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IN THE WEST INDIES



THE COCOANUT PALM

From a painting by Winslow Homer in the Metropolitan Museum of Art,
New York

IN THE WEST INDIES

SKETCHES AND STUDIES IN TROPIC
SEAS AND ISLANDS

BY

JOHN C. VAN DYKE

AUTHOR OF " IN EGYPT," " IN JAVA," " THE DESERT,"
" THE OPAL SEA," " THE MEADOWS," ETC.

CHARLES SCRIBNER'S SONS

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PREFACE

THESE sketches of the Caribbean and its shores should interest those who perhaps agree with me in thinking the West Indies the most beautiful islands in any sea, and the sea itself the most beautiful in the world. That is a superlative statement at the start, but the Caribbean and its islands are superlative themes. Chemistry cannot turn out bright enough colors, nor dictionaries sufficient of winged words to tell the splendor of these islands. The glory of their light, the rose and violet of their atmosphere, the high key of their color cannot be exaggerated. Pictorially, they are intangible dreams, fantasies that the retina records confusedly, and the hand grasps feebly. One can merely sketch at them with the hope of suggesting something only half comprehended—something that in its bewilderment is perhaps a true-enough record so far as it goes.

I have written about these islands pictorially rather than politically, economically, or socially, but in treating of the black man as form and color I could not be blind to his wretched economic condition. This I have spoken of at some length, not with the idea of putting any one in the wrong, but with the hope of

perhaps helping the black to a better living. And for that I need not apologize.

Nor need I speak apologetically of the United States in Haiti, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and Panama. There has been an unselfish attempt to establish good government and right living conditions in the islands, with the native given due consideration. That this has been received ungraciously by the native, with cynicism by other governments, and has been a financial loss to the United States are matters of no great importance. The endeavor was honest and the emphasis on the native first was rightly placed.,

As for the Canal, it is our one credit mark in the eyes of the world. It is about the only thing American that our critics care to praise. What I have said about it will no doubt be put down to pride of country, but it could more accurately be put down to pride

JOHN C. VAN DYKE.

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IN THE WEST INDIES

THE CARIBBEAN

The Sapphire Sea

ALL the seas are one whether around the tropics or around the poles, and yet each area has its own peculiar beauty, its own individual glory. The mere names of the Yellow, the Red, the Black Seas suggest varieties of color, as the Pacific or the Roaring Forties, difference of surface. People have their preferences. Some for the blue of the Mediterranean, or the green of the Baltic, and some for the dancing light of Behring Sea or the flat face of the great South Sea. For myself, being somewhat warped in favor of color, I must confess a strong preference for the sapphire splendor of the Caribbean.

It is not large and yet, when your steamer drives on for days out of sight of land, you are not impressed with its smallness; its surface is not rough, and yet, if you happen to be caught out in a West Indian hurricane, you will realize that it can roll highly respectable storm waves; it is not deep, and yet there are vast reaches of it where a cast lead records thousands of fathoms—great depths where argosies of sails and fleets of steamers might lie side by side on the sea floor and never be *seen* or sounded until the judgment day. It is an immensity, qualify it as you may,

and its profound repose but magnifies the far spread of it. The circle of its horizon is the Rim of a vast Blue Bowl of water and upon this Rim rests an even vaster Blue Bowl of Sky, In the exact centre of the circle your steamer churns green out of the Sea Bowl and trails a reddish-black banner of smoke against the Sky Bowl.

The Tropic Dawn

Over the eastern rim of this great circle of water the dawn comes up, not at all "like thunder," but rather with awe-inspiring stillness. And at first with no graying or silvering around the horizon. It comes in a single spot much as though one had switched on an electric lamp in the centre of a footlight. It illuminates at first only a small arc of the night blue, as the single electric lamp lights up only a small portion of the drop curtain. But it grows. And though at first it is usually white, it soon begins to take on pale rosy colors. These slowly creep around the circle to the right and left. Presently they brighten and begin to glow. The light spreads fanwise up toward the zenith and the dark sea begins to reflect it. Swift changes now take place. The light radiates far and wide and before you expect it, the sun pops up and over the sea rim.

The tropic dawn is a swift affair compared with that of the temperate zones, and often the sunrise may be very spectacular. The sun itself may be hid-

den behind towers of heap clouds that form early—cumulus towers that rise fifteen or twenty thousand feet, with dazzling white crests, gold-rimmed edges, and lilac shadows. If the sea is smooth (not such a frequent happening) it will reflect the clouds as in a mirror—a darker mystery of white, and lilac, or blue. If there has been rainfall, the sun will tinge the clouds chrome yellow and the complementary shadows will be brilliant blue. And sometimes in autumn heat, in periods of calm preceding hurricane weather, the sun will come up like a ball of fire and its red glare will be spread far up the eastern sky and flung back from a violet sea.

Usually the dawn is less dramatic though it may be brilliant in tones that are shot full of light and exquisite in delicacy of hue. Dove colors, tints of rose, pale saffrons, and amethysts may ring the horizon and be repeated in the sea if it happens to be flat. The sea, however, usually shows a deeper note for the trade winds keep its surface ruffled. As the morning wears on, and the light shifts, stronger colors show on its face, each combination coming in with a glow and going out with a glimmer. At first there may be cobalt blue, streaked with lilac red and patched with purple, or it may show one vast body of comprehensive indigo—the midday tone of the sea. There are other times when the little wave crests seem to sparkle all sapphire and the hollows of the waves show all purple. Again the sea may be color-flawed in great

fields or turned to cobalt by cloud shadows. All depends upon the light. But under almost any light the newcomer in tropic seas blinks and wonders and is thrilled by color schemes that he never saw at the north and never even dreamed of in his aesthetics.

And so the day wears through to afternoon. The surface of the sea is flawed anew by wind or patched again by cloud shadows. A passing steamer comes and goes, a white-winged schooner shows along the horizon like the ghost of some long-lost buccaneer. You take tea on deck and have so much purple on the retina of your eye that your cup, saucer, and napkin take on a purple tinge—the royal purple of the tropic seas. Presently, almost before you know it, a further change has come about. The waves are flattening, the clouds are disappearing, and a new palette of color is spreading over sea and sky. The day is nearly over. The sun goes down into the sea like a ball of molten gold and the orange in its flame pushes far around and up into the blue of the sky. One might expect that flaming orange would be reflected in the sea. But, no. The broad surface, still quivering in ripples under the soft breath of the trade wind, turns into the most exquisite tone of mauve, reflecting neither sun nor sky, save in a complementary hue. Blue above, mauve below, and orange-gold in between! Was there ever such an unbelievable color-fantasy! No painter would dare it, and if he did, no audience would believe it.

Lilac and Violet

Mauve! Aside from the great fields of blue, usually apparent through morning and early afternoon, perhaps the most prevalent color in this sea is mauve or lilac or violet. The island and mainland shores of the Caribbean are of limestone, sometimes overlaid with volcanic ash or built up with coral. Seen from the shore the far sea is an indigo or deep violet-blue, and the wave crests are flashing white; seen nearer in toward the beach where it floods over beds of algae or coral reefs or patches of sand, it becomes more pronounced in green, violet, or mauve; then it passes into turquoise-green or aquamarine, is succeeded by jade colors with purple patches, and finally, as it breaks on the beach and floods up the sands in a water mirror, the color becomes lilac with a heavenly foam-edging of heliotrope. You fancy perhaps that this is merely some local coloring but if you look away up the beach to the far headlands or even the distant mountain tops, you will see that they, too, are mauve-colored as though lying in some sea envelope of violet air. Earth, air, and sea are one tone of violet or blue-rose, or sapphire.

Sunset in the tropics means color—change following change with swiftness. The twilight is always short and light and colors come and go hastily and unheralded. With the sun below the sea-rim the zenith clouds may turn sulphur-yellow and then drop into gray or steel-blue as the light leaves them, the

upper blue may become suffused with violets, golds, carmines, that glow along the track of the vanished sun, and the far-eastern sky remain cool with the dove colors of stratus and towering cumulus. Then, as the clouds slowly sink and the light fades out, up from the east comes the moon. At first it is a little distorted, red like a Chinese lantern, but gains in roundness, gleam and splendor as it rises. With a ruffled sea it casts the same angel's pathway along the waves here as elsewhere. And the same lilac persists under moonlight in the sea and the air, until all trace of twilight has vanished and the vast sea floor becomes a pansy purple and the roof overhead a great dome of lapis lazuli inlaid with golden stars.

Painters and Poets

With such splendid color, such infinite variety of air and light and surface one wonders why the tropic seas and islands have never produced a representative poet or painter. Artists from America—Lafcadio Hearn and Winslow Homer in the West Indies, Charles Stoddard and John La Farge in the South Seas—have recorded the impressions of northern visitors in a northern way, but no one native to the tropics, or kindred by adoption, not even Stevenson or Gauguin, has left anything of importance about tropic lands or seas or skies. The materials for masterpieces are on every hand, but the master has not yet arisen to put them together.

Modern painters have been painting Venice for a hundred years, but how few of them have ever heard of Little Venice—Venezuela! Along the Spanish Main, at Caracas or Curasao or Cartagena, there is enough fine light and color to drive a sensitive artist quite mad, but I never heard of any artist, ancient or modern, pitching a white umbrella there and making sketches. Cartagena is little short of marvellous, a painter's paradise, but no one in the city could remember for me any one painting pictures of it. Lafcadio Hearn, with much verve and skill, told of the types and colors of Martinique, and all that he said of that island could be applied with equal truth to Guadaloupe and its streets and markets, but again no native has caught the mood or made response.

The whole of the Caribbean still remains unexplored in more ways than one. It is an unknown sea not only in the sense that there are no empires by its shores and little history about it worth the writing, but also that the flame of its primitive beauty rests undisturbed and practically undiscovered. It not only lacks a poet and a painter, but it has never had even a good descriptive geographer. The very name, the Caribbean, means little or nothing, since the Caribs were unimportant and soon passed away. Had it been called the Sapphire Sea even the dullest visioned of mankind would have been able to recognize on its surface some of the splendid color of that precious stone.

JAMAICA

The Beaches

THE beaches of Jamaica are not as long or as broad as those of the North Atlantic seaboard, nor even some of the other islands of the West Indies, but they are enough to produce marvellous color and excite a lively wonder and admiration. Perhaps there is some wonder that they should exist at all. Igneous and metamorphic rock with superimposed limestone and coral are not the best materials out of which to fashion beaches. They make better caves, and the Jamaican shore is water worn everywhere with cavern-like recesses. The beaches are largely oddments and remainders, little arenas worn by the waves, sickle-shaped curves between promontories of rugged rock. They are probably the cave at a later stage of its development, or of its disappearance.

The waves bring in the sands though originally the rocks furnished most of them. They are sands ground in the mill of the beach from limestone, coral, and sea-shell and are dazzling white in the noonday sun. The little waves (there are few great breakers and no high tides) push up and over these white sands and spread water mirrors that are as clear as crystal, with bead edgings that are as white as snow when seen looking toward the sun, but are a beautiful mauve,

with bead-edgings of pallid heliotrope, when seen looking away from the sun.

The reefs that lie out from the shore, perhaps loosely laid down in geological time, are now largely covered with coral formations and overgrown with sea plants. The water flooding over them shows in great streaks and patches of purple or reddish blue or dull Indian red. The plants are not heavy like kelp, nor long stemmed like *macrocystis*, but more like Gulf *sargassum*, and when strewn along the beaches are golden brown in hue. With them, flung up the sands, are sea urchins, sea cucumbers, sea fans, broken sprays and fronds, beaded and whip-like stems, scraps of green and brown and purple sponges. What seem to be larger sponges, merely petrified and pitted by zoophytes into the resemblance of a human brain—brain coral—crop out of the sand everywhere. The ordinary coral, when seen on the beaches, is in small broken branches and is white and red, water-worn and honey-combed. Shells—yellow, green, and lilac, transparent as thin alabaster, ringed, convoluted, patterned—are strewn everywhere along the water line. Bright stones, bits of cornelian, agate, mica, with blue back of crab and red shell of crayfish mingle with the sands and produce warmth of color.

The waves often bring in a more commonplace flotsam and jetsam, such as the husks of cocoanut, stems of bananas, pods and beans and nuts of tropical trees, but very little that directly points to humanity. The

human element seems lacking. There are no barrels, bales, boxes, boards, or baggings, no ripped life-preserver or broken oar with its intimation of wreck, no message in a bottle, or iron-bound chest in the sand or rusted cutlass in a cave. This was the buccaneer's sea at one time and some of their high-pooped broad-beamed ships, usually referred to, mistakenly, in fiction as "low rakish crafts," went down here long ago under gun fire, but no trace of them was washed ashore so far as remainder can be found of them today. The beaches tell few tales of humanity either past or present.

Birds and Fishes

Nor is there much active animal or bird life along them—not at least in December. One might expect with sandy shores some sand-pipers, but I have seen only a stray one here and there. Also a few yellow-legs, blue herons, small bitterns, kingfishers, and a coot that had wandered from his home in a near-by mangrove swamp. There are apparently few geese or ducks. Occasionally a brown pelican plunges into the water from above a school of fish, or a black frigate bird swings and circles high in air but neither of them may be called a beach bird.

It is mid-winter and the right season for the migratory bird contingents, but very few of them are in evidence. The lists of birds that winter in the West Indies are perhaps made up in part from exceptional

visitors and may be true enough in name while misleading in the impression of number. I may have just happened upon an untenanted shore but that has been my usual experience. Several winters in the West Indies have proved disappointing in the number of migratory birds. Also winters in Egypt, India, Java, the Philippines, the South Sea Islands, Australia, South America have shown me only rare and widely distributed representatives of the Northern birds.

The shore waters contain many fishes in beautiful tones of opalescence—parrot fish, angel fish, herring, yellowtail, grunts, and snooks. Plunging after them are the jacks, gars, and barracuda. There are also calipeners, king fish, red snappers, but they generally keep in deep waters. I am told tales of tarpon and devil fish and the great sport of catching them but I have never been in at the death (or escape) of either of them. I keep watching the surface for the back of a porpoise or the fin of a shark but neither appears. They must be here in common with much other fish life, but I do not see them.

And the black man on the island does not catch them. He is not a fisherman though he eats salted fish from Nova Scotia as an almost daily diet. He is as helpless, or as hopeless, in catching a fish as in raising a vegetable for family consumption. He plods on in the cane field or cotton patch just as in slavery days—eking out a bare existence without change and without hope.

But the beaches give out no black man's moan nor white man's laugh. They are soundless save for a little lap of wave and the faint tinkle of sea shells as the water sucks back and down. Nature is not interested in human woe or weal. She spins her patterns of light and color quite regardless of native voice or animal cry or curlew's whistle. Let them look to themselves. She creates conditions, not immunities. Here is a paradise of light and color. Here along the beaches is where the rainbow rests. You may not find the pot of gold at its base but you cannot miss the rainbow splendor of beach and sea and sky. Why should not humanity live in it, be a part of it with the plants, the fishes, and the birds! Why should he convert it into a field of discord where social forces contend for a momentary supremacy, where poverty and misery go hand in hand, and life is merely a vain struggle against disease and injustice?

Island Roadways

The line of least resistance in island travel—the one followed from primitive days—is around the coast and along the beaches. Following this line does away with the climbing of hills and working through underbrush, and though there is the continual wind-in of bay and bulge-out of promontory yet in the final accounting the longer way round proves the shorter way home. Small wonder then that the beach trail

of the ancient Arawak should finally become the highway of the present-day Jamaican,

It seems very stupid for the stranger to rush along these highways in an automobile, listening to the chatter of some guide from Kingston, and seeing nothing but a blur and a blend of trees, sea, and sky. He might better go alone and afoot and let the history of the island with the name of This and the value of That go unrelated. What matters it how many bunches of bananas are yearly shipped from the island or where abroad is the best cocoanut market or who owns the big sugar mill with the black smoke stack over against the hill? If the guide, or his newly acquired island friends, would let the traveller alone he might get a thrill all by himself walking along a beach road through a grove of cocoanut palms, beside a banana plantation or under the clumps of swaying bamboo with plenty of time to look at them.

The cocoanut palm, for all its exploitation by travel advertisement, is nevertheless the most picturesque tree in the tropics. Swaying on its tall slim stem, riding with its top into the wind, or spreading at twilight its drooping quivering fronds against the sky—a golden green against the blue—it is one of the most graceful growths in all the world. There are vast groves of them everywhere along these island shores. The white roads wind in and out beneath their shade, the violet sea shows between their trunks, and the

cobalt sky above their tops. Perhaps their happiest pictorial appearance is standing singly, or in a group of three or four along some headland or cape where with the sea below and the sunset sky above they make a perfect picture without further material.

The palms and the bamboos are well marked and distinct growths. They stand apart in groves or groups. Few of the island trees hold together in family groups. At the North are forests of pine or oak, groves of beach or birch or ash or maple but the tropic trees are scattered and appear singly and isolated. Sometimes there will be a mora forest (as in Trinidad) but this is rather exceptional. A scattered diversity is the rule.

Golden Greens

At first blush a golden-green peculiar to tropical foliage seems to merge all the tree identities. When closer studied and you begin to pick out the individual trees, oftentimes a bulk of foliage or a grotesqueness of form is found to* mark them. It is perhaps just to say that color rather than form is characteristic of them. One seldom *sees* anything so arrowy as the northern pine, so symmetrical as the elm or maple, so powerful as the white oak. The saman comes the nearest to the white oak, as the mora to the pine, but there is still a vast difference.

As for the grotesque among the trees of the tropics it appears very often. The large silk-cotton (a variety

of the ceiba) has great arms like the white oak and often at its base great roots that reach down and out like flanges or architectural buttresses, but it lacks in proportions, has an elephantine skin or bark, and is usually beset by parasites that mar its branches and do not help its usually frayed foliage. The spread-umbrella foliage of the saman and its beautiful bloom is again marred by the short trunk. The umbrella is too short in the handle. The ponciana regia with its wonderful flower and lace-like leaf is straggling in form and the frangipani with its lovely white bloom is gnarled, twisted, almost deformed. In fact, form is not usually to be looked for in tropical trees. Their saving quality is color. But, of course, there are many exceptions.

And, of course again, Jamaica has now many trees brought in from foreign countries and is not wholly responsible for its present-day growth. Under English rule the importations have been many. For example, the ponciana came from Madagascar, the teak and cinnamon and casuarina from India, the bread-fruit tree from the South Seas. But the greater part are now virtually native to the soil, if not actually so—the mahogany, log-wood, satin-wood, yacca, mahoe, mammee-sapota, and scores of others.

The casual visitor, unless botanically inclined, would be disposed to pass these trees without notice were it not for their bright flowers. All trees may be said to blossom in season but that fact in the tropics

is brought home to one at every turn and with some positiveness. The blue-and-white flowers of the guayacum (*lignum vitae*), the white of the Spanish elm and the tamarind, the yellow of the West Indian ebony, the mango, the maypole, the scarlet of the scarlet cordia, the orange and red of the ponciana, the white and lilac of the anatto are so brilliantly and abundantly set forth that you cannot escape them.

Everything here is brilliant, alluring, compelling in color—the flowers even more so than the blossoms. One is as much bewildered by the mass as by the part. Moving along a beach-road with the golden green of palm and the violet-blue of the sea in great bodies of color, a turn of the road perhaps brings you in sight of a stone wall, a tree and a bungalow, all of them literally covered with the purple and magenta of the bougainvillea. For a moment you wonder if you are color blind or color mad. But a balance is restored by a hedge-row of the common red hibiscus or even such humble growths as the killbuckra or buttercup, the forget-me-nots, and the various flowers of the pea family that hang from every stone fence. In common with these are other flowers that resemble large purple morning glories or white field daisies or even the lowly cinquefoil. None of them has more than a passing resemblance to our Northern plants. They are all of them tropical and some of them uniquely Jamaican.

The floral display is altogether baffling, in variety as

in prodigality. There are said to be 3,000 flowering plants and 200 orchids on the island. Every field, hillside, and woodland sends them forth. They even crop out of white-washed walls and fences, or out of a crack in a limestone rock where two grains of sand and one drop of water are ledged. Strange in forms of star and cup, trumpet and bell, they are even stranger in colors. Sad hues that might belong to the desert and its privations, hues of saffron, bleached rose and faded orange are side by side with blazing reds, fire-yellows and violet-blues. Color is everywhere in the tropics. It dwarfs form, overwhelms it by its super-abundance. You cannot lose it for a moment.

Again the Birds

With all this prodigality in tree and grass and flower, this continuous production of seed and nut and fruit, one comes back again to wonder and find it odd that there is not more of bird life apparent. It is winter, to be sure, but there should be some birds somewhere in field or bush. There is no necessity for a winter migration of native birds and it is doubtful if any takes place. Besides it is said that some fifty varieties of Northern birds move down to the West Indies during the winter months. But I find few of the migrants and have met with only a few of the larger birds either native or migrant. Very likely the

fault is mine but I do not find among friends and associates any larger tale or count.

Whether migratory or native the bird life of the island, such as I have found it, hardly carries out or supplements the foliage or the flowers. On the surface it is not very brilliant in plumage. There are now no blue, red, and green macaws, no rose-red flamingoes, no scarlet ibises, outside of captivity in Jamaica. Columbus made note of the island that the flocks of parrots darkened the sun but to-day they are almost as non-existent as birds of paradise. There are small blue-and-white herons, yellow-billed rails, green-backed toadies, blue quits, but they possess no large color note, either individually or collectively, that is peculiar to the tropics. An orange-and-black troupial could outshine any one of them, and the sight of him might carry you back to Columbian or Brazilian tangles, but the troupial here is seen only behind the wire mesh of a cage. The banana bird or Jamaica oriole is of the troupial family, and a rather remarkable member of it, and the tinkling grackle (an arrangement in iridescent black with a glassy eye and a long keel tail) is another one of the group.

The smaller birds, however, such as the wood creepers, the finches, the warblers, and wrens, are abundant almost everywhere. The interest in them is the greater perhaps because many of them are not familiar to us. The variety in the color of plumage

is large, with many vivid blues, reds, and yellows that one seldom sees at the North. And also many strange markings and bandings, many top-knots and collars, many oddly plumed wings and tails. In fact the interest in these smaller birds keeps growing until it becomes absorbing. They are perhaps too small to play an important part in the gamut of tropical color but in interest they eventually push the larger birds off the stage and make the chained parrot and the caged macaw look vulgar.

Bird Song

But they sing no extended songs. Bird song in the tropics, in the winter months, seems in a state of suspense. No one is kept awake at night with the nightingales nor is he held spell-bound by day with the confused rhapsodies of mocking birds. I have been told of nightingales but have heard none. And the mocking bird, sometimes called here a nightingale, is not peculiar to the island but resembles the mocking bird of Southern California. He is frequently mistaken by the stranger for a bird, called by the natives a petchary—a seeming mixture of the mocking bird and the king bird, with the latter predominant.

The whole bird orchestra of the island in December, could hardly patch up a respectable chorus. Song goes with love and the breeding season and there seems more of it in the temperate zones than in the

tropics. That is to say, bird song at the North is a matter of about two months during the breeding season. It is concentrated then. But in the tropics the breeding season runs on the whole year. Different birds breed at different times, suiting their own convenience. Song is not concentrated at any one time. We miss the chorus and then mistakenly conclude that there is no song at all. But a visitor at the North in September and October, how much bird chorus or even individual song would he hear? Perhaps we are here at the most silent time, or, what is more likely, we are out of focus and out of hearing.

Again (to go on with our impressions) the tropical forests seem poor places for bird song. One can go sometimes for hours through Brazilian, Columbian, or Panaman jungles without hearing a note or call. Birds are there, and if one moves quietly, or sits still, he will see them, but they make few reports of themselves save at morning and evening when they may give out a call or a few short notes, or a scream, or a squawk. Jamaican woods are different from the others only as less dense and more broken by plantations.

And the Northern birds that come here during cold weather are practically songless. About some of them the question might be asked: Are they Northern birds? At morning and evening, circling in the upper air, one sees chimney swifts and small swallows that look like those of summer in New England. It

is assumed that they are the same and have migrated from the North but may they not be a native species or belong only a few hundred miles to the North? It may be doubted that many of the Northern birds make long migratory flights or enter the hot tropical regions at all. An occasional straggler from a flock, a lost bird, may drift down into the West Indies and rest there for a few days in a bewildered condition, thereby establishing a misleading precedent, but he soon finds the food unsatisfactory and the climate too warm.

Some of the warblers and finches no doubt come down from the Southern States by way of Florida and Cuba, also some of the fly catchers, swallows, wrens, snipes, plovers, but they are here in no large groups. And such birds as the Northern thrushes, cat birds, red wings, blackbirds, robins, larks, sparrows do not get here at all. Northern waterfowl are sometimes seen in the winter months, with perhaps such game birds as the woodcock and the English snipe, though I have *seen* neither of the last two. Farther south in Panama there are many blue and green winged and cinnamon teal during the winter months with curlew, plover, and Northern shore birds, but perhaps they have been following down the Pacific shore-line.

Bird movements are more often influenced by food supply than climate conditions. Almost any bird, well-fed at home, will stay there as long as the food

lasts. When it fails he will move on to other fields and pastures new, no matter what the temperature or time of year. The insect crop, upon which many of the smaller birds rely, passes out with cold weather, and the snow covers over many of the seed crops that larks, doves, and sparrows subsist upon. Naturally those birds go elsewhere for food but not necessarily long distances or into tropical circles. The motives of bird migration may be as mixed with the birds as with the bird lovers who are just now trying to solve migration problems. In any event, no one has reason for being too cocksure about them. The birds themselves may not be too sure.

Inland Roads

The shore roads wind on and around the island indefinitely and seemingly forever. They run by arena beach, mangrove swamp, and sugar plantation, under groves of palm, arches of bamboo, and arms of Saman. At right angles from them are still other roads that lead up to plantations and little villages in the hills—roads that twist along ridges through a tumbled and tossed country where huge elephant-eared taro grows in the damp places and giant silk-cotton trees stand on hill tops, and clumps of bamboo spread like huge bouquets of green ostrich plumes. It is a strange weird land, this mountain country through which the roads zigzag and make hairpin turnings;

strange not only in its cone-shaped peaks and corresponding valley bowls (called locally, cockpits) but also in its golden-green foliage, its golden sunlight, and its great masses of deep shadow.

It seems to lie away and aloof from the world. Here and there are large stone houses built long ago with slave labor and never since repaired or freed from clambering vines. Some of these are vacant and even those inhabited have a deserted look. You perhaps circle them before you find signs of a tenant. Behind such walls, in such a tangled cave-and-jungle country, one fleeing from civilization, might lose himself forever so far as inquiry and search go. The hill plantations themselves are half lost though they usually adjoin one another—something you would not suspect at first glance. Occasionally there is a reach of open country where hump-shouldered East Indian cattle graze at ease as though native to these hills, and black goats with brown sheep stand and stupidly stare at each other, and old horses stamp the flies away under heavy-leaved trees. And here beside every stream and near every plantation where cane and banana grow, are small settlements of negro cabins where there is an abundance of native life.

Jamaica Blacks

Wherever the roads run there go the blacks—the Jamaica negroes. In ones or twos or threes, afoot or

leading a donkey or driving a trio of mules to a big cart, they are always moving along the highways somewhat like black ants along a runway. One file is going toward a town or country store with perhaps something to sell and another file is going in an opposite direction with something bought. Those afoot, especially the young girls and women, carry their burdens on their heads. Nothing seems too large or too small to be carried there—sacks of beans or meal, bunches of bananas, bundles of logwood, baskets of eggs, trays of chickens, a table, a chair, an empty tin pan. You look in the fields of cane or banana plantations for blacks at work but they are not there—at least not at this time of day. Of course, the black works in the fields as well as at carting along the roads and loading fruit, but on the surface it is not apparent that he does much beyond walk and talk.

