

British Caribbean Philatelic Study Group

- 1 -

FOR B. W. I. HISTORIANS

A very interesting WORLD ATLAS has recently been turned up that describes in great detail just about every phase of life and conditions on each of the islands we are interested in.

I will attempt to copy it exactly as it appears for our records as quite a portion of it could have considerable interest for our postal historians.

Byron R. Cameron

.....

The book is entitled " Modern and Authentic System of Universal Geography " and was compiled by an Englishman named George Alexander Cooke, Esq. The book is not dated, but it is quite apparent it is circa 1802 by the watermarks in the paper.

So now we will go back to the beginning of the nineteenth century and see just what things were like at that time.

.....

WEST INDIES

We have already observed, that between the two continents of America, northern and southern, lie a multitude of islands, many of them large, most of them fertile, and denominated the West Indies, in contradistinction to the islands of Asia, beyond the Cape of Good Hope, which are called the East Indies. Those which are worthy of cultivation now belong to five European powers, Great Britain, Spain, France, Holland, and Denmark. As the climate and seasons of these islands differ widely from what we can form any idea of by what we can perceive at home, we shall, to avoid repetitions, speak of them in general, and mention some other particulars that are peculiar to the West Indies.

The climate in all the West India islands is nearly the same, allowing for those accidental differences which the several situations and qualities of the lands themselves produce. As they lie within the tropics, and the sun goes quite over their heads, passing beyond them to the north, and never returning farther from any of them than about thirty degrees to the south, they are continually subjected to the extreme of a heat which would be intolerable, if the trade-wind, rising gradually as the sun gathers strength, did not blow in upon them from the sea, and refresh the air in such a manner, as to enable them to attend to their concerns, even under the meridian sun. On the other hand, as the night advances, a breeze begins to be perceived, which blows smartly from the land, as it were from the centre, towards the sea, to all points of the compass at once.

In the same manner, when the sun has made a great progress towards the tropic of Cancer, and becomes in a manner vertical, he draws after him such a vast body of clouds, as shield the earth from his direct beams; and dissolving into rain, cool the air, and refresh the country, thirsty with the long drought, which commonly reigns from the beginning of January to the latter end of May.

The rains in the West Indies (and we may add in the East Indies) are by no means so moderate as with us. Our heaviest rains are but dews comparatively. They are rather floods of water, poured from the clouds with a prodigious impetuosity; the rivers rise in a moment; new rivers and lakes are formed, and in a short time all the low country is under water. Hence it is, the rivers which have their source within the tropics swell and overflow their banks at a certain season; but so mistaken were the ancients in their idea of the torrid zone, that they imagined it to be dried and

scorched up with a continued and fervant heat, and to be for that reason uninhabitable, when, in reality, some of the largest rivers of the world have their course within its limits, and the moisture is one of the greatest inconveniences of the climate in several places.

The rains make the only distinction of seasons in the West Indies. The trees are green the whole year round; they have no cold, no frosts, no snows, and but rarely some hail; the storms of hail are, however, very violent when they happen, and the hailstones very great and heavy. Whether it be owing to this moisture, which alone does not seem to be a sufficient cause, or to a greater quantity of sulphureous acid which predominates in the air of this country, metals of all kinds, that are subject to the action of such causes, rust and canker in a very short time; and this cause, perhaps as much as the heat itself, contributes to make the climate of the West Indies unfriendly and unpleasant to a European constitution.

It is in the rainy season (principally in the month of August, more rarely in July and September) that they are assaulted by hurricanes, the most terrible calamity to which they are subject (as well as the people in the East Indies) from the climate; this destroys, at a stroke, the labours of many years, and prostrates the most exalted hopes of the planter, and often just at the moment when he thinks himself out of the reach of fortune. It is a sudden and violent storm of wind, rain, thunder, and lightning, attended with a furious swelling of the seas, and sometimes with an earthquake; in short, with every circumstance which the elements can assemble, that is terrible and destructive. First, they see, as the prelude to the ensuing havoc, whole fields of sugar-canes whirled into the air, and scattered over the face of the country; the strongest trees of the forest are torn up by the roots, and driven about like stubble; their wind-mills are swept away in a moment; their utensils, the fixtures, the ponderous copper boilers, and stills of several hundred weight, are wrenched from the ground and battered to pieces; their houses are no protection; the roofs are torn off at one blast; whilst the rain, which in an hour rises five feet, rushes in upon them with irresistible violence.

The grand staple commodity of the West Indies is sugar; this commodity was not at all known to the Greeks and Romans, though it was made in China in very early times, from whence we had the first knowledge of it; but the Portugese were the first who cultivated it in America, and brought it into request, as one of the materials of a very universal luxury in Europe. It is not agreed whether the cane, from which this substance is extracted, be a native of America, or brought thither to their colony of Brasil, by the Portuguese, from India and the coast of Africa; but, however that may be, in the beginning they made the most, as they still do the best sugars which come to the market in this part of the world. The juice within the sugar cane is the most lively, elegant, and least cloying sweet in nature, and, sucked raw, has proved extremely nutritive and wholesome. From the melasses, rum is distilled, and from the scummings of sugar a meaner spirit is procured. Rum finds its market in North America, where it is consumed by the inhabitants, or employed in the African trade, or distributed from thence to the fishery of Newfoundland, and other parts, besides what comes to Great Britain and Ireland. However, a very great quantity of melasses is taken off raw, and carried to New England to be distilled there. The tops of the canes, and the leaves which grow upon the joints, make very good provender for the cattle; and the refuse of the cane, after grinding, serves the fire; so that no part of this excellent plant is without its use.

It is computed that, when things are well managed, the rum and melasses pay the charge of the plantation, and the sugars are clear gain. However,

by the particulars we have seen, and by others which we may easily imagine, the expenses of a plantation in the West Indies are very great, and the profits, at the first view, precarious: for the chargeable articles of the wind-mill, the boiling, cooling, and distilling houses, and the buying and subsisting of a suitable number of slaves and cattle, will not suffer any man to begin a sugar plantation of any consequence, not to mention the purchase of the land, which is very high, under a capital of at least five thousand pounds. There are, however, no parts of the world in which great estates are made in so short a time, from the produce of the earth, as in the West Indies. The produce of a few good seasons generally provides against the ill effects of the worst, as the planter is sure of a speedy and profitable market for his produce, which has a readier sale than perhaps any other commodity in the world.

Large plantations are generally under the care of a manager, or chief overseer, who has commonly a salary of one hundred and fifty pounds a year, with overseers under him, in proportion of the greatness of the plantation, one to about thirty negroes, with a salary of about forty pounds. Such plantations, too, have a surgeon at a fixed salary, employed to take care of the negroes which belong to it. But the course which is the least troublesome to the owner of the estate, is to let the land, with all the works, and the stock of cattle and slaves, to a tenant, who gives security for the payment of rent, and the keeping up repairs and stock. The estate is generally estimated to such a tenant at half the net produce of the best years. Such tenants, if industrious and frugal men, soon make good estates for themselves.

The negroes in the plantations are subsisted at a very easy rate. This is generally by allotting to each family of them a small portion of land, and allowing them two days in the week, Saturday and Sunday, to cultivate it: some are subsisted in this manner, but others find their negroes a certain portion of Guinea and Indian corn, and to some a salt herring, or a small portion of bacon or salt pork, a day. All the rest of the charge consists in a cap, a shirt, a pair of breeches, and a blanket; and the profit of their labour yields ten or twelve pounds annually. The price of men negroes, upon their first arrival, is from thirty to thirty-six pounds; women and grown boys fifty shillings less; but such negro families as are acquainted with the business of the islands, generally bring above forty pounds upon an average one with another, and there are instances of a single negro man, expert in business, bringing one hundred and fifty guineas, and the wealth of a planter is generally computed from the number of slaves he possesses.

To particularise the commodities proper for the West India market, would be to enumerate all the necessaries, conveniences, and luxuries of life; for they have nothing of their own but cotton, coffee, tropical fruits, spices, and the commodities already mentioned. Traders there make a very large profit upon all they sell; but from the numerous shipping constantly arriving from Europe, and a continual succession of new adventurers, each of whom carry out more or less as a venture, the West India market is frequently overstocked; money must be raised, and goods are sometimes sold at prime cost or under. But those who can afford to store their goods, and wait for a better market, acquire fortunes equal to any of the planters. All kinds of handicraftsmen, especially carpenters, bricklayers, braziers, and coopers, get very great encouragement. But it is the misfortune of the West Indies, that physicians and surgeons even outdo the planter and merchant in accumulating riches.

