

## CHAPTER III.

### ST. CHRISTOPHER.

St. Kitt's *Liamuiga*, the Fertile.—Historical Notes.—Governor's Warner and DEsnambuc.—English and French Settlement of St. Christopher.—Final Banishment of the French.—Sunrise in Basseterre Roadstead.—The Fleet of Bumboats.—Attacked by Fruit-sellers and Washerwomen.—Effecting a Landing.

THE Caribs, the ancient and warlike people once the lords of the beautiful island where we had cast anchor, called it *Liamuiga* (the Fertile), and well does it deserve that name. Columbus, passing near it in November, 1493, on his way from Dominica to Hispaniola, being charmed with its loveliness and finding it very pleasant, as we are told by an ancient chronicler, would needs give it his name. "He was engaged to give it this name from a consideration of the figure of its mountain, the island having at its upper part, as it were upon one of its shoulders, another lesser mountain, as St. Christopher is painted carrying our Saviour upon his, as it were a little child." The English, upon taking possession of the island many years afterward, rechristened their newly acquired colony, calling it St. Kitt's, by which name St. Christopher is now generally known. Columbus did not tarry long at the land that found such favor in his sight; indeed, it is by no means certain that he or any of his crew landed upon it, being eager to arrive at the continent which their imagination pictured to them lying within a few days' sail of the newly discovered archipelago. There is no evidence that the Spaniards made an attempt at any time to establish a settlement on the island. Its fertile, forest-covered valleys and hillsides had no attractions for them—its rugged hills yielded no gold,

the sole object of the avarice which tempted them in search of the fabled wealth of unknown worlds.

For one hundred and twenty-five years the Caribs remained in possession of *Liamuiga*, until the year 1618, when a certain Mr. Thomas Warner, an adventurous and enterprising trader, accompanied shipmaster Roger North on a voyage to Surinam, where he fell in with Captain Thomas Painton, who proposed to Warner that instead of endeavoring to establish themselves in a part of the world where the Dutch had already secured a foothold, they should attempt the settlement of one of the smaller Caribbean Islands. Painton gave so glowing a report of the beauty, fertility, and natural advantages of St. Christopher that Warner decided to repair thither with him, to the end that they two should found a colony. Painton died in Surinam, but Warner, returning to England in 1620, for the purpose of enlisting the co-operation of his patrons in this new enterprise, immediately busied himself to carry out the project, of which he now became the sole promoter. With great difficulty he induced fourteen adventurers as needy as himself to embark with him in a vessel bound for Virginia, where they arrived in safety after a stormy voyage across the Atlantic, and, sailing thence soon after their arrival, reached St. Christopher in January, 1623. It has been claimed for Barbados that it is the most ancient of all the British colonies in the West Indies, and it is indeed true, as I shall hereafter show, that the Olive Blossom, a British ship, having touched there in 1605, remained at anchor long enough to allow its commander to take possession of that island in the name of James I., but it is also true that no permanent settlement was established in Barbados until twenty years later; for the Olive Blossom continued on her voyage to countries farther to the west and south, leaving the Island Barbados desolate and uninhabited. The colonists sent out by Sir William Courteen, under the patronage of the Earl of Marlborough, did not arrive at Barbados till the latter part of 1624, more than a year after Mr. Thomas Warner had taken possession of St. Christopher. It is maintained by some historians that a number

of French emigrants, led by M. D'Esnambuc, landed on the island the very same day that Warner's little band pre-empted their claim to their settlement, in spite of the vigorous protests of the natives of *Liamuiga*, who attempted to prevent the landing of the unwelcome new-comers, but the French historian Du Tertre, who never failed to support any claim his countrymen saw fit to set up to any one of the Caribbean Islands, or, for that matter, to any part of the habitable earth, admits that D'Esnambuc did not leave France till 1625. Therefore St. Christopher can rightly lay claim to the proud distinction of being considered the oldest West Indian possession of the British Crown, all the pretensions of the Barbadians and the Frenchmen to the contrary notwithstanding.

During the first year of their residence on St. Kitt's, the English colonists saw their plantations utterly demolished by a hurricane, and by this disaster found themselves so reduced in circumstances that Warner was obliged to return to England to implore assistance. While at home he secured the patronage of James Hay, Earl of Carlisle, who fitted out, at his own charges, a ship laden with food and agricultural implements, and sent it with quick despatch to St. Christopher, where it arrived in the spring of 1624. Warner returned to his colony during the following year, accompanied by a number of new recruits. It is more than probable that D'Esnambuc, the captain of a French privateer whose ship had been disabled in an engagement with a Spanish galleon, sought refuge in one of the roadsteads of the island on the day of Warner's second arrival, thus lending some color to the claim that he shared with Warner the honor of first colonizing St. Christopher. Being constantly in danger of an attack by the Caribs, who made a brave resistance to the attempts of the strangers to drive them from their island-home, the English settlers received D'Esnambuc and his thirty followers most cordially, entered into an amicable agreement with them, and, having joined forces, ruthlessly massacred the natives and divided the island between them. The English settled at Sandy Point on the northwestern, and the French at Basse-

terre on the southwestern shore. After the massacre of the Caribs, an act of brutal barbarity which Du Tertre calls a glorious victory, the settlers were troubled no more by the natives, and the French and English colonists remained at peace with one another, cultivating the fruitful soil and increasing in wealth and numbers. Warner and D'Esnambuc returned each to his own country. Warner was knighted in 1625, receiving the appointment to the Governorship of St. Christopher, and came again that year to the island, accompanied by four hundred new recruits. D'Esnambuc, who, being taken under the patronage of Cardinal Richelieu, was joined by more than five hundred emigrants, put to sea in February, 1627, with his expedition, in ships so poorly equipped and provisioned that many of the company perished miserably during the voyage for want of food. The survivors were kindly received by the English settlers, for they took pity on the Frenchmen in their wretched plight and gave them such provisions as could be spared from their own scanty store; thus the people of the two nations for many years lived amicably together on their island-home.