Seen along the Jamaica roads, under the broken sunlight filtered through palm and bamboo, the black is decidedly picturesque. He has the fine line and movement of an animal, the dark skin born of a tropical sun, and the female of the species comes in to help out the picture with the glow of bright clothing. Male and female after their kind they belong in the landscape as much as the waving palm or the flowering bougainvillea or the gay hibiscus. They are exotic, tropical, indigenous, and fit in the picture perfectly, keeping their place without the slightest note of discord. Beside them the white man in his duck

suit and cork hat is only so much superfluous spottiness.

And they are statuesque as well as picturesque. Carrying burdens on the head from early childhood has had to do with producing the straight, strong neck and back, a high, well-carried head, broad shoulders, a filled-out chest, lithe swinging arms, strongly muscled legs, long flat feet. One cannot travel with weights on the head for years without falling into a certain statuesque carriage. The eyes turn but not the head; the arms may sway, like the fronds of the palm, but the trunk bends infrequently and slowly. The figure moves with a balanced rhythm that implies poise and calm. The black girl with a four-gallon can of milk on her head measures out your order from the tap above her brows without taking down the can. Her arms move slowly, gracefully, co-ordinately, but her head and figure bend little. The field hand wielding the mattock or the machette as he bends and swings is quite as wonderful. At times he stops, to wipe his brow with his sleeve, to straighten up and breathe deeply, and unconsciously he strikes plastic poses that might impress a Rodin or a Bourdelle. He is a wonderful animal, perhaps by reason of having no wonder about himself, no thought about being only an animal.

Black Conditions

For the black field hand under present conditions in the West Indies is little more than an animal. And even as such he is not well provided for. The flesh is drawn tightly over his big frame. He has not usually enough to eat. With a lowered resistance he is a shining mark for tuberculosis, alastrim, hook-worm, malaria, and he often dies from an attack of measles. He has strength in his muscles but not in his blood. He works for twenty, thirty, rarely for forty cents a day, but that is not sufficient to provide for himself and his family. As a class it may be said that he owns no land, raises no vegetables for his family in the back lot, but depends upon buying a little salt fish from Nova Scotia, something in tins from London, or cans from New York, and eking out a remainder with bananas from the bush or vegetables or cane from a near-by estate. He has no money, no clothing but the poor cotton upon his back, and no home but a bamboo hut where he and his family sleep upon the floor eight or ten in a row like so many sheep or guinea pigs. His condition is rather pitiful.

For he has fallen upon evil times and is bearing the brunt of an economic break-down. He was better off in slavery days. For then sugar, cacao, cotton, coffee, bananas, cocoanuts were not grown in excessive quantities. They brought top prices, the planters were rich,

and the blacks were well taken care of along with the cattle and horses. But now! Overproduction and competition all around the world have broken down the prices. Sugar, cacao, cotton, and coffee pay little or nothing at all. The absentee landlord grumbles because of lowered or passed dividends but the black field hand has to tighten his belt. His landlord gives him his twenty or forty cents a day and when that fails he is on the bread line—if there is one in his island. He cannot get away from his island. He is practically bound to the district where he was born and reared.

Still, the owners will gamble in sugar, cacao, cotton, coffee, bananas. Still they will push aside diversified farming as did, up to a few years ago, the planters in the southern states of America. And still, they will do little by way of providing the black man with a few acres of land and teaching him how to raise vegetables for his own consumption. They will all sell him land at five dollars an acre—the governments of the islands will do that. But he never had five dollars and has no tools nor any knowledge of how to go to work in a vegetable garden. He needs to be taught, shown how, not by precepts, but by example.

Happily, in some of the islands that is being brought about. Jamaica is one of the islands where the black is just now being helped to small independent holdings. The disposition to help is growing.*

*"Peasant settlement and co-operation among peasants should be developed as much as possible as the most effective way of establish-

And the black is entitled to such consideration, entitled at least to decent treatment. He thinks the islands belong to him by long occupation as much as to the foreign landlord. Moreover, not only the individual owners but the governments themselves are under a blanket obligation to the natives. Any government that conquers, buys, or takes over another country is morally bound at least to provide economic conditions that will keep the natives of that country from starvation. There is no communism in that. It is simply common justice.

But this brings up not one, but many questions. The economic status of the West Indies is not to be settled in a few minutes, in a few pages of a traveller's journal. I had not thought even to mention the subject but one cannot travel far in the islands without coming face to face with the hard fact that there is some distress in all the islands and very sorry conditions in some of them. I shall not be able to ignore these conditions though I may have to content myself with merely reciting them.

The Villages of Jamaica

It is not worth while going into the small villages of the blacks. They are made up of bamboo and board huts, generally about ten feet by twelve, with only one room and that devoid of furniture. Something the economic structure of the West Indian Colonics on a sane basis."—*West Indian Committee Circular*, Oct. 30, 1930.

times the home is a little better than this but at best it is only a grade above the Hindoo mud hut and many grades below the Malay bamboo house. It is a strange commentary on these islands, lying so beautifully in the Caribbean and naturally so productive, that after three hundred years of occupation their native workers should be without decent homes, without decent food and clothing, and always hanging on the edge of starvation.

It is just as sorry a commentary that Jamaica's best city, Kingston, should be largely an aggregation of small, board houses. Aside from two or three business streets the town is a dreary corrugated-iron-roofed sort of place, with not a flash of beauty or a ray of intelligence about it. There are some government buildings that stand up above the dull commonplaceness of one-story roofs, and since 1925 many of the wooden houses have been replaced with concrete buildings of one and two stories. There has been a brightening up with asphalt streets and fresh paint and some liveliness of trade shows in shops. Some of this may be attributed to the invasion of tourists. In recent years the cruise ship which has made a farce of travel, has been running people, like bands of sheep, in and out of places such as Kingston and, of course, the sheep have lost some wool to the shop-keepers.

In the suburbs, on the hill slopes as in the back country, there are some comfortable and handsome houses of English residents. But the city—well, the

best part of it is the harbor in front of it and the mountains behind it. Jamaica, the island which has made so many foreign families rich, so many wealthy English estates, has every shilling been taken out of it? The country roads, the railroads, the bridges that were laid down seventy-five years ago, seem never to have known change or repair. A smart American hotel at Kingston or Port Antonio merely emphasizes the drabness of the surrounding houses, and the beauty of the mountains, forests, and seas, but bring into sharp relief the ugliness of the negro villages. Why all this appearance of poverty and destitution in an island that has proved a gold mine to so many of its owners?

But that question will face us almost everywhere in the West Indies. An economic condition is just now at fault but before ever that arose—from Spanish days on down to present days—the West Indies have been worked by foreign owners for their own benefit rather than for the upbuilding of the islands or the good of the inhabitants. The islands are still suffering from foreign ownership rather than from foreign governments. Indeed, all the governments are well disposed and that of England in the islands is very good, but they are handicapped by vested interests of their own nationals which they cannot ignore or altogether control.

Still, it is too early in the inquiry to parcel out either praise or blame. As we move on to other isl-

ands we shall find that each one has conditions peculiar to itself and that all the blame is not with the absentee landlord. The native—white, yellow, or black—is not exactly an angel of light. He, too, has his shortcomings. The black has so many that almost every attempt to help him to a better living has proved futile. He stands in his own light, like a balky horse, and is harder to move than his planter employer.

HAITI AND SANTO DOMINGO

The Black Island

I DO not know how one could go from Jamaica to Haiti except by sailing vessel and that only by special arrangement. There is no steamer line between the two islands. The different units of the West Indies are served indifferently by their home countries, English boats running to the English islands, French to the French islands, American to the American islands, but none of them co-operates with another, none of them runs around all the islands consecutively. This would seem to be a serious economic handicap, since there is little domestic commerce, little trading of the islands with themselves. Such commerce might not interest the foreign owners, English, French, or American, but it might prove of immense value to the islanders. And I daresay two or three small steamers, making weekly rounds of all the groups, would prove eventually a paying venture.

But at present you go to or from Jamaica or Haiti or Puerto Rico by making starts from London or Havre or New York. I got to Haiti from Panama, once by government ship and once by cruise ship, and I could get there to-day from Cuba did I choose to take an airplane, but my point is that getting there by any means whatever is difficult of accomplishment.

All of which does not help the trade of Haiti. Just now, however, the condition of Haiti is prosperous enough owing largely to the wealth and energy that has been put into it for a dozen years by the American government. In 1915 the island financially was at a low ebb. France wished to occupy it to collect a debt of some seven or eight million dollars. The United States, not relishing a French occupation, offered to take possession and collect the debt for France. The offer was accepted. For a hundred years the Black Republic had been merely a battle ground for contending factions—contending not so much for principles as for offices and a chance to loot. The Outs were always starting a revolution against the Ins. The history of the island during that time is largely a record of bloodshed, assassination, savage shootings. The natural result of this internal strife was the waste of the land, the destruction of commerce, and the impoverishment of the people.

The entrance of the United States in 1915 put a sudden stop to the fighting. A military regime was established. Rehabilitation began immediately. A sanitary clean-up stopped disease, a building of good roads re-established island transportation, an agricultural experiment station at Port au Prince began work on what food-crops could be grown for Haitian consumption. Forty native schools, radiating from the Port au Prince experiment station throughout Haiti, taught the blacks how and what to raise in the back

yard and the garden patch. Elementary schools and hospitals were set up. Trade and foreign commerce once more brought money to the island.

Haiti thus quickly responded to the new management. It paid France and its foreign debtors, fed its own people, built new roads, houses and towns, and Port au Prince, rising on its own ashes, became a city of good streets and parks, good public buildings with many pretty bungalows and cottages, a well-dressed people, and an apparently contented community. But the contentment was more apparent than real. No matter how prosperous a colony there are always those to raise a cry of liberty—freedom from foreign domination. The agitator is never absent. At the present time (1930) the Filipinos are more prosperous than the Americans but their agitators tell them they should be free, and the Haitians have never in their history known such good times as just now, but they want the right to cut each other's throats over the offices. And the United States, perhaps a little weary of handing out moneys and receiving in return nothing but ingratitude, is disposed to let them do as they please.

Haitian Rule

Now it will have been noted that the hundred years of Haitian distress, the impoverishment of the island, and the starvation of the native, were not brought

about by any absentee landlordism or foreign rule. Haiti was free—Heaven save the mark!—and the black man was ruled by fellow black men. Some of them, and the most prosperous of them, were not pure black. They were mulattoes, who had arrogated to themselves large tracts of land. There was landlordism there but not *foreign* landlordism. And there was nothing very wrong with island conditions, except in the black man's rule. He was his own destroyer. Neither in Haiti nor elsewhere has he ever proved that he was able to rule himself. It is safe to predict that with the withdrawal of the United States from Haiti, the old regime of fighting, poverty, and disease will be re-established. For the sake of peace in the island, for the suppression of a disorderly house among nations, perhaps the United States should not withdraw. The cry of the political agitators might be ignored just as the cry of the communists in the United States is disregarded. The black man is universally considered as a person temperamentally unfitted to rule. But for all that he is entitled to decent treatment and a chance to develop as a black man.

Santo Domingo

Haiti and Santo Domingo, both of them black republics, make up just as beautiful an island as Jamaica or Puerto Rico, but it has been so scourged by its black leaders and their followers that much of its natural beauty has vanished. The sea with its harbors,

the mountains with some of their virgin forests, the blue sky, and the trade winds are there, but the native villages with their negro cabins or the cities with their board houses are desolate enough. There is little to excite admiration and it is a relief to find that one can go from Port au Prince to Santo Domingo by automobile and that from there he can get by steamer once a week to Puerto Rico. Conditions are greatly improved in Haiti and are improving in Santo Domingo, but they still have some distance to go before the traveller will find great joy in a visit to either place. Few of the islands in the Caribbean are so badly off for hotels, to start with, and the modern traveller no longer cares to put up with such conditions as are furnished by say, Santo Domingo city.

PUERTO RICO

THE entrance to the harbor of San Juan, under the lee of the old Spanish fort and between two pretty little islands, is very picturesque and puts one in an amiable receptive mood at once. The huge Spanish walls along the sea front, the massive governor's palace, the white cathedral, the good docks, the active city are all stimulating. This seems to be a lively place. There is movement everywhere. People—well-dressed, well-fed, prosperous-looking people—throng the sidewalks, come and go in automobiles, street cars, jitney buses. The narrow streets are clean, the shops excellent, the public buildings up from the docks commanding, and there on a hill farther down the main way is the capitol in white marble overlooking both sea and harbor and dominating the whole scene with an air of complacent well-being. Certainly there is at first blush a prosperous look about the chief city of the island. Who or what is responsible for this? Is it good government, philanthropic landlordism, or an enterprising people? We may as well answer these questions at once as best we can and in reverse order.

This is not a black island. It is still Spanish. Some blacks are here but they are not encouraged to remain. In the interior villages they are often unceremoniously ousted. The people of the island remains

Spanish, as it was from the beginning. It is still steeped in Spanish tradition. It is a polite, affable, hard-working people. In the cane and tobacco regions, as in the mountain districts, the workers are poor, live in small huts, and have little; but they are not ill-fed nor ill-clothed. The scale of wages is better than in Jamaica or Trinidad—something like fifty or sixty cents a day—but the cost of living is higher. This is, no doubt, due to the imposition of American ideas, values, and methods of work. The island is an American possession. As such it is entitled to enter its produce into the United States duty free. Much of the present welfare of the business men and the sugar growers is due to that fact. The last year of Spanish domination (1898), the exports and imports of the island were something like \$10,000,000. In the year 1930, under American rule, the foreign trade of the island ran up to \$175,000,000 with the balance in favor of the island.

Still, there is much talk in San Juan about poverty, about ill-fed children, about the death rate from diseases of malnutrition. I have not seen these manifestations, though I have gone over the island rather carefully each day in an automobile during a recent stay of some three weeks. It may be so. The island is still growing crops of sugar, tobacco, grape fruit, pine apples, coffee, bananas, cotton—gamble crops that are for export, to be sold at the market price, sold in competition with Hawaii and the Philippines.

There is no old-time profit to be made here. **The** market is down, the population has increased enormously, competition in the labor field is lively, wages are low considering the cost of living. No doubt the poorer classes in the country feel the pinch—**feel it** more than the city people.

Small Farm Holdings

So then Puerto Rico, with a better peasant people than Jamaica, is caught in the same vise. Crop-values have collapsed in both islands. But the large owners have not changed their plantings. They are still growing sugar, coffee, and cotton—throwing the same old dice and betting on the market going up. The large plantations are many. Eighty per cent of the island is owned by foreigners, with Spain still holding twenty-five per cent of the eighty, and whenever an American corporation buys in it goes on with the same old gamble crops. Diversified farming! We are told there is no money in that! The big interests are out for big money. Farming just for a good living, for the native and his family first—**well**, they have not come to Puerto Rico for that.

But happily the powers that be in the Puerto **Rican** government have developed a lively interest in **the** man with the hoe. They are out to help him, to prevent his collapse with sugar prices, to make him **independent** of the market crop. **Under** its **Department**

of Agriculture and Labor the government is distributing land in small parcels of two or three or more acres, selling it to the native on an installment plan payable over a number of years. I am told that some 1,200 or 2,000 of these little homesteads have already been taken up and, under expert agricultural guidance, are producing excellent results. And the work has hardly yet got under way.

Now here is a shot that should be heard around the whole of the West Indies. It has been fired before but not heard nor heeded. To change the metaphor it is virtually the casting of an anchor to windward which should make the man who lives on the land independent of what crops the land owners and the corporations choose to grow. They can continue with sugar, coffee, and cotton, but if the native can grow red beans, sweet potatoes, corn and yams, and cultivate a cow, some pigs, a few goats and some dozens of chickens, he can be independent of market collapses. He is insured against starvation and want and can perhaps make some money over and above by working in the tobacco and cane of the big interests.

There are advantages to the government and the state in this parcelling out of land to small owners. With an interest at stake the native at once becomes a conservative citizen. If the government helps him with his land and crops through its experiment stations and agricultural colleges, he is at once beholden

and tied up to the government. He wants no radical or communistic changes that will imperil his holding.

Moreover, this not only makes the independent man but eventually makes the independent self-supporting country. It has its own food supply and though the grape-fruit crop may fail and cotton prices sink to impossible depths, and all the money for sugar go out of the country with the crop, yet the people will not starve. They will not have all their eggs in one basket as to-day. The native will not stand or fall with prices in New York or London.

The very best working of this plan is shown in Java. Years ago the Dutch put on their statute books the law that no one but a native—not even a Dutchman—may buy agricultural land in Java. The result is many thousands of small land holdings. The Dutch government goes further by providing for the native the very best roads and transportation, the very best irrigation systems, the very best experiment stations and agricultural colleges. It works with the native, makes money out of the Dutch possessions, but allows the native to make money too. When the native grows more of rice or cassava or maize than he and his family can use, the government comes in and buys his surplus, shipping it out to the different ports of the world. The result is a contented native population, more dense in Java than any other spot in the world. It is common comment with those who have been in Java and studied conditions there, that it is

the best-governed and most-successful colony now extant.

The Native

But there are some "ifs" and "perhapses" to be considered before one may cry "Eureka" over the small-farm plan in the West Indies. The soil conditions between the East Indies and the West Indies are not so very different, but there is considerable difference between the Malay and the native of the West Indies. The Malay is the better man by far. He accepts his few acres and improves his property. Will the West Indian, white or black, do likewise? That remains to be seen.

In the island of Tortola, near Saint Thomas, there are some 5,000 blacks living on their own small farms. They bring into Saint Thomas about 40 per cent of the vegetables sold in the Saint Thomas market, they have no debts, and cause the English commissioner of the island no expense or worry. They are prospering and apparently contented. Still, there are those who shake their heads over the black. The overseers and proprietors have little faith in his initiative.

I have never found the large proprietors inconsiderate, or ill-disposed toward the native. They are quite willing to admit that he fares badly but they are inclined to put the blame upon his own shoulders. They have been willing to help him to a small hold-

ing of land but they insist that he will do nothing with it, knows nothing about vegetable-raising, is only a sugar, coffee, and tobacco hand, and that if he raised food crops he would not eat them; that he is used to a fish and yam diet and will not eat meat; that he is lazy; that he is just a "nigger"; and as such, quite hopeless. Furthermore, that if he got land in his own right he would sell it and spend the money at the first opportunity.

That is perhaps putting the case harshly but there is truth in the statement. But precautions could be taken. Not all the colored people could be put on farms, any more than all the whites. There must be mechanics, trades people, clerks, shop-keepers, coal-passers, cargo men among them. Selection of those fitted for farmers could be made, would of necessity be made. The sale of the land by the blacks could be prohibited in the deed of sale for the first ten years and after that sold only on governmental approval. The processes of hygiene now being taught in all the islands could emphasize the value of certain foods. The black, or the white, could be taught. And finally the experiment stations and agricultural colleges, whose best efforts heretofore have gone out to help the big companies grow more or better sugar, tobacco, and cotton, could be commandeered to help the native grow garden produce, help him by actual demonstration on the premises rather than by bulletins and scientific class-room talk.

One grows insistent, after long survey of conditions, that the native is entitled to more consideration than he has ever received. He is entitled to a fair show for his life and his living. That he is stupid, and perhaps unresponsive to efforts to help him, is all the more reason for patient consideration. One has no sympathy whatever with any attempt to make the black man in Jamaica a poor apology for an Englishman, or the Spaniard in Puerto Rico a half-baked American. But give him a chance at a decent living, black or Spanish, after his kind.

San Juan

Taking it for all and all San Juan is one of the best cities in the West Indies. And it is just as beautiful to-day as in Spanish times. The old fort on the point with its great walls, fine cornices, and gun emplacements is still there facing grimly out to sea, frowning down upon the harbor entrance with its two little islands between which the ships pass. The high walls run along the sea front for a long distance—a defiance to the old pirates and buccaneers, a line of beauty to the modern traveller. The busy city holds fast by the old fort and the parade ground, by the barracks, the governor's palace, the walled-in houses with their balconies and gardens, the churches and their plazas, the parks with their flowers and fountains. Occasionally some park sculpture appears with no better re-

suits here than elsewhere. A diminutive statue of Ponce de Leon in the swashbuckler style of seventy-five years ago or a first citizen realistically seated on a boulder in a park, may be passed by lightly. The great facade, the halls and walls of the governor's palace, with its garden and terrace and towers are more interesting and even the new capitol commands attention. But one goes back to the fort on the point to admire the view, the sea and harbor, the picturesque panorama.

The beautiful harbor lies under the hill and under the town, and beyond it stretching away to the south in a misty distance lies half of Puerto Rico. There is a foreground range of small cone-shaped hills and beyond these the mountains that run through the island east and west. They are of considerable height—El Yunque the highest point around to the far east being about 5,000 feet and the average height perhaps 2,500 feet. Most of the rivers run down to the north from this range and most of the rain-fall is on this slope. Over the divide and down to the south shore lies a different country. It has only about fifteen inches of rain and is spoken of as being half desert—especially on the west end.

But the magnificent view from the old fort on **the** point is looking north—looking out to sea. Here is the wonderful Atlantic, ever fresh, ruffled anew each morning by the trade wind, coming in over the coral reefs in cobalt waves capped with snow, pounding up

the island sands in an undying roar. Oh! what a magnificent sea! It is not geographically the Caribbean though the same blue water, flawed with turquoise patches under cloud-shadows, and sometimes at sunset flattened into a silver shield flecked with gold.

Gloria's Cottage

Following the coast line to the east, the city expands into a suburb made up of charming residences, cottages, bungalows walled-in and surrounded by tropical trees and flowers. The big hotel is there and beyond it, facing out to sea, are some delightful homes. Gloria's cottage is far down the shore, buried in a garden of palms, casuarina, mahogany, mango, where the moonlight falls on oleander and alamanda, on red hibiscus and purple bougainvillea, and the feathery bamboo spreads against the night sky like a Japanese pattern on a screen. In front of the cottage is a path winding through sea-grape and that lovely arabesque, the sea tansy (*ambrosia hispida*)—running down to the beach where wave mirrors spread on the sands and one hears the faint tinkle of sea shells in the receding water.

And Gloria herself—young and handsome Gloria—is there on the porch, seated on her lounge, book in lap, but not reading, looking out to where the waves are breaking over the outer reef and a white sunlit steamer is pushing out to sea. What a picture of

young life, of hope and happiness, in a kingdom by the sea where the tropical sunlight falls in splendor on wave and shore and cottage wall. Oh, no! the West Indies are not all misery and want. There is another face to the shield, which shows us joy, content, and beauty. And we are not to believe that all windows here are

"Magic casements opening on the foam
Of perilous seas in faery lands forlorn."

By the Military Road

You go in an automobile for a mile or more by villas and cottages of charm and loveliness, by humble homes that are clean, and bright with flowers, and then take the road—the old Spanish military road—across the island. The mangrove swamps, now being filled in, are passed and the open country is soon reached. The road is excellent. And the interior of the island inaccessible without it. One understands at once its necessity to the old Spaniards as its importance to the present-day inhabitants.

The natives do not move along this road, or any other in the island, as they do in Jamaica or Martinique. There are no files of women in gay costumes carrying burdens on their heads. This is not a head-bearing people, nor does it travel much afoot. Many buses, usually packed with natives, go rumbling from **San Juan** to Ponce, and great trucks top-heavy with

bags, boxes, and barrels, push for pace and place. A great deal of traffic moves across the island. And many people come and go. Some of the natives move about on horseback, but the lowly donkey and the mule are very little in evidence.

The road runs on by fields of cane, corn, cassava, pineapple, ascends the first low-hill range, and winds higher and higher along avenues of West-Indian birch, tamarind, casuarina, mango, silk-cotton, ponciana. Both sides are lined with flowers, common wayside flowers, but beautiful enough for an angel's chaplet—morning glories of heavenly blue, the poet's eye, the variegated verbenas, the wild white Indian rose, the trailing clematis, the catsclaw, and dozens of other flowers known only to the trained botanist.* One is likely to overlook these wayside beauties because of the greater splendor of flowering shrubs and trees.

In fields and on the mountain sides, as well as along the roads, one sees (isolated rather than in clumps or groves) the red-flowering African tulip, the pink robe, the lilac lilas, the bright yellow cassia, the yellow and pink mahoe, the white-flowered balsa, the white-podded agati, and occasionally the maga (montezuma), known only to Puerto Rico, with a red flower larger than the hibiscus. In their seasons

*For three weeks in Puerto Rico I was fortunate enough to be with Dr. and Mrs. Nathaniel L. Britton of botanical fame and they pointed out to me scores of trees and flowers with which I had not even a nodding acquaintance. I am much indebted to them for seeing Puerto Rico intelligently, scientifically, and very pleasantly.

all the trees come forth with flower or pod or fruit—the tamarind, mesquite, mango, genip, saman; and even without flowers there are trees that catch the eye by their foliage or white stems or other peculiarity—the tabonuco, the Panama tree, the soap berry, the bay rum tree, the mahogany, the logwood, the *lignum vitae*, the labbek, the palo da Maria.

The lower range of mountains is of limestone formation but when the main cordillera is reached there is a change to an older and harder rock with pudding stone and volcanic ash. The road begins to zig-zag and hair-pin up the mountain sides and along the divides. Wide views of valleys and distant ranges open up. Sugar, grape fruit, coffee, cotton, are growing and the mountain slopes are covered with tobacco. Very picturesque are the tobacco fields with their red soil, green leaves, and women in gay cottons working along the rows.

Coamo Springs

When the top of the range is reached there is no immediate pitch down on the other side. On the contrary a wide plateau spreads out, a fine farming area where almost everything tropical grows. It is well watered but when the descent on the south side begins, the rainfall slackens and a much drier, more desert-like country appears. At the little town of Coamo with its pretty plaza, the rainfall has dropped

to about fifteen inches and at Coamo Springs it is less.

The hotel at Coamo Springs goes back to Spanish days when it was a casino and the island dons with their sweethearts came here for week-end gamblings and carouses. The hot sulphur baths, no doubt, did their part on Monday mornings in restoring lost equilibrium, if not lost money. With the coming of the Americans all that has changed, but the buildings were left intact and now make up an excellent hotel. The place with its trees and flowers, its fine climate and its great stillness is an ideal retreat that every one praises. Moreover, it is the one spot in Puerto Rico where I saw birds. The rest of the island has little bird life and no animals, but at Coamo Springs there were mocking birds that actually sang, with many pretty little ground doves, warblers, finches, king-birds, humming birds, black cuckoos (ani), grackles, and, down by the little Coamo River, some small bitterns. But the birds of Puerto Rico are practically non-existent, as a result of the destructive methods of the Spaniard.

Mountain Roads and People

From Coamo Springs there are good roads in almost every direction where the automobile runs lightly down to Ponce, down to the southern shore, up into the plateau, even up into the high mountains. The mountain trip on a warm day, with luncheon by

the waterfall of Dona Juana, is altogether delightful. You pass through the village of Juana Diaz, turn to the right and move up the hills, past a large irrigation reservoir (1,300 feet) to the Divisoria (divide). From this elevation (2,500 feet) grand views to the south over Ponce and the southern sea are to be had. The mountain air is clean and clear, the sky overhead superbly blue, the vegetation even more densely tropical than down below. Bamboo shadows the road, the trumpet tree (cecropia) shows the under-white of its leaves like white flowers, the vines and mosses cling to the rocky road-sides, and great forests of banana run over the tops of the highest mountains. It is a superb mountain country and the precipitous waterfall and stony basins of Dona Juana form its obvious climax. Nothing could be more lovely than this waterfall in the high mountains, in its setting of golden-green tree ferns, tangled grasses, and lapis-lazuli sky.

The mountain people come out shyly to look you over while you eat luncheon by the main rock basin. They are well and cleanly dressed, look well-fed and healthy, and are well-spoken and polite. It takes some coaxing to get them to come near and talk. They are poor enough but they make no complaint. Their houses are small, often thatched with grass and palm, and almost always shy of furniture, but they are enough better than the shanties of the coal towns of Pennsylvania, or the cabins of the Tennessee mountaineers. I saw many of the school-houses and entered

some of them—again, enough better than many of the school-houses of southern New Jersey.

