishioners that the keeping of the roads in a state of repair is a religious duty. I often pity the ladies, who have great distances to walk over broken-

up rocky roads, washed by the heavy rains, which are never mended till half a dozen horses have tumbled down with their riders.

We went a few days ago to see Paynter Vale, belonging to John Musson, Esq. It lies in Bailey's Bay at the further extremity of our island, and is considered one of the prettiest places in Bermuda, and which every stranger must visit. The house lies between two sister hills, and is completely embosomed in thick foliage. There are some fine plantations of banana and arrowroot, extensive groves of lime, sweet orange, and citron, and numerous caverns and grottos of splendid stalactitic formation; some lying exposed, others concealed amid overhanging shrubs.

From the front of the house you see Harrington Sound, encircled by a chain of lofty hills, which form a tranquil inland lake with many laughing islands rising on its surface; so still, that the slightest bark may glide along in security, and yet sufficiently deep to shelter a



is rarely made south by the heavy timber which is never more than half a dozen feet high, and is covered with ferns.

At the mouth of the river is the Payson Falls, known as the Mussouri Fall. It lies in the valley beyond the further extremity of the house, and is considered one of the prettiest falls in Colorado, and which every stranger who visits the house fits between the steep hillsides is completely enthralled in their beauty. There are some fine plantations of apples and orchards, extensive groves of blue, sweet orange, and pines, and numerous clover and grasses of splendid salubrious formation, some of which exposed, others concealed and over-matted, cherish

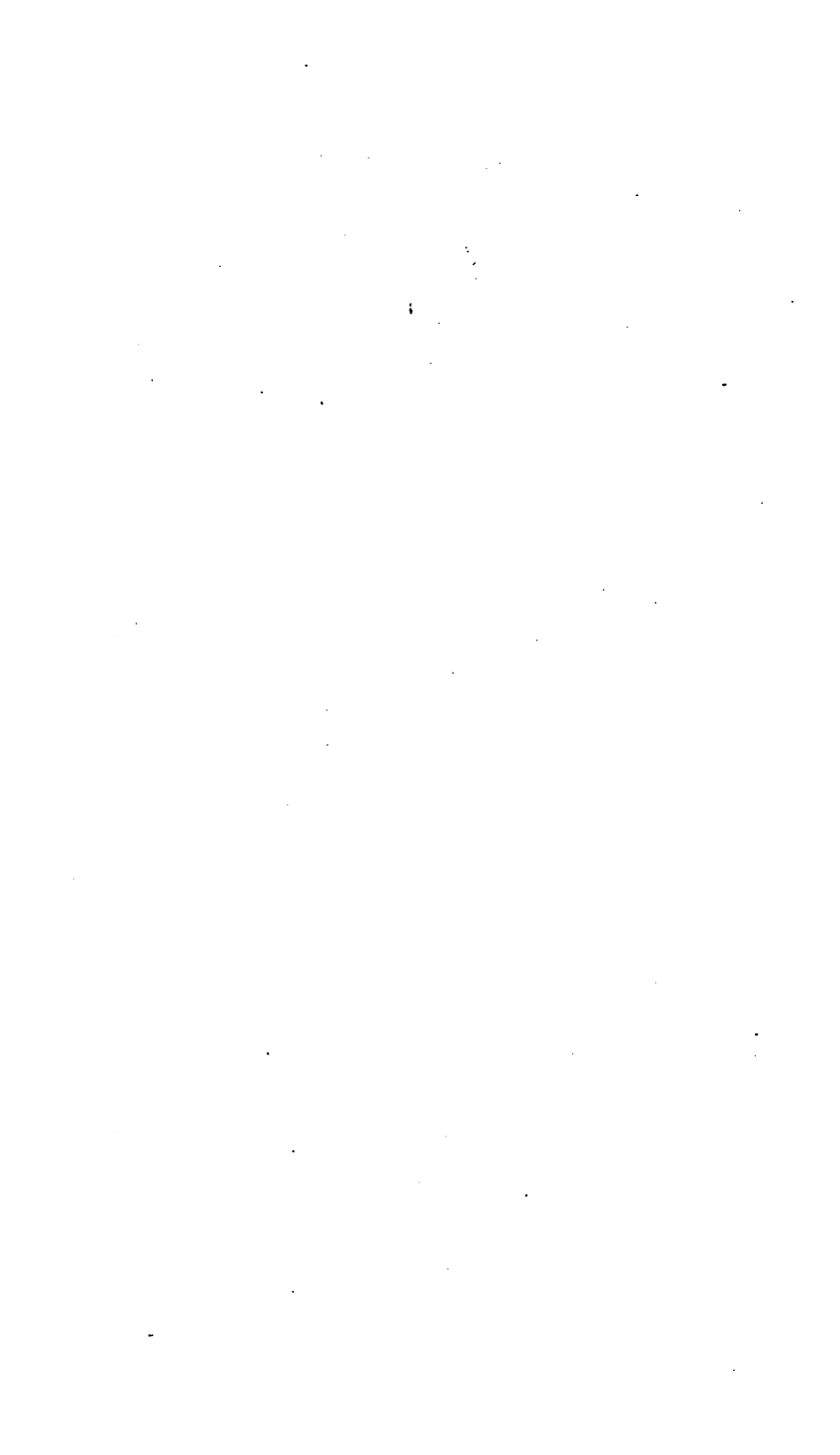
From the front of the house you see Harrington Island, enclosed by a chain of lofty hills, which form a tranquil inland lake with many floating islands rising on its surface; so that the lightest bark may glide along in safety, and get sufficiently deep to shelter a



J. Lloyd. 1877

Art by engraver H.C. London. 1876

W. Clark. 1876



fleet. It is, in fact, a great natural basin, above seven miles in circumference, with upwards of fifteen fathom of water. It is also well sheltered against the wind, and being situated in the heart of the colony, between St. George's and the mainland, would be a position from which both might be covered in case of any hostile invasion. These advantages have induced several persons to propose it for the great rendezvous of our fleet, especially as the channel from St. Catherine's to the present anchorage at Ireland is every day becoming narrower and more shallow, in consequence of the growth of coral and the influx of the sea weed into the great sound. To effect this, it would be necessary to cut into Harrington Sound, from Murray's anchorage near the Flatts, a distance of not more than five hundred yards.

The shores are undermined with numerous extensive caverns and grottos, especially in the vicinity of Paynter Vale, at a short distance from the house.

Under a rising bank, is the mouth of a curious cavern, called Sharks Hole, into which we put our little boat. It received this name from having once been a favourite retreat of these voracious fish. Being pretty certain that we were not likely to find any of its unwelcome inmates at home, we enjoyed the delicious coolness of the grotto, and the water being perfectly transparent, we examined with interest its variegated bottom. As our boat glided along, we beheld innumerable beautiful fish sporting in the depths beneath us, or leaping and bounding to the surface.

Castle Harbour, which lies at the back of Paynter Vale, is a noble piece of water, and abounds in interesting natural curiosities. It is of very unequal depths, and the navigation is rendered extremely hazardous to large vessels by its numerous banks and shoals of coral. Being well protected against the high winds, it was formerly the retreat of our ships of war lying at St. George's, but has not been used since the



wreck of a very fine frigate, the *Cerberus*, which was lost in attempting to get out at low water, in consequence of a challenge from an American privateer, during the revolutionary war. The schooner was commanded by a native of Bermuda, who was well acquainted with its navigation, and was aware that so large a frigate could not get out without risk.

The coral banks and shoals are indicated by the different tints of the water, varying from the deepest azure to the lightest hue of the chryso-prase.

The bottom of the basin seems to consist of a mixture of soft calcareous earth, probably derived from decomposed zoophytes and other marine productions, such as the shells and broken prickles of echini, fragments of crustaceous animals, sertularia, the teeth and hard palates of fish, &c., all of which I have found attached to the roots of the gorgonia, or adhering to the under surface of brainstones and other madre-pores. Indeed all these various substances,

together with the parasite testacea which fix themselves to the dentipore and other branched corals, seem to form a considerable part of the coral masses themselves. Castle Harbour is particularly rich in every variety of the more delicate corals, which are plainly discerned growing in the gay submarine flower garden.

One of the most striking natural curiosities is the graceful Sea Fan, *Gorgonia Flabellum*, it grows in the form of a large leaf or fan, having numerous branches diverging from its roots and throwing out many smaller leaves. The whole is covered with a horny cellular network, and each of its many thousand cells is said to contain a polype. It is the common abode of one family comprising many generations; and is, in fact, a living genealogical tree. When first taken out of the water, it has a bright lilac colour, which it soon loses by exposure to the light and air. It is used by the Negroes for sieves, egg-whisks, &c.

The sea rod is another production of the

same kind, it resembles the finest ebony, and being very flexible, is much esteemed for riding whips.

There is also the sea-feather (*pennatula*), and an abundance of brainstones, from the size of a pigeon's egg to more than a yard in diameter. They are of every imaginable pattern; some representing the curious and intricate convolutions of the human brain (*meandrina cerebriformis*); others stellated, &c. The most common are the *meandrina filograna*, *M. labyrinthica*; *M. areolata*; the *lobophyllia lacera*, which grows in the form of rosettes; the *porites clavaria*, and many more. A beautiful white coral (*dentipora virginea*) grows in large spreading branches; each of the starry perforations with which it is covered, is supposed to be the habitation of a coral worm. It receives a fine polish, and is manufactured into rings, seals, &c., by the convicts at Ireland island.

Of the numerous species of zoophytes which are engaged in the construction of all these

beautiful formations, the most common are, I believe, the *Astrea* and *Meandrina*; but as they live at a distance from the shore and in deep water, I have never seen any alive.

They are extremely sensitive, shrinking at the slightest touch, and immediately on being taken out of the water, lose all their brilliant colours, and are changed into a sort of petrified or leathery substance. It is this latter striking peculiarity which probably gave rise to all the wonderful tales of the Gorgon's head.

Every variety of fish abounds here: the amber fish, angel fish, hamlet, pawgie, rock fish, grouper, mullet, red and grey snappers, and some hundreds more, many of which have very splendid colours. They all have white flesh, and when dressed, very much resemble each other in flavour, only that they are more or less delicate. The amber and angel fish are the most esteemed.

“ . . . Each creek and bay,  
With fry innumerable swarm, and shoals

Of fish, that with their fins and shining scales  
Glide under the green wave,—  
. . . part single, or with mate  
Graze the sea weed, their pasture, and through groves  
Of coral stray ; or sporting with quick glances,  
Show to the sun their wav'd coats dropped with gold ;  
Or in their pearly shells at ease, attend  
Moist nutriment."

The lobsters are formidable looking creatures, and their shells are often very brilliant. Their meat is coarser than that of the English lobster ; but is excellent when stewed in the Bermudian fashion. The oysters are large, and have a rich mother o' pearl lustre. They are generally found adhering to the rocks, from which they are pulled off with the hand, and sometimes growing on the coral, which abounds along the shore : they have also been taken with the living coral growing on them.

Many of these oysters contain pearls ; some of very clear water. A poor negro fisherman lately found one which had an hundred pearls beautifully ranged in rows ; some were large, and others mere seeds. A lady told me that

she has found green, and even black pearls in a common oyster ; I have never seen any but white ones.

The scollop, which is also abundant here, does not fix itself, but is generally found buried in the sand, from which it is taken by means of nippers.

The shells found here are inferior in colour and variety to those of the Bahamas and the West Indies, though some few are strikingly handsome, especially the king's conch, which is very large, and has a beautiful pink hue passing from the most delicate tinge to the deepest rose colour.

The shells are said to retain a brighter tint if they are taken with the animal alive. I believe they are generally caught with a net, and the animal is destroyed by fastening a string round its head and then suspending it to a line till the shell drops off; another method is to immerse the shell in boiling water, when the meat is eaten by the negroes.

Mr. Musson has been so good as to procure for me specimens of many of these curiosities; among others of a *syngnathus hippocampus*, or sea horse. But lest you should fancy that I mean by this some formidable walruss, I will give you a description of this little fish, or insect, for I scarcely know which it is. It is about six inches long, and the thickness of a finger. It has the head and neck of a horse, and the rest of the body resembles a caterpillar. I have also got a fine specimen of the sea porcupine, a large round fish armed with long sharp spines.

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## LETTER X.

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February 18.

TOWARDS the end of January we had some very stormy weather, during which several vessels were driven upon the rocks. Among others, the *Leopard*, which went down with the whole crew on board, almost within sight of land. Accidents, though not always so fatal as in this instance, are by no means uncommon, in consequence of the dangerous shoals and hidden reefs of coral which encircle the whole group. The governor, though sailing in an admiral's ship, was nearly lost in view of Bermuda, on his return from Halifax a few months since, owing to the carelessness of the pilot. The ship stuck fast near the north rock, and was extricated with considerable difficulty.



The weather still continues boisterous, and the rains are heavy. Last week, when the gale was really awful, we went to a dinner at Sir William Burnaby's. We were more than once afraid that carriage and all would have been blown into the sea; however, we arrived without accident at Long House, which is the handsomest and most comfortable mansion in Bermuda. It enjoys an extensive view over Hamilton Water and the green hills of Pagets, and has a very pretty garden containing many choice plants. There are two cedar trees, which were planted by Lady Burnaby on her wedding day, and which have now attained a considerable height.

The prevailing wind is from the north-east and north-west, and the thermometer ranges from 50° to 64°. The weather is occasionally very chilly, and I am glad to wrap up in a warm cloak. The alternations of heat and cold are so sudden, that one day I am longing for an English fireside, while the next I am basking in a glowing sun. Great caution is therefore

necessary, for many severe colds are caught which are sometimes very serious. I know a young lady who has been confined to her room for nearly three years from the effects of one of these sudden changes of the weather.

An apparently slight cold has just cut off the young and lovely Mary Gilbert, whom many called the 'flower of Bermuda.' The sound of her marriage bells was still ringing in our ears, when the doleful knell told us she was no more. Her death has excited a general sensation; and when we beheld her bier placed before the very altar at which only three short weeks before she had stood a gay and blooming bride, our hearts were filled with solemn thoughts of the transience of all earthly bliss; and the beautiful simile of Scripture acquired a more than ordinary significance when pronounced over one who had flourished as a flower in the morning, and drooped with the closing day.