The present state of the population in the British West Indies appears to be about sixty-five thousand whites, and four hundred and fifty thousand blacks. There is likewise in each of the islands a considerable

number of mixed blood, and native blacks in free condition. In Jamaica they are reckoned at ten thousand; and they do not fall short of the same number in all other islands collectively taken. The whole inhabitants, therefore, may properly be divided into four great classes; 1. European whites; 2. Creole or native whites; 3. Creoles, of mixed blood and free native blacks; 4. Negroes in a state of slavery.

The islands of the West Indies lie in the form of a bow, or semicircle, stretching almost from the coast of Florida north, to the river Oroonoko, in the main Continent of South America. Some call them the Caribbees, from the first inhabitants; though this is a term that most geographers confine to the Leeward Islands. Sailors, distinguish them into Windward and Leeward Islands, with regard to the usual courses of ships, from Old Spain, or the Canaries, to Carthage, or New Spain and Portobello. The geographical tables and maps distinguish them into the great and little Antilles.

.....
JAMAICA, and small Islands adjacent.

Discovery and Progress } JAMAICA, which is the largest of the British
of the Colony } West Indian Islands, was first discovered by the
great Columbus in the year 1494, but at that
time he did not attempt to make any settlement there. Some years after, in his fourth expedition, he was cast ashore here by a storm; the loss of his ships putting it out of his power to get away, he implored the humanity of the savages, and received from them all the help of a natural compassion; but these people, who planted only for their own necessities, were tired with maintaining strangers who put them in danger of starving by a famine, and therefore removed themselves insensibly from the neighborhood. The Spaniards no longer kept any measure with the Indians, and soon grew so mutinous as to take up arms against their commander. Columbus, forced to yield to their threats to get out of a desperate situation, took the advantage of one of those appearances of nature, where a man of genius sometimes finds a resource, pardonable through necessity. His astronomical knowledge informed him that there would soon be an eclipse of the moon, and he desired all the caciques to assemble together to hear from him some things very important to their safety. When he was in the midst of them after having reproached them for their cruelty with which they suffered him and his companions to perish, "To punish you for it," said he, with an air of great importance, "the God whom I adore is going to inflict on you one of his most terrible strokes: this evening you will see the moon redden, grow dark, and refuse you light. This is only the prelude of your misfortunes, if you persist in refusing to give me provisions." Columbus had hardly ceased speaking, when his prediction was accomplished: the freight was general among the savages: they thought themselves going to be destroyed, begged for mercy, and promised every thing. He then declared to them, that heaven, touched with their repentance, had appeased its wrath, and that nature was going to resume its course. After this moment provisions arrived from all parts, and Columbus had every thing he could wish for till his departure.

The court of Spain had granted the property of Jamaica to Columbus, who gave it the preference to all other parts, on account of its populousness and happy situation: he called it the Sicily of the Indies. Don Diego his son was the first governor of it, with the title of Duke de la Vega, from the city of St. Jago de la Vega, founded by him, and which became its capital. Don Diego had caused about an hundred Indians to go over from St. Domingo, under the conduct of Juan d'Esquibel; others soon followed them, but in a few years after they all deserted the island.

The Spaniards had built several other cities here, but all their settlements, erected on the dead remains of the Indians, fell to decay as fast as the depopulation increased, and as the ravagers were convinced the island produced no gold, they were soon reduced to that of St. Jago de la Vega, which then consisted of eleven hundred houses, four churches, and an abbey. The inhabitants of this city, plunged into that indolence which follows tyranny after devastation, contented themselves to live on some plantations, whose overplus they sold to the ships which passed by their coasts. The whole people of the island, collected into a small territory which nourished this useless race of destroyers, was confined to fifteen hundred slaves, commanded by their tyrants; when the English coming at last to attack their capital, made themselves masters of it, and settled there in 1655.

At first their new colony had only three thousand inhabitants, part of the fanatical militia that had fought and triumphed under the rebellious standard of Cromwell. They were soon joined by a number of royalists, who went to America to meet with some alleviation for their defeat, and to enjoy the calm of peace. The spirit of division which had so long and so cruelly rent the two parties in Europe, followed them beyond the seas; there was enough to renew in the New World the scenes of horror and bloodshed so often repeated in the Old. But Admiral Penn and Colonel Venables, after conquering Jamaica, had left the command to one of the wisest and bravest men, who fortunately was the senior officer: it was D'Oyley, a friend to the Stuarts. Cromwell twice substituted some of his party in his place, and both times their deaths restored D'Oyley to the head of affairs. His manner of ruling was quite military. He had to keep in order and govern an infant colony entirely composed of soldiers, and to prevent or repel the invasions of the Spaniards, who might try to recover what they had just lost. But when Charles the Second was restored to the throne, a civil government was established at Jamaica, formed, like those in the other islands, after the model of the mother-country; but the first attempts were confined to compiling, without any methods, some provisional regulations for the police, justice, and finances. It was not till 1682 that the body of the laws was formed, by which the island is at present governed.

This colony was so increased after the reformation, that it contained eighteen thousand persons, who had almost no other trade but for their depredations on the Spaniards. Sir Thomas Modiford, a rich planter of Barbadoes, was then governor, who came to Jamaica to increase his possessions: he introduced into this island the art of making sugar, and of planting cocoa trees; and erected salt works. His attention to encourage culture and industry could not make the people of Jamaica give up their maritime expeditions; adventures of all kinds increased the crowd of these romantic pirates, who often deserved the appellation of heroes, known by the name of free-booters and buccaneers: they infested the whole West Indian Sea, and laid waste all the coasts of the New World. The plunder of Mexico and Peru was always carried to Jamaica, both by the natives and strangers: they found in this island a greater felicity, received more protection and liberty than elsewhere, both to disembark and to spend, at their own pleasure, the booty they had acquired in their courses. There the extravagance of their debaucheries soon plunged them into distress. The only sting of their cruel and bloody industry made them fly to new combats and to new prey. Then the colony profited by their continual changes of fortune, and enriched itself by the vices which were the origin and ruin of their treasures: and when this lawless race was destroyed by its own activity, these same treasures became a basis of a new opulence, by the help they offered to increase the plantations and productions, or

to open a contraband trade with the Spaniards. On the whole, in whatever point of view one considers Jamaica, it will be found that England owes the possession of it, as well as the means which determined the grandeur of its settlement, to the Buccaneers.

Situation, Extent etc. This island, which is the most important that we arrive at after leaving Florida, lies between 75 and 79 of west longitude from London, and between 17 and 18 north latitude. From the east and west it is in length about one hundred and forty miles, and in the middle about sixty in breadth, growing less towards each end, in the form of an egg. It lies near four thousand five hundred miles south-west of England.

It is nearly thirty-six leagues to Cuba, and thirty-nine leagues to the west of St. Domingo: these two large islands defend it from the winds which desolate the Atlantic, whilst the number and disposition of its harbours put it in a condition to carry on a great trade with either these and the other islands of the West Indian Sea, or with the continent. There are about sixteen principal harbours, besides thirty bays, roads, or good anchoring places. Though this situation may expose it to the insults of its two powerful neighbours, it at the same time facilitates the entrance of the succours the mother country has at all times lavished on it.

Climate. The longest day in summer is about thirteen hours, and the shortest in winter about eleven: but the most usual divisions of the seasons in the West Indies are into the dry and wet seasons. The air of this island is, in most places, excessively hot, and unfavourable to European constitutions; but the cool sea breezes, which set in every morning at ten o'clock, render the heat more tolerable; and the air upon the high grounds is temperate, pure, and cool. The sea breeze is stronger at some times than at others, and more so near the coast than within land; whereas it is just the reverse with the land breeze. Sometimes the sea breeze blows day and night for a week or two. In December, January, and February, the north wind blows furiously, checking the growth of the canes, and all other vegetables, on the north side of the island; but the south side is sheltered from them by the mountains. It lightens almost every night, but without much thunder, which, when it happens, is very terrible, and roars with astonishing loudness; and the lightning, in these violent storms, frequently does great damage. In February or March they expect earthquakes, and, during the months of May and October, the rains are extremely violent, and continue sometimes for a fortnight together.