On the whole, the rural Spanish of Puerto Rico are not to be commiserated. They have little but their wants are few. Their joys, again, are not many, but their dispositions are happy. And no one is to be pitied for living in such a beautiful island, in such a perfect climate. The United States may improve the living conditions of the native—has done so already—but the native should not be helped to a point of helplessness. Help of any sort, with any people, is a somewhat questionable proceeding. And the Puerto Rican does not need it. If right economic conditions are set up, he can do the rest

THE VIRGIN ISLANDS

Saint Thomas

SAINT THOMAS is far up on the northeastern rim of the Caribbean circle. It looks out to the North Atlantic with its green-blues and is perhaps somewhat tempered in its coloring by northern light. It is within the tropics—that is latitude eighteen north—but the Tropic of Cancer is not far distant.

Perhaps there are deep-sea currents, from New Foundland and beyond, that work their way down here and gradually mingle with the Caribbean. For as one comes down from New York and crosses the Gulf Stream and Bahama Current to Saint Thomas, the waters have a gray-green tinge that is more Atlantean than Caribbean. This is not very pronounced and is perhaps as much due to light and cloud-shadow as to local coloring. But nevertheless, one gets the impression that Saint Thomas, in light, air, water, and climate, belongs to the northern rather than the equatorial tropics.

That may account for a marked brilliancy or intensity of light that one notices as the ship enters **the** fine land-locked harbor of Charlotte Amalia, now called Saint Thomas. The harbor waters sparkle, **the** mountains lifting 1,000 feet behind the town have a rose-tinged sunlight and a dark-green shadow, **and**

the town itself, lying in its amphitheatre of hills and rising in streets and terraces, is a panorama of dazzling light and color. The houses are white and the roofs are usually red—not Indian red but Spanish-flag red. The old Danish Fort Christian that goes back to 1671, is all red, the Dutch church (1740) is pink, Blue Beard and Blackbeard castles are gray, the Moravian Church and some other buildings are yellow, but the prevalent notes are white and red. You are apparently in a highly illuminated circus, lying up against a mountain side and are astonished at the high key of all the colors. What a place for a painter! He could here use his brightest oils, his most transparent water colors with not the slightest danger of exaggerating the reality. The whites blare, the reds blaze, and even the greens and blues have an amethystine glitter about them.

This appearance and impression hold throughout the island. It is one of the smaller islands—about thirteen miles in length by two in width—but one of the most beautiful in natural scenery. I know of no panorama in the West Indies, so impressive as that to be seen from the ridge of the mountain back of Saint Thomas, from Louisenhoj (800 feet), the castled home of Mr. Fairchild. The view to the north shows a forested mountain slope, indented bays with turquoise-green water, the small island of Tobago, and the far-reaching misty Atlantic. Around to the east are the islands of Jost Van Dyke (where William

Thornton, designer of the Capitol at Washington was born), the island of Tortola belonging to Great Britain, the island of Saint John, belonging to the United States, and many smaller islands belonging to no one in particular. The south view overlooks the town of Saint Thomas with its churches, towers, docks, warehouses, harbor, and in the distance the Caribbean with the island of Saint Croix dimly seen on the horizon forty miles away. The whole panorama is seen through a blue air-veil and is a blue-green island world lying between sky and sea. What a world for a yachting cruise with that blue harbor below and those island seas all about! What a place these islands for any leisure class seeking a winter climate, in a land of beauty, far from the madding crowd!

Saint Thomas Town

The town of Saint Thomas is not disappointing on closer approach. It is quaint in square Danish houses, with some large shops, several good parks, and excellent wharves. Flowers in profusion grow over garden walls and along balconies. Fresh paint and whitewash give a spick-and-span look. The streets are almost immaculate, without litter or rubbish, or blowing papers, and as for the grimy, smelly slums, they do not exist. Even the poorer quarters of the blacks are not dirty. Across the harbor is a little isolated French colony that lives by fishing and

haps a little gainful smuggling, and it is there one finds the outer appearance of the slum though I am told they are better off financially, than the cleaner blacks of the town.

All the Virgin Islands have a 90 per cent black population. The blacks that throng the streets of Saint Thomas have their full share of poverty, in fact all of them are poor—but they are not gaunt-looking or ragged, or sad-faced. They are cheerful, good-natured, and polite. New Year's Eve they marched the streets all night singing, and New Year's Day they marched some more, dressed in fantastic costumes, and still singing. The streets fairly blazed with color and hummed with music.

But the people in the Virgin Islands are being chased by the wolf. They are not prosperous and perhaps could not very well carry on if it were not for the help of the United States Government. It is the old story. Sugar, which has always been the first crop in the islands, has collapsed and has been practically abandoned. The plantations lie fallow, have run to grass, and are in spots grazed by cattle, but not otherwise cultivated. In Saint Thomas 60 per cent of the total acreage is held by fifteen owners, in Saint Croix 90 per cent is held by twenty-five owners, in Saint John four-fifths of the land belongs to twelve owners.* The owners can make no profit from sugar,

*Annual Report of the Governor of the Virgin Islands for 19291 p. 19.

and they seem to know little and care less about diversified farming. Agriculture as a mainstay, or even as a means of bare subsistence, has almost disappeared. Forty per cent of the vegetables and table supplies of Saint Thomas are raised and brought in from Tortola—that neighboring island where 5,000 blacks, virtually independent and living on small homesteads of a few acres, are farming, raising enough to keep themselves and their families, and still having something to sell left over.

This would not be a serious condition if Saint Thomas had any other resource in industry or commerce. One of the most profitable of the island enterprises, the trade in rum, was done away with by the United States prohibition law and now the town and island is virtually dependent upon the greatly reduced shipping that comes into the port. The cost of living is happily very little and what with some trade with the United States, some tourist traffic, the bay-rum industry, a little fishing, some dock and coal handling, an existence is eked out. It is all a little pitiful when one understands that the fallow fields of Saint Thomas could furnish an ample food supply for all the islanders if only they could be made available. Some of the colored people have told me that they have tried to buy two or three acres from the large owners but with no success.

Of course, homesteaders on the island could not be recruited from dock workers or coal passers or drug

clerks or carpenters but there are enough agriculturally inclined to farm the island if they could own their own lands, as at Tortola. Why could not that success be repeated here at Saint Thomas? It should be considered that the incentive to work lies perhaps as much in ownership of the land as in the necessity of gaining a living.[#]

American Administration

The bright smart look of Saint Thomas town is now due largely to the United States administration of its affairs. The islands are under the control of naval officers, with a commandant who is also governor. The result is a capable, energetic, honest administration for all the people of the islands. A government by officials who are not beholden to voters, whose tenure of office is not to be changed by political parties, whose salaries are fixed, and whose executive abilities have been demonstrated, is probably as good a government as present-day thought can devise. Good order, good sanitation, good schools and courts go along with it.^f

•Commenting on the Report of the Chief of the Bureau of Efficiency recommending the establishment of small homesteads in the island of Saint Croix, the Governor of the islands says: "Different opinions exist as to the success of this system of parceling out the land, but from an economic point of view, it has been beneficial and has served to demonstrate the tenacity with which the laboring man will cling to the land in which he has an interest. Such a system coupled with extension work and the use of modern methods on fertile lands should be a source of good to the island."—*Annual Report of the Governor of the Virgin Islands for 1930*, p. 27.

†Early in 1931 the naval government of the islands was super-

But naturally it costs more than an inefficient administration or no administration at all—costs more than the islands can raise in revenue. Mr. Coolidge, a few months before retiring from the presidency, said that all the colonies of the United States were "a hindrance rather than a help," meaning that they were liabilities rather than assets. When the United States bought the Virgin Islands from Denmark, it was known that the Danes had made up a yearly deficit of about \$200,000. The United States deficit is about \$280,000—more than \$10 a head for every inhabitant of the islands. On the island of Saint Croix there is a six-cents-a-day dole handed out to the needy. The practice and the policy are both regarded as of questionable value. A bread line or a dole line never decreases of its own volition. When people can get something for nothing they will not work for the something. The policy of Great Britain in the West Indies is not so paternalistic though it is now (1930) helping a number of its islands by grants of money to supplement governmental administration or loans to help out crop handlings. Its previous policy has been to guarantee liberty and protection to the native and then leave him to work out his own economic salvation. That may be, and often has been, severe on the black, but it is perhaps the best policy with all peoples, white, yellow, or black.

seded by a civil government which has yet to demonstrate its **greater** economy and efficiency.

Saint Croix

Saint Croix is some forty miles south of Saint Thomas, is three times as large, and in agricultural resources goes far beyond the smaller island. It has an open roadstead looking westward to the Caribbean where small boats ride at anchor and great flocks of clouds drift down aerial steps to the western horizon. But there is little commerce in the roadstead and no great show of life in the town of Fredericksted. It is practically a dead town and offers no immediate prospect of resurrection to its black inhabitants. They like their new schools, with their cleaner streets and houses, and they rather like being American citizens, but they are not enthusiastic over present working conditions. They and their town are suffering from the collapse of sugar—the people having no work and the town at present no back country to draw upon.

The island is admirably disposed for farming, with mountains running up 1,500 feet, finely diversified valleys, and rich plain and coast lands. The latter have been used for many years for sugar but they are now overgrown with grass that the few cattle on the island cannot graze down. The sugar mills are closed, the old wind mills are in ruins, and traces of the last hurricane add to the general look of abandonment and decay. Some plantation houses are still intact but there is a forsaken look about them though some of them are very attractive within and have the look

of old-time well-being. But one driving over from Fredericksted to Christiansted sees little more than the actual beauty of the island. What humanity has done for it is almost negligible.

Christiansted is the largest town on the island, has good colonnaded houses, clean streets, and a well-protected harbor, but there are no ships in the harbor, no people in the streets, and many houses are shuttered and boarded up. It is not as dead as Fredericksted but it is moribund. Sugar once made the rather good towns and the fine island, but sugar is dead and with its chief industry gone, the whole island is desolate. It is an extreme instance of the changed economic conditions that have affected almost all the islands of the West Indies.

And as yet there has been no readjustment. The land owners do not know what step to take, and it is suicide to go on with sugar. So they do nothing. The governor of the islands in an address to the Colonial Council of Saint Croix October 18, 1929, recommended diversified farming, but that met with little response. He had previously recommended that some of the colored people be placed on homesteads of a few acres, but that, too, was coldly received. It was said that not twenty-five negroes in the island could be induced to stay on a homestead, that they knew nothing about the growing of small crops, and preferred to work for wages, that they were lazy and content with a dole from the government. So the condition

is presented of an upper land-owning class who cannot or will not change, and a lower laboring class that cannot or will not work. There seems to be an *impasse* with the United States as a good angel feeding those who have been caught in the lock-out.

Saint John and Tortola

But the good offices of the angel have not been extended to the island of Saint John—the third island of the Virgin group belonging to the United States. There is no dole given out there perhaps because there was no crying necessity for it. It is the smallest island of the group being about nine miles long and five miles wide. It lies parallel, almost side by side, with Tortola and is much like it in diversification of mountains and valleys, with about the same relative percentage of lands that might be used for agriculture. It knew "the good old sugar days" when prices were up, had its slave rebellions, and finally fell down with the slump in sugar. It has now become the heaviest-wooded and wildest island of the group through the reversion to nature. There are no roads and one moves about the island by horse trails. Less than 800 people are on the island. They make charcoal, bay oil, raise a few vegetables and cattle, fish, and thus manage with bananas and island fruit to live a simple but quite independent existence. There is a little town of a few houses at Crux Bay where a

government official acts the part of Pooh Bah **and** manages the affairs of the island.

Commander Riefkohl, commandant of the Port of Saint Thomas, took me over to Tortola and we stopped on the north coast of Saint John on our return. Tortola, I saw for only a few hours and carried away only a general impression, with some statistics furnished me by the British Commissioner in charge. There are, as I have already stated, 5,000 blacks living on the island on their own small farms. These are located in the valley slopes and even on the tops of the mountains. They raise vegetables, chickens, goats, pigs, carry them in small boats about the islands, and sell them where they can. They are not making much money, but they are making a living and are said to be contented and happy. In the small capital of the island (Road Town) there were no very positive signs of prosperity. The houses were small, the main street clean, the people rather poorly dressed, the children thin in face and legs. Their hands were outstretched as we passed—something not met with in the other islands of the Virgin group during my two weeks' stay there.

The experiment in Tortola is no longer an experiment. It has been going on for a long time with little or no expense to the British Government. The responsibility for a living is put squarely on the black man's shoulders. He raises something to eat or he does not eat. From their appearance it does **not look**

as though any of them ate too much. But perhaps they exist and carry-on as they do by virtue of this unusual thing in the West Indies. They own the land and can raise what they choose. There is no landlordism, no company that has to pay a dividend out of their labor.

Perhaps there has been and is some "hard sledding" in Tortola, perhaps the British rule is a little harsh and unsympathetic,* but is it not better than the pauperizing policy of the Americans in the islands? Does it not make a better, more self-reliant, independent people? Does it not develop better citizenship and bring out certain latent qualities in the black which are desirable in his progress as a black? If it does, what is the real key to the situation if not the black owning his own piece of ground and living his own life under a just and fair government? The example set here at Tortola might be profitable carried out in moderation elsewhere, not only throughout the British islands, but all the islands of the West Indies.

*In November, 1929, there was put in the supplementary estimates of the British Treasury ,£196,000 for the West Indies as follows: Dominica £14,500; Saint Lucia ,£2,000; Antigua £5,000. Before this there had been grants of £183,000 and loans of £222,000. This was to help out the expense of administration in these islands. Food tickets were being distributed in Dominica. This was in recognition of the bad condition of the sugar market, but it shows that Great Britain will help when it deems help necessary.

The Beautiful Islands

And while councils discuss plans and landowners gamble with crops and blacks refuse to work, the islands themselves lie there in the quiet sea, the most beautiful sunlit and color-saturated spots in all the world. The white light dances on the green-blue waves, the cloud-shadows slip over wooded mountain ridges, and the soft trade winds turn the leaves and toss the petals of a thousand different flowers. Everywhere flowers and blossoms. Hedges of hibiscus, walls of purple bougainvillea, beds of canna, blue morning glory, yellow alamanda. Overhead trees in blossom—white frangipani, yellow cassia, orange-red ponciana, spreading in fan patterns against the sky. And how very peaceful! The sunlight falls, the shadows wax and wane, color flares up and dies out, but there is no sound, no jar, no disturbance of any kind. The serenity of nature is omnipresent as though all were right with the world.

But these Virgin Islands have no monopoly of West Indian beauty. All the islands are superb gems of emerald and topaz set round about with amethystine seas. Perhaps Dominica or Martinique in grandeur of mountain height, wooded slopes and sunlit gorges lead all the rest but any one of them by itself considered is a Garden of the Sun. There never were spots of earth so well planned for human happiness as these islands of the Caribbean.

And yet since the days of Columbus, man has done little for them. He has been too busy fighting *about* them. Not about their beauty, but about their wealth. It was for that the early Spaniards split the throat of the native Carib and it is for that that people to-day are trying to cut each other's throats. Money, always money! Sooner or later everything is reduced to a matter of money—even human life. The Ten Commandments and the Golden Rule are mere scraps of paper to suckle fools and chronicle small beer. As for beauty—bah! Stuff for girls! A practical man knows that the world was made for business.

ENGLISH ISLANDS

Saint Kitts

IF one goes directly from Saint Thomas to Saint Kitts he is likely to be somewhat surprised, even shocked, by the contrast. Not by the island itself for Saint Kitts is quite as handsome after its kind as Saint Thomas. Seen from the sea, it is a panorama of sea-island loveliness with its volcanic teepee-shaped mountains, its timbered peaks, and its fields of cane around the mountain bases. The same tropical coloring lies on the hills here as at Saint Croix, the same gulches in between the hills with dry water courses and trees, the same light and air and drifting clouds.

All the islands are much alike in natural endowment. Some are more commanding than others in mountain heights, some more peaceful in flat lands, some lighter in planted fields, or darker in timbered slopes. The differences between them are more marked in those spots on the islands called towns or those spots lying out from the towns called estates or plantations. The estate is usually a clearing and a planting and often a patch of beauty in the landscape, but the town is more often a mere excrescence, a depressing spot where misery **congregates and unhappiness** finds a voice.

Basse Terre is the chief town and port of Saint Kitts. It is drab, dreary, doleful. The buildings are very old, very grimy-looking, very English, and very inappropriate to the tropics. When last painted—it must have been ages ago—the shops of the town evidently received a coat of brown with trimmings of Indian red—colors that have always been sacred to English buildings at home or abroad. The red still shows through the grime. There has never been any pretence at architecture, before or since the fire. The buildings are just buildings where some marooned English trades-people live and hold on because they cannot let go. The gray shanties where the negroes huddle together never were painted and are now weather-beaten, unsheltered, dismal-looking.

Basse Terre

It is a very sombre movie that one sees in the streets of Basse Terre. The whites are usually clad in dark English clothes and even the blacks are gray or blue garmented, perhaps because they cannot get bright stuffs in the shops or their use of color is discouraged. Even the market place where bright hues are generally seen is here almost colorless. The garden walls show few flowers, the streets few trees, and the ill-kept plaza a great deal of grass in the wrong places. Of course, the heavy stone wall that guarantees an Englishman his privacy is in evidence every-

where though the need of it is very questionable, and, of course, the automobile and the phonograph are here though there is no street in the town worth driving down and no hotel where a self-respecting traveller would venture to hang up his hat.

The blacks that one sees in the streets look ill-fed and the thin-legged children rickety. Compared with those at Roseau on the island of Dominica they are a sadder-looking lot, are dressed poorer, move slower, say less. Of course, they beg. The streets of Fort de France at Martinique are not so clean as those of Basse Terre and the general sanitary conditions are not so good but at least the blacks there wear brighter garments, laugh, and are happier than here. And I did not find the beggar so prevalent there as here. I do not know why the principal peak on the island was called Mt. Misery (3,700 feet), but the name would seem more appropriate if applied to the town. The mountain is very beautiful and is no more miserable than the blue sky above it or the blue sea below it.

On my last visit to Saint Kitts (1931) we came into the roadstead at night and this mountain was capped with boiling cumulus clouds that gave the appearance of the old volcano once more in eruption. High above the clouds a full moon was shining. The fields of cane were great patches of golden light, the mountain slopes were in shadow, the lights of the town were twinkling. It was all very pretty—almost ro

matic. Daylight revealed some public buildings near the docks that had recently been painted yellow and elsewhere were some new red roofs, but a closer inspection of the town revealed the same old conditions pointing to the same old misery.

There is doubtless some more or less local reason for the depressing quality of Basse Terre. It has felt the collapse of sugar prices and both planter and worker groan over present conditions. But the proprietors and blacks at Saint Thomas or Fredericksted groan just as hard. The conclusion reached by the stranger that what money is made in Saint Kitts is spent in London rather than in Basse Terre, may be very wide of the mark. I have no explanation and offer no remedy. I am merely pointing out an apparent condition. Basse Terre is a drab little town and to say that its counterpart exists in many parts of England or America does not change the conditions.

Antigua

Saint John on the island of Antigua is an improvement upon Basse Terre at Saint Kitts. It is cleaner, with better streets, parks and houses, more trees and flowers, but is still a little dreary and lonesome. And nothing that one sees there seems proportioned or well-fitted for island purpose or tropical use. The houses, the shops, the parks, streets, docks, ships are English—uncompromising English—and not the best

but the second best English such as one would expect to see in the suburbs of Liverpool and Leeds. What the island colony might need seems to have been considered less than what England had on hand to sell and send out. The English puttee, riding breeches, and cloth cap are about as well-fitted to the island negro as pajamas to an Eskimo, and the uniform of a London bobby (sometimes ameliorated by a white duck coat and cork hat) for the island police is about as comfortable as a hair shirt on a monk's back; but they are the correct thing in London and why not in Antigua?

The native islander is not exclusive, in fact he is rather promiscuous and gregarious, but he must have that high garden wall whether he wants it or not, his principal town square must be Trafalgar Square and there must be Piccadillys and Chancery Lanes and Queens Parks to teach loyalty to the Mother country. In school the young black is taught the difference between guineas and pounds, stones and pounds, and jails and pounds; also he sings the national anthems and is trained to talk about England as "home." This is propaganda which is, of course, more important in his education than being taught island farming or a trade that would fit him to his land and people. Loyalty to the rulers is a primary consideration. England first and if there is any local love or pride of place left over the island can have it. Any race characteristic, or any peculiarity of a people, is not to be

fostered or encouraged. The stamp of the empire follows the flag and is to go on every package, animate or inanimate.

The Foreign Stamp

Now the stamp of a foreign power is one of the most potent causes of discontent with the stamped, to-day as it has always been in the past. Any people with a grain of spirit might object to being always put in the wrong, to being told to drive left when perhaps they have always driven right or required generally to live Nordic when they have been born Afric or West Indian. Liberty for self-expression is just as indigenous in one race as in another and its continued suppression by foreign-born rulers is accounted by the suppressed as mere petty tyranny.

Yet this has been the tale of the colonizers from Phoenician days to the present time. They have lacked not only in imagination but in comprehension. The English, though I have used them in illustration because English islands are just now being discussed, are no more to be haled into court for this than any other colonial administration—perhaps not so much. The French, Dutch, Danes, and Americans in the West Indies (each in its own way) have followed the same short-sighted policy. Point a Pitre and Fort de France are grotesque repetitions of small French towns; in Curagoa the Dutch have built Amsterdam canals as at Batavia in Java; and the Americans have

done what they could to Americanize Panama, Haiti, and Puerto Rico. If the Chinese controlled Antigua instead of the British, it would be filled with pagodas, joss houses, and tea gardens, and the blacks would be carrying paper umbrellas over their heads instead of wearing felt hats and woolen caps. It is bad enough for any race to be under foreign domination but to have the heel stamped upon the race and ground into it is still worse.

The black should not be made over again into a pseudo-Englishman, Frenchman, Dutchman, or American; he should be allowed to remain a black. Any attempt at lifting him into the white man's class would be (and has been) a mistake, just as any attempt to push him down into the "nigger" class would be (and has been) an almost inhuman folly. He should be treated as a black and encouraged to develop and progress as a black on the biological principle that heredity cannot be successfully ignored or suppressed. He should have a chance to develop his peculiar race personality in these islands which have become for him more of a home, more of a country, than can ever be supplied to him by any foreign ruling power. He is not able in his present stage of development to rule wisely either himself or his fellows, but he should not be beaten into submission like a mere beast of burden or enslaved economically and socially—a condition quite as bad as that which obtained in days of actual slavery.

Antigua offers no great inducements to black development. Most of the island is held by large sugar planters and sugar is the main crop, but the negroes have leased some lands and are growing such vegetables as onions, sweet potatoes, beans, yams. Intensive farming, as in Germany or even Southern California, is unknown anywhere in the West Indies. The land in such convenient localities as the valleys and flat places is first utilized, but even there the soil has been little more than scratched in spots and nature has been relied upon to do the rest. As for the inland towns, they are merely aggregations of small cabins along a country-road or, with the cities, mere gatherings of poorly built houses about a bay or roadstead.

Dominica

One always associates Dominica with rainbows. It rains there every day, with 300 inches of rain for the year and 365 small rivers, one for each day in the year. The high mountain ridge that runs down the centre of the island, with Morne Diablotin, over 5,000 feet, as its peak, is a local weather-breeder, making its own clouds out of the warm moist air of the sea that rising to the colder peaks is condensed into forms of the nimbus. Morne Diablotin is usually cloud-wrapped and somewhere along the golden-green slopes there is usually a shower falling with its consequent rainbow. The several times I have passed the

island have been late in the afternoon and the rainbows, single and double, have been the most brilliant in color I have ever seen. They are arched across a most wonderful mountain-and-gorge background and seem peculiar to one of the most beautiful islands in the world.

Dominica in natural beauty is a wonder and a delight. It looks a lofty citadel of green and gold left unconquered by the sea, still facing the waves on every side with abrupt walls, still crowned at the top with crenelated battlements, still flying rainbow pennants from its cloud-capped towers. And still undominated by man. There are settlements at the rock bases, along and around the island shores, but the interior of the island, though known, is practically untenanted. It is a mountain wilderness with two or three hundred of the native Caribs—the Indians that Columbus found on the island—still living there undisturbed and practically without contact with the whites or their government.

It seems somewhat odd that one of the earliest discovered of the islands should still remain primitive forest for the greater part of it, and yet that it is not settled is rather easily accounted for. A forest is not a line of least resistance, above all a tropical forest. And abrupt mountain slopes do not lend themselves to the growing of cane and cotton, or roads for transportation, or sites for town building. The slopes have not worn down flat here as elsewhere. The daily rains on

the mountain top have made rapid-running streams that cut, and continue to cut, huge lateral gorges down to the sea. The gorges sink deeper and their walls rise more abruptly each year. You do not see the rock-walls for everything is green-garmented to the tip-tops, but you know they are steep, and you know also that the gorges are profound by the light cast along them from the afternoon sun.

I have never seen elsewhere, as here, such sunlight and shadow, such wonderful patterns of light and dark, such profound depths of color. Yet the color is always tropical green—golden-green in the light, dark apple-green in the shadow. John La Farge in his *South Sea water-colors* gives a hint of the greens, but no more. The exact depth or quality of the hue is not to be translated by either the brush or the pen. But its beauty makes itself manifest in you emotionally. You feel it in your throat. And when to this pattern of light and dark on mountain slopes is added a rare blue sky above, a violet or amethystine sea below, and a rainbow thrown across for high light and color, you simply rave. It seems the most wonderful landscape in the world and Dominica the most splendid jewel of the Caribbean.

The splendor grows as the sun goes down. The dark greens around the mountain tops indicating where the primitive forests still stand untouched, and the lighter greens of the lower slopes, where there has been some clearing of timber, become intensified.

The deep shadows of the gorges, by contrast with the illumined slopes, cut out and reveal canyons, towers, promontories, arenas. Every line is sharpened as every hue is heightened and every shadow deepened. The mountains come forward in high relief and yet the vast tapestry of green still retains the decorative pattern. The blue of the zenith puts on a suffusion of violet which the sea reflects and the sun dips like a hot ball of gold into the violet sea.

The Botanic Garden

Back from the little port-town of Roseau there is a botanical garden that is more than interesting. Even if you go there at twilight, when it is too late to study trees, and sit on a bench at the side of the cricket field as the moon comes up, you may get some idea of the great stillness, serenity, and beauty of a tropical night. It is impressive, emotional, highly romantic without dragging in a blessed thought of humanity. It is the romance of nature, if you will, though nature is quite unaware of it and is simply beautiful without consciousness or thought. But settle that as you please, you are alive to the presence of supreme beauty. The great trees above you, the mystery of the mountains beyond you, the high sky and the golden moon in the blue immensity, put you in a mood. You dream dreams and see visions and perhaps imagine vain things, but you are very happy and contented. Do-

minica seems a paradise, by day or by night, and you wish your dream might know no waking.

Roseau the Contrast

But you do wake. There is a serpent in the paradise or, at the least, a fly in the ointment. People who live here are no happier than those who live elsewhere. Nature has bestowed many blessings on the island but the Genius of Evil has managed to mix up a curse with almost every blessing.* And man has done nothing to improve the island and so very little to improve his own condition in it that it is scarcely worth talking about. The plantations around the shores of Dominica are not so bad but towns like Roseau (6,000 inhabitants) do not justify their existence. A port to land and a place to barter are, of course, necessary to habitation of the island, but why the corrugated commonplaceness of Roseau? It is duller than a mining camp in Arizona. And how many years have the Dominicans been building stone porches and heavy houses and garden walls after the English pattern in this little place by the sea! And to no purpose of joy or delight or human happiness. Just a place in which to talk shillings and pence, a mere barren shop, an agglomeration of buildings at the end of a road and the beginning of a roadstead.