We have just returned from a visit to Lady Sarah Maitland. Her manners are singularly

pleasing, and she seems to take a lively interest in the welfare of the poor Indians, who are very numerous in the government of Nova Scotia. Sir Peregrine is an enthusiastic admirer of the beauties of Nature, and I was much pleased to hear his encomiums upon the scenery of Bermuda. They at present occupy Clarence Hill, the seat of the admiral on the station.

It lies at the extremity of Spanish Point, on an isolated promontory indented with numerous creeks and surrounded with black naked rocks, which make a striking contrast with the white surf of the breakers. From its elevated position, it commands an extensive prospect over the verdant hills of Somerset, Ireland with its fleet, dock-yard, and break-water, while the horizon is bounded by the hundred islands of the great Sound, and the distant zone of coral reefs, over which the high and foaming billows break in majestic grandeur, and then dash their white spray upon the still waters within the reef.

In the foreground, the highly cultivated gardens of the admiral, which lie at the bottom of a deep valley, are relieved by picturesque cottages, buried amid plantations of orange, plantain, and palmetto, and winding pathways skirted with hedges of aloes and cactus. Beyond these, to the left, rise distant ridges of cedar hills, whose foot is traced by an inlet of the sea, which meanders like a silver stream amid the 'water loving mangrove.'

As the south entrance into the Great Sound lies within a short distance, the scene is enlivened by numerous boats and trading vessels, forming altogether a *coup d'œil*, the most perfect in Bermuda. I much hope to be able to send you a sketch of this charming panorama; but no pencil can do it justice—for however beautiful the swelling hills and the quiet vallies—the winding bays and foaming breakers—it is to the splendor of shade and sunshine, the deep blue of its waters, and its more than Grecian sky, that Bermuda owes all its peculiar attractions.

This spot is a great favourite with us. On the road there are some dear English weeping willows, and a patch of land belonging to Sir William Burnaby; it is the only one here which is cultivated with the plough—all the agricultural operations being performed with the hoe. The soil being so extremely rocky, it would, I suppose, in most cases, be impossible to till the ground; but the Negroes entertain, in general, a strong aversion to what they call our new-fangled notions—thus they persist in resisting the use of the churn, and prefer the infinitely more tedious process of shaking the milk in a bottle, or beating it with two sticks, till it has acquired the consistence of butter. Some, indeed, have introduced a simple machine fitted up with sticks, but I believe it is by no means common.

Another innovation, which they strenuously opposed, was the treadmill. On its first arrival, the Negroes, ignorant of its use, were eagerly assisting to bring this strange machine on land; but no sooner was its nature suspected, than one

and all instantly desisted and fled, leaving the object of their terror upon the beach, and neither threats nor commands could for a long time induce them to bring it on shore. It has since been put up at Hamilton, but the Negroes entertain the utmost horror of this species of punishment.

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## LETTER XI.

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April 26th.

ON the 23rd of April, Sir Charles Ogle, the admiral on the station, gave an elegant fête at Clarence Hill, in honor of the king's birth-day. You will be no less surprised at our courage than at our persevering loyalty, when I tell you that we had to go a distance of four miles in an open row-boat, without a breeze to carry us forward, or a moon to guide us.—The stars however shone brightly, and as the weather was very fine, we rather enjoyed our expedition. Supper was laid for an hundred persons, in a room fitted up like a tent; a number of beautiful flags were disposed in tasteful drapery, and at the upper end there was a brilliant transparency

of the royal arms:—tables were also ranged along the other rooms. Having a long voyage before us, we left about one;—on arriving at the landing-place, we found that our lamp was gone out, and as no other could be procured, we were forced to grope our way in total darkness along a rugged pathway by the sea shore over fragments of rock and low shrubs.

Every body appears much gratified with this entertainment, which is said to be the finest ever given in Bermuda; but it is a pleasure mixed with a feeling of regret, at the approaching departure of Sir C. Ogle, who is shortly to leave the station.

Bermuda is much indebted to him for the great interest which he has taken in the embellishment of its scenery;—he has promised to send from England a large supply of seeds, particularly of the robinia, or locust tree, which is highly ornamental and of rapid growth, and will no doubt prove a valuable timber, as the soil and climate are considered very suitable.



The whaling season has just commenced, and we frequently see an enormous whale, which

“ Hugest of living creatures, on the deep  
Stretch'd like a promontory, sleeps or swims,  
And seems a moving island, and at his gills  
Draws in, and at his trunk spouts out, a sea.”

The whale is most frequently accompanied by its young, against this therefore the whaler hurls his first harpoon, as the dam never abandons it while any appearance of life remains.

On the south coast he approaches within a mile of the shore, where his vicinity tantalizes the eager harpoon of the whalers, who are stationed to give intelligence of his approach; but he takes care to keep outside of the breakers, and I believe he is very seldom caught on this part of the coast.

At Saint George's, however, the chase is carried on with great animation, and the boats go a considerable way out to sea. The whale is generally taken with harpoons, and is pursued chiefly for the oil and bone.

The catching of a whale is a period of rejoicing among the negroes—old and young hasten to the spot to assist in cutting up the flesh, which is reckoned a great dainty among them. At this you will scarcely be surprised when I tell you it is the only fresh meat they get the whole year round. There are, however, many white people, who think a slice of young whale, fried, by no means a despicable dish. The more delicate parts are dressed and passed off upon strangers as beef-steaks or cutlets. From reading the stories of a Greenland whale feast, I conceived a strong prejudice against this sea beef, as the Negroes call it, and having been threatened with a *take-in*, I was always suspicious of any unknown dish;—the other day, however, I was betrayed by the delicious savour of what I imagined to be a cutlet,—a general smile undeceived me, and though I believe I thought it excellent, I could not prevail on myself to taste it again.

When the whaling season is over, turtle

catching, and then grouper fishing, commences, —they are then preserved in ponds, where they are kept till wanted.

You are probably aware that the Bermuda Islands are, in constitution, manners, and habits, very much assimilated with the West Indies, much more so, indeed, than with the North American Colonies.—By an accidental circumstance, however, their insertion was omitted, in the patent of the Bishop of Jamaica, and they were consequently included in the diocese of Nova Scotia. The Bishop has lately announced his intention of coming here in the course of the present month, when he purposes holding a general visitation,—we are in daily expectation of seeing him;—but I have had to pay rather dear for attempting to exercise my nautical knowledge upon some vessels which I saw sailing along the coast—I was anxious to ascertain whether the *Rose* was among them, so, mounting a stone fence, I was busily engaged in examining the sails and rigging,

when, forgetting the unstable foundation on which I stood, my foot slipped, and I was thrown with a large portion of the wall into a bed of prickly pears. The enormous spines and innumerable fine prickles, with which they are covered, entered into my feet, hands and face, and it was with considerable pain and difficulty that they were all extracted.

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## LETTER XII.

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May 6th.

THE bright, the lovely month of May, was ushered in by an unpleasant rainy morning, and a most determined south wind, during which, the atmosphere is always exceedingly dense and heavy :—this wind, I am sorry to find, prevails at this season, and I should think that it must resemble the sirocco of Italy ; it induces a feeling of lassitude and listlessness which indisposes you for all settled occupation ;—books, music, working, or drawing, please only for the moment. This is a miserable state of mind, and I am fully resolved to strive against it, and yet I am unfortunately so acutely sensible of the state of the atmosphere, that I can ascertain by

my feelings, at rising in the morning, from which quarter the wind blows.

In order that you may not fancy that this arises from a foolish nervous excitability, I will mention some of its visible effects upon different objects. In the first place, it is the declared enemy of a lady's frisure, which looks as though she had come out of a vapour bath: also of laces and muslins, which Amanda declares cannot set nice and stiff because it is a south wind; coloured silks, gauzes and gloves, are covered with yellow spots, in spite of every precaution to have them well aired,—the very paper on which I am now writing is so damp that the ink runs as on blotting paper, and I dare say when you receive it, will have turned quite pale and yellow;—the looking-glasses are dimmed with steam,—the doors, windows, every article of furniture feels damp and uncomfortable. My guitar is a most sympathizing companion, and suffers quite as much as its mistress during a south wind. It has once or twice already paid a visit to the con-

vict ships, and wishing the other day to get a screw repaired, I sent it to the silversmith; on enquiring some time after, the man said it was quite out of his line, but that he thought Mr. Harris, the farrier, would do it very nicely.

Well, this is the faithful picture of a *south windy* day in Bermuda, and on such a morning I had the honor of being introduced to Bishop Inglis. When I corresponded with his lordship only a twelvemonth since, on the subject of these very islands, how little did I dream that I should meet him for the first time on their remote shores. Bermuda had ever been to me an object of peculiar interest, and I rejoiced that the Bishop would now find many of his wishes, with respect to the younger Negroes, already anticipated by the flourishing state of the various new schools which the Archdeacon has established since his return.

On Sunday, the second of May, his lordship preached at Paget's, and afterwards held a confirmation of white and coloured persons.

On Wednesday, after examining a white free-school in our parish, the Bishop visited our Negro infant school, accompanied by Dr. Spencer and Mr. Wix, Archdeacon of Newfoundland. It presented a spectacle no less interesting to the eye than gratifying to the heart. Above seventy children were present, some not more than two years old, all arranged in classes. The girls wore their neat pink frocks, with a gaily coloured handkerchief tastefully folded round the head, while their dark expressive eyes, and sable countenances, added a high degree of interest to their appearance in the eyes of an European.

The room was prettily ornamented with flowering branches of the pride of India and palmetto; and when this little band joined in the morning hymn, and knelt down to receive the good Bishop's benediction, I cannot describe the feelings which this scene excited. The children went through their lessons extremely well, and his lordship expressed himself delighted with their proficiency, and with the novelty of the



system, this being the first infant school he had ever seen.

Tell our excellent Duchess, and the other kind friends by whose liberality we have been enabled to establish this school, that I cordially congratulate them on the success which has attended their gifts. I feel an encouraging hope that this, and similar institutions, will lead to a gradual but sure amelioration in the condition and character of the Negro and coloured population, and prepare them for a right use of that emancipation which all feel cannot be far distant.

Though I would offer to the adult Negro every facility for acquiring instruction, I think the great stress should be laid on the education of the younger children. With minds still unfettered by prejudice or uncontaminated by the influence of bad example, we may hope that, being taken in hand so early, religion will find in them a more genial soil, and that with the heavenly guidance they will grow up beautiful plants of

holiness, adorning this moral and religious wilderness, and making it blossom like the never fading roses of their own fair islands.

It is extremely rare that capital crimes are committed at Bermuda,—a very great sensation has therefore been excited by the trial of two convicts who had made several attempts to murder their officers.

You are, I suppose, aware that 1200 convicts, transported from England, are employed at the public works in the dockyard\*. They are every morning landed at Ireland, being confined to their hulks at night.

Though extremely well fed, and I believe also in every other respect kindly treated, they have lately been very mutinous, and having assaulted their keepers, some of whom were cruelly maimed, it was considered expedient to make an example of two of the ringleaders, who were accordingly

\* A hulk with about 400 Convicts has since my departure, been stationed at St. George's.

executed in sight of their fellow convicts. It is to be hoped that their punishment may have a salutary influence on the others.

Two convicts, whose time has expired, have just been set at liberty; they are now perambulating the islands, and their enlargement spreads more terror than even the late small-pox. Burglary is a crime unknown in Bermuda; few persons, therefore, take the precaution of securing their houses with locks and bolts—indeed, there are many who never think of fastening the doors and windows, but to keep out the wind and rain. Does this not almost recal to mind the times of patriarchal simplicity?

But there is a shade that dims this pleasing picture, which I trust will gradually vanish before the enlightening influence of religious instruction—I mean the petty pilfering which is so common among the Negroes, and which till lately was looked upon by very many as a perfectly venial offence. There is, however, an increasing conviction of its guilt, and the open

effrontery with which it was formerly practised, and the systematic prevarication to which the Negroes resorted, when detected, are now every day becoming less frequent.

I was pleased to hear from the Bishop, that he had been assured by persons, who formerly considered it a matter of course that a large portion of their poultry would be stolen from them, that in the last three years, during which period greater attention had been paid to the instruction of the slaves, they had not lost a single fowl. This encourages a hope that some improvement has already been wrought in the character of the people, and by perseverance we may trust that much more may still be effected.

I can only say that I have never missed a single article of any description, though my room is so situated as to be accessible to any one who may feel disposed to enter the open door and carry off whatever may be lying about.

An interesting circumstance occurred at Warwick Church, where the Bishop held a confirma-

tion. At an early hour in the morning, the Archdeacon presented his deed of manumission to an industrious slave, whom he had enabled to work out his freedom: soon after he baptised him—at ten he was married to a respectable young woman, and at eleven he set the seal to his Christian profession by a public confirmation—a series of important events which are but rarely crowded into the history of a day.

I love the little quiet church of Warwick—there is something extremely simple and decorous in the manners of the people; and the blacks, who attend it in crowds, seem most attentive to the service: there is not a wandering eye, and I often feel that the earnestness of their devotions might put to shame the listless behaviour of many in our churches in England.

The accommodation for the blacks is so confined, that many are obliged to remain outside, thronging the doors and windows. Some, more fortunate than the rest, are able to follow the service in their prayer-books, and you generally

hear them reading aloud for the benefit of their companions. There was some talk of a petition from the Negroes for the enlargement of their seats, but I am happy to say that a handsome sum has been collected for the building of an entire new church, which is to furnish ample room for the whole congregation.

The Negroes have, at their own expense, laid out a very good burying-ground, as they are not permitted to be interred in the churchyard belonging to the whites. It lies in a cedar grove, planted with rows of trees, and has some neat tombstones. The same solemnities, however, usual at the funeral of a white person, are observed at theirs; and the whole of our beautiful burial service is read over the body—a custom which, I believe, has been introduced only within the last few years.