The dews here are so great within land, that the water drops from the leaves of the trees in the morning as if it had rained; but there are seldom any fogs, at least in the plain or sandy places near the sea.

Mountains, Rivers, Lakes. There is a ridge of hills, called the Blue Mountains, that run through the island from east to west; the tops are covered with different kinds of trees, particularly cedar, lignum-vitae, and mahogany, which render them equally pleasant and profitable to the inhabitants. Several fine rivers, well stored with fish, and navigable by canoes, take their rise from these mountains. A lower ridge runs parallel to the greater, and the vallies, or savannahs, are exceedingly level, without stones, fit for pasture, and fruitful, when cleared of wood, especially on the south side of the island. After the rains, or seasons, as they are called, the savannahs are very pleasant, and produce such quantities of grass, that the inhabitants are sometimes forced to burn it; but after long droughts, they are quite parched and burnt up.

Though this island abounds with rivers and lakes, water is very scarce in some places, and in others so mixed with sand and sediment, that it is not fit for use till it is purified for some days in earthen jars; and, in some years, many cattle perish for want of water. In the island are several salt springs, which form a salt river, and several lakes. Near the sea, as well as at Port Royal, the well water is brackish and unwholesome. In the mountains, not far from Spanish town, is a hot bath, of great medicinal virtues. It affords relief in the dry belly ach, which, excepting the bilious and yellow fever, is one of the most terrible distempers of Jamaica.

Soil. Though the soil of Jamaica, in general, is exceeding fertile, yet it is thought not one fourth of the sugar ground upon the island is cultivated. Even the grounds lying near the rivers and the sea, are, in many places, over-run with wood, insomuch, that a planter who has planted three or four thousand acres, has seldom above five hundred well cultivated.

Vegetable Productions. This island produces a number of trees, shrubs, and useful plants, some of them natives of the soil, and others brought from the other islands of the continent. There are excellent cerars, of a large size and durable; the cabbage tree, remarkable for the hardness of its wood, which, when dry, is incorruptible, and hardly yields to any kind of tool; the palma, affording oil, much esteemed by the savages; the soap tree, whose berries answer all purposes of washing; the mangrove and olive-bark, useful to tanners; the fustic and red wood, to the dyers; and, lately, the log-wood. The indigo plant was formerly much cultivated; and the cotton tree is still so. No sort of European grain grows here; they have only maize or Indian corn, Guinea corn, peas of various kinds, but none of them resembling ours, with variety of roots. Fruits as have been already observed, grow in great plenty; citrons, Seville and China oranges, common and sweet lemons, limes, shadocks, pomegranates, mamees, soursops, papas, pine-apples, custard-apples, star apples, prickly pears, allicada pears, melons, pompions, guavas, and several kinds of berries; also garden stuffs in great plenty, and good. The bread-fruit, and other useful plants, have been introduced into this island, by the exertions of Sir Joseph Banks, than which none can be more beneficial or worthy of applause. Here are likewise various sorts of medicinal drugs, such as the guaiacum, china-root, sarsaparilla, cassia, venellas, aloes, and the wild cinnamon-tree, which is esteemed a sovereign remedy for dispelling wind, and assisting digestion.

The most valuable production of this island is sugar. The cane, from whence it is extracted, is a kind of reed, which rises commonly about eight or nine feet, taking in the leaves growing out of the top; and the most common thickness is from two to four inches. It requires a light, porous, and deep soil, and is usually cut at the end of eighteen months. Within twenty hours after the canes are cut down, they break them between two rollers of iron or copper, which are put in motion by an horizontal wheel, usually turned by oxen or horses.

The juice, with which the inner part of the cane is filled, is received in a reservoir, from whence it is successively carried to several boilers, to reduce it to crystals. This liquor is called treacle, or molasses. After the draining, they have muscovada, or rough sugar, which is greasy, brown, and soft. This sugar does not become white, shining, and hard, till it is refined, which is generally done in Europe; though there are two refining-houses at Kingston. The molasses are usually the twelfth part of the value of the sugar. A great deal of this article is consumed in the north of Europe, and in North America, where they supply the place of butter and sugar to the common people. The Americans use them to produce a fermentation; and they give an agreeable taste to a drink called Pruss, which is nothing more than the infusion of the bark of a tree.

These molasses are likewise prodigiously useful, since the secret has been discovered to convert them, by distillation, into a spirituous liquor, known by the name of rum. The operation is performed by mixing one third of syrup with two thirds of water. When these two substances have sufficiently fermented, at the end of twelve or fifteen days, they are put into a still, where the distillation is carried on with great facility. The annual exports of Jamaica, in these several articles, the produce of sugar canes, come to upwards of one hundred thousand hogsheads of sugar, between thirty and forty thousand puncheons of rum, and three hundred thousand gallons of molasses.

After sugar, the most considerable production of this island is Pimento, great quantities of which are annually exported. There are several kinds, more or less strong, and more or less acrid. The tree which produces that kind of pimento known by the name of Jamaica pepper, was not cultivated in regular plantations till the year 1668. It commonly grows on the mountains, and rises above thirty feet high. It is very strait, and covered with a grey, close, shining, bark. The leaves are, in all respects, like the laurel; and at the end of the branches grow the flowers, to which succeed berries a little larger than juniper. They are gathered green, and laid to dry in the sun, when they grow brown, and get that spicy smell which has given to pimento the name of All Spice. Its use is excellent in strengthening the cold stomach subject to crudities.

To the culture of pimento the people on this island join that of ginger. This is the root of a small plant, about eighteen or twenty inches high. It was greatly in vogue about the middle of the last century; but, since that time, it has by degrees grown out of fashion, and is now only a secondary article of trade.

This island also produces some tobacco, but of a coarse kind, and cultivated only for the sake of the negroes, who are fond of it; together with cabbages and a variety of roots, particularly cassava, of which they make bread; yams and potatoes.

Quadrupeds. The cattle of this island are but few, what they have are very small, and the flesh tough and lean. Their sheep, however, are tolerable, and their flesh very good; but the wool, which is long and full of hairs, is of little use. They have great plenty of hogs, and their flesh is sweet and delicate. Horses, asses, and mules are very plentiful; the former are small, mettlesome, and hardy, and, when well made, fetch a good price.

Birds. Here are various sorts of fowl, both wild and tame, and in more particular more parrots than in any of the other islands; besides parroquets, pelicans, snipes, teal, Guinea hens, geese, ducks, and turkies; the humming bird, and a great variety of others.

Fish, etc. In the bays and rivers is plenty of excellent fish, but the tortoise, or turtle, is by much the most valuable, both for its shell and fish, the latter being accounted the most delicious, and, at the same time, the most wholesome in all the Indies. The maniti, or sea cow, which is often taken in calm bays, is reckoned by the Indians very good eating.

In the mountains are numberless adders, and other noxious animals, and in the fens and marshes the guana and gallewasps; but these last are not venomous.

Insects. The insect called the ciror, or chegoe, eats into the nervous and membranous parts of the flesh of the negroes; and the white people are sometimes plagued with them. These insects get into any part of the body, but chiefly the legs and feet, where they breed in great numbers, and shut themselves up in a bag. As soon as the person feels them, which is not, perhaps, till a week after they have been in the body, they pick them out with a needle, or the point of a pen-knife, taking care to destroy the bag entirely, that none of the breed, which are like

nits, may be left behind. These insects sometimes get into the toes, and eat the flesh to the bone.

Inhabitants, Dress, Customs, etc. The inhabitants of Jamaica consist of English, or those of English extraction, born on the island; Indians, Negroes, Mulattoes, or their descendants. The better sort of the English, on Sundays, or particular days, appear very gay, in coats of silk, and vests trimmed with silver. At other times they generally wear thread stockings, linen drawers, a vest, a Holland cap, and a hat upon it. Men servants wear a coarse linen frock, with buttons at the neck and hands, long trowsers of the same, and a check shirt. The negroes, except those who are immediately employed in domestic service, go naked. The morning habit of the ladies is a loose night-gown, carelessly wrapped about them. Before dinner they put off their dishabille, and appear with a good grace, in all the advantages of a rich and becoming dress. There is no country in the world where luxury is carried to a higher pitch than in this island.