*Dominica has had *three* recent hurricanes, besides crop losses and insect plagues, enough to try the patience of an Egypt, but it still persists and carries on.

The United States, with all its raw edges and loose joints, could do nothing worse in town building than Roseau.

And it might do better. Were it in possession of these British and French islands it could improve sanitary and educational and perhaps agricultural conditions as it has done at Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, it could establish a military administration and stop political manipulations as it has done at Haiti and Panama, and it might greatly improve trade conditions by lines of steamers around the islands that would put them in touch with each other in local trade. Indeed, it has been suggested more than once, that England and France, holding sea islands all around the world, might do much worse than turn in these Caribbean islands to the United States in payment of those Great War debts they are now grumbling about so consumedly. The present owners might profit by such a bargain. And the blacks, who at heart hate all the whites indiscriminately, probably would not care a rap about the manner of white placed over them.

But the estate owners—aye, there would be the rub! They are seated in the saddle and have no notion of getting down or changing horses. Nor have they any idea of allowing their home governments to turn them over to a batch of Yankees. The sentimental howl and the political pull of that brave contingent would put a quick quietus to any such project.

And the United States? Well, it has all the ventures in colonies it wants and would be glad to resign its present office of good angel to the islands of the sea and the ends of the earth. Even an uplifter sometimes becomes discouraged.

FRENCH WEST INDIES

Guadeloupe and Martinique

ALMOST every traveller in the West Indies thinks he would like to spend a few days in such islands as Dominica or Antigua but he is prevented from doing so by the fact that there are no hotels. If he stopped there at all it would be at the house of some friend, some government official, or some elderly lady financially stranded on the island and accepting occasional boarders through stress of circumstances. But the tourist or commercial traveller has no desire to stop at Guadeloupe or Martinique because there *are* hotels at both places. The hotels are far from the best. But perhaps they are no worse than the towns. In fact, they are representative of the towns where almost everything is second-class French, with old and rather battered buildings, narrow dirty streets, open sewers, bad smells, unsanitary and unhealthy conditions. I never go to them without being somehow reminded of those odoriferous places on the Mediterranean—Tangiers and Algiers—both of them more French than anything else.

Pointe a Pitre, the well-protected low-lying harbor town of Guadeloupe is not so bad as Fort de France. The streets are nargvy *with* open sewers but they are

kept in a rather decent condition and the houses are old but with evidences of new paint, bright shutters and gay balconies. The park with its gnarled tamarinds is overgrown with grass but facing it are some good houses and outside the town are some handsome villas. Also there are good shops and if the iron-clad cathedral looks a little odd we may put that down to fear of earthquake.

But Fort de France on Martinique is sadly in need of an efficient street-cleaning department. The towns on the islands under British administration may be drab and dreary looking without being uncleanly or unsanitary, but the condition in Fort de France creates apprehension. No stranger wants to eat in its hotels, or drink the city water, or even sit on the park benches. He is continually washing his hands, blowing his nose, and holding a handkerchief before his mouth. No doubt he is unduly apprehensive. The careless American, coming from the most dangerous country in the world, is unusually fussy about health conditions in a foreign land. But the look of the people in the streets, the blacks particularly, do not encourage a close approach. The beggars seem shrunken with tuberculosis or swollen with elephantiasis or blotched with leprous-looking sores on their legs. Even the healthy-looking blacks (and, of course, there are plenty of them) for all their gay garments have not the cleanly appearance of the blacks at Trinidad or Saint Thomas,

French Administration

French example and French administration, municipal or insular, must be largely responsible for this. The islands themselves are as healthful and as beautiful as any the sun ever shone upon. But the towns! The Hand that made the islands never made the towns. They are just French-modelled affairs and not well modelled at that. There is as little sense of fitness to tropical needs in Fort de France and Pointe à Pitre as in Bridgetown or Kingston—perhaps less, for a Frenchman has no knowledge or belief in things outside of France, whereas an Englishman can occasionally be argued into looking at other ways and wants than his own. But the Guadeloupe-Martinique black has to accept his French town (with the *tricolore* and the *Marseillaise*) whether he likes it or not.

To be sure, the French administration has some rather sane explanation for the *laissez-faire* part of its policy. It does not want to interfere with native habits and customs. The black is naturally careless, lacking in a sense of order, reckless about health conditions, very lax in sex morality. But let him alone! The administration places opportunity before him and helps him where and as it can. It has, for example, encouraged at both Guadeloupe and Martinique the holding in fee by the blacks of small farms. There are many scattered over both islands. The produce raised there over and above family needs, is sold in

the local markets, or to the larger land owners and shippers, and eventually goes to France. Moreover, France gives its West Indian colonies preferential rates on imports.* This on two industries alone, sugar and rum, is a great help. All the sugar in its islands goes to France. That is why the French West Indies are to-day decidedly prosperous. The uncleanly, ragged-looking towns are no evidence of poverty. The French have always put money in the stocking rather than on buildings and streets. And besides if you go up on the hills back of Fort de France you will see some amazingly fine villas where the better class is living in luxury. Martinique and Guadeloupe are both doing exceedingly well. For further evidence look at the way the people are clothed, both black and white. I can see (1931) evidences of increased prosperity even in the last three years.

Pointe h Pitre and Fort de France

Of course, bad sanitation, smelly streets, and odd-angled buildings are not at all incompatible with the picturesque appearance. Both Pointe a Pitre and Fort de France cut up into pretty pictures at every street corner. The brilliant light, the flashing stuffs worn by the colored people, the groups of women carrying

*Great Britain also gives her West Indian Islands preferential rates on imports, but I am told that the French rates are more favorable.

produce on their heads, the market stalls, the donkeys and oxen, do not show badly against stucco buildings painted in all kinds of bright colors. Either town would prove a wonder and a delight to a painter.

One can easily understand how a writer with Lafcadio Hearn's fine feeling for color could fall in love with Martinique. He was here for two years and wrote then his brilliant *Two Years in the French West Indies*; but I believe he lived out of the town in private lodgings which of course, might not only be very endurable but very delightful. Country life on an estate or even villa life on the hills above the town might well be thought an almost ideal existence. But what Hearn had to say about both town and country, especially the blacks and their display of color, was well said and very true.

The market place at Pointe a Pitre or Fort de France—especially the latter—is the spot where color fairly blazes. The stalls with their stocks of tropical fruits, vegetables, and flowers are brilliant enough but they are quite outdone by the brighter stuffs worn by the women who crowd the place. The skirts show all the colors of a drawn-out spectrum and the head-dresses or tocques are special notes of high color that instantly catch the eye and centre the attention. The stuffs may be cheap French cottons but under this tropical sunlight they might be priceless Chinese silks. And the black heads, wound up in scarlet or orange or butterfly-blue, show profiles like Egyptian reliefs

and outdo anything seen in the markets of Brusa or Cairo or Khartoum. Lafcadio Hearn did not exaggerate these appearances. Indeed, he did not state them strong enough.

Head Carriers

And here in the market place one sees the fine athletic forms of the head-bearers, the strong figures of the young women who carry on their heads the farm and garden produce from the outlying country to the city markets. They are the same supremely fine types that one sees in all the islands. They walk with the precision of a drill-sergeant but with infinitely more grace. The long arms swing, the body sways, the head alone seems to maintain a poise, but even that turns slightly as the attention is drawn to the right and left. The great dark eyes wander at will but the figure in its staunchness again reminds you of an Erechtium caryatid—superb in its lift and in the ease with which it bears its load.

These young women—many of them mere girls—can carry on their heads a burden of a hundred pounds, carry it up hill and down dale, along the sea, or along the mountain. Their necks and backs and legs are rightly, rhythmically, beautifully developed. They neither bend nor flinch nor groan under the load. There are few people of any land, either white or black, who could do the work as well.

But when they come to the market places and are

released from their loads they can grumble like camels and chatter like macaws. The din of voices that goes up from that market place far out-roads a London fish market or an American fair. It is, for the most part, vituperation over prices, or chatter about clothes, or gossip about neighbors, carried on in a French *patois* that not even a Frenchman can readily understand.

And they are not at all timid in launching remarks at the white stranger, whom they regard with curiosity and often with open contempt. In Pointe à Pitre three years ago an American woman told me she was jeered by the blacks almost every time she went out on the streets. She thought that the prevalent French dislike of the Americans had somehow come through as propaganda to Guadeloupe. But any Frenchwoman in the town could have told practically the same tale. The blacks dislike the whites indiscriminately. Have the whites ever done anything for them, as a race, calling for love, loyalty, and affection?

The Market Place

The market place looks like a merry-go-round, the groups of color continually shift and give place to new combinations like the broken glass in a kaleidoscope, and above it sounds the Babel of voices. Only the animals under the stalls whose heads are in peril keep silence. They seem to await their fate with no

great show of fear. On my last visit to the market I found a mangy dog, two hens, a rabbit, a monkey, and a two-year-old black boy all tied to the same table leg and all sitting quietly together under the table. I asked the proprietor of the stall the price of the boy. She reached down under the table, pulled him up to her lap by the string, where she smoothed his hair and looked far away toward the end of the street without saying a word. Such flippancy could not be tolerated by a self-respecting mother. But she finally accepted a brass token-franc as a peace offering and thanked "M'sieu" with a little smile.

When one has "done" the market at Fort de France he may as well go home for there is little left in the town worth the doing. The cathedral is iron-braced like that at Guadeloupe, unattractive without and tawdry within. The streets are smelly, the buildings grimy, the shops, with their assortments of cheap finery, small and ill-lighted. The public parks are merely goat pastures where everything looks browsed or frayed or mud-puddled. Out on a point of land old Fort Saint Louis, by contrast, makes a romantic and picturesque appearance because of its moss-grown walls and its general appearance of age and neglect. It has been let alone, having outgrown its usefulness. It now looks very attractive with its gray-green walls, especially when seen from the harbor at sunset.

Empress Josephine

On the way to the harbor you pass through or by the savane, the principal park in the town and in the centre of it surrounded by a few tall palms is the statue of the Empress Josephine by Vital De Bray. She was born here at Martinique and her career is, of course, matter of local interest and pride. One is surprised at the statue—surprised to find that it is "not so bad," as a French academician would say. It is a graceful performance with a *flair* and an elegance quite appropriate to the subject. The present placing of the statue has the Empress looking across the harbor to the distant island where she was born. That little sentimental touch does it no harm.

There are plenty of worse marbles in the parks of Paris but one need not go so far for comparison. A hundred or more yards from the statue of the Empress, at the end of a parkway with the old fort as a background, stands the new Great War memorial to the heroes of Martinique. Most of the war memorials, here or elsewhere, merely add a new terror to death and—well, the one at Fort de France is not an exception to the generalization. The sculptured figure of it is almost everything that the figure of the Empress is not.

The point worth emphasizing about the Empress herself is, not that she was born on the island, but that she had the good or bad fortune to go away from

it and become both famous and miserable. Such a career—even the mere leaving of the island and going to another country—is not open to many. The majority of whites born on the island stop there indefinitely and among the blacks very few ever get out of sight of its shores. I am told that many of the colored people, living in the remote districts of the island, never have been so far afield as Fort de France. They have lived, as their forefathers before them, within a few miles of where they were born. That seems a pitiful limitation to a globe-trotter but is it so in reality? Do people ever miss what they know nothing about? And if one is content does it matter whether he sees much or little?

There are advantages in adversity and there are perils in prosperity. So while one may feel sorry for the black and seek to lift him to a white man's plane, one's sympathy may be ill-bestowed and his energy poorly employed. The wiser course would seem to be one of helping the black to better food and hygienic conditions as a preventive of disease, to better housing as a preventive of promiscuous sex relations and the high percentage of illegitimacy, to better example and teaching that he may be rightly fitted for his work mentally, physically, and morally. In other words, make a better black of the black.

Blac\ Morality

I have been told (with statistics offered as proof) that the percentage of illegitimacy among the blacks is greater in the French West Indies than elsewhere. I doubt that—doubt both the statement and the statistics. No one of the islands in the West Indies has the lead in this. They are all about alike and the percentage is high for all of them. It may be sixty or it may be ninety per cent; in either or any case it is enough.

Of course, the black man is blamed for this, is held up as an awful example, and shown to be without moral sense. But there is nothing new or unexpected about the condition. He has for many years been treated as an animal and it is not strange that he should respond with animal instincts. His housing conditions—the one-room hut with no privacy for either sex—are not only those of an animal but are opposed to anything like sex morality. Whenever in the past his condition has been improved his morals have responded to the improvement.

Moreover, his overlord, the white man, has never set him a good example in this. The promiscuous sex relations of the blacks among themselves are not as bad as those of the whites with the blacks. There can be no plea of ignorance, or animal herding, or slave conditions with the white man. Nor can there be any question in any of the islands, with any of the colo-

nizers, about the intermixture of white and black blood. It has been handed down from slavery days and the trail of it shows in the faces of many thousands in the West Indies to-day. It is not a record to be proud of.

Out of this mixture of races have come many tragedies and endless heart burnings, for the brand of "the nigger" follows the taint. The social ban is never lifted no matter how slight the taint. The caste system of India is not more inflexible. But it is useless to discuss it since there seems no present remedy for it. Instead of discussing it I shall try to illustrate it by a story that came to me in Jamaica. But I wish to insist that the story could be paralleled in any of the other islands or in the Southern United States, and the condition is not peculiar to Jamaica or to the English. The Danes, the Dutch, the French, the Spanish, the Americans all have their full quota of illegitimate black children in the islands. There is not a single 'scutcheon among them all that does not bear this blot.

Rosalie

I passed her several mornings on my walks up the mountain before I even so much as spoke to her. She was merely an old black beggar and there were too many like her to call for sympathy or even interest. Whenever I passed her she curtsied and saluted me, as they all did, with:

"Good morning, sir."

Mechanically I kept doling out copper pennies to her by way of getting rid of her. And then one morning I surveyed her a little closer. She was bronzed and wrinkled but originally must have been fair and almost white. A red cloth was twisted turban-like about her head and the hair that showed through in spots was a bronze-gray and quite straight. Her features were warped, her teeth yellowed, her feet and hands well formed, but now much shrunken. She wore a faded yellow dress and clutched an old pipe in her hand.

"How old are you, mammy?" I asked, jocosely, and, no doubt, patronizingly, after the manner of the superior race. As she looked at me, peeringly, half-wonderingly, her dark eyes seemed blue-glazed with cataract. She shook her head as though groping in her mind.

"I can't remember, sir."

"Have you always lived here?"

"Yes, sir."

"Do you remember the slavery days?"

"No, sir; but I was told about them when a child. My mother was born and raised a slave, but afterward set free. She told me."

There was no negro accent in her speech—no island *patois* or cockney intonation. She was speaking very good English. It struck me as being rather unusual.

"I suppose you have a family—some children with whom you are living?"

"No, sir. I had a son, but I dunno."

For a moment that "dunno" seemed to betray a negro training but a little catch in her throat, a half-sob, just then may have produced it.

"He doesn't live with you?"

"Oh, no sir. I live by myself up there on the hill," pointing to a small bamboo and grass-thatched cabin.

"But that must be very lonely."

"Yes, sir; but it seems, sir, as though I had always been alone."

I gave her a shilling, again doubtless with a superior and patronizing air. But I did not feel that way. In fact I felt a bit foolish and unhappy over her.

"Will you tell me your name, mammy?"

"Rosalie, sir," and she curtsied.

As I moved away, she God-blessed me for my kindness and stood there looking after me until I passed out of sight around a bend in the path.

When I got back to my quarters, I made inquiry. Did any one know an old woman living up on the hillside named Rosalie? Oh, yes, every one knew her. The colored maids at the hotel tittered at mention of the name and that afternoon the manager of the bank told me that hers was an old story—the same old story. He intimated that it was too common to talk about, but from him and from various

sources, I got the main facts and have linked them together. Here they are:

Apparently she had never had any other name. Every one who spoke of her at all called her "Rosalie." No one knew how old she was, but the consensus of opinion placed her at over eighty, nearly ninety. She was a planter's daughter with only a small strain of negro in her housemaid mother, and a still smaller showing in herself. She had been brought up with whites, in a white household, and though her education was very casual, she was by association above the blacks on the plantation, was well spoken, clever, and (unfortunately) pretty.

At eighteen she came into town and took service as a waitress in the hotel or inn. A young Englishman, who had been sent out from London to the local bank to learn the colonial business and who lived at the inn, fell in love with her. Rosalie was flattered and very willing to listen, well disposed to believe everything he might say or promise. In her young mind and fancy to be loved as a white man's mistress was preferable to becoming a burden-bearer as a black man's bride. It was a step-up in the scale—an alliance with the superior race. So the conquest was not difficult. She yielded readily enough. Then he was sent to Barbados to a branch bank to pick up that end of the business. He would come back to her. Oh, yes! He would never forget her. How could he? But she never saw him again.

A child was born—a boy. That caused no moral shock in the community either black or white. Such happenings were too common to call for more than casual comment. And Rosalie, at the worst, had done no more than follow her mother's example. No one felt badly about it except Rosalie herself, and that not because of any moral offense, but because she had been deserted. She said little, but her pride was stung. Thereafter she knew no close associates among either the blacks or the whites.

But she kept on working for herself and her boy. She had stumbled and fallen, but her boy would succeed. She insisted upon his education as a further step-up in the scale. She worked and he studied and at twenty he was a clerk in the same bank where his father had served. He proved intelligent and the bank, like all English banks, moved him about from place to place, and finally sent him up to London to learn home office-methods and to advise about West Indian business. Oh, yes, he would come back to his mother. He would never forget her. But he did.

All the rest of her life she waited for him to return. But he never came. Her lover had found it easy, after a time, not to think of her. He even came to smile over it. She was only a pretty "nigger." And her son grew up to be ashamed of her. Without her he could easily pass for a white. She was a "nigger" even to him. And a handicap. So when he went up to England he never mentioned her existence, never wrote

or sent word to her, and left her to infer, after some years, that he was dead.

It might be thought and said that this unfilial act showed the "nigger" in him. But no. His white father before him had set him the example in faithlessness. He was merely following paternal precedent—white precedent. For many years she refused to believe him dead. She waited and hoped that he might return, but as she grew old her faith began to burn low in the socket. She did not remember her years, but the time had been long. The boy must have become a man and was now past middle age. Perhaps something had happened to him and he was gone.

"I dunno," she had said.

She had lived on beyond her beauty, beyond her working capacity, beyond her time and generation. She had long been a mere commonplace story with the old, a byword and a scoffing with the young. A mad old beggar woman living by herself, vituperated by the blacks because she was superior to them and forsaken by the whites because she was a "nigger." Her attempt to rise in the social scale by a white alliance (misalliance, if you please) had proved a failure. The black strain in her had thrown her back into the pit. The struggle was hopeless. She gave it up.

I had promised myself that I would go up to see her, try to help her, at the least say something that might cheer or comfort her, but, following white example, I never did. I sent her a rope of tobacco and a little

money instead. I made myself believe that "old nigger" as she was, she might be too proud for sympathy. She had kept silence all her life and why should she care to break it now? And with a stranger? I suppose, if the truth were told, I did not know what to say to her and felt acutely the uselessness of saying anything at all.

But Rosalie's story impressed me. I could not ignore it. It was more than pathetic. It was tragic. And so I have interpolated it here as illustration of one phase of the black problem and shall not apologize for the interpolation. There is not only a lesson in it, but an indictment. Rosalie had been born and raised on a sugar plantation after the manner of a house-slave. The white master of the plantation had made a concubine of her mother and the white mistress of that plantation was said to have had sex relations with her black slaves. The example before Rosalie was pernicious from her earliest childhood. What wonder that she should be led along by it and be quite blind to the ultimate outcome? It would have been more wonderful had she acted otherwise.

It would seem that the whites (the supposedly superior race) owed the blacks a better example of conduct than this. And by conduct I mean not merely sex relations. If the black is ever to arrive at a decent standard of behavior and living for a black, then he should be taught something better than the white man's vices and delinquencies. He should be taught

and encouraged to develop along racial and social lines peculiar to the black. Continuing to treat him as a "nigger," a mere animal, turns every good intent awry and banishes all hope of improvement or advancement.

WINDWARD ISLANDS

Barbados

BARBADOS is somewhat isolated from the other islands of the Windward group. It lies farther out in the Atlantic and on its eastern shore you are more than half-conscious of waves coming in upon the beach from the mid-Atlantic or perhaps in some deep sea swell originating as far away as the African coast. The free-blowing trade winds that sweep over the island seem to bring in the waves and heap them on the beaches at Bathsheba and elsewhere. They lift and break and roar day and night and the roar has a message that every one interprets to suit his own fancy. The waves speak all languages and usually say to each listener what they are expected to say.

Perhaps, also, this is more of a sea island than the others because it is apparently not of volcanic origin, has no lofty range or mountain peaks, is in fact low-lying with no elevation greater than Mt. Hillaby, 1,000 feet. It appears in places to be based in limestone and this has been largely overlaid with coral. And it is thought to have been under the sea at one time and to have come out of it many centuries ago. Yet it is still a part of the sea—a true sea-island. It gets the first rush of the trade wind from the mid-Atlantic, the first burst of rain brought in from the east, the first push of a possible equatorial current, break-

ing through the islands to the Gulf of Mexico to form the Gulf Stream.

During the wet season it rains in Barbados, rains in torrents, making in a very short time small lakes of water in any meadow or depression in the ground. These in turn breed frogs by wholesale. An hour of rain is sufficient to start a chorus, not of little peepers (the hylas or whistling frog) that are always in the grass, but large frogs that clatter all night long like pneumatic riveters. They do not lazily bawl "*tun*-*a-lun*, *chun\l*" at odd intervals but carry on like the hammering in a boiler factory. The swish and pour of the rain on the palm fronds cannot put them out of hearing, which is saying much. With the combined chorus of the frogs, the palm fronds, and the rain reverberating from a corrugated-iron roof, the New Yorker often finds himself back at Fifth Avenue and Forty-second Street at four of the afternoon. The racket is deafening.

But the wind is not objectionable. In fact, it is very agreeable. The island with its tropical sun, its glaring white roads, and its absence of forests, or even large groves of trees would hardly be livable but for the daily trade wind. It is not heavy, hot, and depressing, but reviving, something that puts life into man, animal, and plant alike. And it is not always bringing in squalls of rain. There is plenty of sunlight in Barbados. Sometimes the inhabitants think they could get on quite comfortably with less.

Also, there are hours when the trade wind does not blow and the tall casuarina trees do not sway like great asparagus stalks, and the blue cloud-shadows drift lazily across field and hill as though loath to move at all. Barbados is then a hot tropic island languishing in the sun with little of the glamour or romance that goes with, say, Fiji or Samoa. Life in it is a bit too active for dreaming. People here have to work for a living because the island is old in occupation and thick in settlement—especially thick in blacks.

The statement that there are more people to the acre, or square mile, in Barbados than in any other country is often made, but it is not accurate. There is greater congestion in Java and China. Nor is it usually stated or considered that most of the congestion is about Bridgetown and that the interior of the island still has considerable land lying idle and unoccupied. It belongs to the estate owners and if the blacks wanted it for garden purposes they might have difficulty in getting it and perhaps further difficulty in working it successfully if they should get it.

Crops in Barbados

There is more gardening and vegetable raising here than elsewhere, otherwise there would be famine added to poverty, but there are difficulties and failures with the old methods employed. Intensive farm-

ing or scientific truck-farming could double the present output without great effort. But the estate owners are not greatly interested in growing chicken feed and small food products. There is no money in that. They are growers of cane.

So the House of Lords is just now debating the question of increasing the British sugar preferential to the Colonies and the Governor of Barbados is telegraphing the Secretary for the Colonies that "agricultural activities, so far as Barbados is concerned, are restricted, and must for practical purposes continue to be restricted to the sugar industry."* Sugar is King in the island and always has been. So long live the King! And confusion to his enemies 1

That toast is rather catching if you happen to have friends among the estate owners, and are merely a bird of passage sitting on the cool porch of a country house, or even living in a pretty villa on the shore out from Bridgetown or sunning yourself on the sands out at Crane Beach. But if you happen to have been born a black and are trying to pick a living for yourself and family, the sentiment is not quite so appealing. The blacks know that King Sugar has a habit of slumping down in the market place and when this happens his dusky subjects understand that they must

"Let back and belly go bare, go bare"

until the King gets on his feet again.

**Trinidad Guardian, January 15, 1931.*

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Gambling! The same special-crop gambling that goes on in all of the islands. It is Capital trying to make a few more millions. This morning (January 14, 1931), I read in *The Trinidad Guardian* that cacao is "doomed." No market for the second largest crop on the island! At a meeting of the Board of Agriculture the situation was talked over with becoming solemnity. Mr. Huggins, one of the largest estate-owners on the island, is reported as saying that the "women can save the industry if they stop smoking and eat candy, and if they are taught that men do not like thin women. They will eat cocoa and get plump"! Wonderful! But will they?

I did not read in the reported proceedings that any one suggested the growing of something in the place of cacao. No one likes to contemplate a change of crops. It is cacao or sugar or something equally as big in possibilities on the produce exchange. The land is not fitted for anything else, and the machinery is there, and the blacks don't know anything about other crops. Would you ask the United States Steel Corporation to turn its plant into a boot-and-shoe factory? It cannot be done. The West Indies have always grown what they are now growing. There is no chance of a change.

Unemployment

All of which may be true, but in times of world depression like the present, when nothing will sell,

it might be advisable to have a few vegetables in the cellar and a few chickens in the yard—something to eat. The planter has his larder supplied, no doubt, but what about the black man? He is in precisely the condition of the mill-hand up north when the mill is closed down. He has nothing. The soup kitchen and the bread line are unknown in the West Indies but the dole has arrived. And is likely to remain so long as gamble-crops hold the lead over food-crops in the islands.

Out in the harbor where the ships anchor the black divers swarm about each incoming steamer calling for pennies to be flung down to them. They will chase a penny thirty feet down through the dark water, or for a shilling dive from the upper-boat deck, go under the steamer, and come up on the other side. They cannot afford to lose the penny, much less the shilling. Moving along the wharves and streets of Bridgetown are other blacks (not wharf-rats or habitual beggars) who will plunge head first almost anyhow or anywhere for a shilling. They are in want and hungry. There is no work for them. The sugar crop is in, or it is out, or it has failed, but in any of these events the black man does not prosper. There are too many of them to share the sugar wage of twenty or forty cents a day. Almost all of them are needy and many of them suffer.

Still, Barbados is a handsome and engaging island to the tourists who go ashore for the day while their

steamer is unloading cargo. The villas look bright in the sunlight, there are flowers in profusion everywhere, with graceful trees for shade. Down in the town are well-kept buildings, streets and parks, and right before you in the centre of Trafalgar Square is Horatio Nelson in pocket edition, standing on a little stone pedestal and proclaiming with his pudgy right hand that England expects every man (particularly the black man) to do his duty. By George! What an inspiration to a hungry black! It runs on all fours with the *Boo\ of Common Prayer* and the *Catechism!* What!

Picturesque Barbados

But in spite of small follies and questionable tastes—common enough in all countries—Barbados remains a well-governed island and Bridgetown a cleanly, decent, and picturesque town. It is enough better than Kingston and perhaps comparable to Port of Spain—the best city in the British West Indies. As for the open Barbados country, it is in sharp contrast to the heavily wooded shoulders and slopes of Dominica or Trinidad. One can see in every direction—see long roads winding over low rounded hills and through shaded valleys and fields of cane, with groups of trees about old plantation houses, and on the heights, picturesque stone wind-mills with wings that still turn and creak in the trade winds. From every high point new vistas appear and from almost all the eastern hilltops one can see the open ocean.

Perhaps the most picturesque portion of the island runs down the eastern side to the Atlantic. Here one has long-range views down beautiful valleys that are less settled and planted than elsewhere. A tang of the wild is in the rocky ridges, in the fresh sea air, and in the white line of foam that curls and breaks along the distant beaches. The black problem seems far away and the elemental in the open sea near at hand. The trade wind blows away worries and perplexities and the sunshine sweetens life again.