While walking round the churchyard, the clerk, who is a free Negro, and a highly respectable person, came up and begged that I would come and see his *missis*. I had often

been struck, in passing, with the romantic situation of his little cottage, which lies on the brow of a chain of green hills, bending over the margin of a quiet lake, in the very nook where Gainsborough would have placed it; but so completely is it enshrined in a grove of magnificent orange and shaddock trees, that you would never discover its existence but for the dazzling image of its white porch in the lake beneath, or the burnished lustre of its little casement as it reflects the beams of the setting sun.

The interior was perfectly unique, and, as our English cottagers would say, in apple-pie order: the floor was brightly polished—a cedar table, and half a dozen chairs, were ranged round the white-washed walls, on which hung a looking-glass, some gaily-coloured prints, in showy gilt frames—and in one corner sparkled a sort of Dutch cupboard, filled with old-fashioned basins and tea-pots, with a silver ladle to boot—all bearing evidence to the notable housewifery of his dear Elsy. The room was

scented with the delicious perfume of the oranges which she was employed in making into marmalade ; she appeared much pleased when I accepted her invitation to taste some ; and, without disparagement to our Scotch marmalade, I must do Elsy the justice to say that I never tasted any that excelled hers.

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## LETTER XIII.

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May 22nd.

IN consequence of the arrival of the new admiral, Mr. Colpoys, and several of the fleet, there has been a public sale, or bazar, for the Society for the Promotion of native Industry. It is under the superintendence of some excellent ladies, whose object is to provide a sale for the works of native manufacture, of which the profits are returned to the maker for the purchase of fresh materials. There was a large display of palmetto, in plat, which finds a ready sale in the navy; also a variety of palmetto baskets, of singularly elegant forms, hats, trays, mats, arrowroot, Bermudian preserves, &c. and some beautiful specimens of cedar. The ladies had contributed drawings and fancy work, the proceeds of which

were given to the industrious poor. The sale produced above 100*l.* currency.

The ladies have also erected, by subscription, two school houses in the parishes of Devonshire and Pembroke, for poor white children, whom they personally instruct every Sunday. The schools are well conducted, and are in connexion with the Industry Society.

In the evening we accompanied the Bishop and Archdeacon Wix to visit a great natural curiosity called the Sand Hills, which lie in our parish, about a mile and a half to the west of Roselands. It is a vast accumulation of sand, occupying an extent of several acres, and rising into considerable hills. As it is constantly receiving fresh supplies from the sea, it is daily encroaching further inland, and some cottages, which only a few years ago were at a considerable distance from it, are now nearly buried. The upper strata of sand are loose and shifting, and easily set in motion by the wind, so that every gale produces a fresh encroachment

on the land. By the operation of the atmosphere and the glutinous matter washed upon the shore, this sand conglomerates and passes into various calcareous sand and limestone formations, often with so much rapidity, that some persons look upon the Bermudas as altogether of an *airy* formation.

The shore is here more open, and struck me as being rather lower than the rest of the coast. It lies exposed to the south and south-west, and as the prevailing winds are from those quarters, these circumstances may possibly have some influence; for it is remarkable that this distinct accumulation of sand is peculiar to this spot, and to a small bay in Tucker's Town.

As Bermuda however can really not afford to lose even an acre of its territory, I am surprised that no steps are taken to stop the progress of the encroachment, which, in the course of time, will certainly overwhelm many fertile tracts. I have heard it remarked that close plantations of trees invariably check its further inroads, and that

even the maritime shrubs and creepers which abound on the coast, have been found a sufficient barrier. \*

There was something striking in the scene. The sun had already sunk below the horizon and the tops of the distant hills alone caught his last rays—night was quickly setting in, but earth and sea and skies still glowed with all the radiance of our short-lived twilight, which was lingering on the western wave as if loth to quit so fair a world.

The full moon now rose and shewed us the extent of the sandy plain, which looked like a vast field of snow: here rising into considerable hills, there shadowed by the naked branches of a half buried cedar—terminating on one side in the boundless ocean and the distant breakers; on the other, hemmed in by a ridge of dark hills. There was nothing to disturb the silence which

\* This experiment of forming plantations has been adopted, I believe with great success, in Holland, where the *Arundo arenaria* has been very extensively cultivated.

reigned in this solitary place, but the hollow roaring of the surf, and the dashing of the foaming wave as it broke over the rocks.

We retraced our steps and returned to Mrs. Godet's, whose fine large house had an air of Dutch neatness which was truly refreshing. The room was wainscotted with dark cedar, and the floor so highly polished that I was really afraid to get out of my chair, especially after having seen two negro servants fall down, the one with a tray of coffee, and the other in endeavouring to help him up.

Mrs. Godet is descended from an old Dutch family, and her grandfather was at one period the only Clergyman for all the Islands of the Bermudas, and this at a very low remuneration.

Bermuda now enjoys the advantage of having six clergymen for the nine parishes, into which it is divided; and on occasion of the bishop's visitation, which was held at Pembroke church, on Ascension day, there were present two archdeacons and ten other clergymen—the largest

number ever assembled in this little colony. At his lordship's last visit, in 1826, he met here only three.

On the same day there was also an ordination—one clergyman was admitted into priest's, and another into deacon's orders. The number of communicants amounted to nearly two hundred, and the whole of the interesting services of the day was concluded by a confirmation of some additional candidates, who were all persons of colour.

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## LETTER XIV.

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June 9th.

THE bishop sailed on the 23rd of May, with Sir Charles Ogle, Archdeacon Wix, and Sir Peregrine Maitland, who returns convalescent. To the greatest courtesy and urbanity of manner, the bishop unites all the grace and dignity of the clerical character, and he is much and deservedly beloved by all classes. His lordship expressed himself highly gratified with the general improvements which have taken place since his visit four years ago.

At that time there was not a coloured person, in connection with the church of England, who was receiving any regular instruction—but now schools have multiplied in every corner of Bermuda, owing chiefly to the exertions of

Archdeacon Spencer, who has for many years watched over the interests of the church in these remote Islands.

To a mind inheriting the varied and classic talents of his highly gifted father, the archdeacon unites an ardent zeal for the welfare of the people committed to his spiritual guidance,—and though brought up amid all the elegancies which the most refined society of our metropolis can afford, has become a willing minister in this distant field of missionary labour. His path has been one of no ordinary difficulty, but, by his conciliatory and temperate conduct, he has gained the esteem of the master and the grateful attachment of the slave.

Since our arrival last August, he has founded a free school for poor white children, and three day schools for those of slaves and people of colour, besides several Sunday schools; a large building has also been fitted up at Saint David's, which contains separate school-rooms for whites



and negroes, and a chapel and dwelling house for a catechist. For the means to carry on the negro schools he is indebted to the assistance of the 'Society for the Conversion of Negroes,' and to the 'Ladies' Society for the early Education of Negro Children.' The schools for the whites are principally maintained at the expense of the 'Society for the Propagation of the Gospel,' and the 'Society for promoting Christian Knowledge.'

One of our negro day schools is conducted by a young female slave, of exemplary character and considerable acquirements. By employing her talents in teaching the little slaves in her neighbourhood, she has been for several years the chief support of her kind and aged mistress, who is upwards of eighty years old, poor and almost friendless. To her, Maria is as a daughter, and as you have been so generously endeavouring to obtain the means for purchasing her freedom, you will, I think, be pleased with some account of a visit which I have just paid to this excellent young woman.

Passing the picturesque Lake of Warwick we proceeded by a winding path, bounded on one hand by groves of cedar, and on the other by the Great Sound, which brought us to the door of Maria's neat cottage.

On entering, I was much struck by the appearance of the little group, some repeating the lessons which were hung round the walls, others engaged at work. Maria herself was an interesting object. Her tall slim figure was wrapped in a full plaid mantle, and the deep olive of her complexion set off by a showy turban; her countenance is exceedingly pleasing, and more expressive of the Asian than the negro. She was surrounded by her little flock; and, as a proof that the negroes, and especially the children, are not so deficient in intellect as some have supposed, I must tell you of a little fellow, about three years old, who repeated a number of hymns, the Ten Commandments, and Lord's Prayer, and, besides answering a variety of ques-

tions, read portions of Mrs. Trimmer's Spelling-book.

Last Friday we went on a visit to Mrs. Trott, whose house really deserves its name of Vermont, for it stands in the midst of evergreen hills, and commands a splendid view over all the southern coast—Ireland, Somerset, and nearly fifty other islands.

We could distinctly trace the natural break-water of coral which encircles the whole group of the Bermudas, and defends its low shores from the violence of the sea. Along the south coast, this zone runs at an inconsiderable distance from the land, and when the long heaving waves are driven by the fury of the tempest against this barrier, they often present the most magnificent spectacle which a marine view can afford.

To the right and left, far as the eye can reach, you see these huge billows rolling towards the shore, till their further progress is stopped by the reefs; here, collecting all their strength, they

rise in graceful curves—their foaming crests hang suspended over the breakers—and as they play and dance in the sunbeams, sparkle like brilliants—till the mass of water falls at length from its own weight, and the whole of this fairy frostwork is lost in the quiet waters of the shore.

Mrs. Trott is related to Mr. Green, who was one of the Judges of the Admiralty Court, established here during the war. He appears to have been a very industrious artist, and many of his paintings are preserved with much care. Some of the portraits are really well done, and the rich hooped brocade dresses, Mechlin ruffles, and jewels, impress you with a favourable idea of the former wealth and consequence of the Bermudians.

The absence of tradition, and of all monuments of the olden time, is to me a great drawback upon the charms of Bermuda. I was, therefore, doubly anxious to see some inscriptions said to have been carved in the rock by the Spaniards,

on their first landing in Bermuda. We were directed to the vicinity of a small bay, on the south coast, defended by an old rusty cannon; but, after beating about among prickly pear and sage bushes, climbing over piles of rocks, and opening paths where I suppose no European had been since the days of the Spaniards, we were obliged to give up the search. Being much fatigued, we sat down in a quiet nook, where I endeavoured to console myself for my disappointment by taking a sketch of the pretty scenery on the Duck's Pond.

We discovered several indications of caverns, but all this part of the coast is so thickly overgrown with the sage-bush, which forms a closely matted underwood, that we were unable to trace them up. In some of the many secluded bays, we started innumerable flocks of sea-birds.

We afterwards visited a curious and beautiful natural fish-pond, near Harrington Sound, belonging to Mr. Trott. It is above thirty feet deep in some places; the sides, which are over-

grown with various shrubs and wild flowers, are formed of a stalactite rock, through which there must be a communication with the sea, as it always ebbs and flows with it. We saw in it some hundreds of fish—large turtles, groupers, angel-fish, cowpilot, &c.

We also walked over to Mr. Peniston's, who supplies the navy with fresh meat. His extensive and well-kept stalls, in a country like this, where both the cattle and provender must be imported, are well worth seeing. Some of the oxen are very large; and, I believe, are all brought from the United States.

We returned home by way of the Flatts, which lie in the main road leading to the Ferry, near a beautiful bay formed by the waters of Harrington Sound. The Flatts are separated from the opposite shore, which is however a part of the main-land, by a narrow channel, over which a wooden bridge has been thrown; it is about thirty feet long, and is supported by three stone piers—in the accompanying sketch the

bridge is indicated by the wooden crosses which are placed at the extremity.

The peculiar flux and reflux of the tide in Harrington Sound was pointed out to us in this channel, which is the only visible communication it has with the sea. The spring tides, which on the other coasts of Bermuda rise five feet, in Harrington Sound rise only twenty-three inches, and the neap tides, which out of the Sound rise four feet, within it rise only three inches.

This circumstance is accounted for by the extensive caverns and grottos which abound in the vicinity of the Sound, and by the subterraneous communication on the south-east side, which is perhaps connected with Castle Harbour, and probably situated above the influence of the neap tides.

On Sunday we went to Harris' Bay Church, which lies at the bottom of a deep valley. It is rather an old building, and not having any steeple, the bell is hung from a fine cedar tree. The church contains an ancient carved cedar

screen, and a monument to the memory of Judge Green, who died in 1802.

Near the church is an admirable Sunday school, taught by a coloured woman, of the name of Sally Socco. Mistress Socco, besides ranking very high as a teacher, is a good-hearted dame, and her yellow face is always lighted up by a smile. She is also famous for her delicious syllabubs; and, as her little cottage lies among the most romantic scenery, every one makes a point of paying her a visit.

Tempted by the fineness of the evening, we went, with a party, without sending the usual notification. Mistress Sally was in her garden, resting after the labours of the day; on seeing us, she approached very leisurely, and twirling her apron-string, told us, with many smiles and curtsies, that we had put her to a *non plus*, and that we must come again some other evening, when she would make the finest syllabub in Bermuda.

We are now in the middle of June, and the



weather is getting rather warmer. The thermometer is generally not above 75° in the shade, and yet the air feels so close and oppressive, that you could almost fancy that the clouds were resting on the tops of the cedars. Do not, however, imagine that my partiality for Bermuda is in any way diminished—the truth is, that, unlike our English seasons, May and June are far from being the most agreeable months in the year,—many call them the sleepy months. However this may be, I assure you, that, with the exception of an occasional siesta, or a lounge in a Spanish hammock, I do not indulge myself in the least. Though we seldom creep under our mosquito net till the witching hour of night, I am up by five; and, till within these few mornings, Miss Parker, with Ella and myself, always rambled for an hour or two before breakfast along the shore; not indeed to listen to the sea-maid's music, but to watch the waves breaking over the reefs, and to laugh at the long-legged crabs scrambling among the rocks.

Formerly, too, I amused myself with collecting plants; but, alas, alas! all my labours in the cause of Flora have been miserably disappointed. The plants, which I took such infinite pains to gather, and which I fondly hoped were safely deposited in the *Silvia*, and on their voyage to England, found their way back in a very mysterious manner, about a month after. The Lentipes, whom I dispatched with the box, arrived too late for the vessel; and having thrown it down on the sea-shore, it remained there for some weeks, so that everything has been spoiled. But this is not the whole of my grievance;—all my dried plants have been destroyed by the ants and the south wind, and I fear the weather is getting too warm for me to attempt collecting any more;—I must, therefore, try what I can do about seeds for Mr. Lambert.