The common drink of persons in affluent circumstances is Madeira wine mixed with water, sherbet, or weak punch. Ale and claret are extravagantly dear; and London porter sells for more than one shilling per bottle. But the general drink, especially among those of inferior rank, is rum punch, which they call kill-devil, because, being frequently drank to excess, it heats the blood, and brings on fevers, which, in a short time, send them to their graves, especially those who are just come to the island, which is the reason that so many die very soon after their arrival.

Learning is here at a very low ebb. There are, indeed, some persons well versed in literature, and who send their children to Great Britain, where they have the advantage of a polite and liberal education. But the bulk of the people take little care to improve their minds, being generally engaged in trade or dissipation. The misery and hardships of the negroes are truly pitiable; and though great care is taken to make them propagate, the ill-treatment they receive so shortens their lives, that, instead of increasing by the course of nature, many thousands are annually imported to the West Indies, to supply the place of those who pine and die with the hardships they undergo. It is said that they are stubborn and untractable, for the most part, and that they must be ruled with a rod of iron; but they ought not to be crushed with it; or to be thought a sort of beasts, without souls, as some of their masters or overseers do at present, though some of these tyrants are themselves the dregs of this nation, and the refuse of the jails of Europe. Many of the negroes, however, who fall into the hands of gentlemen of humanity, find their situations easy and comfortable; and it has been observed, that, in North America, where in general those poor wretches are better used, there is a less waste of negroes, they live longer, and propagate better. And it seems clear, from the whole course of history, that those nations which have behaved with the greatest humanity to their slaves were always best served, and ran the least hazard from their rebellions. The slaves, on their first arrival from the coast of Guinea, are exposed naked to sale; and they are then generally very simple and innocent creatures, but they soon become roguish enough; and, when they come to be whipped, excuse their faults by the example of the whites. They believe every negro returns to his native country after death.

This thought is so agreeable, that it cheers the poor creatures, and renders the burthen of life easy, which would, otherwise, to many of them, be quite intolerable. They look on death as a blessing, and it is surprising to see with what courage and intrepidity some of them meet it; they are quite transported to think their slavery is near at an end, that they shall revisit their native shore, and see their old friends and acquaintance. When a negro is about to expire, his fellow slaves kiss him, and

wish him a good journey, and send their hearty good wishes to their relations in Guinea. They make no lamentations; but with a great deal of joy inter his body, beleiving he is gone home, and happy.

Government and Religion. The administration of public affairs in this island is by a governor, who represents the king, a council of twelve, and forty-three representatives of the people. The government, next to that of Ireland, is the best in the king's gift.

The established religion here, as well as in all the British islands, is that of the church of England; but there are no bishops. The bishop of London's commissary is the principal ecclesiastic in these islands.

Divisions, Towns, etc. Jamaica is divided into three counties, Surry, Middlesex, and Cornwall. These contain nineteen parishes, over each of which presides a magistrate called a Custos. There are but few towns in the island, and the reason is, that the greater part of the inhabitants are dispersed on their plantations, which form so many villages or hamlets.

Kingston, in the county of Surry, is the most considerable in the whole island, and at present the capital, being the residence of the merchants, and the chief place for trade. It is about a mile and a half long, and half a mile broad. All the streets, which are broad and regular, cross each other at right angles. The houses are much more elegant than those of St. Jago de la Vega, but the air is far from being so healthy. The Jews, who are very numerous here, have a fine synagogue. This town received considerable damage by a dreadful hurricane, which happened in the month of August 1781. Many houses were blown down, and numbers of vessels that lay in the harbour, as well as Port Royal, were driven ashore, some of which were sunk, and many others greatly damaged. Kingston harbour is one of the most commodious in America, and so capacious, that one thousand sail of ships may ride in safely. It is the station of the British fleet.

St. Jago de la Vega, commonly called Spanish Town, in Middlesex, is a small city, pleasantly situated. It is the residence of the governor, of the courts of justice, and the place where the assembly is held. The greater part of the inhabitants are persons of fortune or rank, which gives it an air of splendor and magnificence. The principal building is the governor's house, which is one of the most handsome in America. Here are also a handsome church, a chapel, and a Jewish synagogue. Between this town and that of Kingston, is Fort Passage, a village of but few houses, and so called, because those who go from one town to the other, land or embark there.

Port Royal was formerly the capital of Jamaica. It stood upon the point of a narrow neck of land, which, towards the sea, formed part of the border of a very fine harbour of its own name. The conveniency of this harbour, which was capable of containing a thousand sail of large ships, and of such depth as to allow them to load and unload at the greatest ease, induced the inhabitants to build their capital on this spot, though the place was a hot dry sand, and produced none of the necessaries of life, not even fresh water. But the advantage of its harbour, and the resort of the pirates, made it a place of great consideration. These pirates were called Buccaneers; they fought with an inconsiderate bravery, and then spent their fortune in this capital with an inconsiderate dissipation. About the beginning of the year 1692, no place, for its size, could be compared with this town for trade, wealth, and an entire corruption of manners. In the month of June, in this year, an earthquake, which shook the whole island to its foundations, totally overwhelmed this city, so as to leave, in one quarter, not even the smallest vestige remaining. In two minutes the earth opened, and swallowed up nine tenths of the houses, and two thousand people. The water gushed out from the openings of the earth, and tumbled the people on heaps; but some of them

had the good fortune to catch hold of beams and rafters of houses, and were afterwards saved by boats. Several ships were cast away in the harbour, and the Swan frigate, which lay in the dock to careen, was carried over the tops of sinking houses, and did not overset, but afforded a retreat to some hundreds of people, who saved their lives upon her. An officer, who was in the town at this time, says, the earth opened and shut very quick in some places, and he saw several people sink down to the middle, and others appeared with their heads just above ground, and were squeezed to death. At Savannah, above a thousand acres were sunk, with the houses and people in them; the place appearing for some time like a lake, was afterwards dried up, but no houses were seen. In some parts mountains were split; and at one place a plantation was removed to the distance of a mile. They again rebuilt the city; but it was a second time, ten years after, destroyed by a great fire. The extraordinary convenience of the harbour tempted them to build it once more; and once more, in 1722, it was laid in rubbish by a hurricane, the most terrible on record. The same fate attended it in 1774, by another hurricane, and as above. Such repeated calamities seemed to mark out this place as a devoted spot; the inhabitants, therefore, resolved to forsake it for ever, and to reside at the opposite bay, where they built Kingston. On the 3rd of October, 1780, was a dreadful hurricane, which almost overwhelmed the little seaport town of Savanna-la-Mar, and part of the adjacent country. Very few houses were left standing, and a great number of lives were lost. Much damage was also done, and many persons perished, in other parts of the island.

Commerce and Population. The whole commercial produce of the island may be reduced to these heads. First, sugars, of which article was exported to Great Britain, in 1787, 824,706 cwt. In 1790, 1,185,519 cwt. Most of this goes to London, Bristol, and Glasgow, and some part of it to North America, in return for the beef, pork, cheese, corn, peas, staves, planks, pitch, and tar, for which they have from hence. Second, rum, of which they export about four thousand puncheons. The rum of this island is generally esteemed the best, and is the most used in Great Britain. Third, melasses, in which they make a great part of their returns for New England, where there are vast distilleries. All these are the produce of the grand staple, the sugar cane. According to the late testimony of a respectable planter in Jamaica, that island had two hundred and eighty thousand acres in canes, of which two hundred and ten thousand are annually cut, and make from sixty-eight to seventy thousand tons of sugar, and four millions two hundred thousand gallons of rum. Fourth, cotton, of which they send out two thousand bags. The indigo, formerly much cultivated, is now inconsiderable; but some cocoa and coffee are exported, with a considerable quantity of pepper, ginger, drugs for dyers, and apothecaries, sweetmeats, mahogany, and manchineel planks. But some of the most considerable articles of their trade are with the Spanish continent of New Spain and Terra Firma; for in the former they cut great quantities of logwood, and both in the former and latter they carry a vast and profitable trade in negroes, and all kinds of European goods; and even in time of war with Spain, this trade between Jamaica and the Spanish main goes on, which it will be impossible for Spain to stop, whilst it is so profitable to the British merchant, and whilst the Spanish officers, from the highest to the lowest, show so great a respect to presents properly made. Upon the whole, many of the people of Jamaica, whilst they appear to live in such a state of luxury, as in most other places leads to beggary acquire great fortunes, in a manner instantly. Their equipages, their clothes, their furniture, their tables, all bear the tokens of the greatest wealth and profusion imaginable. This obliges all the treasure they receive to make but a very short stay, being hardly more than sufficient to answer the calls of their necessity and luxury on Europe.