Grenada

Grenada and the Grenadines are typical Caribbean islands and are among the most charming of them all. They seem to lie on quiet waters, violet-colored waters, sunset-hued waters. Gentle winds blow over them, little seas lap them, eternal summer gilds them. They are such stuff as dreams are made on and in the drear northland, when wind is whistling and snow is driving, these shores of palm and fields of cane and crowns of golden forest come back to one with the pleasure and the pain of things loved and lost but still beautiful in retrospect.

The harbor of Grenada is little more than a three-quarter circle in the rocky hillside—in all probability the crater of an extinct volcano—and Saint Georges, the town, is picturesquely scattered up and around the slopes of the hillside. The town is decent, livable,

even likable, and yet counts for little or nothing in the sum of island beauty. I am always insisting that nature in these islands has not been helped by man. Quite the contrary. Wherever he has gone, he has blazed a trail of waste and destruction. Development? Heaven save us! It means little more than flaying the surface, picking up and selling such obvious wealth as comes readily to hand. Putting back anything but a wooden dock, a crooked street, and a grotesque monument is not even contemplated.

But Nature does not complain. She goes on spinning new garments for the fields, weaving new tapestries for the hills, and blending new colors for the seas. She is not baffled or put out of countenance by this "bother of ants," but goes her way singing a song and scattering flowers of beauty along her path.

Here in Grenada she seems always showing a beautiful face. Seen from the sea, the island greens shift and change, as the sun wheels overhead, as the dawn or the sunset flames, as the clouds come and go. Shadows! What wonderful shadows in the valleys and gorges. One may grow a bit weary of the bougainvillea on garden walls or the hibiscus in the hedgerows, but never of the golden light and green-saturated shadows on the mountain slopes. And after moving up and down the rambling streets of half a dozen island towns, one feels as though he had seen enough of them and could get on without seeing more. Mechanically he walks through the town and

up to some high point of land, such as Fort George at the entrance to the harbor of Saint Georges, and there looks out at the shining sea. One never wearies of that.

The Magnificent Sea

Oh, what a magnificent sea! No wonder that the Ten Thousand shouted when they came in sight of it. But that was the iEgean and this is the Caribbean. The tale of color and light is told differently here from there. This evening, as I write this note, seated on a rocky promontory, the western sea stretches out in an enormous plain of flat glassy water, the sun is sinking down to it, the upper sky is a pallid blue suffused with violet, and violet is creeping around the horizon line and being reflected from the sea itself. Every evening from this rock one can see a different glory of color spread upon cloud and wave. Why should you look on a negligible town when you can look out at the splendid flooring of the sea and the magnificent roofing of heaven? From the sea the island and from the island the sea! The rest is merely the leather and prunclo of trade.

As you move away from the island in a steamer or a sailing craft, you may notice that the local color of the water by the ship's side has changed in hue. You have seen blue, indigo, even violet water about the different islands, but here is a dark jade-green. It is local and may be due to shallow water and a reflect-

ing shore-bottom, but more probably it is caused by the presence of some fresh water. This conjecture seems confirmed as your ship moves away to the south, for the water continues to show green. Far off to the left drifts into view the island of Tobago looking like a scrap of mist on the surface. Straight ahead is the pale-blue outline of Trinidad, and to the right, still fainter and more misty, something like the rocky headland of Venezuela. The approach to South America, the nearness of the mouths of the Orinoco, mean something in connection with this green water.

In a few hours you are entering the larger Dragon's Mouth, the narrow channel that separates Trinidad from the Venezuelan mainland. This channel was originally cut through (thereby cutting off Trinidad from Venezuela) by the waters of the Orinoco. And that vast volume of fresh water still floods over the sunken reefs and northward to Grenada changing the violet sea to a jade-green. The same water spreads on the surface of the Gulf of Paria and all about the southern coasts of Trinidad. Its green hue becomes even more apparent as you come up by the smaller harbor islands and finally drop anchor in the roadstead of Port of Spain, the chief city of Trinidad.

THE DETACHED ISLAND

Trinidad

THE islands of the Caribbean were a part originally of the main land of North and South America. The Greater and Lesser Antilles are the tops and high plateaus of mountains of which the Atlantic coast range at the north and the eastern Brazilian range at the south are the possible extremities.

They are, at any rate, part of a chain—outposts of a once high mountain range (the Caribbean Andes) that has now been worn through by the sea and worn down by the wind and waves. They have been further changed by upheaval and subsidence. Some have been overlaid by coral deposits, and others have been fashioned by volcanic action. With their bases in the sea, there has been opportunity for the generation of steam and gas with consequent explosions. Not a few death-dealing volcanoes are scattered around the Caribbean.

They resemble other islands very little though superficial resemblances have been pointed out. They are said, for example, to be like the Greek Cyclades. I have seen the Cyclades but I have seen little likeness here to anything there. The Leeward and Windward Islands are timber-clad, densely green. The Greek Islands are not. The Celebes, Moluccas and

Spice Islands of the Malay Archipelago are a nearer likeness, but they have not the Caribbean color in either islands or sea. That alone seems to set the West Indies apart from any other group in the world. In color, if nothing else, they are unique and really incomparable.

Trinidad is usually declared to be a detached portion of Venezuela, the headlands of which are visible from the island. The South American flora and fauna, with the geological strata of the island, confirm this statement. But in its look it differs from the other islands only in the sea water that washes its southern and western shores. The green tinge is not apparent along the north and northeast coasts where rare deep blues predominate. But the general appearance of Trinidad's rocky shores, its savannas, and its mountains are in substance what one *sees* at Martinique or Jamaica. It is a beautiful island—one of the most varied and picturesque in Caribbean waters.

It has perhaps the best climate of them all. That is remarkable when it is considered that the island is only ten degrees from the equator. It seems cooler in the winter months than Puerto Rico or Jamaica, perhaps because the air is dryer. The dry and wet seasons are pronounced and from February to May one can depend on dry air, warm mid-days with the thermometer between 80 and 90, and cool nights, with the thermometer between 65 and 75. Almost always in the morning, during the dry season, the trade wind

comes in before sunrise, and almost always at evening it falls with sunset. There is no "over-powering heat" during the winter months, at least I have never discovered it; and as for "tropical lassitude" I have never felt that either. All countries have porch philosophers and arm-chair travellers who discover many things that are not so.

The climate of Trinidad (or for that matter any of the islands) in the dry season is nearly perfect. The west coast of Mexico rivals it but not Southern California, nor Florida, nor the Riviera, nor Algiers, nor Egypt, nor any of the well-known resorts. Indeed, if the Trinidadians were well advised (and well advertised) they could make more money from peddling their climate than from the pitch of their asphalt lake. But the climate is not tangible enough for a business man whereas the pitch is perhaps too much so.

Port of Spain

Port of Spain, Trinidad, is the best city in the British West Indies. It has no land-locked harbor and is dependent upon an extensive but rather shallow roadstead yet it has large commerce, with many lines of steamers from many countries. The commerce of the port has made the city and has helped tide over the recent collapse of prices for the sugar and the cacao of the island. Just now the large exports of oil (in 1929 over ^3,000,000) have given some impetus

to business and Port of Spain has a lively look, an air of prosperity that may be superficial. There is plenty of competition in oil, more perhaps than in sugar or cacao. But at any rate the city is looking up.

The older buildings along Marine Square, with their heavy walls and coatings of gray, brown, and Indian red, are what might be expected in an English colonial town, and the busy shops on Frederick Street are not remarkable in any way; but there are newer and better buildings flanking the large and rather good Anglican Cathedral and around the adjoining square. The best of Port of Spain is, however, in what is called "the residential district." There are hundreds of very good cottages and villas (with some notable "follies") surrounding the Queens Park, in the adjoining avenues and streets, and out at Saint Anns. Many of them were built some years ago with special adaptation to tropical conditions (notably the Queens Park Hotel) and indicate not only comfort but moderate wealth. The number of these residences in every suburb of the city is rather remarkable.

The business streets have more than their quota of citizens on parade—the blacks in pinks, salmons, and yellows, the Hindus in white, and the English in khaki or cottons. They make up pictorially very well and are not badly off hygienically, but what they may be financially is a problem. The Hindus (130,000 of them) were brought into the island some years ago, presumably as cheap labor to help the sugar people

make a little more money, at the expense of the native black. They are said to work on the land with moderate success. Some of those on the streets work well as beggars. The black always has had a way of putting his money on his back rather than in his stomach so that his being well dressed indicates little. And the English, of course, look after themselves. As a whole the moving lines in the street look prosperous.

But the town black has his troubles as well as the field hand. There is competition for any and all kinds of jobs. Of course, he prefers what is called "a white-collar job." And many of them hold such positions. They do not make bad citizens, and as clerks, shopkeepers, harbor officials, government employees, policemen they are efficient and perhaps more facile than the younger whites. Some of them are very successful, live quite as comfortably as the whites, mingle everywhere with the whites on terms of apparent equality, and with their field games, races, dances, their constabulary band and well-trained police force, seem happy and content.

But a large part of the colored population of Port of Spain does not fare so well in spite of wearing a white collar. It spends a good many days hanging by its eyelids, looking for work and not finding it, perhaps not wishing to find it. The town black is not very energetic. He grumbles a good deal and when offered a collar less job usually sits down and contemplates it with that vast leisure he always has at com-

mand. He can live on very little, and with that knowledge, and some town training, he often becomes very independent, very insolent, quite worthless. He is not exactly the same black as the field hand.

The large estates in Trinidad are in the hands of a few people—one man is said to own a quarter of the whole island—but a good many of the colored people have small holdings of a few acres with which they are not too successful. A good many more, who are given cabins to live in on the estates, have half-acre patches of ground upon which could be raised enough to feed a small family, but some of them decline to plant beans, onions, or sweet potatoes. They say that everything planted is stolen over night and it is useless to plant. Where they do plant they expect the Lord to look after the increase. If a banana, papaya, or sweet-sop happens to grow in the yard, they will pick the fruit but do nothing to improve the growth. The only cultivation it gets is from a pig or a goat scratching his back against it.

The black needs to be taught but the white man does not care to bother with him. If set an example he might follow, but the only example that has been put before him has been an adventure in sugar or cacao or cotton, or some other gamble crop not to be eaten on the premises. Naturally the black follows his white leader in this. He wants to gamble too. He likes a cash price for his produce with a chance to go up to town and buy something in a tin. Every one

takes kindly to gambling. And prefers cutting a tin to working in a garden.

In short, the black is very human and does in his hard circumstances just about what any other human being would do. He follows the example of some one higher up.

The Savanna

The outlying portion of the city about Queens Park is very attractive as landscape. There is a surrounding amphitheatre of hills that carries under sunlight the golden-green glow peculiar to tropical foliage, a noble savanna lying under a tropical sun, and near by one of the finest botanical gardens on any of the islands. There is loftier, wilder scenery on the east and north shores of the island but that is a region little settled and little seen. The average traveller is quite content with the view across the savanna from the lounge of the comfortable Queens Park Hotel.

The name "savanna" seems to imply a marsh with long grass, but here it means merely a flat piece of ground lying in a valley or along a coast—something akin to a meadow. The one at Port of Spain has been called Queens Park but it might more consistently have been called Hyde Park, since there are Piccadillys and Chancery Lanes near it, and, besides, it looks like Hyde Park, London. It is just a flat, rough-grass common but it is very picturesque. There are 130 acres of it, with mountains at the back, and the

town and harbor in front. Of course, it is the place for riding, driving, walking, as well as for racing and cricket—the place to which the town drifts after five in the afternoon to get the air and be under the high blue sky.

Tropical Skies

Now the sky of Trinidad is not that of New York or London or Constantinople or Tokio—an elementary statement that somehow always meets with dissent. People insist that the blue sky is the blue sky the world over. But, as every one knows, the blue is merely an atmosphere and the atmosphere in the tropics is not the same as in the temperate zones. It is deeper and denser because hotter and more humid. The sunbeam in passing through it seems to lose most of its many short blue rays and put through its stronger and longer red and yellow rays. The result is that golden tone seen in the green of the trees and grasses, that every one notices as soon as he arrives in the tropics.

The blue of the sky does not lack in depth but the blue is all above and the gold is all below during the early morning hours. Throughout the day the blue holds its own but the golden light continues to fall on the savanna grass, the great trees in the park, and the forests on the mountain-side with a warmth of splendor quite unknown to any landscape at the north. And sunset, with the sunshafts driving across

the savanna horizontally, merely enhances **the golden** effect, saffrons the brown grass, gilds the tops of the great palms, and fires the far mountain-side with a gold that is almost flame.

From the flat-lying savanna one gets **the great lift** of the sky, its height and its infinite depth. The clouds of the tropics aid one to this. For here are **all** kinds, shapes, and manifestations of clouds—all the clouds that Turner ever imagined in his pictures, in reality, and in prodigality. Here again is dissent. It is difficult to make a New Yorker or a Londoner believe that he does not see every conceivable form of cloud from the window of his office. But clouds are made by the contact of heat and cold—the expansion of air—and those at the tropics have **a** deeper theatre of action than those in the temperate zones. That is to say, if London in summer has a sky depth of 10,000 feet and in that depth are shown the nimbus, cumulus, and lower stratus clouds, then Trinidad will have **a** sky depth of 40,000 feet and in it will appear **not** only the nimbus, cumulus, and stratus **but many** forms of the upper cirrus that have **not** as yet **been** recognized or named by meteorologists. These **many** varieties of cloud (not always of daily occurrence, to be sure) are like so many guide posts, or rungs of **a** ladder, leading one on and up into the blue, into **the** white manifestation of light, into infinity. This it is that gives the appearance **of a higher deeper sky here than at the north,**

The tone of gold or orange in the sunsets is perhaps more tropical than that of red because it appears oftener. Night after night the sun may go down in a clear sky with little color of any kind, but oftener there is an orange-gold arch set in a butterfly-blue sky. If there are clouds then many colors in intense tones will be spread around the horizon and far into the eastern sky. This makes up the spectacular sunset that people exclaim over as they step out on the porch. But the orange-gold sunset is the commoner, the more tropical appearance.

As soon as the sun sinks below the verge the light begins to fail all around the circle. This is again peculiar to the tropics. There is no prolonged twilight as in the temperate or polar regions. Coleridge exaggerated it somewhat in his couplet:

"The sun's rim dips; the stars rush out;
At one stride comes the dark."

But that in substance is the fact. The stars are not always as bright as at the north. Their brightness or dimness is dependent upon the thickness of the atmosphere and, as I have stated, it is thicker here than there. And the moon has usually not the clear gleam and shine of the moon at the north. But it is often larger in appearance and warmer in color. That again is due to its being seen through a thick lens of atmosphere. When it is high in the heavens it is smaller and brighter. As it rises in the early evening

it is often misshapen, in hue a Chinese red, and when a cocoanut palm comes into the picture and flattens against the blue, the appearance is very romantic, poetic, even at times a little sentimental. Of course, a strong wind blows all this away by driving the atmosphere before it, and then stars and moon, for a time at least, will be quite as bright as at the north.

Tropical Trees

I know of no place where tropical trees can be more enjoyably studied than just here at Port of Spain. The large Queens Park has many varieties and on the north side of it are the famous Botanic Garden and the Agricultural Experiment Station where growths, both native and foreign, are cultivated. For all of that let us thank the English. It is a great satisfaction to be in an island colony where the people live and cultivate trees, love and protect the birds, and love and treat their animals decently. The English do that better than any other people.

The advantage of study here in the park and garden is that trees can be seen in the clear. They have been planted and grown in the clear with the result that they have full expansion and development. The crowding for place, the struggle for life, the contraction and compromise in the forest do not appear in the savanna and the garden. Each tree can drink its fill of light, air, and moisture, and send its roots

where it pleases. Not but what there are great trees in the forests that have out-pushed and out-shadowed their neighbors but, perhaps, they would have known even greater development had they had more freedom and less pushing to do.

Again, these trees in the open are not tangled and worried by lianes, and some of them have fewer parasites than the trees in the forest. One can see not only the whole form of the tree but the color and texture of the bark and limbs, the spread of the foliage, and, at the top, the bouquet mass of the flowers. The lilac bloom of the mora, the crimson of the bois immortel, the yellow of the poui are usually seen only in part in the forest, whereas in the garden or savanna their color as a mass lends a note to the entire landscape. The East Indian laburnum in bright yellow, the amhrstia in red, the frangipani in red, yellow, pink, orange, are not native here, but if they were their splendid colorings would be lost in the forest where they show so brilliantly in the garden.

Again, the tree trunks in the forest are dimly seen for want of light and the accumulation of vines, epiphytes, sap suckers; but when you see them in the open you are perhaps struck by the predominance of white or silver-gray barks. In the temperate zones the birch and the poplar are conspicuous by their white trunks, but here in the tropics the trunk of the elm, the black oak, or the pine would be conspicuous by its darkness. Many of the trees look as though

they were holding a last year's coat of whitewash. The so-called locust, the bay trees, the leopard wood, the fig are gray or silver trunked—lighter in color than the northern beech. Some of this lightness is caused by silver-gray or pale-green lichens on the trunks—noticeably on the royal palms—but I am not now concerned with the cause so much as with the general effect.

Tropical Greens

Quite as remarkable as the light trunks of tropical trees is their light foliage. To say that this is tropical green is inadequate description. The word needs to be hyphenated and qualified with many adjectives. For the greens run into yellow, orange, and red at one end of the spectrum, and blue, violet, and purple at the other end. There are cold greens, fire greens, bronze greens, moss greens, apple, olive, lemon, and orange greens, emerald, beryl, jade, malachite, and agate greens, sea greens, Paris greens, and poison greens. It is the blend of all these tones that makes up the dense green of the forest and the golden green of the mountain side.

Occasionally the most intense green of foliage is found in close alliance with white bark and tall form as, for example, in the so-called "naked Indian." It is one of the noblest of trees in height and with its clean cream-white bark and emerald-green leafage it makes a notable showing. The bois immortel is in

the same class, and the mora, the locust, the balata are perhaps not inferior to it. These trees, with the commoner palms—cocoanut, cabbage palm, royal palm, palmiste—shoot up and have commanding height. They are quite wonderful in the way they lift skyward and take the wind and sun in their upper branches.

But I keep recurring to an earlier impression that a large number of tropical trees are inferior and grotesque in form, lacking in grace or justness of proportion. They begin to spread a few feet from the ground, have insufficient stem, or they are elephantine in body and bark or twisted or gnarled in limbs. I am thinking of the over-fat ceiba or cotton-silk, the rambling genip, the rough-barked monkey-pot, the clumsy galba, the confused cannon ball, the split-up mango. There are so many trees with odd forms that one comes to believe that fine form and rich color are not often combined and that when they appear it is the exception rather than the rule.

Trees that Spread

Then there are more oddities of form in such trees as the spreading banyans, the Ceylon willows and the wild figs. They put out from their branches air roots that reach down toward the ground. These roots perhaps swing in the wind for a long time before they reach the ground and make fast. Once rooted they quickly grow into not only a feeding but a support-

ing branch-trunk. The great reach of the arms of these trees and their vast foliage make unusual support and sustenance quite necessary, and the tree responds to the necessity.

This is a marked peculiarity of many tropical trees. The mangrove thickets are spread by this device, the forest trees use it in their struggle with their fellows, and all the heavy buttressing about the bases of trees, or even the rooting of the stilt-palm, are probably lesser manifestations of the same thing. The buttress is an extra root thrown out laterally to the ground instead of from an overhead branch. They are all of them means by which the tree gathers greater sustenance and maintains a firmer foothold.

The best time of day to see the trees in the park is late afternoon between five and six. The sunbeams falling diagonally, almost horizontally, through the heavy afternoon air are more golden than at noon, and this not only brings out the shadows on the mountain side but reveals the shadows in the foliage of every tree. Again, it emphasizes the white trunks, shows the great ramifications of the upper branches, and indicates the layers of foliage spread one above another in beautiful pattern, texture, and color. Of course, this means looking to the east with the western light full flung upon the trees. No hour or light will display the wonderful variety of tropical greens and the splendor of the great flowering tree-tops so well as this.

East and North Shore

It will not be assumed from what has been seen from a park bench or a garden stroll that all the beauty of Trinidad lies about the savanna at Port of Spain. Two hours' drive in an automobile to the east will show not only wilder but far grander pictures. Beyond Arima you drive through miles of wonderful mora forests and beyond Sangre Grande you come out to the Atlantic, getting your first glimpse of it through the green fronds of cocoanut palms at Manzanilla Beach.

The beach is some seventeen miles in length, with pure white sands and a green-tinged Atlantic wave coming in and breaking in white foam. I know nothing like it in length and beauty anywhere in the West Indies. It is a splendid shore line under a long high bench of land which seems entirely uninhabited. As a place for a summer resort, for hotels and cottages, it is worth a dozen of Port of Spain, but it is now quite inaccessible lacking proper transportation. But it is a Trinidad possibility that may some day become a reality.

Just so with the crescent-shaped shore at Balandra Bay, beyond the Manzanilla Beach. It is difficult to imagine a finer outlook to sea or a more attractive shore. The white sands are free of pebbles or even sea shells, they lie flat, or in a gentle incline, and the waves break and spread upon them in white bead*

edged water-mirrors that reflect the sky in blue flashings and gleams. Again, what a spot for a bathing beach! Just now it is deserted. A few sand pipers are the only living things that move along the sands. But like many another deserted shore it has the tang of wild beauty.

As you move on toward the north side of the island the coast becomes rocky, water-worn, honeycombed with caves, horse-shoes, potholes, and reefed with ragged outlying rocks. The sea changes from green to a stormy blue, almost an indigo, is streaked by underlying seaweed and mottled by cloud shadows. The waves have the lift and curl of northern seas, with the color depth of the tropics. The headland where stands the Jalere light-house, and where you look out and away toward the island of Tobago, is of rugged black rock against which the Atlantic waves break with a swish and a roar that reminds you of the northern coast of Jamaica.

All the northern coast of Trinidad knows wind and wave and a chopping sea, and with them, from them, out of them, have come rocky headlands and deeply gnawed-out bays. Some small towns are there and some large cocoanut plantations, and yet all of that splendid north shore is isolated and little visited. There is no highway that continues around by the north and comes out at the Port of Spain. Again, it seems strange that this long-inhabited island should still be so primitive in parts and that the mountains

and forests should be so inaccessible. Of course, there are roads to the south, to that pitch lake and the oil fields; that being business and not the mere flub-dub of beauty.

Mora Forests

The mora forests through which you travel to reach the east and north coasts may be taken as fairly typical of the timber and undergrowth that originally stood on all the islands. There are parts where the trees do not stand close together and where a dense undergrowth of bush and small trees from fifteen to thirty feet in height fills up the floor of the forest and makes travel almost impossible. There are dim trails through it in places which one may follow, but no one blunders through it slashing his way with a machette. There are not only difficulties in the way but dangers. This is the home of the bush-master, and he coils to strike quite as often as he slips away. He is said to be slightly different from the Martinique *fer-de-lance* but there is no difference in the deadliness of his poison.

When the trees are tall, thin, and straight-stemmed, like the moras, and stand close together, there the forest floor is more open. The shutting out of sunlight from above cripples the growth of foliage down below. The trees spindle upward and do not spread out until near the top of the forest. Often the moras reach up, with trunks little thicker than a telegraph

pole, for a hundred feet, and then spread a thin bouquet of foliage. Noble trees are the moras! And the mora forests in Trinidad are not only dense but awesome in shadow and profound in silence. They are true enough tropical rain-forests and differ very slightly from those on the Orinoco or the Amazon.

Birds

The difference in the West Indian, Venezuelan and Brazilian forests is largely one of degree. They are substantially alike but the Brazilian is on a slightly larger scale as regards the trees, the bushes, and the vines. And perhaps there is more reach-up and spread-out above, more tangle down below, though that is doubtful. Possibly, too, a greater silence, though this again is merely a vague impression. None of the forests seem to have cry or call or song during the day and even at dawn and dusk there is no great chorus of the birds, as at the north in the spring time.

That is not due to the observer making a noise in tramping through the forest and thus hushing any bird song or other utterance that might be. Every one interested in life in the woods understands the little strategy of sitting still and letting the birds and animals do the moving. The fact is that tropical forests are not, generally speaking, the most favored bird haunts, not places where birds like to live and sing. They go there to get out of the heat, out of danger,

out of wind and rain, and at night it is a place where they can roost with greater safety than in the open. Also there are exceptional birds, like the toucans, mot-mots, and trogons, who find a food supply there and live there. But almost all the birds love the open spaces, love the sun, the sky, and the air. Wherever there is a clearing in the jungle of, say, two or three hundred acres, there the birds will be found in greater numbers than in the forest. This is generally true of all birds and of all forests. The northern woods are often contrasted with those of the tropics but even there the birds are not usually in the timber but in the fields, the meadows, the orchards, the woodlots.

Bird Song

Well, here in Trinidad, as in Jamaica, wherever the birds may be in forest or open, I do not find them rich in song though some of them are interesting in cry or call. Tropical birds and pretty girls have usually been put in a common category. They are thought of as chatterers and gigglers, fine lookers but poor singers. I doubt the justness of that estimate and fear it is based upon insufficient knowledge. Still, with some two hundred varieties of native birds in Trinidad I find approach to song only among the thrushes, tanagers, finches—the smaller birds. I must continue to record my impressions.

There is a chronic nuisance of a bird, called by the

colored people a *keskadee* (*qu'est-cja-qu'il-dit?*), that repeats and repeats that inquiry under your window morning and evening until you would like to wring its neck. Then there is that black savanna cuckoo (*ani*) with a half-parrot beak and a half-note that is like the cry of a dry axle on a wheel-barrow, and a rusty blackbird with an appetite for cow-ticks that perhaps prevents his vocal expression to any extent. To offset this there is a brown robin with a song much like our northern bird, and orioles that whistle and wrens that sing as incessantly as canaries, but there is no song like that of a northern bobolink as he rises in the air from a mullein stalk, no medley like that of the catbird from the syringa bush, no melody like that of the wood thrush from the lawn at sunset.

The parrots, toucans, bell birds, mot-mots, woodpeckers, have notes and calls but they can hardly be called singers. There are herons, bitterns, egrets in the mangrove swamps, snipe and plover along the shores, with pelicans and frigate birds over the harbor waters, but there is no song, nothing peculiarly tropical about them more than about the vultures and John Crows over the town. The unique in tropical bird life lies more often with the smaller birds to be found about the hedges and open lawns. They are very active, if silent, and quite wonderful in their variegated featherings. Some of them are so brilliant in arrangements of blue-and-yellow or orange-and-black, or some other pretty color scheme, that they

look as though modelled in porcelain and fired with bright mineral paints. The larger birds, the macaws, trogons, and blue jays, are wonderfully brilliant, too, but they are not frequently seen.

Rapacity of Birds

Perhaps the tropical birds are not more voracious than birds seen elsewhere, and yet the large, strongly developed beak in so many species would suggest that their appetites are very good and need continual attention. The parrots have nut-cracking beaks, the trogons have beaks that are saw-edged and designed to hold fast, the finches are jawed like nail-biters, and even the thrushes and fly catchers go armed, each one, with a pair of scissors. I watched a keskadee, on an overhead limb, for thirty minutes one day, and in that time he had darted twelve times and returned to his limb with nine somethings that he cracked and swallowed with apparent gusto. His scissors bill, larger and sharper than normal, had done what it was expected to do. A similar tale might be told of the beautiful woodpeckers or the sombre-hued wood-creepers. Their strong bills enable them to work with rapidity and, I daresay, with rapacity.

Nature fits one kind of life to destroy another kind of life. In her hands life and death are mere processes of chemical change. But I do not know that destruction here is different from elsewhere except that it

may be more varied or rapid by special need or circumstance. Birds—all two-legged things—are more savage than those that go on fours. Nothing could be more voracious than the common domestic hen. She keeps killing and eating from dawn to dusk and no one need feel sorry that she eventually eats her way into the family pot. She is finally experiencing a well-merited fate.