In the reign of Charles I., during his war with the Dutch, France having declared for the latter the French settlers in St. Christopher, unmindful of past favors, drove the Englishmen from their settlement. The exiles thus unceremoniously driven away by their ungrateful neighbors, were however restored to their homes and lands by the Treaty of Breda. During the Revolution in England the French, pretending to espouse the cause of the abdicated king, expelled the English a second time from St. Christopher and remained for nearly a year sole masters of the island. This action on their part is alleged to have been one of the causes that induced William and Mary to declare war against Louis XIV. In 1690 General Codrington, Governor of Barbados, on receipt of the news of the Battle of the Boyne, fitted out an armament to capture St. Christopher. In this adventure all the English islands joined. The expedition consisted of three thousand armed men, of which number seven hundred were English sol-

diers, eight hundred from Nevis and Barbados, eight hundred from Antigua, four hundred from Montserrat, and two hundred gentlemen volunteers. This large force of men, conveyed in eleven men-of-war, accompanied by five tenders, met with little or no resistance, and experienced little difficulty in capturing the island, when about two thousand of its French inhabitants were banished to Martinique and San Domingo.

The French made several attempts to re-establish themselves on the island, and in a measure succeeded in doing so, a remnant remaining at St. Christopher until in Queen Anne's day, when they were finally driven from the island by the English, who held it successfully against all comers until the end of the war, when, by the Peace of Utrecht, St. Kitt's was ceded to Great Britain, in whose possession it has remained until the present time. During the war for American independence it is said that the people of St. Kitt's sympathized with the rebellious colonies, but were prevented, by the presence of an English fleet in their neighborhood, from actively participating in the war against the mother country.

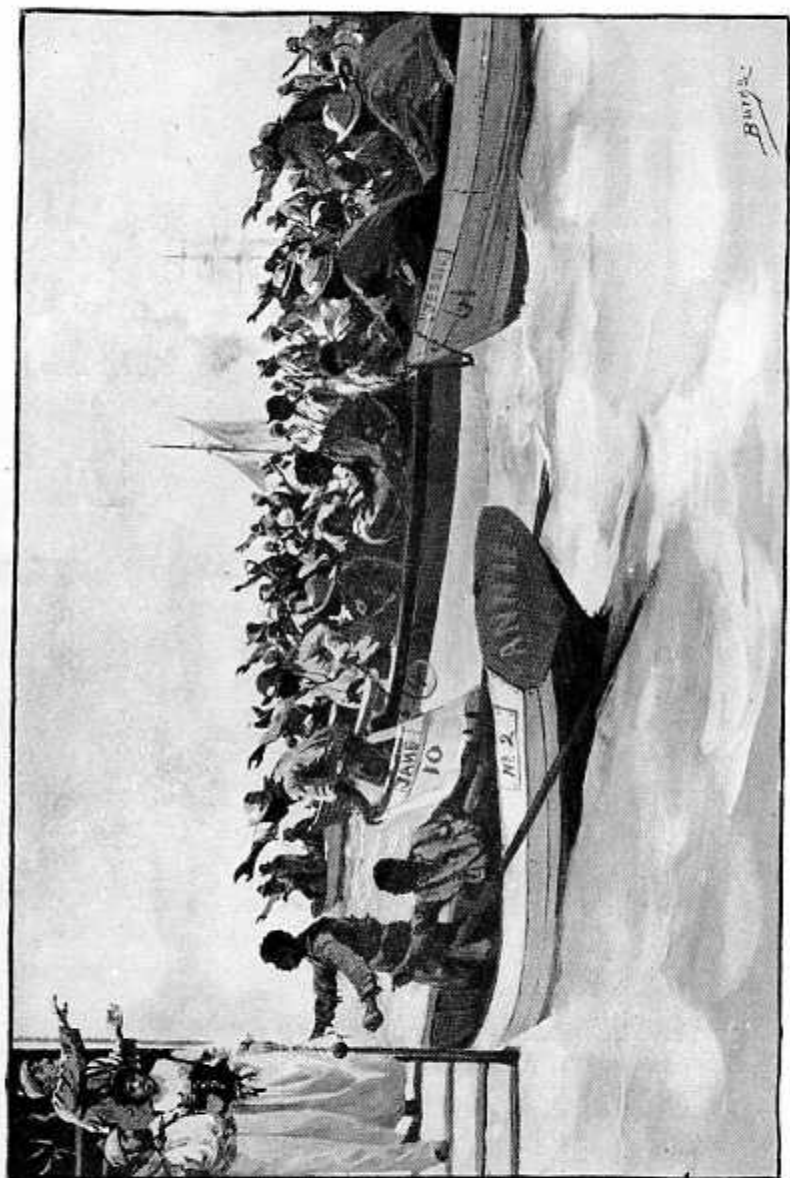
The Island of St. Christopher lies in latitude  $17^{\circ} 18' N.$ ; in longitude  $62^{\circ} 48' W.$  The main body of the island is an oval, nearly thirteen miles long, little less than six miles in width at its broadest part, and contains an area of about sixty-eight square miles, or nearly forty-four thousand acres, of which thirty thousand are under cultivation. Its entire surface, except toward the southeastern extremity, is very mountainous. The Conarrhee Hills uplift their heads around the lofty and precipitous crags of Mount Misery, which towers heavenward in the centre of the island to a height of four thousand three hundred and fourteen feet.