The value of this island, as British property, is estimated as follows: two hundred and fifty thousand negroes, at fifty pounds sterling each, twelve millions and a half; the landed and personal property, and building to which they are appurtenant, twenty-five millions more; the houses and property in the towns, and the vessels employed in trade, one million and a half; in all thirty-nine millions. The exports of Jamaica for one year, ending the 5th of January, 1788, amounted in sterling money to two millions one hundred and thirty-six thousand four hundred and forty-two pounds, seventeen shillings and three-pence. In 1787, the exports to the United States amounted to sixty thousand and ninety-five pounds, eighteen shillings, and importations from the United States to the value of ninety thousand pounds.

In the beginning of this century it was computed that the number of whites in Jamaica amounted to sixty thousand, and that of the negroes to one hundred and twenty thousand. At present the inhabitants are stated at thirty thousand whites, ten thousand freed negroes and people of colour, and two hundred and fifty thousand negro slaves.

The decrease of inhabitants, as well as the decline of commerce, arises from the difficulties to which their trade is exposed, of which they do not fail to complain to the court of Great Britain; that as they are of late deprived of the most beneficial part of their trade, the carrying of negroes and dry goods to the Spanish coast; the low value of their produce, which they ascribe to the great improvements the French make in their sugar colonies, who are enabled to undersell them by the lowness of their duties; and the trade carried on from Ireland and the northern colonies to the French and Dutch islands, where they pay no duties and are supplied with goods at an easier rate. Some of these complaints, which equally affect the other islands, have been heard, and some remedies applied, others remain unredressed.

Coin. The current coin of the island is Spanish. There is hardly any place where silver is more plentiful, or has a quicker circulation.

.....

CAYMAN ISLANDS

To the north-west of Jamaica are three small islands dependent on this, and known by the name of the Caymans. The most southerly is distinguished by the name of Great Cayman; the other two, which are distant from it about twenty leagues, are called Little Cayman and Cayman Brack. Great Cayman is the only one that is constantly inhabited; it is very low, and covered with high trees. It has not any harbour for ships of burthen, only a tolerable anchoring place on the south-west. The inhabitants, who amount to about two hundred, are descended from the old Buccaneers. They have given themselves a set of laws, and choose a chief to see them executed, in conjunction with the justices of peace appointed by commission from the governor of Jamaica. As they have no clergymen among them, they go to Jamaica to be married. This colony is undoubtedly the most happy in the West Indies; the climate and the kind of food, which are of a singular salubrity, rendering the people healthy and vigorous, and making them live to a very advanced age. Their little island produces plenty of corn and vegetables, hogs and poultry, much beyond what is required for their own consumption. They have, besides, sugar canes, and some springs of pretty good water. Being quite hardened to the sea, they are excellent pilots for the neighbouring coasts, and their island, as well as their activity and humanity, have been many times a relief to ships which were distressed in this part of the sea. Their principal employment is fishing for turtle. Instinct every year leads a prodigious number of turtles to these islands, to lay their eggs, the greater part of which come from the Bay of Honduras. The low and sandy shores of these islands, particularly

of the Great, are perfectly commodious to receive and cover their eggs. A female lays some hundreds. When they have done laying, the turtles retire towards the Isle of Cuba, and the other large islands, where they recover themselves in the submarine pastures, and, in about a months time, acquire that fatness which makes them so much esteemed on the tables of the great. The inhabitants of Great Cayman shut them up as soon as they are caught, in enclosures, which they call cralls, made with stakes, in a smoothe water, between the shore and a reef of rocks on the north-east coast. These turtles serve for all the traffic which they carry on with Port Royal. It is an article of food which is very wholesome, and the shell of the hawks-bill is a commodity which has a place among the exportations to Great Britain.

.....

BARBADOES

Rise and Progress. When the English, some time after the year 1625, first landed here, they found it the most savage and destitute place they had hitherto visited. It had not the least appearance of ever having been peopled, even by savages. There was no kind of beasts of pasture, or of prey, no fruit, no herb, nor root, fit for supporting the life of man; yet, as the climate was so good, and the soil appeared fertile, some gentlemen of small fortunes in England resolved to become adventurers thither. The trees were so large, and of a wood so hard and stubborn, that it was with great difficulty they could clear as much ground as was necessary for their subsistence. By unremitting perseverance, however, they brought it to yield them a tolerable support. At first they applied themselves to the planting of tobacco, which not thriving as they expected, they planted cotton and indigo, which turned to a good account. Little sugar was made until 1647, when other adventurers, living uneasy in England under the usurpation of Cromwell, converted their estates into money, and transported themselves into Barbadoes, where they erected sugar works, and acquired very great possessions. In the year 1650, the white inhabitants of the island were increased to upwards of thirty thousand, with twice that number of negroes. King Charles II purchased the property of the island in 1661, ever since which time it has been a royal government, and the colony granted a duty on their sugars for maintaining the forces and fortifications of the island.

Situation and Extent. Barbadoes, the most considerable of all the British sugar islands next to Jamaica, lies in between 59 and 60 degrees west longitude, and between 12 and 14 north latitude, extending twenty-one miles from north to south, and fourteen from east to west.

Climate. The climate is hot, especially for eight months in the year, but not unwholesome; for though there are no land breezes, there are others arising from the sea, which increases as the sun advances to, and decreases as he declines from the meridian. A temperate regimen renders it as safe to live in as any climate in Europe, south of Great Britain. The days are very nearly equal, the sun rising and setting about six o'clock all the year round.

Country. Soil, etc. Barbadoes is, in general, a plain level country, with some small hills. The woods have all been cut down to make room for the plantations of sugar canes, which now take up the major part of the island, and render it the most valuable plantation to Great Britain, of its size, that it ever possessed. The soil is various, being in some places sandy and light, in others rich, and in others spongy; but all of them are cultivated according to their several natures.

This island has two streams that are called rivers on each side, with wells of good water all over it, and large ponds or reservoirs for rain water. In its center it is said to have a bituminous spring, which sends forth a liquor like tar, and serves for the same uses as pitch or lamp oil.

Productions. The fruits here are various and very plentiful, particularly pine-apples, guavas, plantains, oranges, lemons, citrons, limes, tamarinds, mangroves, cedars, prickled apples, pomegranates, papays, custard apples, figs, bullies, cocoa and cocoa-nuts. Indian corn can be imported from North America cheaper than it can be sold for when growing upon the island.

Here are great quantities of hogs, also oxen, cows, horses, asses, goats, monkies, and racoons, with a few sheep and rabbits, but the mutton is greatly inferior to that of England.

The wild fowl are teals, curlews, plovers, snipes, wild pigeons, wild ducks, and a kind of bird called a man-of-war. The tame pigeons, pullets, ducks, and poultry of all kinds, that are bred in Barbadoes, have a fine flavour, and are accounted more delicious than those of Europe.

Insects are very numerous here, but they are not venomous, nor do either their snakes or scorpions ever sting.

The surrounding sea abounds with fish, some of which are almost peculiar to itself, as parrot-fish, snappers, grey cavellos, tarbums, and coney fish. Their mullets, lobsters, and crabs, are excellent, and the green turtle are caught here in vast quantities.

Inhabitants. The inhabitants of Barbadoes, like those of the other islands, may be divided into three classes, viz. the masters, the white servants, and the black servants. The former of these are either Scotch, English, or Irish, with some Dutch, French, Portuguese, and Jews. The white servants lead more easy lives than the common day labourers in England; and when they come to be overseers, their wages, and other allowances are considerable. As to the black servants, it is the interest of every planter to be more careful of them than even of the white, the former, unless they should happen to be made free, being his perpetual property. Most of the negroes are employed in the field; but some of them work in the sugar mills and storehouses, while those of both sexes, who are most likely, are employed as housemaids and menial servants. Every negro family has a cabin, and a small piece of ground adjoining to it, by way of garden, in which the more industrious sort plant potatoes, yams, and other roots, and rear live stock, which they are at liberty to eat, or convert into money for their own use. They are fond of rum and tobacco.