Trinidad Animals

About the animals here in Trinidad it is interesting to know that there are seventeen kinds of rats and twenty-seven kinds of bats, that there are two kinds of monkeys (a red howler and a capuchin), a wood dog that climbs trees and comes down head first, a raccoon that lives in the mangrove swamps; but all of them are inhabitants of the inaccessible so far as the average traveller is concerned. The great ant-eater, the peccaries, the ocelots, the small deer belong in the forests where they go for safety and are not to be driven out by beaters, like tigers from the Indian jungles. At the least my quest for them was unsuccessful. The reports of those who have seen them read well but I have no first-hand information about them.

Nor have the snakes here been disposed to show themselves to me though I have been out on special hunts for them. Boa constrictors, some of them fifteen feet in length, are occasionally seen with whip snakes and cascabels; but the poison-carrying crew—

there are two coral snakes and two vipers—I have not seen. I especially wanted to see the mapepire because of his close relationship, if not identity, with the deadly *Jer-de-lance*, but he is now an inhabitant of the high mountains and is rarely seen even by the natives. The negroes fear him and with cause.

There is continual reference in travel books to the presence of scorpions, tarantulas, and centipedes, but again the average visitor in the islands is almost as likely to see a camel or an elephant as any of these insects. No one says anything about the large steel-blue wasp that is always chasing and killing the tarantula-spider family. Also there is talk of cockroaches about the houses—not a bad visitor since he is a harmless scavenger—but no one says anything about the absence of flies. The ordinary house fly that is such a pest at the north is almost negligible here. And one can dine in the evening air without moths, millers, and beetles, and sleep on an open porch without fear of vampires. There are shivery tales told of caves, somewhere about twenty miles distant, where vampires hang in rows from stalactites during the day and go out at night, like the lions, seeking whom they may devour. But the traveller, watchfully waiting from his hotel bed and finally falling into an apprehensive sleep, is not likely to waken in the gray dawn to find a hole bitten in his big toe.

THE SPANISH MAIN

Sea Fancies

ALL seas and skies are alike to the average person. And if he confines himself to one zone perhaps he is not so far astray in his casual observation. Those who go from the United States to Europe note merely that the skies grow bluer and colder and the water a trifle greener. The difference in latitude is only some several hundred miles and the shift in longitude means little in climatic change. But the trip across the world from north to south is quite a different affair.

As you drop down from latitude 40 to latitude 20 there is a marked change. The water is bluer, the sky higher, and the upper zenith is filled with clouds that drift in curls and wisps and wings not usually seen at the north. Dropping down ten degrees farther toward the equator you find the sun at noon so nearly overhead that you can hardly see your own shadow. At six o'clock the sun goes down straight into the west, or a little north or south of west dependent upon the season of the year. Moreover, it goes down and goes out speedily though often there is an after-glow in the upper sky.

The stars come out but some of the southern groups appear strange to a northern star-gazer. And his own

stars are a little askew. The familiar Pole Star is there, and the constellation of the Great Bear "never sinks into the ocean"; but nevertheless the Bear looks dim at ten degrees north, and the lower stars of it are often difficult to place in the thick evening air. It seems odd that our world is really so small that a few days of steaming can change the relative position of those far-distant lights. And there in the southeast is rising the Southern Cross that belongs on the other side of the equator. The people living down New Zealand way, who see it in full splendor, talk much of it and think it wonderful. I have seen it from lower Chili, and also from Australia, without any emotional disturbance. The wonderful part of it to me is its appearance in the sky when we are still ten degrees north. In that position it seems we can see the stars that shine nightly on Cape Horn and beyond.

There is another appearance on the seas near the equator that tends to make one wonder over the smallness of our earth even though it is a mere appearance, an illusion. As you move north or south in equatorial seas, the horizon directly over the ship's bow seems higher than any other point on the rim. The horizon line seems to run around to the right and the left in a vast circle but is lower at the sides than straight ahead. Apparently one can see the curvature of the earth. Coming up from Rio several winters ago a painter-friend was standing with me at the bow of the steamer one evening at sunset. We

were looking ahead at the horizon—at this very illusion—and he was saying:

"Of course, Columbus knew the world was round. Almost any one with half an eye could see it."

I am not aware that the curvature of the earth is more marked at the equator than elsewhere but the illusion of it certainly seems so. The Caribbean shows it whenever the steamer gets out of sight of land. These sea lines, as your steamer at dusk moves along the old Spanish Main, look positively uncanny, almost like those of an extreme post-impressionist drawing. And the green-on-red mountain wall of northeastern Venezuela, lifting up from the Caribbean, has a tilt back that makes one think of some very long and very high skyscraper thrown out of plumb, leaning over backward.

Sea Wall

Fancies! Sea fancies! In the morning they have vanished. The mountain wall of Venezuela stands there very firmly based. There was a suggestion of the wall in the Margarita Islands passed by the steamer earlier in the day, but the mainland back from La Guaira shows it half hidden in clouds, looming skyward in its peaks and, in the afternoon sun, showing as a rose-and-mauve parapet against the blue. It runs on across the top of South America to Panama with some gaps broken through it, as at Maracaibo. But notwithstanding the gaps, made by the cut of rivers and the wash of seas, there still remains some-

thing about the wall that suggests the broken rim of an enormous volcano. And the Caribbean as its one-time crater lake.

Why not? Far away to the northeast is the chain of islands that still spit fire and gases from their Soufrieres and Pelees, volcanoes not yet dead though perhaps dying. The eastern rim has been broken out in many channels to the Atlantic. The Equatorial Current keeps drifting in through these channels at the rate of half a mile or more an hour. Does it circle the bottom of the Caribbean, gathering new impetus from its swirl like some huge sea-nebula, until finally it is flung out as the great Gulf Stream?

More fancies! Mere day dreams at which the geologist and the oceanographer will smile. The Caribbean basin, as every one should know, was caused by a subsidence. Wind and wave did the rest. The modern way to establish a theory is to state it very positively and keep repeating it with vehemence. The Caribbean is the result of subsidence. Yes. So, too, are most of the crater basins. But one need not press the point. And fancy serves our purpose here quite as well as fact.

If one climbs to the top of this Venezuelan parapet, this mountain barrier along the Spanish Main, and looks back over the vast expanse of the Caribbean, his fancy quite outruns his science. The far sweep of water looks in color and light precisely like the water in Crater Lake, Oregon, because it perfectly reflects the

sky. The mirror is smooth but it does not seem to lie flat. It is apparently convex. There again is that appearance of the curvature of the earth, with the feeling that the globe is so small that from this Venezuelan height you can actually see it curve up and over and down again. But, in reality, what an enormous curve! And what splendid color in it! The rose-and-mauve of the mountain wall but emphasize the blue of the sea! However, and for whatever cause or reason that sea originally flooded into this basin, one can now only hope it will always remain there as a thing of beauty and a wonder forever.

La Guaira

La Guaira is only a little crack or cranny in the Venezuelan parapet. The crack was made by a small but (in the wet season) very swift mountain stream. This stream has not only cut a steep valley-gorge but has carried down and dumped on the sea shore a vast quantity of rock, sand, and gravel in the rough form of a delta fan. It was upon this foot-hold, up against the parapet, that La Guaira was started.

It has expanded along the shore, and built up in terraces against the mountain, until there is now a rather picturesque showing of red-tiled houses lying back from a small break-water, and a little harbor where ships unload cargoes with a rattle of winches and a whole fleet of schooners, flying the Venezuelan flag, rock at anchor. It is not a bad showing.

The town has practically only one street but that, with tram cars and automobiles, is a rather lively one. There is a good deal of bustle with hawk and howl of porters and squawk and scream of parrots, and very colorful fruit stands, but no great color display in the costume of the inhabitants. They are Spanish, or were originally. What they may be in this day of race-raixtures is rather problematic. At any rate they are not black.

Caracas

La Guaira is the sea port of Caracas, capital of Venezuela, some miles up in the mountains. Hence the hustle and bustle of the place. It keeps rushing goods up to Caracas. An electric road winds up the valley, zig-zags and hair-pins around precipices, and finally arrives at the capital. It is built across taluses and over beds of rotten granite and is not too safe from land slips. A newer and better concrete road, for automobiles, follows the same route and is perhaps safer. Either route shows remarkable views of the sea, the deep mountain valleys, the red-and-orange colored slopes of the mountains. The region is semi-arid, the trees are small and thin, and the red soil shows through almost everywhere. It is practically untenanted save for a few small ranches in the valleys. The brown-black vulture, gliding and wheeling down the valley, with a brown goat browsing in the brush, are about the only living things in sight.

Caracas is often enthusiastically called the "Little Paris" by people who seemed surprised that Venezuela should have a city of any kind. But it is about as much like Paris as Bergen, Norway. It is a cleanly town with some good streets and plazas, and some rather pretentious public buildings of no great architectural significance. The capitol in white stucco, and of pseudo-classic design, occupies two blocks. It was built under Guzman Blanco with Roberto Garcia as architect, and has probably always astonished the natives. Near it is the Museo de Bellas Artes and the National Library, done in pseudo-Gothic style. Not far away is the largest plaza in the town, floored with tiles, bedded with flowers, and planted with some good trees; and in the centre of it Simon Bolivar in bronze, of heroic size, riding a horse that stands on his tail and paws at the firmament.

The traveller can afford to skip the cathedral but not the villas and cottages that have recently been built along the avenues and in the suburbs. Some of them are very pretty and give evidence of a new wealth that has come to Venezuela. The country is just now very prosperous with its oil fields. But behind that is an agriculture more than sufficient for the national needs. Moreover, the government, whether popular or not, seems at least stable. General Gomez, who has been the dictator of Venezuela for some thirty years, is usually credited with the present prosperity. He is supposed to administer a benevolent

despotism, and there is every outward appearance that he has done so successfully. Venezuelans, when asked about him, shrug their shoulders and smile as they did over Diaz in Mexico forty years ago, and as is done to-day over Mussolini in Italy. But they were all of them men of the hour—perhaps the best men of the hour. And there is no questioning their successes.

Puerto Cabello

As the ship pulls away from La Guaira in the sunset light the mountains put on a precious quality of color not unlike old green velvet spread on a red ground, and the terraces of shabby little houses up the mountain side, with their raw reds, blues, and yellows, begin to glow like rows of jewels. It is a picture such as modern art occasionally makes a drive at but seldom succeeds in capturing. It is the unattainable—nature in *one* of her most subtle and evanescent appearances.

Fifty miles farther west along the wall the steamer stops at Puerto Cabello, another cranny at the foot of the mountains, with a harbor that is part of a lagoon formed by the accumulation of river-wash from the hills. The face wall breaks down just here, falls away to the south, and finally loses itself around Lake Maracaibo—a great basin broken through from the Caribbean in days before memory, at a time so remote that it can now only be guessed at. But the beautiful

shore runs on, rising and falling in the lines of a broken wall, to the Isthmus. Indeed, before the mouth of the Magdalena is reached, that wall rises at the back to a spectacular height with the snow peaks of the Santa Marta range in full view. But we are anticipating.

Puerto Cabello, built upon river-wash and now gradually spreading over a mangrove swamp, is a bright clean little town with some good streets, shops and houses, some parks with monuments, a brick custom-house, a wharf where large steamers tie up and unload, a dry dock, and a small harbor with considerable shipping. It looks very prosperous and its inhabitants seem happy without effort. Perhaps that is because they have an interest in the place. They own it and, no doubt, have a local pride in it. The people who make money here, small though it may be, spend it here in the town. And the town reflects it. Compared with any of the drab little towns of the West Indies—Basse Terre, Fredericksted, Fort de France—Puerto Cabello is far more interesting. What is more important it shows no sign, has no note, of human misery. People here are not starving, nor forlorn with disease, nor hopeless about the future. They are polite, cheerful, contented. How much have local ownership, home rule, and a chance to get on in the world to do with this? And, *per contra*, how much have foreign rule, absentee landlordism, and large estate-ownership to do with the other? If General

Gomez and nineteen of his friends owned the whole of Venezuela and these people in Puerto Cabello were merely his workmen and tenants would the town look so bright and lively as it does to-day? Would the people care about it or be greatly interested in its rise or fall? Would they be so cheerful to-day and so hopeful for to-morrow?

But we are forgetting that these are people of Spanish descent—not black people.

Curasao

Curasao, lying off the Venezuelan coast, is an island of anomalies and surprises. Coming into the port of Willemstad one sees ancient-looking forts on either side of the very narrow harbor entrance and vaguely wonders if this is some mediaeval Ragusa of the Caribbean. As the steamer drifts up the river-like harbor (it is not 200 yards wide) there appears straight ahead a wooden bridge of boats that reminds one, in a small way, of the Galata Bridge at Constantinople. But the resemblances to Dalmatia and Turkey speedily vanish. A hundred yards farther up the stream, and beyond the bridge of boats, the patent fact is disclosed that the place is Dutch—just Amsterdam Dutch with not the slightest attempt at concealment.

The whole town looks like a modern suburb of Amsterdam. The houses are step-roofed, have gables, heavy red tiles, square windows and doors, plastered

walls, and are painted blue, yellow, and green. The older public buildings are small imitations of those about the Dam in Amsterdam—Dutch Renaissance, perhaps, with domes, columns, and porches—while the newer ones show the influence of the *art nouveau* with mad stoops and crazy chimneys.

The streets are narrow, busy, noisy, confused with automobiles that blunder through the crowds, just as at Amsterdam. The docks are only a foot or more above the water, the bayous and lagoons at the sides of the harbor have been turned into Dutch canals, and steel lighters with steel tillers are rushed about by grimy little tugs, just as at Amsterdam. And there at the steamer landing is a crowd of Dutch blacks, kept in line by black police in Amsterdam helmets and blouses, while a brass band, made up of blacks, blares the Dutch national "Wilhelmus" as a welcome to your Royal Netherlands West India mail steamer, the "Simon Bolivar."

Of course, there is no more imagination, no more fitness to tropical conditions here at Curasao, than at Trinidad, or Saint Kitts, or Martinique. It is Dutch without apology, but not pinchbeck or shoddy Dutch. Everything is of fairly good substance and quality. Order, industry, energy are apparent at every turn. Curasao, for its size, is probably the liveliest-stepping town in the West Indies. Even the black band, with its kettledrums, beats out popular airs with a snap and a spirit,

It is quite apparent that the town blacks here have enough to eat and are fairly well lodged and clothed—so much so that they have a jaunty impudent air reminding one of their American cousins in Harlem. And the dock worker instead of fifty cents a day gets from one to two dollars, plus cheap living and housing. Curasao is making money and the Dutch are willing that the black should have a share of it—to the extent of a decent living at least. From several expensive automobiles, carrying fashionably dressed black women and children, seen in the shopping district I gathered the impression that some of the blacks were making more than a living. Beggars are not seen. Nor is disease. The clean bright look of the streets and buildings throughout the town dispel any suggestion of want and disease. And the handsome cottages and villas in the suburbs speak for considerable wealth. In fact, Curasao is just now very prosperous.

There is no questioning the success of Curasao but there may be some curiosity about the why and the how of it. And here comes in one of the anomalies. The island grows nothing, produces no crop of any importance. Geologically it seems to be of limestone formation, with table mountains and much faulting in the lower hills. The rainfall is hardly sufficient to supply drinking water, cactus and mesquite are the natural products of the soil, and what slight garden produce there is comes forth under protest. The isl-

and is not self-supporting. It hardly sustains the few cattle, sheep, and goats that one sees on the hills. One asks at first, and quite naturally, why this settlement on a semi-desert island off the Venezuelan coast? The narrow little riverine harbor—a mere crack in the rock into which the sea has worn a way—was no doubt a snug hiding place for pirates in the old buccaneer days but why its continuance as a port, or a colony, at the present time?

Willemstad

Well, the answer is that the island is nothing aside from the harborage. Willemstad is the whole thing. It is a trading port, a transshipping port, and something of a manufacturer into the bargain. It does not trade in anything grown on the island but profits by handling the goods of others. It imports oil from Venezuela, coal from America, and all kinds of supplies from Holland and these it turns over and hands out to any purchasers that may be seeking. There is not enough water in Maracaibo Bay to float large ocean steamers. Cargoes are docked at Curasao and re-shipped to Maracaibo in smaller bottoms, just as crude oil is brought over from the vast Venezuelan oil fields in small steamers, refined at the great works in Curasao, and then reshipped to Europe and America. Thirty lines of steamers bring in and take out cargoes from this narrow but deep water-port. And

Willemstad snips off its toll from each and every cargo.

Then too it builds small ships and has argosies of schooners which it sends out trading on its own account. Import duties average only about 3 per cent of value, and merchandise of any sort can be brought here and sold about as cheap as at the home factory. The result is Curasao drives a profitable local trade. It is even said that it does a nice little business smuggling goods into Venezuela and Columbia. There are nearly as large profits running shoes and shirts into neighboring republics as running rum into New York.

So, all told, Willemstad, on a barren almost treeless island, is doing very well as a broker and a middleman. With no visible means of support from the land she lives well by her sea trade and her great oil refineries, and has built a city which must be ranked in importance among the first cities in the Caribbean circle. Certainly none of the towns in the Lesser Antilles can go beyond Willemstad. It is not only energetic but it is also picturesque, entertaining, worth living in.

The island is picturesque too, but in limited degree. It is rather flat, has no high mountains, no forests, no display of tropical foliage or flowers, but its shores are indented by shallow bays, from its hills are far views of the sea, and it has a great expanse of blue sky from which falls a most brilliant sunlight. The greater part of the island is not inhabited which lends a touch of

wild beauty to the landscape. It looks not unlike Sonora in Mexico and, like that country, could afford pasturage for many cattle, but Willemstad is just now too busy making money out of oil to bother with cattle. Besides, Venezuela can raise cattle cheaper.

But Curasao repines not. It refines, makes money, lives well and says little. And looks well—looks so gay in light and color that one wonders why it has never appeared on canvas. I never heard of any Dutch painters doing anything in Curasao. They fuss with the Amstel, and do portraits of pie-faced Dutchmen, as painters have done for four hundred years before them. All of which is perhaps right enough but remarkable in these days of travel and search for the unusual.

The Columbian Andes

The bridge of boats at Willemstad is pushed aside for your steamer and you go down the narrow portway, between the gray forts, and are soon out of sight of land, headed southwest for Puerto Columbia. The next day you pick up the South American coast where it comes swinging back into line after the great bulge in at Maracaibo. The coast has a low range of mountains but these are merely the outliers of a lofty range at the back—the eastern spur of the Columbian Andes or, as they are locally known, the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta. There they lie up and beyond the

coastal foot-hills, pushing their pyramidal peaks of snow into the equatorial blue, as fair and flawless a sight as one can see anywhere in the world.

How far away? One can only judge by the air that lies between. Perhaps fifty miles. How high? From their snowy crests certainly over 14,000 feet and from the sharp angle lines of the peaks (indicative of schist or limestone formation) perhaps 17,000 feet. As a matter of record the highest peak in the range is Horqueta, 17,600 feet; but it may not be in the picture. Some peaks at the back are lost in the clouds.

What is more certain about the range is its striking pictorial appearance. At sunset the peaks seem to be floating in that rosy lilac air we have seen all around the Caribbean, a warm air not at all indicative of cold or snow. And down below stretches that cool violet-indigo sea not at all indicative of heat. These extremes of heat and cold—a blaze and a freeze in the same picture—have been pointed out in more than one place on the globe, notably in southern California and Peru, but I know of no place where they are quite so effective as just here. A sharp contrast does exist, but, due to the air, there is also a most perfect accord. There is not a single note out of key in the whole panorama. It is a perfect picture the like of which is probably not to be seen outside of the tropics.

And the great bulk of the range stretched out like an enormous white barrier with the white breakers of the Caribbean down below! South America is well

protected on this northern coast by its long mountain wall of which these lofty peaks seem the high citadel. But the sea is ever gnawing at the base, pushing into weak spots like Maracaibo Bay, eating out huge arenas in the wall like the Gulf of Darien. We shall come upon many spots of sea-wear if we keep following the coast line. That quiet sea with its gentle lapping wave looks quite harmless, but there is a claw under the velvet paw.

Puerto Columbia

Puerto Columbia, the principal port of Columbia, is not so important among towns as its name and office would imply. It is merely a break-water pier built out into a shallow sea, where cargoes are unloaded and, in the course of time, sent on by rail to Barranquilla on the Magdalena River, and there, in the course of time again, transferred to boats and sent up into the interior. There is no mad rush about the transportation except with the ocean steamers. These seem anxious to dump their cargoes on the large pier and beat out to open sea as speedily as possible. But the Columbians take their time. And that of every one they come in contact with.

The snaky little railroad at Puerto Columbia winds and twists along the coast, through towns of mud-walled and grass-thatched houses, through mesquite and cactus and flowering muerto raton, through mangrove swamps and cocoanut groves, and finally

reaches the Magdalena River at Barranquilla. The Magdalena comes out to sea just here. It is the 1,000-mile water-way leading up into Columbia, to the high cities of Medellin and far Bogota. If there is a good stage of water in the river the trip can be made in a week or ten days by the old-fashioned stern-wheelers that come and go. If there is a low stage of water much time and patience may be spent, with the steamer aground on a sand bar. Occasionally the cargo has to be taken out and piled up on the river bank to lighten the boat. I am told that occasionally the exigencies are such that these cargoes remain on the river banks for weeks and even months unguarded and unmolested.

Barranquilla

The town is large, sprawled out, carved up into countless blocks that are thinly populated or lying quite neglected. There is a recent Ritz hotel, placed on high ground in a fashionable quarter where there are some good asphalt streets and some very pretty villas and bungalows. This quarter is surrounded by a vast aggregation of mud-walled houses and dirt streets in which one can wander interminably and unprofitably.

Some hundred thousand people live here and apparently pick a living from the river traffic. They have their troubles. Columbia has its troubles. But the troubles seem inherent in the race. Spanish

America is in no great hurry. Transportation schemes and national development wait upon credit. And credit just now is letting them wait. So much money has been lost in the Spanish republics that no one can blame northern capital for being a bit shy. Columbia may have to wait a long time for that railroad, or that automobile road, running up from Barranquilla into the interior.

Cartagena

This is another Columbian port, seventy or eighty miles farther along the coast, where another wholly inadequate railroad transfers goods from a pier to a point on the Magdalena, there to be taken by river steamers into the upper country. It is a vastly better harbor (being larger and land-locked) than Puerto Columbia and owing to the terminus here of a huge oil company's pipe-lines is destined to be a place of considerable commercial importance. That is no matter for rejoicing for it will not help the look of Cartagena however much it may improve its business. The average traveller is usually more interested in history and picturesque beauty than in pipe-lines even though they do come down hundreds of miles to the sea.

Cartagena is an old Spanish town first started in 1533 by Don Pedro de Heredia, but it was not until some years later that stone was used in the building of it and the present city began to take form. The

Spanish (many of them coming from Sevilla) built the town, surrounded it with strong beautiful walls and fortified its harbor entrance with half a dozen forts, which was no doubt sufficient reason in itself for Admiral Vernon to come along in 1741 and try to shoot the place to pieces with cannon. All the Vernons and Morgans and other duly commissioned buccaneers were not doing their duty unless they blew ships and towns and forts out of water.

But Vernon succeeded here only in part. The walls and forts and churches and houses still stand and they are the whole beauty and glory of Cartagena at the present time. There is nothing more in the place except, of course, the colorful market and the quaint streets, worth looking at or talking about. Some later history attaches to the town, and is as crooked as its streets, but I have no notion of detailing it. Nor do I feel any strong urge to tell the story of that pipe-line for all the millions that it has cost. It is a great business venture. What of it!

The old buildings of Cartagena in their design and structure show the influence of southern Spain, with a Moorish touch to which was added later a leaven of the tropical and the barbaric in the New World. Its walls and forts and bell towers and white balconies, its square windows and heavy-lintelled and pilastered doors, its tiled roofs and shaded patios quite take it out of modern life. It belongs to the past quite as much as Avila or Ragusa, or Brusa for all the hustle

and bustle of life in its narrow streets. Many of the wooden balconies, great doors and window guards are rudely fashioned, hewn and wrought with primitive tools by native hands, and while that of itself does not make art it adds a barbaric touch that increases a general picturesque appearance. And the color which glows from every wall and roof and tower, from every door and window in greens and blues and pinks and yellows, and illumines the most insignificant calle as well as the broadest square, is the crowning splendor of the town.

I have never seen anything in the New World, either north or south, quite comparable to Cartagena for picturesqueness. The unequal height of the houses, the push-up of church towers, the great masses of shadow cast by overhanging eaves and balconies, the broad patches of light and color on wall and roof and cupola are features that painters love to juggle with and perhaps finally succeed in pushing into pictorial shape. But here there would be no need for juggling or composing. Everything falls into place of itself.

The Colorful City

Like Venice? Yes: and no. Guardi, Bellotto and Marieschi discovered the pictorial quality of Venice three hundred years ago and ever since their time painters have been going there to paint that city of the sea. Even an American contingent has been paint-

ing there for more than fifty years. But what a pity our Americans have never seen and painted Cartagena! Had they done so the resultant pictures would not perhaps be any more reflective of the United States or American life than those of Venice but at least they would have been more novel.

For here is the real Spanish-American scene still redolent of priest and conquistador, still glowing under the tropical sun, a scene such as one does not meet with in the City of Mexico or Lima or Santiago. And here where Cartagena faces outward, just at the foot of great gray walls, stretches the beautiful Caribbean that neither the Adriatic nor any of the Seven Seas can go beyond in surface and in color. Cartagena, a flower of the sea that has been in bloom for three hundred years and yet who among the so-called artistic have ever paused to look at it? Who will look at it now with the hurrah of modern life calling attention to pipe-lines and business? And art playing the mountebank with color-puzzles and mad jim-cracks to attract the notice of a jaded audience!

But if the tourist—the poor misguided and harried tourist—should go up the streets of Cartagena, not to the big cathedral with its wholly modern and bedizened exterior (though it has a good gilded altar in its apse) but to San Pedro Claver with its fine facade and towers or, better still, to Santo Domingo with its bell tower, facade, good doors, and excellent proportioned cloisters, he would see things very well worth

his consideration and admiration. In both churches the sense of proportion in doors, windows, and walls is noticeable and the feeling of solidity and stability in the structures well marked. That means good building at least.

Age has nothing whatever to do with it. It is an elementary statement in art criticism that the old masters are admirable to-day not because they were "old" but because they were "masters." Just so with these church builders in Cartagena. It is their mastery in style—Spanish style, the classic tradition handed down through Spain and modified to meet conditions in the New World—that counts. Of course, it is proper enough to marvel over the time when these churches were built and the place and the circumstance of their building—marvel that under such limited or adverse conditions they were built so well—but that bit of story or sentiment has nothing to do with the still inherent beauty of the buildings themselves. Their beauty is matter of artistic sense and sensibility, not of sentiment or history.

I may illustrate that further by calling attention in the cloisters of Santo Domingo to the wooden beams in the ceiling overhead. I know nothing of the history of those beams but if you should learn that they had been hewn by the crude axes of the natives up in the mountains and brought down on the shoulders of the Indian converts with much labor and sore trial of spirit, and set up here with prayer and religious cere-

mony, all that would not add one jot or tittle to their art value. They never had any art value. They are merely rough-hewn beams and neither their history nor their age could make them otherwise. They are no more artistic in the ceiling than so much brick and mortar in the wall or stone in the foundation.

On the contrary, if you will go over to the nearby church of Santo Toribio you will see there a ceiling above the nave, and especially above the high altar, that is so good it may be called artistic. It is perhaps the best piece of workmanship to be seen in any of the Cartagenan churches. I know nothing about who designed it, or when or how it was built, or what history it may have. It may have been done in modern times—only yesterday. But all that is beside the mark. The ceiling is handsome without name or date or history though these latter rightly enough might add to the human interest of the work.