From the southeastern shore a long neck of uncultivated land, a quarter of a mile in width makes out for three miles or more into the sea, increasing, fan-like, in extent. The surface of the land at first gradually rises toward the south, then abruptly mounts upward, forming a cluster of conical hills called St. Anthony's Peaks, all of them

bare of trees but covered with a growth of bristling grasses, mimosæ, and a great variety of cacti such as thrive best in sterile, parched soil or among volcanic rocks.

The view looking north toward the land from the deck of the *Baracouta* at sunrise on the morning after our arrival at Basseterre was extremely beautiful and inspiring—a scene, not easily, if ever, to be forgotten. The steamer was at anchor about half a mile from shore; before us an amphitheatre of mountains enclosing the town extended from a promontory rising boldly from the sea on the north to high and rugged cliffs plunging into the ocean at the southeastern end of the island. The land ascends gently from a crescent of sand by which the harbor is bounded on the north and east. The picturesque little town lies close by the margin of the sea, and beyond it, sugar-plantations extend upward on the left of the picture until they join the dense forests by which the mountain-sides are overgrown; on the right, toward the southeast, spreading over the neck of land I have mentioned above, lies the valley of Basseterre, between Monkey Hill, one thousand three hundred and nineteen feet in height, on the northwest and the group of rugged cone-shaped heights on the southeast.

At intervals here and there among groves of palms, mango, tamarind, ceiba, and many other wonderful flowering trees the houses of the planters, who own all this fair country, overlook fertile meadows and valleys, the town and the harbor, with its great fleet of ships. The peaks and summits of the mountains rise, one behind the other, until in the background, overtopping all, the almost inaccessible pinnacle of Mount Misery pierces the clouds that seldom lift from the top of this once active but now slumbering volcano. On infrequent cloudless days, for it is a rare occurrence to see Mount Misery uncovered at any season of the year, the blackened, fire-worn crests surrounding and overhanging its hideous crater may be seen a hundred miles or more out at sea. The ruggedness and wildness of this magnificent mountain serve only to render the contrast of the cultivated country between it and the ocean more strikingly beautiful. Toward the south-



HUM-BOATS AT BASSETERRE, ST. KITT'S

east the grand, symmetrical cone of Nevis, rising from the seas beyond a narrow strait, stands out bold and clear against the sky, making a landscape of such surpassing beauty that it would be impossible to sail fifteen hundred miles, or, for that matter, any number of miles from Sandy Hook in any direction, and make a fairer landfall than the harbor of Basseterre.

Long before sunrise I had been awakened by a perfect babel of voices, and my first appearance on deck was the signal for a storm of shouts and cries from a multitude of boatmen in a fleet of small boats surrounding the steamer. There were stevedores and long-shoremen, fruit-sellers and washerwomen, venders of knick-knacks, flowers, shells, and coral, geological, and botanical specimens; all the congregation of traffickers howled at me, gesticulating frantically, as each and everyone besought, nay, commanded, me and my fellow-observers of the riotous scene to buy their wares, deliver up our raiment to be washed, or to take passage on their craft. The boatmen screamed out the names of their boats and their own names, they jostled their little vessels together in a fierce contest to approach nearest to the side of the ship or to bring their boats closest to the foot of the companion-ladder. They threatened one another with terrible cries and frantic gestures. From moment to moment we expected to see a dozen or score of them tumble overboard. At times it seemed as if riot and bloodshed were inevitable; indeed, as if a riot had already broken out. The noise and confusion were more deafening and astounding than that created by cabmen at a railroad depôt at home in New York, at times equalling the din and disorder of our Stock Exchange during a tight money market or a corner in stocks.

I happened to step to the side of the vessel for the purpose of bargaining for some fruit that had attracted my attention and for which my teeth watered; I was received with a stunning chorus by the entire flotilla. High above the general tumult and explosion of noise soared such *fortissimi* fragments as—

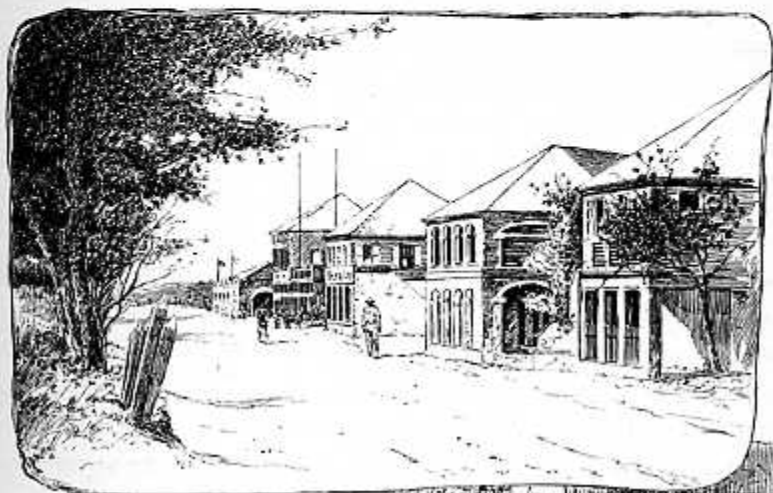
“Mary Jane’s awaiting fo’ you, dear massa.” Mary Jane, be it ob-

served, was the name of a boat. "Don't forget Aleck, sir!" "Cushions in dis boat." "Do yo' washin'." "'Member Lucy." Whether Lucy was a boat or a washerwoman I remain to this day in blissful ignorance. "I'se waitin' for yer, captain." "Here's yo' bes' figs." I learned afterward that figs signified bananas—fig-bananas. "Take yo' asho' jus' now." And so on. By a shake of my head I diverted the deluge of words from myself and my affairs, and the fickle crowd dedicated their remarks to one another. "Massa don' wan' yo' boat." "He won't trust hisself wid you." "He told you to go away." "I knock you in de water." "Shut you mouf, you nigger."