Establishments Civil and Religious. The governor of Barbadoes has a considerable salary. The council consists of twelve members, and the assembly of twenty-two, chosen yearly, out of the several parishes, viz. two for each, by a majority of votes. Most of the civil officers are appointed by the governor, who also collates rectors to the parishes of the island. Their perquisites are very considerable. The church affairs of Barbadoes are governed by a surrogate of the bishop's appointment. There are upon the island some Jews and Quakers, but very few other dissenters. The inhabitants of this island support their own military establishment, which is respectable, with great credit.

The island is divided into five districts. In each of the districts is a judge and five assistants, who hold a court of common pleas every month, from January to September, and if any difficult matter arises, it is referred to the arbitration of the governor, whose employment is very lucrative.

Chief Town. Bridge-Town, the capital, is situated on Carlisle Bay, in the south-west part of the island, and has the best, or rather the only, harbour in it. It is reckoned the finest and largest town in all the Caribbee Islands, if not in all the British West Indian colonies. Bridge-Town takes its name from a bridge in the east part of it, erected over the waters that come from the neighbouring marshes; but a dreadful fire, which happened some years ago, destroyed a great part of it. It is the seat of the governor, council, and assembly, and also of the court of chancery.. The governor's house is about a mile out of the town, which is not reckoned

very healthy, on account of the neighbouring marshes. There are several forts and batteries about the town and bay. There is a college in the town, which was founded and liberally endowed by Colonel Codrington, who was a native of this island.

Commerce. With respect to the commerce of Barbadoes, the principal articles of exportation are aloes, cotton, ginger, sugar, rum, and molasses. Those of importation are timber of various kinds, bread, flour, Indian corn, rice tobacco, some salt beef and pork, fish, pulse, and other provisions, from the northern colonies; slaves from the coast of Africa; wine from Madeira, Tercera, and Fial, as also some brandy; beef and pork from Ireland; salt from Curassao; linen of all sorts, broad cloth, kerseys, silks and stuffs, red caps, stockings, and shoes of all sorts, gloves and hats, millinery ware and perriwigs, laces, peas, beans, oats, strong beer, pale ale, pickles, candles, butter and cheese, iron ware for their sugar works, leaden ware, powder and shot, brass and copper wares, etc.

Population. In 1786 the number of inhabitants was sixteen thousand one hundred and sixty-seven whites, eight hundred and eighty-eight free people of colour, and sixty-two thousand one hundred and sixty-seven negroes, a proof that this island is much upon the decline from its former state, which is attributed partly to the growth of the French sugar colonies, and partly to the British establishments in the adjacent islands.

This island, as well as Jamaica, suffered the greatest calamities by the dreadful hurricane which happened in the month of October 1780. The plantations were almost all destroyed, and Bridge-Town was reduced to a mere heap of ruins, scarce a building in it left standing. No less than eleven parish churches, and two chapels, were leveled with the ground, among which was the fine church of St. Michael. The streets were covered with the ruins of the houses; and it was supposed that no less than three thousand persons perished. The ships in Carlisle Bay were driven out to sea, and several of them cast ashore and lost. The damage was so immense throughout the island as not to be estimated; and the whole formed a scene more melancholy and deplorable than it is possible for words to describe.

.....

St. CHRISTOPHER - ANTIGUA - NEVIS - MONTserrat

.....

St. CHRISTOPHER

This island, called by mariner's St. Kitt's, is situated in 17 degree north latitude, about fourteen leagues from Antigua, and is about twenty miles long, and seven broad. It had its name from Columbus, in his first voyage to America. The French and English arrived here on the same day in 1625, and divided the island between them. Three years after their settling, the Spaniards drove them out of it. They soon returned, and continued to live in harmony till 1666, when war being commenced between the two nations, St. Christopher became, at different periods, the scene of war and bloodshed for half a century. In 1702 the French were entirely expelled, and the peace of Utrecht confirmed this island to the English. In February 1782, it was taken by the French, but restored again to Great Britain by the treaty of peace in 1783.

The assemblage of a great number of high and barren mountains make St. Kitt's appear to those who approach it by sea, like one huge mountain covered with wood; but they find, as they come nearer, that the coast grows more easy, as well as the ascent of the mountains, which, rising one above another, are cultivated as high as possible.

The climate of St. Christopher is hot, though, from the height of the country, much less than might be expected. The air is pure and healthy;

but the island is subject to frequent storms, hurricanes, and earthquakes. The soil is, in general, light and sandy, but very fruitful, and well watered by several rivulats, which run down both sides of the mountains. The animals, vegetables, etc. are the same with those of Barbadoes. The whole island is covered with plantations, whose owners, (noted for the softness of their manners) live in agreeable, clean, and convenient habitations, adorned with fountains and groves. Most of their houses are built of cedar, and the lands hedged with orange and lemon trees.

The most considerable town upon the island is Basseterre, formerly the capital of the French part; the other is called Sandy-Point, and always belonged to the English. There is no harbour; on the contrary, the surf is continually beating on the sandy shore at the few places fit to land, which not only prevents the building any quay or wharf, but renders the landing or shipping of goods always inconvenient, and very often dangerous. They have been, therefore, obliged to adopt a particular method to embark, or put the heavy goods, such as hogsheads of sugar or rum, on board. For this purpose they use a small boat of a peculiar construction, called a "moses"; this boat sets off from the ship with some very active and expert rowers; when they see what they call a lull, that is, an abatement in the violence of the surge, they push to land, and lay the sides of the moses on the strand; the hogshead is rolled into it, and the same precautions are used to carry it to the ship. It is in this inconvenient and very hazardous manner that the sugars are conveyed on board by single hogsheads. Rum, cotton, and other goods that will bear the water, are generally floated to the ship both in going and coming.

The public affairs at St. Christopher's are administered by a governor, a council, and an assembly chosen from the nine parishes into which the island is divided, and which have each a large handsome church.

The island of St. Christopher sustained great damage by violent hurricane, which happened in the month of October, 1780. All the goods in the warehouses and cellars near the beach were totally destroyed, and upwards of eight hundred vessels were driven out to sea, many of which were lost, and the crews perished.

.....

ANTIGUA

This island was discovered by Christopher Columbus, but not settled upon till the year 1632, when the English took possession of it. It is situated in 17 degrees north latitude, and is of a circular form, about twenty miles each way, and near sixty in circumference. It is more noted for good harbours than all the English islands in these seas, yet so encompassed with rocks, that it is of dangerous access in many parts, especially to those that are not well acquainted with the coast.

The climate is hotter than Barbadoes, and very subject to hurricanes. The soil is sandy, and much of it overgrown with wood. There are but few springs, and not so much as a brook in the whole island; so that the principal dependence of the inhabitants arises from the water supplied by casual rains, which they save in cisterns.

The capital of Antigua is St. John, a regular built town on the western shore, with a good harbour of the same name, whose entrance is defended by Fort James. It is the residence of the governor-general of the Caribbee Leeward Islands, the place where the assembly for this island is held, and the port where the greatest trade is carried on. It was a very flourishing town before the fire in 1769. The best port in the island is English harbour on the south side. At much trouble and expence it has been made fit to receive the greatest ships of war. There are also a dock-yard with stores, and all the materials and conveniences necessary to repair and careen. English harbour is at a small distance from the

town and harbour of Falmouth. There are, besides, Willoughby Bay, to the windward of English Harbour; Nonsuch Harbour, on the east point; and the town and harbour of Parham, on the north side; also a great number of creeks and smaller bays; but, in general, the shore being rocky, wherever the landing would be practible, it is defended by forts and batteries; and there is commonly one regiment of regular troops quartered there for the defence of the island.

The governor-general, when he thinks proper, calls a general assembly of the representatives of the other islands. Antigua has, besides, a lieutenant-governor, a counsel, and its own assembly, composed of twenty-four members. It is divided into six parishes, and eleven districts, of which ten send each two representatives, and that of St. John four.

.....