Of course, if you are historically bent it might be worth while to visit the house of the Inquisition (it has a handsome portal) or La Popa up on the hill (with a fine view of the sea) but if you are pictorially inclined you might better spend a half-hour in the convent of Santa Clara, or walk about on the walls of the city, or stroll through the quaint streets and talk to the very polite citizens. You can learn more of beauty and of art from the streets of Cartagena in half a day than from the streets of Kingston or Bridgetown in half a life-time.

Doubtless I shall be accused of flouting the historical for the sake of the pictorial. I plead guilty and offer as defense that any town or island in the West Indies can furnish you with the same kind of buccaneer history that you find here, but no other town about the Caribbean can begin to produce the pictorial in such quality and quantity as Cartagena. It is perhaps justifiable to emphasize its form and color at the expense of its story, though there is no reason why the hectored and harried tourist should not enjoy both, if he will or can.

THE CONTINENTAL WATERWAY

Wind and Wave

GROUPS of islands, like groups of stars, are a source of endless speculation. We get out sea maps and star maps and keep asking why and how. And at each session we revise and restate conclusions. Thus of the Caribbean at the last session:

It is a rock-bound inland basin that half pretends at being an open sea. Its shores are mountains and its islands are merely the worn-down roots of mountains—worn down by rain, wind, and wave. What made the basin is any one's guess, as it is mine. Probably a continental plateau once existed here where now stretches a sapphire sea, and the eastern edge of that plateau has, as a remainder and a reminder of its former state, merely its high points—the Leeward and the Windward Islands. They were high points on the plateau or they were hard-cored peaks that wore down slower than other points and to-day project like the upper structure of a sunken wreck.

Presumably the wreck took place years ago, with the subsidence below sea level of this Caribbean plateau. That was the first disturbance. The second was that the waters of the Atlantic at once took advantage of the disaster and (if it was cataclysmic) rushed into the depression. Since that far-off day the Atlantic

waters (with the wind and the rain as helpers in erosion) have been wearing arenas in the Continental coast and gnawing at the shores of all the islands. In the fulness of time they may destroy the islands and possibly eat through the Continental Divide at Panama to the Pacific. What that would produce in disturbance of ocean currents and changing of climates can merely be surmised. It might possibly mean that certain North-Europe peoples now being warmed by the Gulf Stream (if they should then be in existence) might have to change their clothing or their residence.

But perhaps not immediately. The Gulf Stream would at first meet with opposition. The tide on the Pacific side is several feet above that on the Atlantic side. But that might eventually be equalized and the prevailing eastern wind might in time push the Gulf Stream through into the Pacific. Such a happening would certainly disturb the North Atlantic. But I am a little ahead of my story.

The wind, it will be understood, is the trade wind which gathers headway in the equatorial Atlantic and moves west. It is thought to be caused largely by the spinning of the earth from west to east. The greatest velocity, and consequently the greatest atmospheric friction of the spin takes place at the high point—the equator. The air there cannot keep up with the spin of the earth and drifts behind making itself manifest practically as a wind blowing from east to west—the **trade** wind of the tropics.

This flow of wind westward has an immediate effect on the surface of the ocean. It sets in motion, or at the least is measurably responsible for, a corresponding westward flow of water. The flow is known as the Equatorial Current of the Atlantic. It moves from the mid-Atlantic westward to the South American coast and there seems split into two branches by the outstanding shoulder of Brazil. The southern branch follows the coast and is known as the Brazilian Current. It eventually crosses the South Atlantic and flows up the African shore (where it is known as the Benguela Current) thus completing an ocean circle.

The northern branch of the Equatorial Current moves up the shore of South America, flows through the Windward and Leeward Islands, through the Caribbean, meets the Central American coast and is there gradually shunted and pushed around the Mexican shore and finally through the Straits of Florida as the Gulf Stream. It flows northward and eastward toward England and a portion of it comes down by France and Spain and eventually finds its way into the main Equatorial Current again, having completed the northern circle of the Atlantic and created in the centre of it the Sargasso Sea of fancied terrors.

Now, if you will take up a map of the Caribbean you will see how very easily the North Equatorial Current could flow through the Leeward and Windward Islands, across the Caribbean, and against the

Central American coast. If you will follow on the map the shoreline of the Caribbean you cannot fail to notice the two or three huge indentations or arenas or crescent-shaped bays in the coast—the great bay that spreads across from Cartagena to Honduras, the big bend-in of the Honduras coast, and the Gulf of Mexico carved out like a bowl from the mainland. Within these irregular arenas are other smaller arenas or bays such as the Gulfs of Darien, Honduras, and Campeche. And still within the secondary are tertiary bays in infinite number.

Great and small alike all these arena bays show the wear of waves and are largely caused by the push of waters before the trade winds. The moving waters, with their beating crests and cutting undertows, that have come through the Caribbean from the Equatorial Current, have been gnawing at the Continental shore unceasingly for many centuries. They never pause. And the thrust of the wave is always the deepest and keenest at the innermost point of the arena. It is at this innermost point that finally the wave breaks through.

Water like every other element wears along the line of least resistance. Where the soil is loose or the rock is soft there it works the swiftest. If you will look at the map once more you will see that where the Isthmus of Panama shows there is a huge ragged arena cut in the coast. That would argue soft rock, or, at the least, poor resistance to the wave. Singularly enough this

would seem to be confirmed by the fact that the sierra which apparently runs from Alaska to Cape Horn breaks down and practically passes out at Panama. The mountains there are only a few hundred feet in height. That certainly suggests, what the engineers of the Canal found in fact, that the Isthmus was a soft spot. It proved the weak link in the chain, and the thinness and softness of it made possible the cutting through of the Canal at just that point.*

Between the Oceans

We usually frame in our minds distorted pictures of those places where we have never been. I retained for many years a boyish image of the Isthmus of Panama as a great flat swamp filled with alligators, snakes, mosquitoes and sudden death. And a later fancy that the digging of the Canal was largely a matter of clearing out dead logs and trees except for one big cut through the hills. But the reality proved rather disconcerting, certainly disillusioning.

There are no mosquitoes or alligators left in the sanitized portion of the Canal Zone though there are still plenty of alligators in the smaller Panaman rivers and mosquitoes in the Panaman bush. But a traveler from Alaska, or even from New Jersey, would

*I am aware that geologists do not consider the Panaman hills a link between the Rockies and the Andes, but the matter is not important in this connection. The hills exist as hills or low mountains whether links in a chain or not. Topographically, if not geologically, they are a connecting link.

think lightly of the mosquito numbers on the Isthmus. They are but a handful compared to the clouds of them in the temperate zones. As for the stumps they have been submerged in the artificially made Gatun Lake and the swamps were drained off by the Canal at either end.

The Canal

The big Culebra Cut, I am told, was made where a saddle or pass occurred in the range of hills. Possibly the saddle was originally formed and the pass depressed by the wear of two rivers, both of which started at the top of the Divide but flowed in opposite directions—the Chagres flowing into the Caribbean, and the Rio Grande flowing into the Pacific. In its construction the Canal followed, in a general way, the bed of the Chagres up to the Divide, allowing for deviations in the Gatun Lake. The cut through the Divide was made at the low point, or what I have called the saddle, a matter of 312 feet above sea level. The Canal was then carried on and out to the bed of the Rio Grande and thus down (and through the Miguel and Miraflores locks) to the Pacific, allowing again for some deviations in the route.

The entrance to the Canal, at either ocean, is at sea level but the main reach of the Canal is some eighty-five feet above sea level and steamers are lifted up and down that distance by the locks. The locks are of great size and strength and they work well but I am

not aware that any new mechanical principle was here developed. The Gatun lock and dam on the Atlantic side made Gatun Lake by backing up the impounded waters against the Continental Divide. It is through this lake that your steamer, under her own power, moves on to Culebra Cut. The lake though artificial is nevertheless beautiful in its wooded islands and shores and up from the waters rise round-topped hills several hundred feet in height and still covered with golden-green forests.

The timber near at hand is not tall because the larger trees were used in Canal construction, but the second growth is dense in bush and root and vine and will prove enough of a jungle for any adventuresome soul who wishes to explore it. On the Atlantic side, save for patches of banana here and there along the water, the jungle remains quite untouched. No one cares to disturb it and back a mile or more from the Canal it runs into big timber that is still a forest primeval.

On the Pacific side the bush has been cut back and cleared in spots to make a habitable place for the army and Canal employees, and with very good results so far as the appearance of the landscape is concerned. The hill tops have been left in forest and the clearing-up of the valleys makes an agreeable contrast. The open profits by the bush and the bush by the open. There is small doubt that the Atlantic side will eventually be cleared up in the same way. A jungle

at right and left may prove attractive but a change to open country is also acceptable.

With the first triumph of the Canal builders—the banishment of malaria and yellow fever—the Zone at once became habitable and to-day it may be said, without exaggeration, that it is as perfect a winter resort as tropical America can show. The climate is warm but even, the thermometer varying from day to night only some ten or twelve degrees. Its maximum at three in the afternoon at Barro Colorado is about 83⁰ F. and its minimum at daylight about 73⁰ F. The rainfall on the Atlantic side is 130 inches a year; on the Pacific side only 70 inches. In the dry season from January to May, when there are only occasional light showers, the Zone is an ideal health resort.

There are now some twenty or thirty thousand people living along or near the Zone. Not only the towns at either end of the Canal are increasing in population but the intermediate space—that which is still bush and jungle—is undergoing a change. Development is afoot. The banana plantation and the negro cabin are merely the first crude beginnings. There is a branch of the United States Department of Agriculture under Doctor Zetek at Balboa and an Experiment Station and Botanic Garden at Summit. Along the Canal the truck gardens of Chinamen have already demonstrated that the land can grow almost any sort of produce.

The crop-gamblers of the Caribbean Islands would

probably pooh-pooh the garden idea and talk sugar and bananas, but the Zone is a garden, not a plantation, and will not only look better but pay better as a garden. Besides, it cannot be more than a garden at the most because the land can be rented only in lots of ten acres, and no one can purchase land outright anywhere in the Zone. The population is already large enough to consume whatever is raised, and it is not necessary to argue that fresh produce from the land would be preferable to cooked produce in an American can.

But the truck-garden argument is perhaps less important than the beauty-garden argument. By that I mean that the narrow Canal Zone is, by its proportions, by its natural endowment, and by its uses, better fitted for a landscape garden than a farm. The nations of the earth pass along this highway. They are looking to right and left for evidence of some Yankee money-making project. Why not disappoint them by showing just a Canal Zone beautiful—made beautiful by grasping Yankee hands?

Canal Administration

At the present time one meets with few Americans who care to discuss the manner of taking over the Zone from Columbia. It is now common opinion that there was hasty action and that Columbia was dealt with perhaps too brusquely, though she gave cause for irritation. She has since been given her

price in full, but that amend failed to please her. We, who have assumed the role of bigger brother and protector extraordinary to all the Americas, should have set a better example. Besides it was rather poor diplomacy. The same results could have been arrived at with less friction by the exercise of more politeness and patience.

But with that *faux pas* admitted, or ignored, the American takes honest pride in the rest—that is the building and administration of the Canal. Even the contemptuous Frenchman and the patronizing Britisher think it a job well done, while the frank New Zealander and the thankful Australian are enthusiastic about it. So that while there is hardly a nation on earth that does not dislike, or envy, the United States, there is hardly one of them that does not concede here something well done and worth while. It is further conceded, actually admitted, that for once we went into an enterprise with some other object than money-making.

The first ten years of Canal operation showed a deficit of fifty millions of dollars. Since then there has been a better series of balances until now the Canal pays its running expenses and interest on some of its capital cost.* More ships use the Canal each year and as a result more water is already needed and more expenditure is indicated. It is not likely that

*The capital cost of the whole Canal enterprise is roundly put at \$540,000,000.

it will ever be a large paying concern. And, what will seem wholly incredible to the stranger, the American really does not care whether the Canal pays or not. He is satisfied with his country having done a good job and his government carrying on a good piece of administration.

The budget of the Canal seems to interest no one so much as does the bulk and bigness of the undertaking. The size of it, the Gatun Lake, the Culebra Cut, appeal to every traveller from every land. And also the working of the locks. The way those little "electric mules" hustle a 30,000-ton steamer in and out of the locks commands admiration. There never was anything quite like it. Steamer follows steamer like the buckets on a chain. An imaginary traffic officer seems to stand at every lock urging them on with the jerk of an official thumb. Get along now! There is plenty of room ahead of you in the Pacific. Keep moving! And they do. But in perfect order, without friction, and almost without sound. Every cog in the system knows its place and purpose and they all work together effectively and rhythmically. We not only builded better than we knew but we are administering quietly, efficiently, forcefully.

Cristobal

Some intimation of Yankee order and cleanliness in and about the Canal is given by the swept-and-scrubbed look of Cristobal at the Atlantic entrance.

It is little more than a cement wall, a plastered park, some concrete buildings and a row of palms, but it is clean and wholesome. The buildings and streets are almost immaculate and the control keeps them so. Khaki-clad police maintain perfect order. You are not allowed to shoot up the town, nor to celebrate with newly made acquaintance, nor to walk on the grass, or spit on the pavement.

Colon lies just across the railway track and, belonging to the Republic of Panama, has no prohibition law. You can "celebrate" over there. Only the *sanitary* arm of the United States government reaches into Colon. It keeps the place clean in order to prevent disease in the Canal Zone. Colon is an old ramshackle town that has seen worse days and might be improved even now, but the Canal administration is responsible only for its sanitation.

A little hint of isthmian possibilities in landscape gardening comes to one from a visit to the Hotel Washington at Cristobal. It is government owned—a huge mixture of steel, tile and concrete, but cool, clean, comfortable, well planned for a hotel in the tropics. It is in a park-like enclosure and fronts on the sea, looking out beyond the harbor and over the long foam-washed breakwater. Graceful palms fit in with passing ships and clouds and blue sky to make up a pretty picture in which the Caribbean serves as background.

This, however, is more suggestion than any great

realization, but it points to an inclination that may lead to larger results. The opportunities for tropical landscape gardening with water, hills, forests, savannas, under golden light, are here very great. The Canal Zone has been made habitable, healthful, useful. But, again, I ask why not also something beautiful? If the United States should here create the garden of the world for the ships of the world to pass through what then could the carping and the envious say? American money for beauty! Heaven save us! Only the mad now dream of such a thing. But, nevertheless, the dream may come true.

Balboa-Ancon

At the Pacific entrance to the Canal stand Balboa-Ancon and Panama, the former, like Cristobal, belonging within the Canal Zone, the latter, like Colon, belonging to the Republic of Panama. Once more the sanitary arm of the United States reaches into the older city, but only so far as to keep it free from contagious diseases. Balboa-Ancon is the new city, largely built up since 1900, and is the residential quarter for governmental and army officials. It has been well located, well planned and is kept in perfect order. Its driveways, parks, trees, and points of view are attractive and some of its buildings, such as the Administration building and the Gorgas Hospital, are matters of local pride.

Below Quarry Heights there are extensive docks and out from the shore into Panama Bay are built huge causeways leading to the islands that lie off the Pacific entrance to the Canal. The islands are fortified and the causeways controlled by the army as part of the Canal defences.

Of course, the Canal had to be fortified. It is a very convenient short-cut between the oceans for every nation, including the United States, but it is also a short-cut to the side-doors of the United States. In enemy hands it could be used very effectively against us. If our Latin-American neighbors from the Rio Grande to Cape Horn, would or could understand that point they would not accuse us of imperialism. The American acquisitions in the Atlantic and the Pacific are merely strategic points for Canal defence by water, and our unwillingness to allow Mexico and Central America to make alliances against us is, again, matter of Canal defence by land. We are defending the Canal for their use and protection as well as our own. No one in the United States wants any more Latin-American land, and no one there, not even in delirium, ever dreamt that supposititious dream of imperialism which mad editors at the south attribute to us. Our expansion is already too large for safety. We are merely trying to protect what we already hold.

Panama

The city of Panama is the oldest town on the Isthmus and still contains many interesting streets, squares, esplanades and water fronts. The Avenida Central is the main shopping street, and the one usually paraded by tourist bands, but it has small interest aside from its shops. The waterfront down near the market, the sea walls, the fishing and fruit boats (they are large dug-out canoes—cayucas—with sails) are more colorful and picturesque.

Along the waterfront runs Avenida Norte, one of the oldest streets, and in it still stand some fine old residences belonging to Spanish times. They are not pretentious but substantial, with good walls, roofs, balconies, doors and windows. There are still some excellent wrought-iron railings and grills showing along the facades, and, of course, there is a wealth of color in the walls. The narrow streets running between Avenida Norte and Avenida A (on the other side of the town) are most attractive with these fine balconied houses. They are still occupied by some of the older Panaman families and are beautifully kept up. Why not? Buildings do not have to be tumbled down and deserted to be beautiful.

There are some ruins in the city, however, that are worth looking at. The two or three large churches now in use may be passed by without great loss, but near the Esplanada, on Avenida A, is an old abandoned church with a famous flat arch that every **one**

talks about. The arch is said to have held intact for two hundred years and is evidence that no earthquake in that time has been very severe or the arch would have fallen. Therefore, no earthquake in the next two hundred years will crack the big Canal! But the arch is rather remarkable in that it did not collapse the day it was built. The main facade of this ruin, on Avenida A, has some quaint steeple-pointed pilasters, and there are several good windows and niches still holding up.

Moving back into the town along this Avenida A, and on the same side of the street, is another old church-ruin, much more elaborate in its round stone columns, its windows, niches, and arches. Unfortunately a screen of modern masonry has been flung across its front. On the opposite side of the street and a little farther along is a church with a golden altar with which every one in Panama is familiar. The altar is said to have come from the wrecked Cathedral of Old Panama half a dozen miles down the coast. It is a handsome piece of carving and gilding and makes a rich showing. The church itself has a wooden barrel-shaped ceiling with square supporting columns.

But these relics of the past should not absorb interest to the exclusion of many fine old residences along this same Avenida A and its adjoining calles. The Spanish here knew how to build dwelling houses as well as churches, knew how to build for looks as well as comfort. And their descendants, still living here, know how to carry on the ancient tradition.

No doubt the northern tourists who come here in the winter in cruise ships, and chase up and down the main street of Panama in automobiles for an hour, have both pity and contempt for the Panamans and their little city, but their contempt is shallow and their pity were better bestowed upon some of their fellow-tourists. The Panamans who stay at home are much happier than the tourists who circle the globe. But, of course, the tourists never see the interior of that home, never see the courteous generous head of the family, nor the handsome wife and daughters, never know their charming hospitality, their lively talk, their pretty play at carnival, never even go to an ordinary Saturday-night dance at the Union Club where the beauty of the dressing and dancing, to say nothing of the beauty of the women, might put some heads in a whirl. They go on around the Caribbean, or around the world, judging of everybody and everything from insufficient premises. This is, and always has been, the plague of peoples and the cause of misunderstanding among nations.

Old Panama

There are vine-clad ruins down the coast at what is now called "Old Panama." The original Spanish settlement was at the far end of the Bay and the imposing towers and walls of Cathedral and Convent still standing there attest the scale of the building. It was so large and so good that it attracted the lively atten-

tion of that hundred per cent buccaneer, Morgan, who came here in 1671 and destroyed everything in the city. Morgan's idea about hornets was not only to exterminate them but to burn their nests, and of course, the Spaniards have always been hornets to people of Morgan's ilk. He, at any rate, made a complete job of Old Panama. The hornets never tried to rebuild the nest and only some ruined scraps of it are visible at this day.

The great tower and the still-standing walls of the Cathedral attract attention by their bulk and extent rather than by any fine proportions that are now apparent. Some window arches and openings in the tower are interesting, but most of the detail and all of the ornamentation has disappeared and what remains is merely good masonry for the time and circumstance of the building.

Across the road from the Cathedral and a little way back in the clearing are the ruins of the Convent of Saint Joseph, the least injured of the old buildings. It is now half-masked in over-growing trees and vines and in the evening light is very picturesque, even romantic. There are some excellent architectural features about it still apparent. One should notice the well-sprung arches, the excellent door openings, the windows and the niches. The masonry in old flat brick (possibly brought from Spain) was so well done that the arches still hold up and seem as strong as ever. Originally this Convent building must have

been handsome. The whole of the old town was possibly somewhat like the present Cartagena but to-day it is only a tumbled-down monument to the rascally rapacity of Morgan.

BARRO COLORADO

The Wild-Life Preserve

IT has already been stated that when the Gatun Dam was built the waters of the Chagres River were impounded and backed up to a depth of eighty-five feet against what is loosely called the Continental Divide. Gatun Lake at once expanded into a water area of 165 square miles. All the low spots in it became deep water and all the high spots were changed into islands. One of the highest of the spots was Barro Colorado and it is now one of the largest of the islands. It is about three and a half miles in length, and as much in breadth, with an altitude at the centre of the island of about 537 feet.

The place and the name were both known in the days of the conquistadors. In 1670 Captain Luis de Castillo "was fortified at Barro Colorado" to meet Morgan (the same piratical person who shot up Old Panama) but nothing came of it. No battle in the forest ever came off and the place remained, still remains, a place of peace lying away from the world of man and his doings.

In 1923 Governor Morrow of the Canal Zone set the island apart as a reservation, a biological preserve, and under the administration of the Institute for Re-

search in Tropical America and supported by American universities and museums, it has become a ground for the scientific study of natural history in all its departments. A laboratory is maintained at one spot on the island-shore with living quarters for the scientific people who go there for research-study. Elsewhere the island is uninhabited. No one stops there except by invitation. The place is quite the same as Castillo found it—a place of refuge. But not one in which an army could do battle or a tourist contingent find its way.

The Tropical Forest

For the island is forest clad to the water's surface—that is the forest does not end on the shore but hangs down and over the water some distance from the shore. It is a primitive forest—a virgin tropical rain-forest. Some of the shores adjacent to the Canal probably lost some of their larger trees during the French occupation of the Isthmus. They were needed in construction. But the centre of the island and the far shores were untouched and to-day the giant espave, the wild fig and the spreading corotu stand there in undisturbed repose as they and their kind have stood perhaps for a thousand years.

A hundred feet within the forest and you seem within some shut-in wilderness at the end of the earth and yet you are only twenty-odd miles from

Cristobal and a little farther from Balboa. Sitting on the laboratory steps you can see a few hundred yards away the ships passing along the Canal channel between the oceans, and every day overhead the army airplanes go roaring by bound for the Atlantic or the Pacific station.

One might think that the roar of the airplanes would cause the birds and animals on the island to lose their minds and take to flight but apparently they care little about it. Each one of them is concerned in making some kind of roar on its own account. The parrots go by in pairs chattering or quarrelling with each other, the toucans follow with a grating note, the giant orioles bubble, the tinamous call, and the monkeys howl, each for its own amusement or relief and quite regardless of any other disturbance of the ether.

And yet these noises, occurring only at far intervals, have no appreciable effect on the usual deep silence of the forest. There seems to be agreement among writers on the tropics, not only about the "isolation," but about "the overwhelming stillness" of the jungle. As a general statement of fact that is true but it is subject to some exceptions or, at the least, explanations. There are no heavy winds in the tropics, barring occasional hurricanes in certain regions. The trade winds that blow may ruffle the tops of the trees but never get down in the forest depths. In the clearings or about the savannas or parks you will hear the

rustling of palms until perhaps you wish they would keep quiet, the rubbing of bamboo stems will make a sound like crackling ice that finally grows monotonous and wearisome, and the broad leaves of the bread-fruit tree, tossing outside of your window, will persuade you again and again that it is raining; but there is very little of this leaf sound in the forest. The trees are too close together, the depths are too dense for even the wind to pass through.

But the wind passes over the tree-tops and occasionally with a far-carrying rush and swish of leaf and blossom. The upper branches toss and the tall stems may reel a bit. The foliage is tremendous in volume and when shaken by a high wind gives out an orchestral swell that is not unlike the sound of heavy surf on a shallow beach.

Tropical rain produces a similar sound. Perhaps you awake at night thinking an unusually strong wind is stirring when it is merely the incessant beat of heavy rain drops on the foliage. When wind and rain combine the sound of the forest is more like a profound and prolonged roar. It is as though some large cataract were falling near you or around you.

Again, all the writers on the tropics agree about "the impenetrable" in the forest depths. The machette or cutlass is declared to be always in requisition, hewing a way through the tangles of root and vine and bush. There is truth in that but it needs some qualification. There are lanes or leads or animal runways

in almost every forest. And spots where the sunlight sifts through even in the densest of jungles. The density is not always so dense as we are assured it is.

Moreover, the great tangle is not an exclusive feature of tropical forests. Any primeval forest calls for the occasional use of cutlass or axe. I have still in mind days spent worrying through the unbroken forests of Oregon and British Columbia and in the wilderness of Alaska. Last summer I found the second-growth timber around the tops of the Catskills a little too thick in underbrush, fallen trees and trailing vines for comfortable navigation. If nature is let alone for a few years she will create a jungle in any country that has an average rainfall. The mountains of Southern California have always known limited rainfall but the dense chaparral that grew on those mountain sides thirty years ago could be penetrated only by a grizzly bear. Still, the conditions of growth—heat, light, and moisture—are more favorable in the tropics than elsewhere and the tangle is, generally speaking, greater.

The outer edge of a tropical rain-forest is always a little deceptive at first sight. For example, the approach to Barro Colorado by water, or paddling about it in a cayuca, gives an impression of a foliage-density that is slightly misleading. The branches and boughs of trees, the bushes and flowers crowd to the open edge of the forest to get the sun. Every available space is filled with leaves or flowers. They overhang

and droop into the water. Making a landing on the (unseen) shore seems possible only by smashing a way through leafage, stalk, and branch. You may notice similar barriers of foliage around a clearing or along a road through any tropical forest. Everything crowds out to the light. A wall of green, very real but still somewhat deceptive, is soon formed wherever there is an opening to the sun and the air. After you have pierced the wall the interior of the forest is dense but perhaps not so dense as you anticipated.

Tangle and Jungle

The tangle is low down on what may be called the floor of the forest. It is not a confusion of small flowers or weeds or grasses or even bushes. These appear only where the forest is more or less open. In the primeval forest, where the trees are tall, straight and close together, there is no room or food or light for underbrush. The tangle is with the twisting and knotting of vines, bush ropes, lianes, creepers, huge buttresses, exposed roots, fallen tree trunks, with accumulations of decayed vegetation, fungi, and ferns.

From this confused floor rise, sometimes for a hundred or more feet, the long stems of the great trees. Their trunks are usually bare of leaves and flowers and some of them do not send out branches for the first sixty or seventy feet, but they are almost always wound and bound with lianes and studded in their

forks and along their branches with parasitic air plants. Not until the roof of the forest is reached do the trees spread out their foliage and not until the tip-top of the roof is gained do they burst into flower. The flowering top is not usually seen from below and your only indication perhaps of there being flowers there at all is the dead petals that lie strewn beneath the tree on the forest floor.

But this primeval forest, this real wood-wilderness, occurs only in spots and areas, even where it seems certain that the forest has never been touched by axe or fire. The more frequent type, and perhaps just as primitive, is that wherein the big trees are not so thickly sown and smaller growths fill in between making a brush or bush from ten to sixty feet in height. There the tangle is quite as great and the variety will include many trees not seen in the big-tree forests. Such is the forest of Barro Colorado.

In speaking of Jamaica forests I made note that almost any tropical forest will show a great number of trees, flung together pell-mell, as it were, rather than, as in the temperate zone, great belts of pine or beech or oak. Sometimes there will be a group of one family but oftener espave or almendro will jostle wild fig or corotu, and the mora, with its lavender-hued flowers, will lift in grandeur from some hill-top side by side with the roble spreading a fluffy pink veil with its profusion of petals.

Struggle of Plant Life

But there is usually a battle going on among these giants. It is individual against individual rather than species against species. And while they struggle among themselves less powerful stems push up and sneak through openings and creep into sun spots. Even the straight and dignified palm will often spindle up in the forest for many feet making some strange turns and curves to get its cabbage head through a loophole in the foliage.