Here, as elsewhere, "nigger" was employed as a term of reproach among negroes. In the scramble and mimic battle oars were broken, rudders became unshipped and drifted away with the tide, boatmen lost their hats, fruit-sellers their fruits, curiosities were spilled into the sea, and I saw one great specimen of coral at least return with a splash to the ocean-depths that bore it. The darkies, roaring like wild beasts, seemed ready, or ever we came to the bottom of the ship's ladder, to rend us in pieces and take us ashore piecemeal. By and by, exhausted by long-continued frantic struggling, as well as by the wear and tear of the lungs and throats, after the storm and war of words there came a great and grateful calm of silence.

In the meantime, a large gang of stevedores had boarded the ship, the hatches fore and aft were taken off, and steam-winchies were set a-running. The work of breaking out and discharging cargo was going on with such wonderful rapidity that it took but little time to load six or seven lighters lying alongside, to start them shoreward, while their places were promptly taken by others in readiness to be made fast to the ship. As soon as storage-room was made below by removing such of the cargo as happened to be consigned to St. Kitt's, a quantity of freight destined to other ports was brought to the Barracouta from shore. In this manner, the operations of loading and unloading went on simultaneously and with remarkable activity throughout the live-long day until late in the evening. During our trip down the islands

our ship was compelled to anchor at a distance from shore, for the reason that at none of our stopping-places, save at Demerara, did we find any harbors, and were therefore obliged to lay at anchorage in open roadsteads. So far from finding these positions off-shore incon-



venient or undesirable, we discovered that our isolation was a great addition to our comfort, for, no matter how warm it may have been on the land there was always a cool breeze blowing across the water, therefore at no time of the night or day were we oppress-



Street Scenes.

ed by the heat, nor was our privacy invaded by a staring, gabbling crowd of wonder-seeking dock-rats and loungers. It was not monotonous to be thus cut off from immediate communication with the land, for in every harbor we visited in the West Indies the Barracouta became the centre of a fleet of small boats filled with darkies who, while keeping at a respectable distance, kept also a sharp lookout for our

spare change and were a constant source of amusement to us, entertaining us by their quaint remarks and grotesque behavior. At every port of call there were neat, clean-looking washerwomen ready to take our linen in charge, many of them by no means inexperienced *blanchisseuses*, for they did their work neatly, thoroughly, and promptly; received payment therefor graciously, earnestly soliciting our further favors, "Nex' time yo' come back, dear massa."

It was astonishing with what quantities of fruit we passengers on the Barracouta were tempted; and the cheapness of it, as well as the inexhaustible supply of all kinds, was still more to be marvelled at by those of us who could not rid our minds of the idea that tropical fruits were of necessity luxuries, in the nature of things costly, and therefore to be indulged in sparingly except by those whose purses were commensurate with their appetite for expensive delicacies of the kind. Oranges, limes, bananas, mangoes, pines, soursops, avocado-pears, and other juicy, tempting comestibles before untasted by us who were making our first discoveries of the delights of a West Indian voyage, were constantly in active demand; in fact, any appetizing morsel that appeared to be good for food or was pleasant to the eye commanded a ready sale, regardless of quality or degree of ripeness. We held as naught the old Spanish proverb which sets forth the varying metallurgical properties of fruit according to the time of day it happens to be eaten by human beings. The arrival of a fruit-seller's boat alongside the vessel was watched with eager interest; the discovery of any hitherto untried specimen was promptly advertised by cries of, "Hi! you there! how much are those? What'll you take for the lot, basket and all?" The inquiries frequently made by us of the hucksters we patronized, "Is it good to eat?" "Do you eat it raw?" invariably excited the unrestrained mirth of the colored by-standers. The fruit-sellers took a childish delight in showing us how strange varieties were to be made ready for the experimental bite, which was generally taken in the presence of a silent, expectant group of the purchaser's fellow-passengers.