NEVIS

Nevis, which is no more than a vast mountain rising to a very considerable height, is situated about four miles to the south of St. Christopher's. The soil is fruitful, and the staple commodity sugar, which serves all the purposes of money. Here are sometimes violent rains and hurricanes, as in the other islands, and the air is even hotter than that of Barbadoes.

On this island are many remarkable insects and reptiles, particularly the flying-tyger, the horn-fly, and a kind of snail call a soldier. The sea abounds with a variety of excellent fish, as groopers, rock-fish, old wives, cavallies, welch-men, mud-fish, wilks, cockles, lobsters, etc. Land crabs are very common here; they are smaller than sea crabs, and make little burrows like rabbits, in the woods, towards the tops of the mountains. The only venemous creatures are scorpions and centipedes.

They have plenty of asparagus here; and there is a tree called diddle-doo, which bears a lovely blossom of the finest yellow and scarlet colors, and is esteemed a sovereign remedy in some disorders. The liquorice bush runs wild along the stone walls of common fields, like the vine. The butter here is not good, and their new cheese far worse. The sheep have neither horns or wool, but are cloathed with smooth hair, and generally full of small red or black spots, resembling those of a fine spaniel. They breed twice a year, if not oftener, and generally bring two, three, or four lambs at a time, and, what is more extraordinary, suckle them all. The rams are of a pale red color, with a thick row of long strait, red hair, hanging down from the lower jaw to the breast, as far as the fore legs. The hogs, being fed with Indian corn, Spanish potatoes, and sugar cane juice, are exceeding sweet food, white, and fat, as are the fowls and turkies, which are fed with the same diet.. The ground doves here are about the size of a lark, of a chocolate color, spotted with a dark blue, their heads like that of a robin-red-breast, and their eyes and legs of a most pure red. They have excellent game-cocks and fierce bull-dogs, besides large cur-dogs, but no hounds or spaniels.

Nevis was formerly much more flourishing than at present, and, before the revolution, contained thirty thousand inhabitants. The invasion of the French about that time, and some epidemical disorders, have strangely diminished the number to what they then were. The present number of whites is stated not to exceed six hundred, while the negroes amount to about ten thousand, a disproportion which necessarily converts all such white men as are not exempted by age and decrepitude, into a well regulated militia, among which there is a troop consisting of fifty horses, well mounted and accoutred. English forces on the British establishment they have none.

Here are three tolerable roads or bays, on which are a many little towns, viz. Newcastle, Littleborough on Moreton Bay, and Charles-Town, the capital, with a fort called Great Fort, that defends the anchoring place,

where the governor, council, and assembly meet; the last is composed of five members for each of the three parishes into which the island is divided.

Here, as in some of the other Caribbees, if a white man kills a black he cannot be tried for his life for the murder; and all that he suffers is a fine of thirty pounds currency to the master for the loss of his slave. If a negro strikes a white man he is punished with the loss of his hand, and if he should draw blood, with death. A negro cannot be evidence against a white man.

The inhabitants have three public annual fasts, to implore the Divine Protection against hurricanes; and if none happen in July, August, or September, they appoint a public thanksgiving in October.

This island, as well as the following, was taken by the French in the year 1782, but restored at the peace in 1783.

.....

MONTSERRAT

Montserrat was discovered by Columbus in 1493. It lies in $16^{\circ}37'$ north latitude, and $62^{\circ}13'$ west longitude. It is twenty-five miles almost south-south-east from Nevis, twenty west-south-west from Antigua, forty north-west from Guadaloupe, and two hundred and forty from Barbadoes. It is of an oval figure, about three leagues in length, the same in breadth, and eighteen in compass. The Spaniards gave it the name of Montserrat, from a fancied resemblance it bore to a mountain of that name near Barcelona in Old Spain. It was settled in 1632 by Sir Thomas Warner, and taken in the beginning of the reign of Charles II, by the French, who restored it to England at the peace of Breda. The first settlers were Irishmen, and the present white inhabitants are principally composed either of their descendants, or natives of Ireland. The whole of the inhabitants amount to thirteen hundred whites, and about ten thousand negroes.

The climate, soil, and produce of Montserrat, are much the same as those of the other English Caribbee Islands. The mountains yield cedars, the cypress-tree, the iron-tree, with other woods, and some odoriferous shrubs. It is well watered and fruitful, and the planters formerly raised a great deal of indigo. The surrounding seas produce some hideous monsters, particularly two, which, from their remarkable ugliness, as well as the poisonous quality of their flesh, are called sea devils. The laman-ture, by some called the sea cow, is found in this island, and generally at the entrance of fresh water rivers. According to the accounts we have of it, it is an amphibious animal; and lives mostly on herbage. Its flesh is reckoned very wholesome food, when salted; and they are so large that two or three of them load a canoe.

The government of Montserrat is composed of a lieutenant governor, a council, and an assembly of eight representatives, two for each of the four districts which divide the island.

Montserrat has not any harbour, only three roads, namely, at Plymouth (which is the chief town in the island) Old Harbour, and Ker's Bay, where the shipping and landing of goods is attended with the same inconveniences as in the island of St. Christopher.

.....

BARBUDA

This small island lies in 18° north latitude, and $61^{\circ}35'$ west longitude, fifteen miles north-east of Montserrat, its length being about twenty miles, and its breadth twelve. It is the property of the Codrington family, who have the appointment of the governor. Part of the estate arising from it, amounting, as is said, to two thousand pounds a year,

with two plantations in Barbadoes, were bequeathed, in 1710, by Christopher Codrington, Esq. governor and captain-general of Barbadoes, to the society for propagating the gospel, towards the instruction of the negroes in the Caribbee Islands, in the Christian religion, and the erection of a college at Barbadoes, for teaching the liberal arts.

The land of this island lies low, but is fertile; the inhabitants apply themselves chiefly to the breeding of cattle, and raising provisions, with which they supply the neighboring islands. Many of the commodities, however, which are raised in the other West India islands, may also be raised here, such as citrons, pomegranates, oranges, raisins, Indian figs, maize, cocoa-nuts, cinnamon, pine-apples, and the sensitive plant, with various kinds of woods and drugs, such as Brasil, ebony, pepper, indigo, and the like. There are some large serpents on the island, but they are so far from being poisonous or noxious, that they destroy rats, toads, and frogs; though the sting or bite of others is mortal, unless an antidote is quickly applied. On the west side of the island is a good well-sheltered road, clear from rocks and sands.

To the north of Barbuda are several small uninhabited islands. The most remarkable of them lies at six leagues distance, and is about a league long. It consists of an eminence, in which the Spanish discoverers, finding some resemblance to a hat, they gave it the name of Sombrero, which it has always preserved.

To the west of Barbuda and Sombrero, after having crossed a channel of eight leagues, begin the Virgin Islands. These take up a space, from east to west, of about twenty-four leagues long, quite to the eastern coast of Porto Rico, with a breadth of about sixteen leagues. They are composed of a great number of isles, whose coasts, rent throughout and sprinkled with rocks, every where dangerous to navigators, are famous for shipwrecks, and particularly of several galleons. Happily for the trade and navigation of these islands, nature has placed in the middle of them a large bason of three or four leagues broad, and six or seven long, the finest that can be imagined, and in which ships may anchor landlocked, and sheltered from all winds. The Buccaneers called it the Virgin's Gangway; but its true name is the Bay of Sir Francis Drake, who first discovered it in 1580, when he made his expedition against St. Domingo.

One of these islands is called the Tropic Keys, from the astonishing quantity of tropic birds which breed there. These birds are about the size of a pigeon, but round and plump like a partridge, and are very good to eat. Their plumage is quite white, except two or three feathers in each wing, which are of a clear grey. Their beaks are short, thick, and of a pale yellow; they have a long feather, or rather quill, about seven inches long, which comes out of their rump, and is all the tail they have; they obtained their name from not having been ever seen but between the tropics.

The Virgin Islands are all of them small, and the greatest part uninhabited.

.....

ANGUILLA

Is situated in 19° north latitude, and 62° 57' west longitude, about seventy-five miles north-west of St. Christopher's. It is very long and narrow, which induced the Spaniards to give it the name of Anguilla, or "Eel". It is so low and flat, that the French, who were there first, did not think it worth cultivating, or even keeping. The English adopted the same opinion when they took possession of it, and the island was a long time in their hands, before they perceived the contrary. Within a few years, industry, and the indefatigable labours of the planters of Anguilla, have convinced them that their island produces not only all the necessities of life, but, besides, many provisions which they sell to their neigh-

bours, as well as sugar and cotton. The climate is very healthy, and the inhabitants strong and vigorous. Their exportations are sugar, rum, and cotton.