They all fight for existence. They fight one another for the light and air up above and the humus and moisture down below. It is a crowding and a pushing at the top and a twist and a wrestle at the bottom. The entwining and enwrapping of roots often goes on at the surface of the ground. The botanists are inclined to think the exposure of roots above ground a peculiarity of certain forms of tropical vegetation but I am bold enough in my ignorance to suggest that perhaps the root-struggle goes on above ground because there is no room for it below ground. The space below is already completely occupied. Great heaps and tangles of roots lie around and out from the tree-buttresses tightly twisted like boas in death coils, or they are thrown up in lumps and protuberances looking like huge lizards. Evidence of long struggle is always apparent.

In the desert the vegetation has many devices for

fighting off drouth, evaporation, poor soil and the attack of animals, but in the tropical forests I do not find defensive expedients very apparent. There is really little necessity for them. There is no prolonged drouth and hence no need for storage reservoirs in root or branch, there is no unusual evaporation though the foliage is large, there is no desert soil with its lack of humus. As for the predatory animals they are too few to make any impression on the forest. There is practically no need to fight them off with protecting thorn and spine or poisonous sap.

Still, there are trees that, for reasons best known to themselves, carry even here a spined surface or a clawed branch or a razor-edged leaf or astringent sap or fruit, or conserve some moisture in their leaves by shellacked surfaces, or in folded leaves, or cupped flowers. And almost every one of them has some peculiar device for food gathering or some cunning in fighting for existence. The urge of life and living is with all of them. They have no notion of dying without a struggle.

I assume the intelligence of plants and have argued for its existence in other publications, and I assume further that life and growth and movement with plants do not just "happen." For example, the ordinary cocoanut palm that grows best by the seashore where sometimes wild winds blow, tempers and adapts itself to the gale by growing a trunk bent like a rambling crescent, its points turned to face the

wind. It actually rides into the wind while letting gust after gust drive through its fronds. This has long been considered a "happening" but is it not a designed measure of protection? Without it the coconut palm which is never deep-rooted would go down in the first big blow.

Take, for another example, the ordinary wild fig or, better still, the silk-cotton tree which seems more open to the attack of parasites than some other trees. Its horizontal branches are often covered with them and as a possible consequence its foliage at times seems to droop or fall abnormally. It is denied that the cause of the falling foliage is the attack of parasites. They are declared not to be sap suckers and instances are cited of parasitic air-plants growing on fence posts and telegraph poles. True enough an occasional air-plant will fasten on a telegraph pole and live there for some weeks or months. But all that time it is perhaps getting some additional moisture from the wood and eventually it dies because the added moisture finally fails. Beyond doubt many of the parasites have their own water cells but others have sucking disks that are capable of extracting moisture from almost any tree surface. They fasten on the branch of a tree like the silk-cotton and fare better, live longer there, than upon a fence post because they are getting some moisture not only from the surface but from the sap of the tree.

To meet this exhaust, which must be considerable,

and to ward off? possible drouth the silk-cotton has developed great flanges or buttresses at its base that are like extra pumping plants. This is a response to attack and is not merely a "happening." My botanical friends smile at this idea and tell me the buttress is put out as an extra foot for support. But, as I have previously argued, if the tree can put out an extra foot for support why cannot it put out an extra root to gather food and moisture? Either action would indicate intelligence, and both of them are defensive.

Many of the great forest trees, like the moras, are heavily buttressed with lateral roots. These roots keep thickening through the years. Undoubtedly they give the tree a firmer footing and just as surely they serve the further purpose of extra food-and-moisture gathering. The size of the buttress indicates the need of the tree, and the defense may be not alone against parasites but against a poor soil or an insufficient moisture. But the parasite with the sap-sucking disk seems the more apparent danger. It does not kill outright any more than vermin kill an animal outright, but it has its part in preparing the tree for a fall.

Lianes

Just so with the lianes but not so frequently or so surely. They may entwine and twist and bend a tree, as the wistaria a porch railing, without actually killing it. Still the lianes are the stranglers of the forest

and they are apparently at war with everything within their reach. And they keep renewing their forces and perpetuating their species by continually letting down newer lines from above. These perhaps sway like loose strings for weeks and months and even years, gathering some moisture from the air and the rain, and gradually reaching down nearer and nearer to the earth. Then they come to trail on the ground, get a footing in the soil, and begin to tighten and thicken. Finally they become as taut as a ship's cables and are like great guy-ropes reaching up perhaps a hundred feet or more and anchoring a tree firmly in one place. Coati, iguani, termites, climb them, monkeys swing from them, other growths enwrap and twist them, but they hold fast as with hooks of steel and do not let go until the tree itself goes down in some high gale. After many years a tropical rain-forest becomes almost a net work or screen of lianes in various stages of growth from something the size of a fiddle string to a hawser as thick as a man's leg. They are a formidable part of the forest tangle.

Clinging to the lianes, and living upon them, as well as upon the trees, are many leaf-bearing vines, with the leaves at first fastened flat upon the trunks or cables, many ribbon-like strings of cactus that look like green snakes, many beautiful orchids and golden ferns, many lesser parasitic growths, with thousands of lichens, toad-stools and miscellaneous fungi. They **all** hold fast with a bulldog tenacity and suck suste-

nance from some bordering life. The rain-forests are ever and always in a ferment. It is part of the great ferment of chemical change whereon the whole creation hangs and is eternally renewed through the processes of life and death.

But this ferment in the forest is not so very apparent; in fact, it is not seen at all unless looked for. Everything on the surface seems quiet, peaceful, beautiful. The rope-like lianes wave in graceful lines, they let down their small strings in mists and veils, the tall almendros rise up like columns supporting a green roof, and almost everywhere there are blossoms, flowers of the forest, not readily seen but there nevertheless. A strangely beautiful theatre for the drama of struggle and death. It goes on incessantly and forever. And the fang of the bush-master, though more speedy with its poison, is not more certain in its results than the slow rope-strangle of some of these wood assassins.

The Great Trees

Many of the larger trees are magnificent in form, in bulk, in majesty of height and spread of foliage. Almost all of them have light-colored barks and are as smooth in texture as a northern beech, though a few, like the monkey-pot and the sand-box, are coarser. Many of them are mottled by pale white or gray lichens and resemble the leopard wood in their stems. The largest trees such as the espave, the almendro, the

corotu are twenty feet in circumference and have the look of having stood here in the forest for centuries while lesser growths have gathered about them. Their lift above the other trees of the forest, their spread of massive branches, their vast canopy of foliage carry out the impression of great age.

But often you cannot see the big trees for the forest. They are surrounded and their tops shut out by smaller trees. You can perhaps see them better from a distance—that is looking down from a height or looking up from the water. Trees and flowers and foliage can be well studied by moving about the island in a cayuca. The shore line is broken everywhere by outstanding promontories along which there is almost always a group of wood giants towering above the rank and file of the forest.

The promontories have as their complement indented bays which are quite wonderful again for the study of foliage and flowers. In the morning and the evening they carry great masses of shadow broken by sharp cross-lights and, under moonlight, this is broadened into mysterious patches where the trees become almost uncanny in their proportions. But the shadows seen at noonday are beautiful enough and the corresponding golden highlights are almost unbelievable in their intensity. Here the smaller foliage spreads like a green wall and everywhere it is dotted and spotted with blossom and flower.

Flowers and still more flowers! Clusters and

groups of them springing out from trailing vine and ball-topped bush, from overhanging bough and lofty tree-top. They are not in mere star-like points, but sometimes in vast bouquets fifty or seventy feet in breadth and all of one flower. Every tree and bush has its peculiar make-up which results in its peculiar and identical flower. But the display *en masse* is not at all like a crazy quilt. The majority of the blossoms are small and, of course, all the varieties do not come at one time.

Here, as in the temperate zone, most of the flowers of tree and bush come on in the spring time. The growths bear but once in the twelve-month but occasionally there is a tree that blossoms in both spring and autumn. In New York or New Jersey there is often a start at a second blooming in a warm October. Strawberries will throw out fresh cups and buds will swell and fruit trees blossom. But they are soon nipped and stopped by the frost. Here the same start is occasionally made but there being no frosts, the start is carried on to perhaps a second maturity. At least that is the impression one gains though it may not be scientifically correct.

But in any event, in both spring and autumn, in fact at all times of the year, there are flowers and blossoms in the tropical forest. The larger number of them are up on the roof or the hillside, and from the island laboratory they can be well studied through a field glass. With a twenty-four-power binocular these

great masses of color come out in patterns that are really amazing. No northern experience in tree blossoms lends you any poise or any help. Entirely novel and wholly unexpected are the purple masses of the jacaranda, the crepe-de-Chine pinks of the roble, the golds of the guayacan, the scarlet of the palo santo, and the hundred other hues that flame along the tops of the island hills. It is not possible to describe the variety, the mass, the intensity of this wonderful flower show.

Island Birds

The leaves and the flowers are always putting forth effort to reach the light either at the top or the sides of the forest. Almost all of the birds are doing the same thing. In going about the island in a cayuca, especially in the early morning, I find the birds on the sunny side of the inlets, on the outer edge of the forest. They preen themselves in the sun and indulge in much small cheep and twitter as though they were perfectly happy there.

The lake waters are filled with fish that are not accounted desirable as human food because too soft, but the cormorants take kindly to them. They beat about the island in flocks of ten or twenty, making a wide drag net under water, and harrying the fish all along the line. Well, even the cormorants finally tire of fishing under water and hang themselves out on the limbs of dead trees to dry in the sun. And the iguani,

as your canoe slips by, keep falling into the brush or the water with a crash or a splash, from some far branch where they have been sunning themselves. Yesterday I saw one on the topmost dead limb of a fifty-foot tree. He looked as though impaled on the end of a lightning rod, but he seemed quite at ease and was breathing fresh air and sunlight with evident satisfaction.

Many of the smaller birds, not visible in the forest, are seen in the open by going about the little bays in a cayuca. The fly-catchers, generally with yellow breasts, the wood-creepers, small birds in grays and browns, the tanagers in indigoes and reds, the yellow and prothonotary warbler, the blue grosbeak, all come out in the morning sunlight. I am vaguely aware of many other small finches, warblers, fly-catchers, birds with blue heads, yellow bills, red feet, birds green and olive and blood-red and butterfly blue, small birds whose names and habits I have never known. They all like to creep about in the sun on the top of the thick foliage.

Doctor Frank Chapman in his excellent book on Barro Colorado* points out that normally the forest birds belong in three different zones of the forest, beginning with the tinamous, quails, wood-rails, ground-doves on the floor of the forest, the parrots, toucans, mot-mots, cotingas, oropendolas on the roof

*Chapman, *My Tropical Air Castle. Nature Studies in Panama** New York, 1929.

of the forest, and the wood-creepers, fly-catchers, man-akins, ant-birds in the space between. The birds of the most brilliant plumage thus go to the top in the sun, the birds of sombre feather go at the bottom in the shade, the birds that are neither the one nor the other are in the middle zone. Doctor Chapman notes numerous exceptions to this generalization and has some interesting pages on protective coloring in which he notes many exceptions there. He cannot accept any universal application of this so-called law. One might add that it not only has too many exceptions but some very positive contradictions.

Also, Doctor Chapman intimates regarding all these birds that they are apparently little disturbed by the people about the laboratory and that observation from that vantage point is quite as good as from any other portion of the island. That rather helps out my contention about birds loving the open and the sunlight. They come to the clearing about the laboratory because it is practically the only open space on the island.

Bird Peculiarities

Birds differ in their fancies for their fellows. The parrots, for example, always move about in pairs and you can hear them coming long before they arrive because they are always squawking when moving. The plain-colored parrot, meaning the green one, is as noisy in the forest as in a cage. There is a smaller blue-headed parrot the size of a robin, and a little

green parrakeet that moves about in flocks and is not larger than a cat-bird. They all of them squawk.

The toucans also usually travel in pairs, although sometimes singly or in flocks. They are normally quiet, well-behaved birds though they look erratic with their yellow throats, black backs, red-and-white rumps and huge bills. The highly colored bill is enormous in size and is suggestive of a lobster's claw. It looks as though it might cut through like a shears, but in reality it is shell-like, not heavy, and has not the pinching power of a parrot's beak. The bird looks a bit top-heavy but is very active. Why he should have been given that remarkable bill I have not been able to discover. It is notched and designed to catch and hold. So, too, with the bill of the smaller bird of the species—the collared aracari—which is still more deeply notched.

The trogons travel in pairs again, but they are not often seen outside of the forest. They are very beautiful in plumage, with green heads and backs and red breasts. They have heavy finch-like bills with saw edges. At dawn they indulge in some cooing and then settle down in silence for the rest of the day. They seem very sad birds and often sit quietly on a limb for an hour without sound or movement. The white-tailed trogon is the most marked of the family but he is rather outdone in color by the graceful trogon. There are four of the species on the island.

Bills and their development in the tropics make up

an interesting study. Parrots and toucans are well provided for in this feature. Nature no doubt fashioned their beaks for need and planned with wisdom as well as generosity. But, nevertheless, the toucan's bill is just a little incomprehensible considering he is largely a fruit-eater. One can readily understand why the Panama pileated woodpecker, with his handsome red head and black back, should be given a bill almost like an Irishman's pick because the woods of many of the trees with which he has to deal are very close grained and hard. But why should the large kingfisher have such a huge bill? The fish here are soft, peculiarly sluggish in movement, and it would seem that any ordinary kingfisher bill could gather them in. But all of the family here, even the little green kingfisher, no larger than a barn swallow, seem to have over-developed bills. And why the half-parrot bill of the large black cuckoo (ani) with no apparent use for it? Why should the finches have such extra nipper-like jaws, or the indigo jay such a piercing wedge? The toucans' lobster-claw is not the only bill-problem here.

And while we are asking questions it may be worth while to enquire into the gift of tails and tail feathers, and why some are long and some are short, and what end they subserve? The woodpeckers, of course, hitch themselves up the trees and hold fast at every pause by using their stiff tail-feathers as prop and support. **That** may account for their tails being stubby **and**

often a little ragged. The kingfishers were never largely endowed with steering gear, but the large-tailed trogon, the great rufous mot-mot, some of the toucans, and all of the large blackbirds (grackles) have phenomenal long rudders. The broad-billed mot-mot, no larger than a robin, has a long single feather extending down like the pendulum of a clock. It has been shown that he fashions this single tail-feather himself by plucking off portions of the feather. He evidently has some very definite use for it.

I assume that the primary purpose of a bird's tail is for steering, turning, dodging, balancing, but why the extra spread or length of tail in certain birds that are in no way remarkable as sailers or dodgers? The ordinary small bat that goes about catching insects at twilight can spring straight out at right angles from his flight, can turn or twist in a hundred directions with a swiftness and certainty that would baffle any of the long-tailed birds, and yet the bat has no tail at all. That large black cuckoo, with the extra-heavy upper bill, has difficulty in maintaining his equilibrium and is always balancing and see-sawing up and down as though in danger of tipping over, and yet he has a tail perhaps longer than his body; and the large purple grackle with the keel-tail has a labored flight almost like an English sparrow flying with a yard or more of string in his beak. What is the use of these long steering balancing tails if they do not steer or

balance? The humming birds (there is a large representation on the island) are almost like the bats for darting and yet they have, with the greater number, only normally developed, rather short, tails.

At the side of the laboratory is (1927) a great sand-box tree and from its uppermost boughs a number of giant orioles (oropendolas) have elected to hang their long pouch-like nests. There are some twenty nests and as many females in attendance who seem to be urged on in their maternal duties by the bubbling notes of several large males. They are very beautiful birds in their black and dark brown coats, and they all have extra-long ivory bills and extra-long yellow tails, but for what purpose I am not able to imagine. A small black-throated humming bird has a nest in the same tree and the orioles seem to irritate her. Her mate spends much of his time standing in the air a few feet from the oriole nests whirring defiance at the occupants. If they would only come out and fight! When one of them starts to fly the hummer is instantly after him and there is much turning and dodging on the part of the oriole in which his long tail and big beak do him small service. The little hummer is too much for him, just as is the mad hornet for the farmer's boy.

But the oriole can probably fight off his larger enemies better than the humming bird, and his precaution against attack in the first place may be thought intelligent, even by those who believe only in bird in-

stinct. In the case instanced he and his mates chose a large and isolated tree (it has now, 1931, fallen) to make a nest in, one not connected in the upper branches with other trees. The monkeys and various cats could not reach the nest except by climbing up the main trunk from the ground, a something that the monkeys, at least, do not fancy. Then the nest is swung from the tip end of an isolated bough which would not bear the weight of a large animal such as a monkey or coati. And, finally, the birds are colonized in one tree and in case of attack could put up a massed defence, or if not that, then at least a watchful guard. And here the big bills would perhaps come in for justification. Two dozen orioles with large bayonet bills might make it uncomfortable for an ordinary enemy.

Silence and Song

Birds in the tropics fight and make love and raise families very much as in the temperate zones. You see them, that is if you look for them, but you do not usually hear much from them. I mean that here, as elsewhere in the tropics, birds may twitter or call or whistle or break out in a bar of song, but you are not likely to hear them unless you have ears set for song. Still, at morning and evening there are always some sharp cries from the forest. Tinamous, goat-suckers, and guans (a small wild turkey) send out calls that make you stop and exclaim: "Now, what was that?"

You recognize the whistle of the owl and the squawk of the parrot, even the coo of the trogon. And almost every day some new note makes you pause and wonder. But with the sun risen, and the bats hung up for the day in the banana fronds, a silence falls upon the forest and one has to go to the outer edges to get the short chee of a warbler or the peep of a fly-catcher,

January of the year is perhaps not the best time for bird song. I seem always in at the wrong season. People tell me I am either too late or too early for the bird show of the tropics. I have never heard it in January or May or any other month. But at all seasons there are a few birds with charming notes. Just now, and just beside the laboratory, the giant oriole is repeating a short bubbling-water note, stranger and less describable than that of his cousin the troupial, but more deep-throated and musical. It is the richest, roundest, and deepest baritone I have heard south of the Tropic of Cancer.

And here and now on the gutter of the laboratory roof sings every morning, and all through the day, a house wren, enough like our own northern wren to be deceptive, sings until you would think he might burst his throat like the Persian bulbul. Very bright, sprightly and companionable is the laboratory wren. No bird in the forest can sing so pretty a song or is apparently so content with life. For several days it has been raining but, while that closed the throats of almost all the forest birds, the wren goes on with his

cheerful song though the rain runs down his back and off his tail.

But why look for northern song or plumage in southern woodlands! All the surroundings and influences here are different from those at the north, and all life here, while showing resemblances to life there, does not repeat likenesses. I look among the trees and flowers, the birds and animals, for a familiar (that is a northern) appearance. But in vain. The great blue *Morpho* butterfly that has an up-and-down flight through the forest, showing in wonderful flashes of blue that the aviators can see a thousand feet up, has no parallel or likeness in the temperate zone. The blue of his wings is the most heavenly blue ever seen on earth, but it is seen only on this portion of the earth. Just so with the blue plumage of Natterer's cotinga. It cannot be matched elsewhere and is the most wonderful bird-blue in all the world but it is seen only here in the tropic world. All that is quite as it should be. The tropics and tropical life are unique, sufficient unto themselves.

Forest Animals

Yet instinctively we grope at and comprehend one form of life by its resemblance to other forms of life. There is a forest animal here called a coati that has a raccoon head and body, a monkey tail, an ant-eater nose, and a general otter-badger look. Every one tries

to explain him by resemblances but ends by giving up in bewilderment. He is a what-is-it, a something unusual even for the tropics. Several of them living near the laboratory have become quite tame and come up two or three times a day to be fed bananas. Each one eats his banana head up, precisely as a dog does a flap-jack, and then goes down the hill his long tail waving in the wind precisely like a monkey.

Another mixed-up animal, a conejo (agouti) comes to the kitchen door every evening to get a biscuit. He walks up the steps and takes the biscuit out of the hand of the young Indian woman who administers the laboratory cook shop. He then retires a short distance, sits up and nibbles his ration precisely as a muskrat a root of calamus. He seems half guinea-pig, part rabbit, part coney. Every one has a guess at his identity which does not disturb his mental poise in the least. Like Charlotte he goes on cutting bread (with his teeth) and is no doubt profoundly grateful for the arrival of man on the island.

None of the animals here seems to object to the human presence. It is, in fact, one of the attractions of the island, as of nature at large, that the animals have as much curiosity about you as you have about them. They will look and listen and sniff the air for your scent and oftentimes follow you out of mere curiosity (as the puma) when you perhaps think them evilly disposed. Here at the laboratory one has but to sit quietly and sooner or later many of them come

around and make calls. It is almost always a sunlight or appetite or curiosity call rather than anything vicious or predatory.

Howling Monkeys

The monkeys, for example, call frequently and stay for several days in the trees about the laboratory, but they do not come down to either the front or the back door. They stay up in the trees. They have aerial trails, well-worn routes along the branches, and perhaps do not come down to the ground at any time. Why should they? It is possible for them to move anywhere in the forest by branch and bough. And all their food is up in the trees. They are always in quest of food.

Watching a band of white-faced monkeys, gathering leaves and nuts from the small boughs of the forest trees, is not exactly the same thing as seeing them eating peanuts in a zoo. The freedom of their movements, their run along a limb or clamber over foliage, their springs and catches, their foot-holds and tail-holds and swings are astonishing in their ease and certainty. When one of them pauses to turn over some tree bark in a search for insects, and you get him at rest focused in your field glass, you are once more astonished at the sleekness of his coat, his muscled back and legs, his rather savage face. Even the little ones that hang upon their mothers, or tag after

the elders learning how to thread the leafy way, get an ugly look early in life.

But the white-face is not so ugly nor so savage as the black howler. Nor so large. The black howler might perhaps weigh twenty-five pounds or more. He is very heavily muscled but moves leisurely, takes his time, goes out on a branch until he weighs it down to a touching point with a branch below, and then steps off much as a man might get out of an elevator at a lower floor. He will often spend a whole day in one or two trees if he finds food there. A band of ten or a dozen were in the trees directly back of the laboratory for two or three days. And they howled each day both early and often.

The word "howl," however, does not describe it. It is a roar of rage ending with a strangled moan and groan—something much like the roar of an old menagerie lion. In volume of sound it is out of all proportion to the size of the animal. And in the night it is terrifying, if you have never heard it before. The animal probably sends it forth as an expression of rage for he beats his breast with his fists or pulls violently on a tree-branch as he roars. Any unusual sound or happening seems a provocative cause. He roars at a dash of rain, at an airplane passing overhead, at the whistle of a Canal steamer. The impotence of his rage does not seem to impress him. He keeps up his roaring at intervals, as day by day he moves with his band back into the forest, and per-

haps some spider monkeys, or marmosets with little bull-dog faces, try to fill his place up aloft with a series of small squeaks.

A roar in the night, and of a terrifying nature, might be expected from the puma but he moves about like a big cat, with a padded foot, sneaking after the deer or peccaries, and making no cry. During my first visit to the island in 1927, Doctor Chapman tried to inveigle a puma into the focus of his flashlight camera by the bait of a live rooster in a cage. But it rained all night, the rooster by morning was waterlogged and the puma had stopped at home. The next night, however, without a bait, the puma tripped over the wire and took his own photograph looking at his very best—a sleek powerful-looking beast to be seen in illustration in Doctor Chapman's book to which reference has already been made.

Pumas, Ocelots, and Tapirs

Every animal likes an open trail and moves along it at night with leisurely satisfaction. He leaves footprints in the wet trail which usually lead to his identity. But sometimes there is doubt, or the trail is faint, and then he carelessly trips over the wire and has his photograph taken. He may jump at the flashlight but it is too late. The record is on the plate and all doubt is immediately dispelled. No one here at any time had seen an ocelot on the island though tradition had it that he was here. One caught himself

on Doctor Chapman's plate and was developed into a pretty striped beast, footing his way along in the dark, and quite unconscious of anything like a camera.

A later quest was for a tapir, known from his foot prints to be in island residence, but a beast that does not move along well-worn trails either by night or by day. He keeps to the marshes and close to the waterways. But he was finally caught red-handed, with the banana bait in his mouth. Later a second tapir, or perhaps the first one over again, was flashlighted, just coming up out of the water, half submerged.

The explosion of a camera fuse can be heard a long distance and people at the laboratory sometimes wake in the night and wonder what new beast got caught on the plate that time. Something rare and strange is always expected but not always realized. An alligator, or perhaps a boa constrictor, is looked for but the plate may reveal only half a dozen peccaries. They have the look of small wild hogs and some of the old boars have tusks to rival those in the hunting pictures by Snyders and Rubens. But there are no boar hunts here on horseback, with hounds and horns and gaily-clad halberdiers. No one is allowed to hunt or shoot on the island. It is a game preserve not a shooting forest.

There is variety of game. Besides the small wild turkey there are quails, pigeons, doves, tinamous (a species of partridge) but no one on the island disturbs **them**. The small deer, the droves of peccaries, the

sloths, the ant eaters, the great otter-like weasel (coal black, long of body as a coati, but slimmer, small of head, very keen of scent) wander where they please. All that any one at the laboratory does to them is to look at them or photograph them, or try to feed them. The result is that the animals seem quite unafraid. This friendliness is encouraged.

Insects

I cannot make out so much of a welcome for the insects. There are many of them. The ordinary housefly is practically non-existent and the mosquito almost so. No one bothers with either of them. The woodtick with the termite and the ant family in general are, however, well represented. Every building post and table leg has to be set in tar or kerosene and every door and window is screened. Bees and wasps are kept at a low stage numerically by the snip and snap of the fly-catchers, and snakes and lizards by the appetite of the white hawks that make of them a chief article of diet. The only snakes I have seen here are in a glass jar of alcohol on a shelf in the laboratory. They are quite harmless—that is the ones in the jar. A boa that would not go into the jar was picked up near the boat landing, and there are some of the bush-master family in the forest, with a palm viper, that no one cares to pick up. But they keep out of the way and have never been a peril.

I am not so sure about the tarantulas. There are two kinds that are rather numerous under dry banks and in the dry fronds of the banana. They are two or three inches in diameter, counting the legs, and one of them looks as though cut out of black velvet and the other as though cut out of brown velvet. They jump and they bite—bite through a green twig almost as thick as a lead pencil and apparently with no great effort. But no one here has been nipped by them. Like the snakes, alligators and iguani they sound more dangerous than they are in reality. A taxi cab on Fifth Avenue carries in itself more potential danger than all the tarantulas, snakes and pumas on the island put together.

The Peaceful Island

In fact Barro Colorado is an island of peace—a primitive wilderness where nature still her customs holds regardless of man and his civilization. And here one can return to primitive conditions and renew his youth, like the eagle, if he will. Civilization stops out there in the channel where the ocean steamers go by and nature begins here at the boat landing. Back to nature! Well here it is. And in a very attractive form. The beauty of the place will quite outlive any mere scientific curiosity about its animal or vegetable life. The birds and trees and flowers may be photographed and catalogued, like the stars, and duly filed

away; but their beauty individually and collectively as parts of the whole, will live on and be a joy to future generations. Happily the plan of the reservation contemplates this very thing, contemplates the maintenance of the *status quo*.

And so in the golden dawn, with its reflection in the waves of the lake, you go down the steps to the water's edge and step into the boat that will take you across three miles to the little railway station. You are off, going back to civilization, to

"The endless clatter of plate and knife
The singular mess we agree to call life."

But you keep turning around for just another last look at the beautiful island. It is slowly flattening down into the water but still reflects from its green roof studded with blossoms, the gold of the sky and the flame of the rising sun. It is not a rock-bound Ithaca, nor yet again the island of any purely human Calypso, but rather the abode of that great goddess Nature whom we worship because of her infinite and eternal beauty. Always we leave her dominions with regret. The regret is greater here perhaps than elsewhere for here she is manifest in all her tropical splendor. It is her Kingdom of the Sun. May it endure forever!