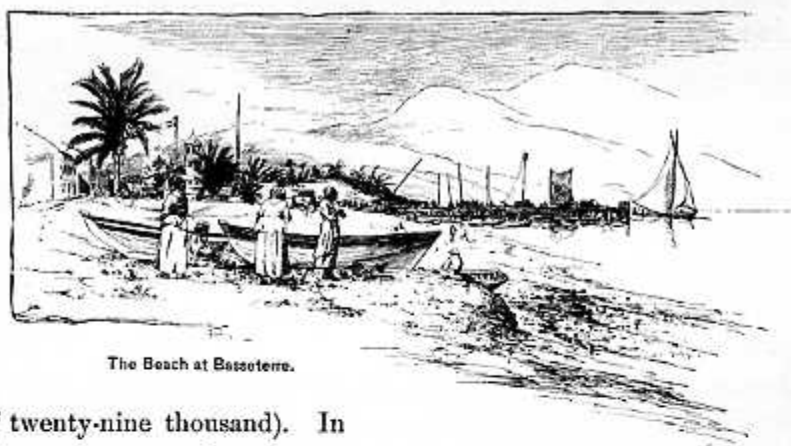
A number of passengers, of whom I was one, were ferried ashore about seven o'clock. We landed in safety on a well-built pier projecting a hundred feet or more from the beach, on which the waves were tumbling within a few yards of the front walls of a row of stores and warehouses, built in a curve along the shore. Immediately upon setting foot on land we were surrounded by a host of fruit and flower-sellers, and those having coconuts and sugar-cane for sale; all of them, singly and collectively, and no less noisily than their brethren in the boats which had followed us landward from the ship, clamored for our patronage, thrusting their wares into our faces—indeed, I may say, with much color of truth, almost into our mouths. Being abundantly supplied, by reason of purchases made aforetime on board ship, we politely but firmly refused all the bargains which were offered with exasperating persistence not to say maddening reiteration, walked up the wharf, passed through a picturesque and ancient gate-way, ran the gauntlet of Her Majesty's customs-officers, and at last found ourselves in the metropolis of St. Christopher.

## CHAPTER IV.

### RAMBLES IN ST. KITT'S.

Basseterre, the Capital of St. Kitt's.—Slavery and Windmills.—Free Labor and Steam-power.—A Magnificent Landscape.—Distant Views.—The Barber of Basseterre.—A Wonderful Garden.—A Host of New-found Friends.—The Voyage to Antigua.

BASSETERRE, the capital of St. Christopher, is a town of sixteen or seventeen hundred dwellings, with a population of about seven thousand (the total number of inhabitants in St. Kitt's is in the neighborhood



The Beach at Basseterre.

of twenty-nine thousand). In this town are Government House and other public buildings, and several churches, one of which, at least, makes good a claim to be considered architecturally handsome. Previous to the year 1866 the two Houses of Legislation which regulated the public business of St. Kitt's met at Basseterre when called together by the executive. From that year down to 1878 the functions

of the two houses, which were then abolished, were exercised by a single chamber composed of three Crown officials—seven members appointed by the Crown and ten elected by the rate-payers. Since 1878 St. Christopher has been a Crown colony, and is governed by all the laws and regulations in such cases made and provided. The foreign commerce of St. Kitt's, which is chiefly carried on in Basseterre, consists of imports from Great Britain and the United States, and the export of rum, molasses, and sugar—mainly to the mother country.

The people of St. Kitt's are spoken of as Kittefonians and are, as well they may be, very proud of their island, of its scenery, and its wonderful fertility.

Although Basseterre is a large town, but few of the houses are well or substantially built; indeed, most of the dwellings are constructed of wood, and those occupied by the negroes deserve no other description than to be accounted as miserable shanties. A few of the better class of habitations are built of a grayish stone or of rough masonry covered with white plaster and roofed with old-fashioned red tiles that contrast pleasantly in color with the rich-green foliage of the palms and stately trees growing in gardens and along the streets. The principal warehouses of Basseterre stand close to the beach, following its curve, facing the breakers that crumble into a foam a stone's throw from their front doors. Along the broad street, or levee, the Barracouta's passengers held their way in search of the office of the agent of the Atlantic & West India Steam-ship Company. We had been invited to call there and make it our headquarters while in town. The scene presented on the beach was interesting and well worthy the attention of even the most listless and chronically bored traveller in our party. Seaward of the high surf, many fishing-boats and lighters rode at anchor; others, drawn high up on the sands, evidently newly come to land, attracted around them motley crowds of negroes who were bargaining with the fishermen for the catch of the previous night. Gangs of longshoremen, lazily loading or unloading lighters and other small craft of various kinds, paused in their work to stare at

us and comment, in by no means inaudible tones, upon our appearance, which they evidently found novel and outlandish. Hundreds of hogs-heads of sugar, molasses, and rum lay along the strand, brought there in drays and carts of various nondescript patterns, all drawn by wretched-looking horses or the meekest of half-starved mules. The scene was one of activity and bustle, confusion worse confounded by the shouting and noise of many discordant voices—for the darkies rejoice in hearing themselves talk, and call every man to his fellow.

Some of the dwelling-houses of Basseterre stand in the midst of gardens shut in from view by high, unsightly stone walls, most inhospitable and bare-looking. This renders the town less attractive in appearance than it otherwise well might be. There can be no logical reason for this waste of stone and mortar. It seems selfish and inexcusably exclusive to wall in such wonderful gardens, and for no apparent good reason but a desire to wall out the passers-by. Such, however, is the custom in parts of Great Britain, and the custom is provokingly imitated in many West Indian towns by those most hospitable people in the world, the British West Indians. While walking along the streets of Basseterre, one is constantly tempted to ask the passers-by for a *boost* to enable one to get a short, if it be only a short, peep at the shrubs, ferns, and flowers in the gardens. The palms rear their graceful crowns high overhead; mango, tamarind, ceiba, and endless varieties of wide-spreading trees lift their branches above the enclosures; the broad leaves of bananas and plantains wave like banners in the air; here and there flamboyant trees in full bloom, covered with magenta blossoms, present a startling contrast to the network of green foliage that surrounds them. These truly magnificent trees are to be seen everywhere at this time of the year, bearing glowing masses of flowers in color resembling those of the rhododendron.