## LETTER XV.

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St. George's, July 25th.

HERE am I dating my letter at sun-rise; not from ostentation, I assure you, but because this is really the only part of the day, except the evening, when it is possible to write or think, or indeed do anything with tolerable comfort. Not that the heat is so excessive, but that the dead and stirless calm which has continued for the last fortnight, makes us feel the heat more sensibly. We are now in the dog-days, and I hear that this lifeless weather generally prevails at this season. A gentleman from St. Vincent's, who was with us last night, told me that he finds the heat much more oppressive here than even in that island, in consequence of this total absence of wind.

The morning is quite lovely, and I congratu-

late myself on having shaken off my drowsiness, that I might indulge not indeed in the 'early devious morning walk,' but in the far greater pleasure of writing to you.

You will perceive by the date that I am once more in St. George's, and though I have seen much beautiful scenery during nearly a twelve month's absence, I am free to confess that my first impression has not been at all weakened. Indeed it is scarcely possible for anything to be more lovely than the view I am at this moment enjoying. Far beneath me, lies the town of St. George's, with its white roofed houses and sober tinted foliage, still buried in shade, while the distant hills, and the islands which float on the blue and moveless waters, are gradually receiving the first rays of the rising sun. Here and there a fisherman is casting loose his boat, and spreading the sail which hangs idly down the mast.

I am again staying at Rosehill, with the amiable family of Mr. William Tucker, for whose

affectionate kindness I cannot be sufficiently grateful; the remembrance of it will ever be associated with some of my happiest days in Bermuda.

The house has an air of English comfort, which I have seen only in two or three others in Bermuda. In general the offices for the coloured domestics are wretched; this, perhaps, is owing to the proprietors having about them a greater number of slaves than they can possibly employ. They very rarely have distinct departments assigned to them, and three or four are often engaged for a whole day upon a work which one good English servant would accomplish in a few hours.

This superfluity of half working, half idling servants, is the grand source of all the complaints we hear about the intolerable laziness of the negroes. I have often been amused to see a little curly-pated vixen, when desired to perform some task which she disliked, scamper up a cedar-tree with the agility of a monkey, and re-

main rocking herself upon a branch till she chose to come down. If a poor old dame is burthened with half a dozen of these wild slaves, what can she possibly do? She is obliged to support them—her household is distracted—no one will purchase or employ them, and she is forced to join in the universal confession, that the evils of slavery have fallen with a double weight of calamity upon the master.

Much, however, might be done towards remedying this state of things, by giving the negroes some sense of home comforts. I will not allude here to the few more opulent families, who are of course enabled to make their domestic arrangements on a more extensive scale; and even in speaking of the middling class of whites, I would do so with some qualification, for a year's residence in Bermuda has shewn me the privations which even these are obliged to endure.

Manners and society are of course very differently constituted in a colony from what they are

in the same ranks of life at home ; but even in respectable families, comforts, which we consider indispensable, are looked upon as luxuries which none but the wealthy can command. Their incomes are in general very limited ; and, for a colony, living is upon the whole expensive.

The trials and vexations of house-keeping, especially in the country, and in the absence of any regular market, are such as none but those who have had some experience in these matters can conceive. Schiller's *tüchtige Hausfrau* must hide her diminished head before the labours of her sister housewife in Bermuda. She, in the first place, has no handy maidens at her behest, but is perhaps burthened with three or four dawdling women, whose noisy half-clad children, fighting and crawling about, add to the difficulty of maintaining anything like order.

The heat of the climate, too, renders it impossible to keep a supply of meat : the morrow must consequently be provided for, and the Bermudian housewife has to ascertain when Mr.

Such-a-one kills a calf, or Mrs. So-and-so a young kid; or, if the weather should be boisterous, what she can have in place of fish; and her next anxiety is whether her caterer will return in time for dinner. A lady told me that having unexpectedly to provide for a large dinner party, she had been obliged to telegraph for a turkey to a friend who lived on an adjoining island.

The duties of the store-room are never ending—still beginning; and as pantries are generally built detached from the house, a Bermudian lady has to walk backwards and forwards through the sun or the rain twenty times a day, for negro servants seldom think beforehand of what may be wanted. In fact, they seem to prefer applying for every individual article as they find that they require it, and she is in most cases obliged to attend herself, as there are but few negro servants who are not given to pilfer sugar, sweetmeats, and similar trifles.

When all these preliminaries are at length settled, the daily business of laying the cloth



must be revised. It is very rare that even those who pretend to understand something of waiting at table have not omitted some necessary article, or made some ludicrous blunder.

One day while staying at a friend's house, having occasion to pass through the dining-room previous to a dinner party, I was not a little amused to see the arrangement of the table, as superintended by a new servant. In the centre stood the cruet encircled with a ring of water-glasses, and beyond it another of tumblers. The corners of the table were, in the same manner, each formed into a centre, composed of a decanter and salt cellars encompassed with a circle of wine-glasses, while the knives, forks, and spoons were laid in Vandyke patterns round the table, with here and there a plate by way of relief.

In waiting, too, the hostess has constantly to dread some silly blunder. A gentleman told me, that at a large dinner party which he gave to some admiral, he desired the negro servant to bring an additional finger-glass. After wait-

ing a considerable time, the man at length walked in, carrying on his head a huge earthen foot-pail, filled with water, which he was about to place on the table to the no small amusement of the company.

For strict discipline, there is perhaps also too much familiarity between the master and the slave. The negro is a grateful, kind-hearted creature, and to attach him there must be a condescension of manner—an affectionate interest in all his little concerns—but if once you overstep this line, you give an advantage of which, especially, an uneducated negro is but too ready to avail himself.

The white children are very fond of their black nurses; and I have met with some pleasing instances where this affection has been mutually cherished during a separation of many years. The negroes, however, are for the most part very injudicious managers; for though they certainly understand the art of putting a child into good humour, they do so at the hazard of

spoiling his temper; for they give him every thing he cries for, and if this does not pacify him, one woman will dance him on her knee, while another sings and jumps and plays about. All this, of course, diverts baby excessively, and the negroes seem to enjoy this sort of merriment quite as much as the child. Then, too, they always have something nice to bestow, and therefore, as the children grow up, they still continue to follow them about; this it is difficult to prevent, as the servants' offices are close to the house, which always stands open; and from this constant intercourse with the negroes, the children contract that disagreeable Creole drawl which few ever entirely lose.

The blacks are fond of gaiety, and would on no account miss one of the many balls which they are in the habit of giving among themselves; they are most common in Saint George's, where I was sorry to hear they are frequently graced by the presence of the officers of the garrison.

To make a smart appearance at these fêtes, the wardrobes of their mistresses, the obliging supplies of the laundress, and the newest fashions, are eagerly sought; and often not very honorably obtained.

I was told by an officer, who had been present at an entertainment given by the king and queen of the blacks, that when dancing was over, the company was ushered into the supper-room, where a table was set out covered with a profusion of cakes, preserves, wine, &c.; that the black women appeared in full costume, lace, satin and flowers; and that, in short, every thing was conducted with the same state as in the higher circles of society. They had Spanish dances and quadrilles, country dances not being considered genteel.

The negroes are generally very well made, and have great freedom in their movements, which is probably owing to their loose, unconstrained dress when young; and I have seen negro women, during the Gombey revelry, move

in the dance on the lawn with an ease which really surprised me.

A good deal of attention has been excited here by the formation of Temperance Societies in America, and several of the inhabitants some time ago established one in Bermuda, chiefly with the view of checking the prevailing vice of drunkenness among the negroes.

To give additional weight to their arguments, several gentlemen have resolved not merely to abstain from spirits, but also to refrain from the use of wine at their own table. Spirits are very cheap, and a person may, for a mere trifle, indulge in this destructive propensity.

I was one day speaking to a well informed slave, who, from principle, never tastes rum, and was much struck with his reply to my question, whether he intended to become a member of the Temperance Association. 'It is an excellent Society,' said he; 'but, to my mind, a

man who knows the Bible does not want a higher sanction to keep from drinking.'

A great change, I am assured, has already taken place in the conduct of several individuals since they have joined the society.

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## LETTER XVI.

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St. George's, August 3d.

\* \* \* \* In the cool of the evening we generally enjoy a sail among the islands in the harbour, and you would be amused to see me sitting at the helm, and steering the boat. Boating is certainly one of the greatest attractions in Bermuda, and as there are more frequent opportunities for it in Saint George's, I shall miss it much when I return to the country.

I have been much pleased with our excursion to Walsingham, one of the most captivating spots in Bermuda, which lies close to Paynter Vale, on the banks of Castle harbour. It is buried amid luxuriant foliage, and completely enshrined in an angle formed by two hills which rise abruptly out of a tall rampart of

rocks, and make the best background scenery I have observed here.

While the boat is sailing into the quiet inlet, the eye is regaled with the beautiful coral and sandy bottom; here presenting patches of bright yellow and purple, and there again of the softest blue.

A long avenue of overarching cedars forms the approach to the old farm-like looking house which stands between two picturesque lakes. On one of these a merry party of negro women, with baskets of fruit, were rowing themselves over to our side. As soon as they got out, it was determined to pull their boat over the lawn, and set it afloat in the other lake, that we might visit Moore's calabash tree and the caverns, for which this place is famous. We named this little lagoon the wild pigeon lake, from the numerous flocks of these birds which here find a safe retreat.

Amid the wildest scenery we scrambled over craggy rocks, overgrown with the coffee-plant



and other wild flowers, till we found ourselves at the entrance of a large and magnificent grotto. The stalactitic columns and pendent drops, which hang down in perfect and brilliant crystals, are seen in every stage of their formation, of infinite number and beauty, and of various sizes; some sparkling like diamonds, others dimmed by the flare of the blue lights and torches, which the guides generally carry to heighten the effect. I have procured some fine specimens of the limestone formations, of which these caverns are composed.

The Reverend Richard Tucker, who resides at Walsingham, took me to see Moore's celebrated calabash. It is a noble tree, with wide-spreading branches rising in vaults and arches from its large and strangely-twisted trunk, and was covered with blossoms and pendent fruit; some still in flower, some hanging down in large gourds. A party of officers had been there the day before, and I was sorry to see the ground bearing witness to the spoliations they had com-

mitted. It is a pity that so picturesque and interesting an object should be thus wantonly injured.

There was a rustic seat placed in a charming little nook near the lake, among broken rocks, overgrown with the passion flower, various species of fern, aloes, poison weed, and many plants which were new to me. Vegetation here is very luxuriant; the orange, lemon, lime, citron, and olive, are magnificent. There were also fragrant avenues of the pride of India, plantations of indigo, banana and arrowroot,—all rejoicing in spontaneous beauty in the goodness of that Power which had made them so fair.

Vaghi boschetti di soavi allori,  
 Di palme, e di amenissime mortelle,  
 Cedri ed aranci, che avean frutti e fiori  
 Contesti in varie forme, e tutte belle,  
 Facean riparo ai fervidi calori  
 De' giorni estivi con lor spesse ombrelle.

I could have lingered for hours amid the romantic scenery of this retreat: my interest in its natural beauties was heightened by pleasing

associations of the moral culture which is bestowed on above a hundred negroes, who throng from the vicinity to attend the Sunday school, which is kept in a small building on the lake.

We returned to St. George's by starlight, which is uncommonly brilliant in Bermuda. The stars seemed to dance upon the waves as they splashed over the rocks, and at times we could scarcely distinguish their sparkling reflection from the innumerable phosphorescent fish which glistened round the boat.

The St. Georgians are most kind in their attentions, and notwithstanding the warm weather are making up several parties on my account. At a dinner, a few evenings ago, we were alarmed by the appearance of a large centipede in the drawing-room, and I was not a little surprised to see a very delicate lady take up a thick club and deliberately combat with this formidable antagonist till she had gained a complete victory.

I spent an agreeable evening with the family

of Mr. Maturin, a brother of the poet, who holds a situation in the commissariat. I have also paid several visits to Ordnance island, a strange little place, which lies only a few yards from St. George's, and is entirely occupied by one or two magazines and the extensive mansion of Mr. Phillips, the ordnance storekeeper. He has a large and very valuable collection of the natural curiosities of Bermuda; his specimens of the coral are the most beautiful I have yet seen.

A syllabub party, which Mrs. Phillips was so good as to make up, gave me an opportunity of seeing St. David's. Here are some fine patches of arrowroot; also mills, which are an improvement upon the former method of preparing this root. In some parts of the country it is still made in the old fashion, which is an extremely tedious operation. After the root has been carefully cleansed and grated, it is washed through sieves of different sizes, and then laid upon large China dishes to dry in the sun.

Arrowroot prepared in this manner formerly

sold for a dollar a pound : this was considered the best way to obtain a pure light starch ; but the manufacturers of arrowroot by the new method say that starch made by the old process is liable to fermentation, and that the hand-mills are a decided improvement. The starch (as it is generally called here) is certainly much cheaper now than formerly, and the very best may be purchased at a quarter dollar a pound.

The Bermuda arrowroot possesses one great advantage over the West Indian ; it is not adulterated, for cassava is scarce, and flour expensive. The arrowroot grown on St. George's and David's islands is considered the finest, as it is cultivated on a limestone soil, on which it thrives best.

The arrowroot has lightish green leaves, not unlike those of the lily of the valley ; they do not proceed from one common stem, but each separate leaf grows immediately from the root. The stalk, which from its resemblance to an arrow has given its name to the plant, rises in a single shaft to the height of two or three

feet, and is surmounted by a tuft of pale green flowers, which, as they drop off, are succeeded by a bunch of small berries.