.....

DOMINICA

This island was discovered by Columbus, who called it Dominica, because he first saw it on a Sunday. It is situated in 16° north latitude, and 62° west longitude, lies about half way between Guadaloupe and Martinico, and is about twenty-eight miles in length, and thirteen in breadth. The soil is thin, and better adapted to the rearing of coffee than sugar; but the sides of the hills bear the finest trees in the West Indies, and the whole island is well supplied with rivulets of fine water. Here, as in some other of the Caribbees, is a sulphur mountain, and hot spring, equal, in salubrity, to those of Bath, in England; and the fine fruits, particularly the pine-apples, are superior to any that grow on the French islands. At the north-west end of the island is a deep, spacious, sandy bay, called Prince Rupert's, which is well secured from the winds, by mountains on all sides.

The most distinguished place in this island is the town of Rosseau, situated on a spacious harbour. The houses are low and irregularly placed, and the town is sheltered by the circumjacent mountains, some of which rise to a considerable height. The most advantageous view of the town is from the bay or harbour, where ships of considerable size ride at anchor with the greatest safety.

The French have ever exerted their efforts to prevent the English from settling on this island, as it must cut off their communication, in time of war, between Martinico and Guadaloupe. However, by the peace of Paris, in 1763, it was ceded in express terms to the English; but we have derived but little advantage from this conquest, the island being, till lately, no better than a harbour for the natives of the other Caribbees, who, being expelled their own settlements, have taken refuge here. But on account of its situation between the principal French Islands, and Prince Rupert's Bay being one of the most capacious in the West Indies, it has been judged expedient to form Dominica into a government of itself, and to declare it a free port. It was taken by the French in 1778, but was restored again to Great Britain at the peace.

.....

ST. VINCENT

St. Vincent, situated in 13° north latitude, and 61° west longitude, is about twenty-four miles in length, and eighteen in breadth, lying about fifty miles north-west of Barbadoes. Out of the ridge of mountains, which crosses it from south to north, rise a great number of rivers, which are well stored with fish. These mountains are, in general, of an easy ascent, and the vallies and plains, some of them of a large extent, are exceeding fertile, producing most of the necessaries of life, particularly sugar, coffee, cocoa, and anatta.

When this island was ceded to Great Britain, by the treaty of Versailles, in 1763, there was a great number of a mixed breed of the ancient Caribbees, and of shipwrecked or run-away negroes; but these have been all long since exterminated.

The most remarkable place in St. Vincent's is Kingstown, situated on a bay of the same name at the south-west end of the island. It is the residence of the governor, and the place where the assembly meet. About three miles from Kingstown, towards the south-east, is the town of Calliagua, whose harbour is the most considerable in the whole island.

GRENADA and the GRENADINES

Grenada is situated in 12° north latitude, and 62° west longitude, about thirty leagues south-west of Barbadoes, and almost the same distance north of New Andalusia, or the Spanish Main. This island is about thirty miles long, and fifteen broad. The climate is good, and the soil rich and fertile, and particularly adapted for producing sugar, coffee, tobacco, and indigo. A lake on top of a hill, in the middle of an island, supplies it plentifully with fine rivers, which adorn and fertilize it. Several bays and harbours lie round the island. Some of these may be fortified with great advantage, which renders it very convenient for shipping; and it has the happiness of not being subject to hurricanes. St. George's Bay has a sandy bottom, and is extremely capacious, but open. In its harbour, or careening place, one hundred large vessels may be moored with perfect safety.

Near Grenada is a cluster of small islands called the Grenadines. These islands produce very fine timber, sugar, indigo, tobacco, pease, millet, but the cocoa-tree does not thrive so well in them as in the other islands. These islands were all discovered by Columbus, but never settled by the Spaniards. The French first established a colony here, but were disturbed by the natives, who carried on a long and bloody war with their invaders. At length, however, they were compelled to submit to superior force, and then the settlements of the French rapidly increased.

In the last war but one, when Grenada was attacked by the English, the French inhabitants, who were not very numerous, were so amazed at the reduction of Gaudaloupe and Martinico, that they lost all spirit, and surrendered without making the least opposition; and the full property of this island, together with the Grenadines, were confirmed to the crown of Great Britain by the treaty of peace in 1763. But in July, 1779, the French made themselves masters of it; though it was restored by the treaty of 1783.

The Island of Grenada, with all those adjoining to it, sustained considerable damage by a dreadful hurricane that happened in the month of October, 1780. Many houses were levelled with the ground, the plantations destroyed, and several ships which lay in the harbour totally lost.

.....

TRINIDAD

This island, situated between 59° and 62° west longitude, and in 10° north latitude, lies between the Island of Tobago and the Spanish Main, from which it is separated by the straits of Paria. It is about ninety miles long, and sixty broad, and is an unhealthy but fruitful soil, producing sugar, fine tobacco, indigo, ginger, variety of fruit, and some cotton trees, and Indian corn. It was taken by Sir Walter Raleigh in 1595, and by the French in 1676, who plundered the island, and extorted money from the inhabitants. It was captured by the British arms in February 1797, and possession of it is retained by the treaty of peace in 1802.

Having described the British Islands in the West Indies, we shall advert to a group, which, though they cannot be considered under the denomination of the former, come under the class of North American Islands, appertaining to Great Britain

.....

THE BERMUDAS, or SUMMER ISLANDS

They are a cluster of very small islands, and were discovered by John Bermudez, a Spaniard, from whom they received their first name, as they did their second from Sir George Summer, who was cast away upon them in

1609, since which they have belonged to Great Britain. They are situated in the Atlantic Ocean, in 32^o north latitude. They have a clear temperate air with plenty of flesh, fish, poultry, fruits, herbs, roots, etc. The climate, however, of late years, is altered for the worse. Cedars grow here, ambergris is found on the shores, and whales and turtles are caught on the coast. Here is a breed of black hogs which are much valued. White chalk-stones and tobacco are exported. Oranges and palmettos abound; and many things are found in great plenty, water excepted; for the inhabitants have none but what falls from the clouds.

The chief island is St. George, which takes its name from George-Town, is a pleasant place, sixteen miles in length, and three in breadth, and contains handsome buildings. The chief employment of the inhabitants is building small vessels.

These islands are thus described by Waller, the celebrated poet, who resided here during the civil wars of England.

Bermudas, wall'd with rocks, who does not know
That happy island, where huge lemons grow,
And orange trees, which golden fruit do bear;
Th' Hesperian gardens boast of none so fair;
Where shining pearl, coral, and many a pound,
On the rich shore, of ambergris is found.
The lofty cedar, which to heav'n aspires,
The prince of trees, is fuel for their fires;
The smoak by which their loaded spits do turn,
For incense might on sacred altars burn;
Their private roofs on od'rous timber borne,
Such as might palaces for kings adorn.
Their sweet palmettos a new Bacchus yield,
With leaves as ample as the broadest shield;
Under the shadow of whose friendly boughs,
They sit carousing where their liquor grows.
Figs, there unplanted, thro' the field do grow,
Such as fierce Cato did the Romans shew,
With the rare fruit inviting them to spoil
Carthage, the mistress of so rare a soil.
The naked rocks are not unfruitful here,
But, at some constant seasons ev'ry year,
Their barren tops with lucious food abound,
And with the eggs of various fowl are crown'd.
Tobacco is their worst of things, which they
To English landlords as their tribute pay;
Such is the mould that the blest tenant feeds
On precious fruits, and pays his rent in weeds.
With candied plantiners and the juicy pine,
On choicest melons and sweet grapes they dine,
And with potatoes fat their wanton swine.
Nature these cates with such a lavish hand
Tastes of that bounty, and doth cloth return,
Which, not for warmth, but ornament, is worn;
For the kind spring, which but salutes us here,
Inhabits there, and courts them all the year.
Ripe fruits and blossoms on the same trees live;
At once they promise what at once they give.
So sweet the air, so moderate the clime,
None sickly lives, or dies before his time.

.....
No mention was made of the BAHAMAS except as islands in the Atlantic.
.....