Through gate-ways, sometimes through spaces left by falling walls, one can catch occasional glimpses of fruits and flowers, of ferns in bewildering and beautiful variety, roses and lilies, rare plants to be seen only in the greenhouses of grand domains or public gardens at the

North, cactuses and orchids, delicate creepers and vines clinging in festoons to trunk and branch, beautifying the trees they are slowly but surely killing. Some of the more hoar and venerable trees around which the vines seem to cling most fondly, as lissome Vivian clung to



An Old Gate-way.

Merlin of old, are covered from root to the farthest end of their spreading boughs with parasites and air-plants. It would seem that even this teeming, hospitable soil could not make room for all the growing things that the fostering air nourishes and fondles into life and reproductive growth, for the sides of the houses are covered with

vines and creepers, and wherever there may be found a morsel of earth, on roof or top of wall, in crack or crevice, large enough to give the most delicate tendril or root the feeblest support, there will some tender, graceful, living green thing be found, rejoicing in the sunlight, in dew and rain.

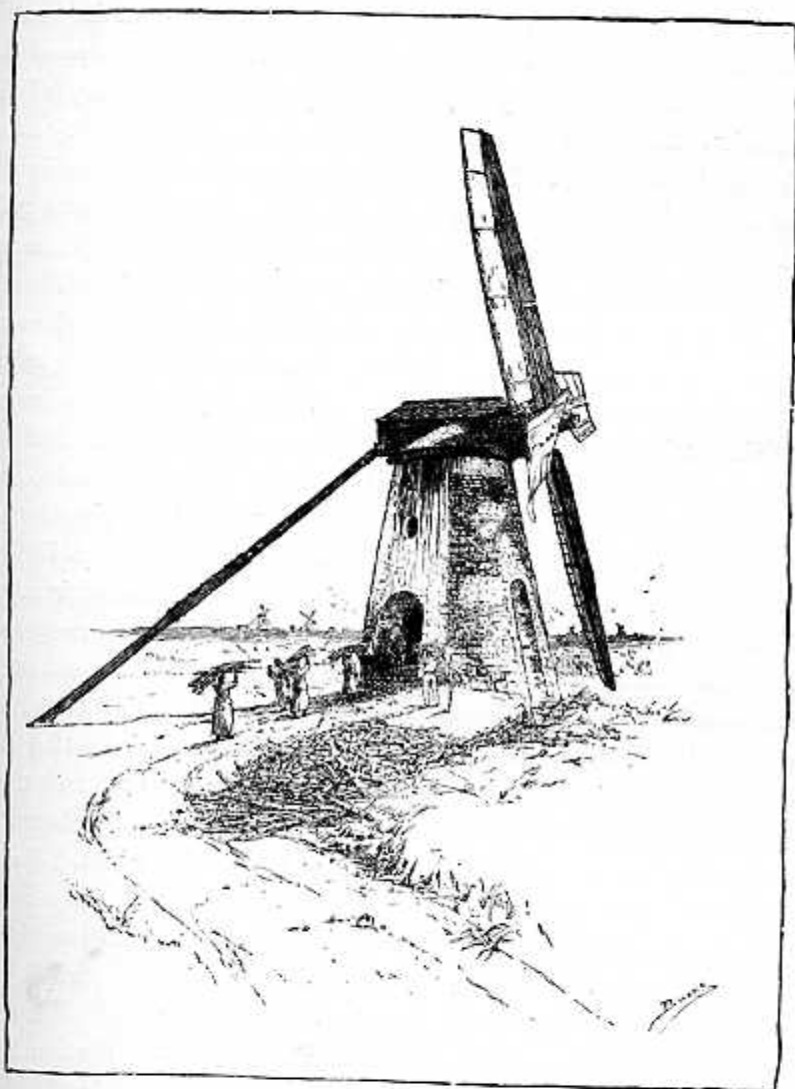
In the midst of Basseterre there is a public garden, most tastefully laid out with beds of flowers and variegated shrubs. It is a pleasant, shady spot, where idle darkies congregate to gossip and children love to play. Placed at regular intervals in rows along the walks are great palm-trees, their column-like trunks perfectly smooth and round, resembling unpolished pillars of gray New Hampshire granite. These palms were the first I had ever seen growing in the open air. I could hear the wind rustle amid their branches, I could stand—yes, actually did stand—in their grateful, cooling shade. Then, for the first time, I realized that I had reached the tropics—had left the land of maple, elm, and hemlock far beyond the sea.

A road runs from Basseterre in a southeasterly direction, climbs a gentle ascent to the crest of the island, where the Atlantic is to be seen stretching away as far as the eye can reach; thence the highway gradually descends to the windward shore, trending toward the north, continuing along the east coast of St. Kitt's, with the ocean on one hand and the land sweeping upward toward the forests and the mountains on the other, and so, completing the circuit of the island, re-enters Basseterre from the north on the western or leeward shore.

Nothing can exceed in loveliness and grandeur a view I had from the top of a knoll a short distance from this highway. I stood in the midst of a great sugar-plantation, looking out upon a plain dotted with dark, cool groves and gardens of orange-trees and flowering shrubs. Picturesque farm-houses and negro-cabins, half-hidden beneath the shade of palms and evergreen trees, stood near the main road, or were approached through lanes walled in by hedges of prickly-pear and tangled rows of bushes, all overgrown by creepers and clusters of vines. From the midst of them, here and there, the aloe shot up its



AN AVENUE OF COCOA-PALMS.