The arrowroot is planted like the potato, and when ripe, which is indicated by the withering of the leaves, it is taken out of the ground, and the end of the root broken off and reserved for the next planting. This root is put into the ground in the spring, and taken up in the autumn. About fifty-one acres are cultivated with arrowroot, which, next to cedar, is the staple commodity of Bermuda.\*

It is rather singular, that arrowroot is held in but small estimation by the Bermudians, and even the negroes think it fit only for starching muslins and laces. Few really like it, except when made into puddings and cakes. The latter are delicious, and Gunter himself can produce none to excel those made by some of the negro women. But even here there are arcana in the science, which are known only to a favoured

\* During the year 1834, about thirty tons of arrowroot were imported into this country from Bermuda.

few. I was anxious to adventure my skill, and prevailed upon Mistress Piny to initiate me into the mysteries, but I completely failed, and only produced a combination of soft lead and floating sugar.

There is a large school-house belonging to the Society for the Conversion of Negroes. It likewise contains a chapel, where many persons, who are unable to cross over to attend church at St. George's, assemble from different parts of the island. We went into a pretty garden containing many West Indian plants—the mamme-apple, the aligator-pear, &c. It is really a pity that these productions of an almost sister climate, so pleasing to the eye, and grateful to the taste, are not more generally cultivated here. We passed a quarry of the yellow limestone which is found in this island. It has a fine grain, and receives a good polish. The late commissioner has had a handsome bath made of it by the convicts at Ireland, which has all the effect of marble.

## LETTER XVII.

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St. George's, August 12th. .

\* \* \* \* I was anxious to see the tomb of Sir George Somers, which is generally said to be still preserved in the government gardens, but on enquiring of a gentleman who has paid some attention to the history of Bermuda, he told me that during the time of his holding some public office, it was determined to examine the supposed tomb. It was opened in the presence of the mayor, and found to contain only fragments of glass, &c., but no indication of human remains.

It is probable that Sir George is interred in the parish church, where there is still a monument which was erected to his memory by one of the earlier governors.—I send you a copy of



the epitaph as a specimen of the poetry of the age.

. . . . . " In the year 1611  
Noble Sir George Somers went hence to heaven,  
Whose noble well tried worth that held him still employed,  
Gave him the knowledge of the world so wide ;  
Hence 'twas by heaven's desire, that to this place  
He brought new guests, and name to mutual grace.  
At last his soul and body being to part,  
He here bequeathed his entrails and his heart."

The fashionable, indeed the only walk in St. George's, is the ferry-road ; there are some pretty views, and being on the water-side it is pleasantly cool in the evening ; but we generally prefer the wild scenery on the north side of the island, where the navy tanks are situated.

From these there is a fine military road leading across Retreat-hill. I did not go in, but I was told that this place is perforated like an ant-hill with subterranean excavations, to which, in the event of a hostile attack, an army might retreat and make it a point of annoyance to the enemy, if he should already have made himself master of the fort.

Besides the regular garrison a company of artillery is stationed here, and also one of miners and sappers, who are employed upon the various public works carrying on. Another detachment of infantry is expected, and as the present barracks are too confined, various large buildings have been hired for the accommodation of the officers and men till their final destination for the town of Hamilton, Ireland, or St. George's, is determined. There is no garrison whatever on the principal island, and it is therefore probable that part of the new regiment will be removed thither.

The heat is now excessive, and I was rather amused by the remark of an officer's lady, who has just arrived from New Brunswick, that she had been forced to surrender to the climate. The thermometer is 87° and 89°. What then will you say to our taste when I tell you that we were at two dinner parties last week, with a thick Turkey carpet under our feet, and hot turtle soup steaming in our faces.

The most pleasant time for walking or riding is from six to eight—then breakfast; after this, none but those who are obliged by business, stir out till four or five, when the air is rather cooler, and from that hour till almost any time at night it is quite delicious; that is to say, if there is any breeze, otherwise the heat is even more trying and oppressive than during the day. On a moonlight night the temptation to stroll about the gardens and sea shore is very great, but often attended with risk, as the dews are heavy.

The best way to escape rheumatism, which is very common here, is to avoid unnecessary exposure to the sun, and when heated to get out of the currents of air which in a Bermudian house are always blowing upon you. I was recommended, when heated by exercise or exposure to the sun, to shut up my room, so as to exclude a thorough draught, and lie down under the net for a short time. An entire change of dress is also very refreshing, and by attending to these simple precautions I have

escaped the much dreaded rheumatics and dandy fevers.

The very lightest description of dress is worn at this season—white muslin is the most appropriate to the climate, and also the most economical ; for coloured chintzes and gingham after having been washed, and worn in the sun for only a short sime, look quite faded and shabby.

Both climate and laundress are in league to destroy your wardrobe. In the first place, every thing gets covered with iron-moulds, which are soon converted into holes. The most common mode of washing, is by beating the linen on the rocks along the sea shore ; and then no entreaties will induce the washerwoman to relax aught of the quantum of starch which the Negroes consider indispensable to produce a handsome appearance. Hence the ladies frequently look as if they were hewn out of rock salt.

I was much interested by seeing two large, and several smaller water spouts hanging over St. David's island this morning. They sailed

before the wind with great rapidity, raising a considerable swell in the sea immediately beneath them. The edges of the large ones were black and strongly defined, while the centre, which was almost white, was agitated by a quick spiral motion, as if the clouds were drawing up water from the sea, in a sort of canal. They looked like tapering columns resting on the ocean as their basis, and supporting the massive dome of clouds that rose above them.

Since my stay in St. George's I have been amusing myself with learning the telegraph signals, and I have just been rewarded by seeing the welcome basket and flag hoisted which announces the arrival of the packet. The packet always puts in here, so that I may expect in a few hours the happiness of hearing from home.

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## LETTER XVIII.

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Somerset, August 24th.

ON returning from Saint George's, we went to visit the island of Somerset, which lies at the western extremity of Bermuda, and is separated from the mainland by a narrow channel, over which a bridge is thrown. The road is extremely varied and picturesque, and less disfigured than the rest of Bermuda, by stone fences, which harmonize so ill with the scenery.

After passing the small and neat Presbyterian church, and the quiet lake of Warwick, the road becomes more open, and is skirted with hedges of dark cedar, relieved by the brighter tint of the orange, lemon, palma christi, and olive. The light and graceful foliage of the tamarind alternates with the waving crown

of the palmetto, and the long-pointed leaves and elegant flower-shafts of the *agave americana* which is here erroneously called bamboo. The hills suddenly disappear, and you enjoy an uninterrupted view over the Great Sound, which is a large bason formed by an arm of the sea running into the continent, and is covered with innumerable green islets.

This portion of Bermuda forms a crescent, with its open side towards the north-east. It would almost seem as if the countless verdant plateaux, which lie scattered over the Great Sound, owed their origin to the constant action of the currents, which, meeting with obstruction from the reefs, had deposited on their ragged tops, fragments of coral, sea-weed, &c., which, in process of time, raised them above the surface; while the mould, gradually formed by the decay of drifted vegetation, prepared a soil for the various seeds which here found a resting-place after their long migrations.

If any spot ever deserved the name of 'sea-girt,' it is these lovely islands, which shine like so many emeralds upon the blue and buoyant waves. I had, however, been so long lost amid this sameness of splendour, that it really seemed a relief to look upon the cold bleak hills of Port Royal.

The road winds along the brink of a steep precipice, which overhangs the sea; a ridge of sand-stone hills rises like a wall on the other side, and it is said that some of the highest points of land are to be found in this chain. It was lately proposed to erect, on the signal station of Gibb's Hill, a lighthouse which might serve as a beacon to ships off the coast; but on setting fire to a pile of wood, in order to ascertain how far off the light could be seen, it was found to be discernible only at an inconsiderable distance, and the plan has consequently been abandoned.

We passed the cottage of Tabitha, a negro woman, who is the oldest person in Bermuda. She is above a hundred years of age; and



when the late commissioner paid her a visit some time since, she expressed so much anxiety lest she should not have a decent coffin, that he very kindly had one made, which she constantly keeps in sight, and seems to regard with great interest.

In the more retired bays we started some plovers; otherwise, there was nothing to animate the scene. The road, however, soon became more interesting, and merged into all the pleasing features of a Bermudian landscape. I remarked that, as we approached Somerset, the sides of many of the hills were cultivated, and the aspect of the country was altogether more rural; there were thick fences of Spanish bayonet, a species of aloe, with sharp, sword-shaped leaves and beautiful clusters of white flowers, hedges of cotton and tobacco, plantations of arrowroot, banana, sugar-cane, pepper, guinea corn, &c., enlivened by scattered groups of negroes chanting their wild songs, and carrying provisions and poultry for the supply of the Hamilton

market. I noticed, also, many indications of grottos and caverns along the roadside, some of which were overgrown with brushwood and wild flowers.

Near the sea-shore, I visited a large cavern called Basset's Cave; the entrance is wide, and lies quite exposed: after proceeding a little way, we came to a spring of deep water, in which an unfortunate young man lately drowned himself. He had been missing for some days when his body was discovered by a favorite dog.

There are many fine trees in Somerset, among others, a magnificent calabash laden with above five hundred gourds; some full grown, others just emerging from the bud, and the blossom, which is very pretty, in every stage of expansion. It has a curiously-twisted trunk and branches, and the leaves, resembling those of a magnolia, grow immediately from the wood without any stalks. It covers a large extent of ground, and its vaulted roof recalled to mind the pictures I have seen of the pagoda or banian tree. The

fruit is green, of an oblong form, and when full grown is about eight or nine inches long. It has a smooth rind, and contains a soft pulpy substance, which is said to be poisonous, and is therefore always carefully buried at some depth under ground to keep it from the poultry. The flowers are large, and not unlike those of the stramonium, but with only four stamens, and the calyx like a spathe.

We also visited a delightful retreat called the Grove, which has all the appearance of a snug English cottage. The approach is shaded by an avenue of fine tall forest trees; and scattered clumps of cypress, lime, orange, and magnificent West India locust trees, grow on the smooth verdant lawn.

The predominant family name in Somerset is Tucker; and as the slaves always take the name of their masters, there are Tuckers innumerable. The principal families are descended from the first governor and early proprietors of the colony, and are distinguished by the name of

their property, such as Scower's-hill Tuckers, Tuckers of the bridge, &c.

The August sun burns fiercely, but the delicious coolness of the evenings recruits our spirits, and Ella and I often walk to the bridge to watch the sun dipping his last rays into the sea.

On one hand lies the isle-girt haven, with a long neck of land rising in the background, and contrasting its loneliness with the wild turbulence of the ocean and the lashing of the raging billows that roll through the channel on the opposite side.

No where have I seen such glorious sunsets; there is such a flood of purple and amber in the sky, such radiant vistas of gold and crimson, that you could almost fancy you saw the portals of another world. A Bermudian sunset, however, is as evanescent as it is magnificent; and scarcely has the sun sunk a few degrees below the horizon before all this splendour vanishes; night sets in, the pale moon rises over the distant rocks of Ireland; one after another the constellations appear in the firmament, numerous

shooting stars fall around, the homebound boats glance between the islands, and the cigala begins its shrill song.

There are several wells in Somerset, but the water has a brackish taste, which makes me think that it is merely sea-water filtered through the rock by means of some subterraneous communication. Grottos and caverns abound here, some of which contain springs of cool water.

The stone called Bermuda rock, which forms the basis of nearly the whole group, is a limestone or calcareous sandstone, composed of a congeries of comminuted shells and corals. It is extremely light and porous, and resembles the common Bath building stone, both in softness and in the size of the grain, though it is not truly oolitic, like the Bath stone, the grains being variously shaped and imperfectly rounded.

It is occasionally found to include larger and more perfect specimens of shells; all, however, belonging to recent species: such as the *Venus pensylvanica*, of which, in some places, whole

strata are composed. Vegetable remains are very rare; nor have I met with any fossils, though in some districts the soil closely resembles chalk.

The different varieties of rock are often found combined without any regular order of situation, loose sand being sometimes subordinate to limestone, while in other cases layers of soil are interposed between strata of sand.

Along the sea-shore, this Rock, as it is always called, is piled in large blocks, which in some instances are very regularly stratified. I noticed this especially in the Great Sound, in the vicinity of Somerset and Southampton, where the shore, being more sheltered from the high waves, and less exposed to the constant attrition of the water, the rock projects in large bold masses, which all appear to form the same angle with the horizon. Generally, however, the dip, as well as the direction of the layers, varies considerably, which may perhaps be owing to the drift having taken place at various times and under different circumstances.

The rock lies immediately below the soil, and frequently rises above it: when first taken out of the quarry it is whitish or cream-coloured, and so soft as to be easily cut with coarse saws; but on exposure to the atmosphere it hardens into a very durable material for building, which some years ago formed a considerable branch of the export trade to the United States of America.

The limestone of St. George's is, I believe, different from that found in the other islands; it is of a reddish tint, and burns into a good lime. That of St. David's is yellow, and when polished closely resembles marble. At Ireland, a great deal of the limestone is blasted by the convicts for the public works. What is called hard water is very much like the Gibraltar rock, and receives a beautiful polish. The soil in this island is of a reddish brown, and appears to contain much oxide of iron.

The soil throughout the island generally, is a mixture of clay and sand; in some districts it is

poor and scanty—in others, composed of a rich argillaceous mould, producing luxuriant vegetation.

Sailors have a notion that the Bermudas are floating islands, encrusted with so slight a covering that there would be but little difficulty in breaking it.

The Bermudas are certainly a very singular formation, and it would almost seem from their form and situation as if they owed their origin to some violent convulsion of nature, which had swept away an extensive island, and left only naked and unconnected fragments. What is now actual land is evidently but the elevated portion of a more extensive basis, which is clearly indicated by the innumerable shoals and minor islands.

It has been conjectured that the islands scattered over the Atlantic, are the remains of the Atlantis of Plato, whose account of these 'islands of the blessed,' though mingled with so much fable, probably had some truth for its foundation.



It seems certain that there was a distinct tradition of a large island having once existed near the Straits of Gades, with several others in its vicinity, and beyond them a continent exceeding in extent Lybia and all Asia; that this island, which was called the Atlantis, contained many flourishing and populous cities; and that the whole was swallowed up in remote antiquity by a mighty earthquake which lasted three days.