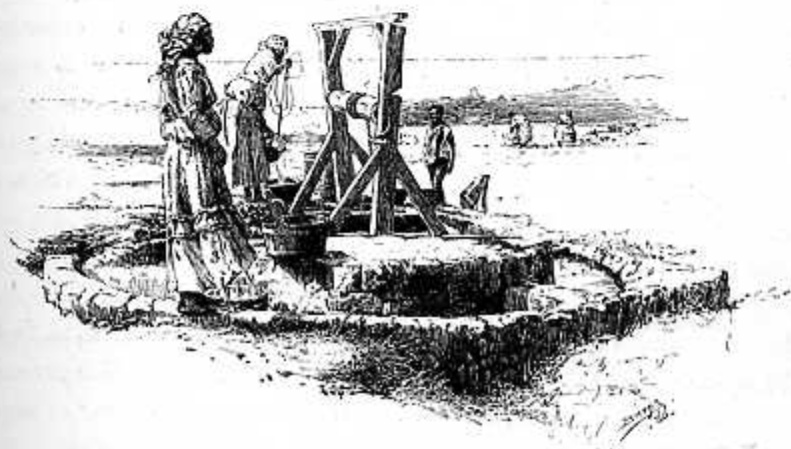
A Relic of the Good Old Times.

May-pole, crowned with flowers. Among groves of mangoes and tamarinds I could see from afar gorgeous masses of crimson, flamboyant blossoms, while in the open fields trees as large as giant oaks

spread out boughs covered with yellow blossoms to shelter lazy cattle from the heat of the sun. Ruined windmills stood on the tops of the highest knolls, where they were most exposed to the sweep of the trade-wind that, once upon a time, long ago, set their mighty arms whirling right merrily. These windmills were veritable giants in the good old slavery days, before steam-power, when sugar-estates paid their lucky owners princely incomes, instead of only beggarly interest on capital as is the case nowadays; for in the days of windmills and slavery the planter, according to all accounts, was a nabob, and every sugar-estate on the fertile island was a gold-mine. Steam, free labor, and beetroot-sugar have changed all that. The windmills, no longer used except in out-of-the-world places, beyond the reach of levelling enterprise and matter-of-fact steam-power, are falling into ruin, and, like the castles of feudalism after the invention of gunpowder, are now but picturesque refuges for bats and owls. Their work is done by newfangled engines, housed in ugly sheds with awkward, straight up and down chimneys, built of dirty-red brick, or worse, rusty iron stacks, continually vomiting clouds of filthy smoke. The old mills were well built and hurricane-proof, their lower parts of stone, the upper stories of heavy joiner-work. The great sails have rotted and fallen from many of them, leaving only the towers standing, and these are all overgrown with vines, mosses, cactuses, and parasitic plants.

From where I stood I could see, on one side of the island, Basseterre and its quiet harbor, the refuge of many vessels; on the other, a long line of white breakers rolled in from the ocean, to fall in glistening foam upon a beach lined by rows of willows, cotton-wood, and manchineel-trees, fringing the edges of the plantations. I looked across the meadow-land, where, beyond rugged cliffs, at the southern point of St. Kitt's, across a narrow strait, glimmering in the sunlight like frosted silver, Nevis swept grandly upward from the Atlantic into the dazzling clouds ever sleeping around the top of its great pyramid, hiding it from mortal sight day after day throughout the never-ending summer.

Continuing onward for a mile from where I had paused to enjoy this delectable view, I came to a place where, near the road, and between it and the shore, were several large salt-pans, the bottoms of which, lying lower than high-water mark, were easily covered with sea-water, to be evaporated, leaving the salt, which is carefully scraped together in piles, and then taken away to be shipped, or for use in home consumption. In this way, from the various salt-pans in the island there are gathered annually between twelve and fifteen thousand barrels of pure sea-salt. After sitting for half an hour in the shadow



Old Well—St. Kitt's.

of a grove of palms, enjoying the delicious breeze and admiring a prospect of which I remember thinking at the time I should never tire, wishing I were the fortunate owner of a villa built on that charming spot, I returned unwillingly and slowly to Basseterre, casting many lingering looks behind.

The town seemed dusty and stifling after the fresh air of the hills; therefore the suggestion made by an Antigua who had sailed with us from New York, bound to his own island, where we were to touch after leaving St. Kitt's, to wit: "Let's have a hair-cut and a shampoo," jumped with my inclination, especially as my friend assured

me that until I had been "properly doctored by the barber of Basseterre" (who is, be it said, as well known to voyagers among the Caribbean Islands as is the "Barber of Seville" to opera-goers, or the Florentine barber to the readers of "Romola") I had no satisfactory reasons or valid pretext for pretending that I had ever been artistically dealt with from a correct tonsorial point of view. The barber of Basseterre (who, by the way, followed the sea and his profession for many years on board H. M. S. Niobe, the flagship of the British Navy on the West Indian station) is also a gatherer and circulator of news, a man of opinions, and possessed of the courage of the same, and is much sought after by those who wish to keep themselves *au courant* of Kitterfonian affairs. For these reasons, when I took my seat in his chair, I felt as if I had been invited by one of the old masters to sit for my portrait. Taking heart of grace, I committed myself into his care and keeping, feeling well assured that in the hands of a master workman not a hair of my head would take any harm. When I had received the finishing touches, and was loosed from the drapery in which I had been enveloped like a statue previous to the ceremonies attending its unveiling, I was perfumed, puffed, and powdered, so fresh and rosy-looking as to resemble a highly colored fashion-plate presentment of my former unadorned self. I was afraid to smile lest I should muss my hair, or perchance unwittingly disturb the exceedingly nice, but, I must say, somewhat conventional and "*slick*," arrangement of my beard and mustache.