I make no pretensions to any knowledge of geology; but I think we might easily conceive, that upon this submerged tract the coral worm would commence its labours. We see what vast changes these tiny architects are effecting in the Pacific, where they are raising the foundations of a future world, occupying an extent of many hundred miles.

It is impossible to contemplate these mighty works without admiration and astonishment at the omnipotence of that Being, who has endowed these puny worms with the instinct and power to rear such stupendous fabrics! It makes

us feel the nothingness of all the boasted powers and energies of man, when we see them thus confounded by the weak things of the world.

Large specimens of growing coral abound here. Bermuda may therefore, in the course of ages, assume a more connected form, and the hundreds of islets, which lie at the entrance of the various harbours, be joined to the mainland.

These islets are probably only the craggy tops of the coral reefs, which, lying in the way of the current that is constantly passing through the mouth of the harbours, have been gradually raised above the surface by the accumulation of fragments of coral, seaweed, and drift-wood. Seeds, borne along by the waves, found here a soil on which they could germinate, and in process of time the decaying vegetation prepared a mould for the reception of the cedar, which rises in tufts and groves on all these verdant plateaux.

## LETTER XIX.

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Somerset, September 5th.

AT the further extremity of Somerset is an admirable negro Sunday-school, conducted by a coloured man of the name of Tankard. He is a very good teacher, and crowds of negroes attend him in his cottage; but worthy Mister Tankard, not content with this well-earned fame, aspires to the dignity of a pulpit orator, and having obtained a volume of sermons, has now set up as a preacher, and astonishes the natives by his eloquence.

In speaking to the negroes, and especially in addressing them from the pulpit, the plainest and most intelligible language ought always to be made use of; for they are perpetually misunderstanding and perverting what they hear.

A preacher who makes use of rather hard words in his sermons, said one day, that the bible was the *continent* of all truth and wisdom. Now as none of these simple folks knew anything of Shakspeare, they were very much puzzled to know what the bible had to do with a *continent*. One thought it was because the bible was a big book; another was of opinion it was more like a continent, because many sorts of people were mentioned in it; and a third declared it was because the bible says a great deal about liberty, and is therefore like the continent of America.

But perhaps the best story of the kind is that of a Wesleyan preacher, who was somewhat too grand for his humble congregation. Preaching late one night to a large body of negroes, he frequently made use of the word *nocturnal*. On coming out he overheard a party discussing his sermon, and after sundry remarks, one of them said—‘I say, Joe, how this parson likes *mock turtle*; why he did nothing but talk of it.’

While staying here, I was distressed to see

the ignorance in which hundreds of little negro children were running about; and the benefit of an infant-school immediately occurred to me. The only instruction given to the negroes in this parish is during a few hours on a Sunday at Tankard's cottage; but this is always so crowded that none but the adults in the neighbourhood can attend. I mentioned the plan of establishing a school, to some proprietors, who seemed delighted at the thoughts of getting rid, for some hours in the day, of their noisy little *niggers*.

The archdeacon approving the proposal, a school was immediately opened on the confines of Somerset and Southampton, where the people, though poor, are very anxious for instruction. The children were placed under the care of a kind and primitive sort of dame; and I have no doubt that this little nursery will prove a great benefit to the neighbourhood.

This morning, while reading in my room, I heard some little voices under the window sing-

ing an air which the children in our Paget's infant-school had lately been learning. On listening, I heard them repeat correctly the beautiful hymn which begins 'God is in heaven.' Much surprised, I went out, and found that it had been taught them by one of our little girls, who had lately spent a few days among them.

There is a pleasing desire to communicate, as well as to receive instruction; and this is a great encouragement where our immediate personal influence can be but small.

At the further extremity of Somerset is a picturesque cove, called Mangrove Bay, which is completely overgrown with this singular looking tree. Like the banyan, the mangrove (*rhizophora*) throws out new offsets from its branches which take root in the soil. Fresh shoots continue to proceed from the parent root, which in their turn, spread and ramify in every direction, thus forming a little forest, which protects the shore from the violence of the breakers.

The dominion of the island is a worthy, kind-

hearted man—one of the old school. A few years ago, while on a voyage to America on board a large man-of-war, he was much shocked at the custom of swearing which prevailed on board, and the oaths with which the officers gave even the most trifling orders to the men.

Being a great favourite among the officers, he ventured to remonstrate with them on the impropriety of this habit. ‘The men are so accustomed to it,’ replied they, ‘that unless we enforced our orders by an oath, they would not think that we were in earnest.’

Good Mr. —— ventured to suggest that some expression equally emphatic, and less reprehensible, might be substituted, which would in time acquire all the efficacy of an oath. ‘A bright thought,’ exclaimed the whole party; ‘if you will furnish us with such an expression, we will gladly adopt it.’

Delighted beyond measure at the unexpected success of his proposal, he retired to his cabin and spent several hours in turning over in his

mind a variety of phrases: having at length fixed upon one which appeared most suitable, he hastened to the cabin where the officers were seated at table. ‘ Well, Mr. —, have you thought of a word?’ ‘ I have, gentlemen; suppose you were to say, *Burn my wig!*’ ‘ Capital,’ exclaimed they all; ‘ capital, Mr. —;’ and *burn my wig* became the prevailing phrase during the rest of the voyage, to the infinite satisfaction of the worthy old man, who rejoices in the idea that he has been the happy instrument of abolishing the custom of swearing in his Majesty’s navy.

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## LETTER XX.

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Roselands, September 23d.

ON the birthday of George IV., we received the news of his death; but as it did not come through an official channel, we have only just now gone into mourning. It is very slight, in consequence of the great price as well as scarcity of every article of mourning; and, besides, the weather is almost too hot for black bombazeens. As the sun crossed the line yesterday, we may look forward to the next month as an ample compensation for all our sufferings.

I have just seen some melancholy wrecks, sailing, or rather drifting, along the south coast. They are jury-masted, and seem scarcely able to hold together, after their severe sufferings

during the late fearful hurricane. The newspapers are filled with distressing accounts of the ravages which it has occasioned in different parts of the West Indies.

Our little islands were providentially spared—we had been alarmed by the hollow roaring of the sea, which lasted some days, when it was suddenly succeeded by an unnatural stillness of the air; the sky assumed the peculiar bluish hue which commonly precedes a hurricane. All the hammers, planks, and cordages, were called into requisition, to nail, board, and tie up the doors, gates, and windows, which lay most exposed, and all looked forward with considerable apprehension to the approaching visitation; but only the tail of the hurricane reached us. My little turret chamber rocked to its foundations, and on awaking in the morning, I found that the door had been torn away.

Bermuda is generally visited by a triennial hurricane, which I am told is awfully terrific. Were it not for the distress in which it often

involves many individuals, I must confess that I could almost wish to witness this mighty convulsion of nature.

The thunder and lightning here are very fearful; and a thunder-storm generally comes on without any warning. At times the heavens seem to be rent asunder, and to discover immense globes of fire. The claps are extremely loud, and the reverberation is probably prolonged by the peculiar construction of the Bermudian houses, which, with but few exceptions, are of one story, and have vaulted ceilings, which produces the effect of a music-room.

The Bermudians are excessively afraid of thunder, and many take refuge on a feather-bed till it is over. Houses are often struck by lightning, especially, it is said, such as are situated on the summits of the hills; and this is given as a reason why they are generally built in the low grounds and vallies. A notion prevails here that a house, which has been once struck, is always more liable to attract the lightning, be-

cause that some of the electric matter remains behind.

I must not forget to give you the Bermudian, or rather West Indian, etymology of the word hurricane (*huracan, Spanish*), which is here derived from the rustling or *hurrying* of the wind among the sugar *canes*.

Some of the negroes are very knowing meteorologists. The groom amuses us by his philosophical calculations when we ask his opinion respecting the weather. He throws himself into an attitude of great importance; and after carefully studying the appearance of the sky all round, he will say, 'Why, I guess that if it doesn't rain before half-past twelve, we shall have fine weather till a quarter past three.'

Soon after my return from Somerset, the Archdeacon took me to see Devonshire College, which has lately been erected. Its situation is commanding and picturesque; and, from its eminence, enjoys every breeze that blows over the Atlantic. The school-room is airy and

commodious, and affords ample accommodation for a hundred pupils; and the gardens and play ground, attached to the academy, extend over a hundred and fifty acres.

The plan for this college was proposed above a century ago, by the celebrated Dean, afterwards Bishop, Berkley, for the education of Indian youths, who might be subsequently employed as catechists and missionaries for the conversion of their countrymen in North America. In furtherance of this object a grant of ten thousand pounds, and an endowment of one thousand pounds per annum, were obtained from the British Parliament, besides very considerable contributions from private individuals.

The Dean resolved to vacate his ecclesiastical dignity at home, in order to preside over the institution which his philanthropy had projected; and, accompanied by several clergymen, and some opulent relations, he embarked for Bermuda to lay the foundation-stone of the new college. But being driven by a storm on

the coast of America, they returned to England, after having preached at Boston and other places for some time. Political considerations prevented the execution of the design of erecting the Bermuda College; the parliamentary assistance was withheld, and the money raised by private benefactions was expended in the endowment of a perpetual scholarship in the College of Virginia.

The good Bishop would be gratified could he witness the success which has attended his proposed Institution. Though it has not been established above a year, sixty scholars have already been entered, who are instructed in the Greek and Latin Classics, Mathematics, Geography, &c., by the president, who is a clergyman in full orders, from the university of Oxford. The under-master is a native of France, and there is some intention of sending for a second master from King's College, Windsor, in Nova Scotia.

The funds by which this College has been

erected arose from the following sources:—a grant from the crown of 1000*l.*; a vote from the Colonial Legislature of 1500*l.*; and the produce of the sale of certain lands in three parishes, bequeathed by the Countess of Pembroke, and two other of the original grantees of the island, for the establishment of charity-schools. In accordance with the spirit of these bequests, the law obliges the trustees to provide for the gratuitous education of two poor scholars from each of the parishes whence the lands have been alienated.

Hitherto the inhabitants of Bermuda, the Bahamas, and the West India Islands, who may have been desirous to bestow on their sons a liberal education, have been reduced to the alternative of sending them at a great expense to England, or of educating them in the nearer States of America, where they are liable to be brought up in civil and religious principles foreign to our English manners and constitution.

To supply a remedy to this inconvenience, was regarded as a matter of importance by both the colonial and the imperial governments; and there seemed no means by which the attainment of it might be expected with more probability of success, than from the establishment of a competent academy in Bermuda, the locality, retirement, and climate of which seemed to indicate its peculiar adaptation for such a purpose.

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## LETTER XXI.

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October 13.

LAST Sunday I witnessed the amusing ceremony of a negro wedding; and as the parties were well known, many of their kinsfolk came to have a peep. The bride was attended by a train of *para nymphas*, all attired in transparent muslin dresses; and the glimmering of their black arms had a strange effect amid the profusion of white satin ribands, flowers, &c. There was such a display of white gloves and favours—such shifting of sides—such crowding around the bride to enjoy the privilege of ungloving—such whimsical blunders between the right hand and the left, that, though I wished the good people all possible felicity, I could with difficulty preserve my gravity, especially when the bride-

groom, in a very hearty tone, cried out, 'I Cupid take thee Venus for my wedded wife!' Though these names had now become familiar to my ear, the effect of this association was more ludicrous than I can describe.

A wedding is quite a grand affair among the negroes, and the women are at infinite pains to dress themselves in the most becoming fashion. Poor Blanche, who, I must tell you, is as black as jet, was found by her mistress, on her bridal morning, standing before the glass, and reviewing the labours of her toilet with intense interest. She seemed pleased with the effect of a bunch of red coral flowers which were placed beneath her bonnet, and once more adjusting the folds of her long white veil, was about to retire, when turning round, she exclaimed, with a desponding air, 'Ah, how beautiful I should be if I were white!'

Marriages are not published by bans, and the poorest person must have a licence, for which it is necessary to apply to the governor.

They are commonly celebrated in the evening, and most frequently at the house of the bride. The marriage of a great heiress with the colonial secretary, which has just taken place, was however, contrary to the usual fashion, performed at church.

There are two or three rich heiresses in Bermuda, but the people in general are not opulent; for all the wealth of the colony is in the hands of four or five individuals, who made large fortunes during the last war, the golden era of Bermuda, when the prize ships were carried into its harbours, and it became the seat of a regular court of admiralty.

With the termination of the war, the consequence of Bermuda declined; and it is now indebted for its political importance solely to the advantages of its geographical situation. Lying directly in the track of the West India ships, it is in fact the key to all our transatlantic possessions; and, besides affording a near and safe retreat to our fleets, would, in case of a war

with America, serve as a point of annoyance to the enemy, and cut off all direct communication with Europe.

It is said that the Americans would be very glad to get Bermuda into their possession, and that they have formed several plans for making themselves masters of it. Washington, in particular, was very desirous to annex it to the republic, and to make it, as he said, 'a nest of hornets' to annoy the British trade.

These considerations have induced the English government to devote so much attention to these islands, and to make them the grand naval station of the West Indies.

The stations of Halifax, Bermuda, Jamaica, and the Leeward islands, which have hitherto been under the charge of only one admiral, are now to be divided between two; and it is intended to erect Bermuda into the chief entrepôt of the new division.

Great sums are expended in carrying on the extensive fortifications which are now in pro-

gress, and which promise soon to make Bermuda the Gibraltar of the west. And yet, in the event of any hostile attack, it would be indebted for its safety even more to the impregnable ramparts with which nature has defended its approaches, than to the laboured works of art.

The islands of St. George's and Ireland, the latter especially, are the best fortified of the whole group, but there are neither strong batteries nor even a garrison on the mainland. Though it would be impossible, on account of the reefs, to effect a landing in large vessels on the south coast, government has determined to station a garrison in the neighbourhood of Hamilton, and some officers of engineers who have been appointed to determine upon the site for the intended barracks, have lately been engaged in surveying a very high hill opposite Roselands.