I returned to the Barracouta about noon to luncheon; others of the party remained on shore, sojourning during the heat of the day at a hotel of which they afterward gave a most favorable account, saying that its larder was well stocked with toothsome kickshaws, that in particular there was a most meritorious pepper-pot; but each and all of them dwelt with enthusiastic emphasis on the skill displayed by Boniface in swizzling swizzles with his swizzle-stick. What a pepper-pot is, and, more particularly, what a swizzle is, how and of what ingredients compounded, why so called, with what ceremonies and ob-

servances it is mingled and *set up*, will be made known hereafter with particular care, all in its proper place in my narrative.

After a siesta on board I returned to land, with a numerous addition to the contingent I had left ashore lingering over their swizzles at the inn, and proceeded with them to the office of the consignee of the Barracouta, where we were put into carriages and driven to the house of the owner of one of the most extensive sugar-plantations on the island. The hospitable mansion stands on the mountain-side, overlooking the town, in the midst of pleasure-grounds laid out, generations ago, by the ancestors of the present possessor, in terraces, parterres, shrubberies, and beds of flowers and ferns. Nearly every plant or tree indigenous to the West Indies was here to be seen, rare exotics, rare to us children of the North; tropical plants, all growing to perfection in marvellous, not to say bewildering, luxuriance.

“In the open air, just think of it!” exclaimed one of the visitors who, like myself, failed to realize that in seven days from midwinter we had arrived in midsummer—that we, in reality and in very truth, lived and breathed in the tropics. I could hardly persuade myself of the fact that at no time of the year was it necessary to transplant the treasures and curiosities of this garden, by which we were surrounded, into pots and hot-house tubs, with the intent to store them away under glass until winter had come and gone. The garden, which was several acres in extent, contained a bewildering variety of trees, flowers, vines, exquisite ferns, orchids, and delicate plants. Such a horticultural display, within ten miles of New York or Boston, would so greatly promote local travel, attract crowds of sightseers, it would be well worth the trouble of even the least accommodating railroad company to run excursion trains to and from the exhibition half-hourly every pleasant day during the short season the show might flourish and retain its beauty in our northern climate, from the time—

— our spring gets everythin' in tune,  
An' gives one leap from April into June:

until the maples hang out the first red cautionary signals foretelling frost and foul weather. One night of frost, such as with us would serve to strike down the morning-glories and dahlias, or cause the shining golden-rods to bronze and wither away, would utterly destroy every growing thing in this West Indian garden, every palm and vine, all the fruits and flowers that here, all the year round, show so rich and luxuriant.

We remained with our new-found friends, wandering about their estate, enjoying every moment of our stay, until after five o'clock tea was served; then, just before sunset, started down the mountain-side, and after a drive of a mile reached the landing-place, were ferried off to our floating hotel, and reported our return to the officer in charge of the Barracouta.

During the evening our ship's company received a numerous and notable addition, in the persons of certain delegates from Antigua, Dominica, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, and Barbados, who had been to St. Kitt's to attend a convention at which the commercial relations of the Caribbean Islands with the United States were in part the subject of discussion, as I was informed by one of the gentlemen who had represented his island in this Caribbean parliament. These members of Her Majesty's Government arrived on board singly and in groups, some of them accompanied by their wives and daughters; when all had come, the Barracouta could afford barely enough accommodation for all our guests. I say *our* guests, for, be it remembered, I have explained how we regular Barracoutans—the *through* passengers—looked upon the ship as *our* private steam-yacht; and so, having thus put ourselves in the place of hosts, were bound by all the laws of hospitality to entertain all visitors whomsoever in a manner becoming their rank and dignity. We found the new arrivals to be an uncommonly interesting, entertaining, and jolly lot of people, disposed to be heartily satisfied with everything and everybody; therefore, bearing in grateful remembrance the almost embarrassing hospitality with which the Kittefonians had greeted us, we bestirred ourselves in the vain attempt

to do unto these West Indians even as their countrymen had done unto us. We got on famously with our newly found friends, and before bedtime each one of our party had received numerous invitations to lunch, to dine, to drive, to stop a night, make ourselves at home when we arrived at islands yet in store for us—islands of which some of us had, I fear, as indefinite ideas as Columbus had when he first discovered this Caribbean Archipelago, four centuries ago. With such tropical rapidity and spontaneity did the bud of acquaintance blossom, bloom, and ripen unto the full flower and fruit of good-fellowship, that before bedtime I found myself exchanging confidences on terms of delightful familiarity with *new* old friends, whose flattering invitations I had accepted, whose names I may have heard mentioned when introduced to them (to some I was not formally presented), but whose faces I had as yet dimly seen by the unsatisfactory glimmer of an occasional match or by the glow of pipe or cigar as we smoked in the dark out on deck.

At nine o'clock a gun was fired to recall those passengers who had again lingered during the latter part of the afternoon and the early evening on shore, enticed by swizzle or other forms of hospitality. At ten the *Barracouta*, getting under weigh, sailed southward, keeping close to the leeward coast of St. Kitt's; then, crossing the narrow channel between that island and Nevis, skirted the south-western coast of that island and at midnight came to the open sea. Presently turning to the east, the ship steamed leisurely all night toward the light-house at the entrance of the harbor of St. John's, Antigua, where, after a run of sixty miles from Basseterre, she was to cast anchor in the morning.