I have just returned from a ramble to the summit, from which there is an extensive prospect over the whole southern coast, Ireland, &c. It would, doubtless, be an admirable

spot for a look out, but I cannot think that it would be very agreeable to toil up its steep ascent under a burning August sun. It stands in a beautiful cedar grove, close to Hamilton water, and I found on it so many interesting plants, that I proposed it should be called Botany Hill\*.

Bermuda lies in the same parallel of latitude as Madeira, but it does not enjoy so great a variety of climate or scenery. The air, too, is perhaps not quite so salubrious; but I am only speaking comparatively, for I really believe the climate of Bermuda to be healthful.

The rather sickly appearance of many of the Bermudians, and especially of the children, I should attribute in some measure to their mode of living, and to the want of active and regular exercise. Though this may not be very feasible during the heat of summer, yet the evenings and the early part of the mornings are extremely plea-

\* Since my return from Bermuda, a temporary garrison has been stationed at Hamilton, but I believe the plan of placing it on this hill has been abandoned.

sant. There is an elasticity in the air, which, though it has not the bracing freshness of our English atmosphere, is very invigorating, and must be conducive to health.

The children never run and play about as they do with us, nor are they acquainted with our fine healthful games and exercises ; and I am told that there cannot be a greater contrast than the playground of Harrow or Eton and that of Devonshire college.

Our parish contains a population of nearly one thousand souls, and yet within the last fifteen months there have been no more than six or eight deaths, and of these two only were young persons. At the time of the small-pox indeed, the average mortality in the islands generally, was greater, but our parish happily escaped the contagion.

Bermuda has no indigenous fevers : the yellow fever, which has occasionally prevailed, having always been brought from the West Indies.

It is, however, sometimes visited by a frightful endemic, called the dandy, or broken bone

fever. The former name was given to it in consequence of the stiff and constrained position into which it throws the whole body, but the latter name is most expressive, and far more likely to inspire the sympathy which it well deserves. It seems to be a violent rheumatic affection, occasioned by the humid exhalations which arise from the marshes after heavy and continued rains, and by exposure to the dews and night air. It is said to be contagious, and I was really alarmed when I saw its melancholy effects in the contracted and even distorted appearance of a young lady who had been attacked by it some years before: every body, however, does not suffer to the same extent.

Of another malady to which young ladies especially are subject, I can speak most feelingly; I mean the tooth-ache. It exceeds both in duration and intensity, every thing that we know of it in England; the only remedy is to be found in extraction; and there not being any



regular dentists, there is no alternative but to submit with a good grace to a barbarous sort of corkscrew, for the more refined instruments are unknown.

The prevalence of this complaint is perhaps owing to the incautious temerity with which people expose themselves to draughts of air. There is something so delightful in being able to catch a breeze, that I have myself often taken my seat in the very centre of six or eight currents of air streaming in from open windows, doors, and verandahs. Sometimes this may be done with impunity; but more frequently the indulgence of a present gratification is followed by many days of suffering. The tank water may, perhaps, in some degree contribute to injure the teeth, as large quantities of lime are, I am told, often thrown into it, to preserve its purity.

The universal remedy is cupping, and it has become so familiar from habit, that the most delicate females talk of this painful operation

without the least repugnance ; and they seemed really suprised when, between a choice of evils, I gave the preference to bleeding. An arrival of leeches is quite an event, and their appearance is eagerly welcomed.

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## LETTER XXII.

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January 4, 1831.

THE new year was ushered in by the disastrous death of a number of unfortunate pigs, which were poisoned by drinking of the water in which cassava root had been washed. With their fate before my eyes, would you believe that I ate a large plate of cassava pie at dinner!

Though the root in its raw state is a deadly poison, it is quite innocent when cooked, for the action of heat deprives it of its noxious qualities, which reside in the juice. It is first carefully washed and scraped, and then grated into a tub, after which it is put into a bag and the juice squeezed out. The farina is mixed into a thick soft paste, and made up into meat pies,

which are the standing dish at Christmas. Cassava puddings and cakes are delicious; but the plant is cultivated here only in small quantities, owing to the accidents which have occurred from its being eaten in its unprepared state.

The cassava, or mandioca (*jatropha manihot*), is a pretty and very knotty shrub, growing about four or five feet high. The terminations of the branches are covered with leaves, and the flowers are placed in an umbel round the extremities. These are succeeded by nuts, which possess powerful medicinal qualities. The root is about the size of an ordinary carrot, but I never heard of any tapioca being prepared from it in Bermuda. There are two sorts of cassava—the sweet and the bitter; it is the root of the latter only which is poisonous.

Another plant, having noxious qualities, grows wild, chiefly in low sheltered vallies and about the entrance of caves, and generally climbs like ivy round some taller tree. The 'poison weed'

or 'vine,' which appears to be a species of *rhus*, (perhaps the *R. radicans*,) nearly allied to *Rhus toxicodendron*, the poison ash of North America, is most powerful in the hot seasons, and during the damp weather which succeeds the heavy rains, when the atmosphere in the caverns and their immediate vicinity is very much vitiated. A friend of our's on attempting lately to enter one of these caves, immediately fainted, while his face at the same instant was violently flushed, and raised in considerable blisters. These effects are very painful at the time, but they soon pass away without leaving any serious consequences.

In one of my botanizing excursions I gathered a large branch of the poison weed, with which I was at that time unacquainted, when the loud exclamations of an old negro, that I should certainly be poisoned, made me aware of its nature. It had not, however, the slightest effect on me, and I was disposed to doubt the wonderful stories which are told of its baneful power, when I one day sent an African negro to gather some

for me. He returned with a large branch, which he held with the tips of his fingers, and threw down as soon as he came up to me. His hands were much blistered, and he seemed to be in great pain; and when I asked him to place it in the box with some other plants which he was packing up, he replied, spreading out his hands, 'Catch me if I burn my fingers again.' I afterwards saw two or three other persons whom it affected in a similar manner.

Another plant said to be noxious is the poison-tree, also a species of *rhus*. I have met with it only in one spot, where about eight or ten trees are growing together, near a small bason formed in the rock, and filled with rain water. It is nine or ten feet high, very slender, and the foliage, which is large, and of a delicate green, is chiefly crowded at the top. The bark is soft, and of a greyish white, and on my pricking the trunk with a large pin, a profusion of white gummy juice flowed out, which in a few seconds assumed a deep rose colour. I had the curiosity

to taste it, and found it very astringent to the tongue : a small quantity which entered into a puncture in my finger occasioned redness and swelling, and was rather painful. The tree bears a small berry.

These, with the fruit of the calabash, and the seeds of the coral-tree, are the only noxious plants I have met with, though the negroes affirm that the ipecacuanha, which grows wild, is also poisonous. It is about three feet high, and bears brilliant orange-coloured flowers, and has large smooth pointed leaves. Its bright green pods are filled with a very soft white silk, enclosing a number of small brown seeds. It is the favourite abode of a beautiful butterfly.

There is not a disease for which the negroes do not know a remedy among the herbs of the field, and I have, upon several occasions, received benefit from their knowledge of the qualities of the various plants. I frequently press Mistress Piny into the service, and prevail on her to tell me the names and vir-

tues of the different wild flowers. My Mentor, however, is the oddest creature in the world, and dances on before me, clapping her hands, wondering why a young lady should trouble herself about such out of the way matters.

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## LETTER XXIII.

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February 9th.

\* \* \* \* The graceful tamarind, with its light and airy foliage, grows in great beauty; so does every species of the mimosa, especially the more shrubby kinds; and whenever I look upon the unsightly stone walls which skirt the roads and intersect every cedar grove, it is with a feeling of regret that so little advantage is taken of the extraordinary rapidity of vegetation, to embellish the landscape scenery of Bermuda. This might be done without much labour, for the slip has merely to be put into the ground, and the tree shoots up, you know not how.

Some little trouble and expense would of course be requisite, but verdant hedges would add so greatly to the picturesque appearance of the country and even to the comfort of the

people, that I wish some public spirited persons would unite in planting them. In some parts of the island of Somerset, where the stone walls have been removed, and the roads skirted with fences of aloe, acacia, orange, or oedar, the beauty of the scenery has been so much increased, that I am surprised they have not been more generally adopted, especially as they must in the end be less expensive, and at the same time more secure than the present walls, which are merely heaps of stones piled upon one another, without any kind of cement.

A tropical and pleasing character is given to the landscape by the banana, or *musa sapientum*, which is, however, more familiar to Europeans by the name of plantain, of which it is a sister species, and which it resembles in its essential characteristics.

The plant, for it can scarcely be called a tree, attains a height of about fifteen feet. The stalk is very soft and grass-like, and is surmounted by a full crown of leaves, eight or nine feet in

length, and one and a half in breadth. They are of a bright green colour, beautifully veined, and have a rich satiny surface, but they are so extremely thin, that unless the tree is planted in a sheltered situation, they are easily rent by the wind, and present a very ragged appearance. As soon as they fade they are replaced by young leaves of a delicate texture, which are at first curiously folded, but soon expand and turn back. While they are rolled up, their advance upwards is so rapid, that I am assured they will sometimes grow nearly an inch in the space of a few hours.

As soon as the plant attains its full size, one strong spike, or stalk, about three or four feet in length, springs from the centre of the crown of leaves, and is bent down beneath the foliage by the weight of its purple, heart shaped head. The flowers come out in bunches, those in the lower part of the spike being the largest; each is enclosed within a bright purple sheath, and as the spike continues to lengthen, the upper series of flowers drop off; those in the lower row only

are replaced by the fruit: the last blossom which hangs down at the end of the long scarlet spike, falls off when the whole is nearly ripe.

The fruit, which is of a pale yellow colour, and about three or four inches long, grows in close and beautiful clusters, or rows of tiaras; and I have seen a bunch with above a hundred bananas growing on it in various stages of ripeness. The banana is in full bearing in about eight or nine months after it is first planted. When all the fruit is gathered, the plant is cut down to the root, young suckers spring up which produce fruit in a few months; and thus, by merely cutting the stalks, at different seasons, there is a continued succession of new plants all the year round.

Another very striking form of vegetation is the great American aloe (*agave Americana*). Its tall scape or flowering stem, which rises from the centre of a star-shaped tuft of tall pointed leaves, gives it some resemblance to an aloe; but, strictly speaking, it is not a true aloe, which

is of the natural order of *Asphodeleæ*, whereas this belongs to the family of *Bromeliaceæ*, or pine-apple.

It would almost seem as if the Bermudians were aware of this distinction, for they never call it by its botanical name; yet by an unaccountable perversion, they invariably style it a bamboo, to which it has not the slightest resemblance. I was for a long time puzzled to know what plant was intended by the bamboo, when a splendid flowering aloe was one day pointed out to me by that name. Its stiff thick leaves, which are armed with strong spines, are set round in the form of a star, very much like those of the pine-apple: the outer ones are turned back, while the inner circle of leaves rises in a closely twisted spire.

This is the ordinary appearance of the plant, but it is scarcely possible to imagine a greater contrast, both of character and proportions than an aloe exhibits before it is in blossom, and when its majestic flowering stem rises into the air,

hung round like a candelabra, with successive tiers of blossoms. The aloe is between twenty and thirty feet high, and of this the panicle or crown of flowers sometimes occupies ten feet.

The leaves are filled with juice which contains a large proportion of alkali and oil; hence it makes an excellent lather, and a slice of *bamboo* is therefore a universal substitute for soap in scouring floors and boards, which it renders beautifully white.

The fibres, which are strong and tough, are used for fishing-lines and cordage, while the softer ones furnish the material called silk grass, which is employed in sewing the palmetto plat.

The cocoa palm, which is at once so beautiful and ornamental, is but partially cultivated here. I have been greatly pleased with examining the strong bracing of net-work with which nature has protected its long leaves against the violence of the high winds. This fibrous matting, which is called cocoa cloth, envelops the lower part of the stalks, and binds them firmly to the trunk.

When the leaves are young, this net-work is white and beautifully fine and transparent, but as the leaves grow older, it becomes darker and coarser.

The cocoa palm is far more elegant than its half-brother, the palmetto (*chamærops*), which grows wild in great luxuriance, and is of considerable importance to the inhabitants. A fine straw, which is manufactured into bonnets, baskets, &c., is obtained from the spindle, which rises from the centre of the tree. The large fan-shaped leaves are woven into coarse mats, and the threads furnish materials for fishing lines and cordage. It bears long clusters of a large purple berry, which is not unpleasant to the taste.

The stately date palm rears its head only in the government gardens, and the elegantly pinnated leaves of the sago palm are not often seen.

We have but little fine grass; the crab-grass, (*agrostis virginica* I think,) which is stiff and

closely matted, being the universal herbage. In spring all the hills and vallies are covered with a pretty blue flower, called Bermudiana (*sisyrrinchium Bermudianum*), and many other wild flowers. In the more sheltered spots, the aloe (*aloe Barbadosis*) is the most conspicuous. The flower stem rises about three or four feet in height, and towards the top is beset with a tuft of yellow blossoms. The leaves, which are long and tapering, are numerous, and of a bright green colour. The aloe was first introduced into Jamaica from Bermuda, and was formerly a considerable article of commerce, but it is now quite neglected.

Near the house which is said to have belonged to Lord Cavendish, one of the early proprietors of the colony, we saw the tree, under which Whitfield used to preach during his stay in these islands in 1747. The tree is a West India locust (*hymenœa courbaril*), about sixteen feet in circumference; and as there is ample shade under its wide-spreading branches, it must have



been admirably adapted to the large congregations that always attended him.

Along the sea-shore abounds a curious dwarf plant (*suriana maritima*), resembling a cistus or rock rose; also a singular looking tree, called the sea-side vine, or mangrove grape tree (*coccoloba uvifera*). It attains a height of about twenty feet, and bears clusters like the real grape, of rich dark purple berries, covered with a delicate bloom. These grapes have a pretty effect among the brightly veined foliage; the leaves are large, round, and of a leathery substance. The trunk and branches are very crooked and curiously knotted.

Within a few minutes walk from Roselands is a grove of this beautiful tree; it forms a cool retreat, which we call Ella's bower, after our little favourite. We spend in it many a sunny hour, for it lies along the sandy beach of a little bay, which delights us with the variety of its shells and sea-weed, and the many interesting plants which creep along the ground, and display

their bright blossoms among the dark rocks: of these the most common are the sea convolvulus (*convolvulus maritima*), and sea lavender (*heliotropium gnaphaloides*).

It is amusing, too, to watch the white sprites dancing about on the sands, and looking more like shadows than real substantial beings. They are furnished with a set of sharp teeth, and their bite in the unshod foot of a negro is said to be very painful.

Many *Physalia pelagica* are here cast on shore after a gale of wind. I saw numbers of these beautiful phosphorescent fish, which sailors call Portuguese men-of-war, pass the vessel in full sail on our voyage hither, but I never had an opportunity of examining them. I frequently find them here with their gelatinous bladder-sail, by means of which they are said to preserve their buoyancy, still inflated, and showing all its splendid soap-bubble tints. The animal, however, loses all these brilliant and varied colours soon after it is taken out of its native element;

its iridescent crest of azure, pale green and crimson falls, and the whole becomes dissolved into a sort of jelly, leaving no trace of its former beauty.

Here, too, is an abundance of the ground nut, (I believe *arachis hypogæa*), to which the negroes are partial. It resembles the kernel of the filbert, and is generally eaten roasted.

I do not think that I have yet told you any thing about the insects; but there is as little variety in the entomology as in the ornithology of Bermuda. Of butterflies I have seen only three or four different kinds, and these are by no means strikingly handsome.

The tobacco moth, however, is a beautiful insect; it has a very long proboscis, with which it penetrates the flowers; and while it is sipping the nectar, it continues hovering, and fluttering its wings with so much rapidity, that it is scarcely possible to distinguish its form. The nymph of one of the butterflies exceeds in beauty any I have ever seen. It is of a delicate

chrysoprase green, spotted with gold, and of a soft waxy texture.

At night, when the candles are lighted, a great variety of small and beautiful insects, especially the species called hardbacks, fly about in vast numbers, and dash with violence against the large glass shades with which the candles are always covered.

The brilliant colours of the silk-spider banish any unpleasant feelings which its size might otherwise inspire. It is about three or four inches long, of a bright yellow, covered with dark brown and silver spots. Its web, both in colour and substance, is a perfect raw silk, and very strong; but of this no use is made, though it hangs down from the cedar-trees in great abundance.

There is a troublesome little insect, called the *chigre*, a species of sand-flea, which even in spite of a leather shoe, works its way into the foot, particularly into the toes, where it occasions an extremely irritating sensation. If it is not im-

mediately removed, it insinuates itself between the skin and the flesh, where it encloses itself in a kind of bag, in which it deposits its numerous eggs. These eggs in a few days burst the bag, and form similar deposits. The negroes, who never wear shoes, often suffer dreadfully from the ulcers which they occasion, and which, if not instantly attended to, are very difficult to heal.

Three or four took up their abode in my foot some time ago, but they were soon dislodged by Piny's long needle, and the puncture filled with tobacco.

There are several kinds of chigre; it is the bite of the poisonous one which is so painful.

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## LETTER XXIV.


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March 25.

THE legislative government of Bermuda is modelled after that of Great Britain, and all the laws are enacted by the Governor and Council, supported by a House of Assembly.

The Governor, who is appointed by the Crown, is the commander-in-chief of the troops; he has the power of summoning and dissolving the legislative body; and though all the laws must originate with the House of Assembly, yet as the veto is vested in him, none can pass without his sanction.

The Council is composed of eight members and a president, who are distinguished by the title of honourable. They are nominated by the Governor, but their appointment must be confirmed by the Crown.



The House of Assembly, which answers to our Commons, consists of thirty-six members, who are returned by the nine tribes or parishes into which the islands are divided. No person is qualified to be elected a member of the House of Assembly, unless he has an income in landed property to the value of about 200*l.* currency per annum.\* Whenever there is any public business to transact the Governor issues a writ for the meeting of the Assembly, and the session lasts until such business is concluded. During the session, every member that attends the house receives two dollars per day. To be entitled to vote for an Assembly man an elector must possess landed property to the amount of 40*l.* currency (30*l.* sterling) per annum.

The Court of Chancery and the Court of Errors, which are composed of the Governor and Council—the King's Bench and Vice-Ad-

\* Since the emancipation of the slaves in August, 1834, it has been proposed to raise this sum to 500*l.*, with the view, I believe, of preventing, if possible, the admission of negroes into the Assembly.

miralty Court—are also modelled after those of England.

The offices connected with jurisprudence are confided exclusively to natives, who have all, I believe, been called to the English bar, though this is not indispensable.

It is only within these few years that there has been an establishment for convicts at Bermuda. Their number at present is about 1,200, and the estimated value of the labour performed by them, is supposed nearly, if not wholly, to defray the expenses of the establishment. The hulks are stationed at the island of Ireland.

[Since this was written, a hulk has been placed at St. George's. The following is a summary of the official reports for the last six months of 1833, and the first six months of 1834. The hulks are four; one at St. George's and three at Ireland. The expenses for the last six months of 1833 were 13,866*l.* 4*s.* 7*d.*; the estimated value of the labour of the convicts 13,845*l.*; being an excess of expense of only



twenty guineas. In the first six months of 1834, the expense was only 10,063*l.* 14*s.* 1*d.*; and the value of the work performed 16,315*l.* 4*s.* shewing a profit of 6,251*l.* 9*s.* 11*d.*]

The population of Bermuda, independent of the 1,500 convicts and the various regiments quartered here, according to a census taken in 1831, consists of 7,330 white and free coloured, and 3,920 slave inhabitants. From a charge delivered by the Chief Justice, in May, 1830, it appears that there are four hundred inhabitants for every square mile, which forms a denser population than in most parts of the British dominions, where there are no regular towns, as is the case in Bermuda.

I enclose a copy of a very accurate MS. map of Bermuda, which a gentleman has very kindly lent me, and on which I have carefully marked all the places in which you are most interested. In making this copy, it struck me as a singular circumstance, that nearly all the chief, or prac-

licable entrances to the harbours (which are so surrounded by land that they resemble lakes) should be from the eastward. Thus the entrances to St. George's harbour are between David's Head and Queen's Fort, and between Fort Cavendish and the south point of St. George's.

The entrances to the Great Sound are also from the north-east; that from Ellis Harbour being impracticable. But besides this, the continuous chain of reefs and sunken rocks on the south-west, north-west, and north, renders all access on these sides impossible; so that ships, in whatever direction they approach this group, must enter from the east or north-east. Thus a vessel arriving near the elevated rock off Port Royal bay, and being bound to the island of Ireland, must sail along the whole extent of the south coast, and then steer north-east and north till it comes to the opening in the reef, where it may enter with safety.

Whatever may be the cause of this fact, of the openings being to the east and north-east, it is a fortunate circumstance for the ships that enter them; for as the wind during nearly eight months in the year blows from the southward, west, and north-west, the consequence would be, if the entrances were on those sides, that vessels might be detained for months before they could put to sea again.

Lest you should be led to form any erroneous conclusion from what I here say respecting the entrances into the Group, I must warn you that these remarks are entirely my own, and that I have had no opportunity of conversing with persons who have paid attention to the subject, or of ascertaining whether similar observations have been made by others.

As every thing relating to Bermuda has an interest for you now, I am sure you will not be angry with me for sending you a dry detail of its latitude and longitude, taken from various points

by Mr. Jones, master of H. M.'s ship, the *Hussar*, in 1828—1830:—

	Lat.	North.	Longitude W. of Greenwich.
St. Catharine's Point, (middle of the Fort).	32°	23' 43"	64° 41' 25"-8
Dockyard Clock . . . . .	32	19 1	64 54 18
Wreck Hill . . . . .	32	16 1	64 57 21
Gibbs Hill Flag Staff. . . . .	32	14 18	64 55 12
North Rock . . . . .	32	29 26	64 50 18

*Bearings and Distances of Gibbs Hill from different parts of the Reef surrounding the Bermudas.*

	Bearings of Gibbs Hill True.	Distances.
South-west Breaker. . . . .	North East.	2 Miles.
Chub Breaker, or W. end of Reefs . . . . .	w. by N. $\frac{1}{4}$ N.	9 $\frac{1}{8}$
Chub Cat . . . . .	s. E. $\frac{1}{2}$ s.	8 $\frac{1}{2}$
Position between Chub Cat and North Rock . . . . .	s. $\frac{1}{2}$ E.	11 $\frac{3}{4}$
North Rock . . . . .	s. by w. $\frac{1}{2}$ w.	16 $\frac{1}{4}$
Furthest extent of Reefs . . . . .	s. s. w. $\frac{1}{4}$ s.	18 $\frac{1}{2}$
Between Ditto and Mills Breaker . . . . .	s. w. $\frac{1}{4}$ s.	18
Mills Breaker . . . . .	s. w. $\frac{1}{2}$ w.	16 $\frac{1}{2}$

Since the above observations were made, I have found in the second volume of Mr. Lyell's interesting 'Principles of Geology,' some remarks which have given me much pleasure, as

not only confirming, but explaining them. Treating of the oval or circular form of the numerous groups of coral islands in the Pacific, as observed by Captains Flinders, Kotzebue, Beechey, and others, he says, quoting Captain Beechey:—"It is on the leeward side that the entrances into the lagoons occur; and although they may sometimes be entered on a side that runs in the direction of the wind, yet there are none to windward."

It will be seen that in the Bermuda group there is no entrance from the south side. Mr. Lyell continues:—"These observations of Captain Beechey accord perfectly with those which Captain Horsburgh and other hydrographers have made in regard to the coral islands of other seas. Thus, the Chagos isles in the Indian ocean, are chiefly of a horse-shoe form, the openings being to the north-west; whereas, the prevailing wind blows regularly from the south-east. From this fortunate circumstance, ships can enter and sail out again with ease; whereas,

if the narrow inlets were to windward, vessels which once entered, might not succeed for months in making their way out again. The well-known security of many of these harbours, depends entirely on this fortunate peculiarity in their structure.”

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## LETTER XXV.

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Roselands, April 9.

THIS will probably be the last letter you receive from Bermuda, for I intend to avail myself of a favourable opportunity which offers for my returning home, under the protection of a friend of the Archdeacon.

I have paid a farewell visit to our interesting infant school, which has become a flourishing institution, and many of the pupils whom I had known ignorant and unhappy, now give the promise of growing up in virtue and piety.

I had spent among them so many happy hours, that I took leave with a feeling of

melancholy regret, mingled as it was with the certainty that they would see my face no more. The poor little negroes were most affectionate; one brought a shell, another a flower, another a little honey; some begged that I would take them with me to England;—all entreated that I would not forget them.

When I look back upon the last eighteen months, they seem to me but as a pleasant dream. Here we take no note of time, for there is no succession of changes in the face of nature to remind you of its rapid, though imperceptible, flow.

Accustomed to look upon the vicissitudes of the seasons as monitors, who would forbid us to forget that we are hastening on our journey, Europeans are lost in unconscious oblivion, amid the perpetual sameness of beauty, in which nature is clothed.

Here is not the eloquence of the falling leaf—of the quiet slumber of nature—no tree deposits its verdant honours, again to put forth the



bud of promise and hope—to remind us that in the withered stem there is still life, that in the root there is still spring;—here no early primrose rises from its grave, with all its beautiful associations of a brighter world. Even the days and nights, in their one round of unchanging length, give no warning of the fleeting hours.

‘ A pleasing land of drowsyhead it is,  
Of dreams that wave before the half-shut eye ;  
And of gay castles in the clouds that pass,  
For ever flushing round a summer sky.’

Never has the lovely scenery of Bermuda been more beautifully delineated than by the genius of Moore in his Odes and Epistles. His descriptions, though highly poetical, are strictly true to nature; and he has selected, with the happiest effect, the various characteristic features of the landscape. Some of the scenes, indeed, may have their existence only in the imagination of the poet, yet the combination is so harmo-

niously blended, and the whole so faithful a portrait, that I know not whether to admire most, the skill displayed in the selection, or the fascination of the language.

The following lines, by our favourite Campbell, exactly express my opinion respecting Moore's description of the scenery of Bermuda:—

“ When first the Rhodian's mimic art arrayed  
The queen of beauty in her Cyprian shade,  
The happy master mingled in his piece  
Each look that charmed him in the fair of Greece.  
To faultless nature true, he stole a grace  
From every finer form and sweeter face ;  
And as he sojourned in the Ægean Isles  
Woo'd all their loves and treasured all their smiles.”

But though Bermuda has been called a ‘ heaven for bards to live, and saints to die in,’ it is, like all small colonies, destitute of that intellectual tone of conversation and manners which is the great charm of English society. I should, however, be ungrateful, were I to speak in any terms, but those of the warmest acknow-

ledgment of the affectionate kindness of many with whom I had the pleasure of being upon terms of familiar intimacy, and of the polite attentions which I received from the principal inhabitants.

Yet however greatly I may appreciate these, it is to the Archdeacon and dearest Mrs. Spencer that Bermuda owes all the peculiar attraction which it has for me. Mrs. Spencer, who lends a charm to all she does or says, has felt a particular pleasure in interesting me in her own beautiful islands. In the society of these dear and valued friends, which is embellished by all that is elegant in literature and refined in manners, mingled with the utmost cordiality and kindness, I have never, even for a moment, had cause to regret the resolution, which I so promptly formed, of accepting their kind and unlooked for invitation to accompany them to Bermuda, and spend some time in these lovely islands.

Bermuda will ever be to me as a beautiful

dream—a green spot in memory's waste to which my mind will fondly recur for pleasant thoughts.

Farewell ! before this reaches you, I shall, in all probability, be on the Atlantic, sighing for the 'lee of the land that I love.'

THE END.

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