

# A WARSHIP'S DIARY.

Continuation of the Interesting Story of New York's Cruise.

## THE ISLANDS OF ST. KITTS

Description of Some of England's Possessions in the West Indies.—  
Social Side of Life.

At 6 a. m. of the 2nd day of January we left St. Thomas, enroute for St. Kitts, and at 3 p. m. passed the Dutch Islands of Saba off the port beam. The latter island is nearly circular in form, 2 1/2 miles in diameter, and rises sheer out of the sea to a height of 2820 feet, appearing to be an uninhabited rock. Yet with its apparent barrenness, it supplies some of the more fertile islands, chiefly St. Thomas, with most of their garden-truck. From a little landing place to leeward a stair runs up 800 feet into the bosom of an old volcano, and in that hollow live some 800 negroes. Up in that crater they build the best boats in the West Indies, and lower them down the cliffs into the sea. After passing the next islands to the southward—St. Eustatious—where the Governor of Saba resides, we were under the lee of Mount Misery, island of St. Kitts, and at 5:55 p. m. dropped anchor off Basseterre, the chief city.

### ST. CHRISTOPHER.

Upon approaching the anchorage everyone on board was charmed by the delightful view of the long broad stretches of cane field, the sugar houses marked by slender chimneys, and the scattered groups of neat little houses. The island of St. Kitts, or St. Christopher, belongs to the Caribbean chain, and was at one time inhabited by the Caribbean Indians, who named it Liamuiga, or fertile island. It is composed of entirely of old volcanic material. Was discovered by Columbus in November 1493. As he approached it from the southward, he fancied resemblance of the top of Mount Misery to the form of the giant St. Christopher bearing on his shoulders the infant Christ, determined him to name the island as he did. St. Kitts has a great deal of history in proportion to its size. It is about thirteen miles long by six wide, but a narrow handle like that of a spoon stretches ten or twelve miles further. The entire area is sixty-five square miles, and the population is 45,000 with but a small white element. The island possesses no harbor, and but indifferent roadsteads, quite unsafe during the hurricane season. In 1624 Sir Thomas Warner took possession of St. Kitts, and established the first British settlements in the West Indies. The island is called the "Mother of the Antilles." At this time the French adventurer "Corsair" was prowling about in this vicinity. In a battle with a Spanish galleon his ship was crippled, and he put it into St. Kitts for repairs. The British and French were then on good terms, and they agreed to combine to drive the Indians out of the islands. They succeeded in getting rid of the Indians after a hard struggle, and in 1625 they divided the islands, the English taking the lands in the middle, while the French occupied both ends. In 1629 a Spanish fleet came in unexpectedly from Hayti, and drove away all colonists. When the latter returned each party claimed exclusive possession of the island. The French expelled the English in 1689, and the latter returned the next year. The English in turn drove out the French in 1715, and the island was ceded to the former. In 1782 the French again got temporary possession, but from that time the English sway has been undisputed.

In 1871 St. Kitts surrendered its separate existence, and was included into the Leeward Island Colony. The St. Kitts part of the colony has no elective members, but consists of ten non-official members, the latter with the president being appointed by the Governor—seven from St. Kitts and three from the neighboring island of Nevis. The legislative council for the whole colony is chosen for a term of three years and meets at Antigua island, the capital. The island's natural aspect and recent conditions are as interesting as its history. The French called their two ends Capesterre and Basseterre, meaning highland and lowland. Basseterre is still the name of the capital of the island and is sometimes called Bar Star. It is situated in a sheltered Bay on the east side. It is clean and healthy.

Mount Misery, 4330 feet high, is said to have been so named from its occasional habit of sending down floods and torrents which sweep away the houses and mills, especially in 1880. Upon going ashore in one of the ship's boats we were landed at a wharf that extends several hundred feet into the sea. We soon found ourselves in the centre of the sleepy town, with its 10,000 inhabitants. The houses are all well built, but the stores are very poor and what fruits there were at the time came from St. Croix, and therefore was not cheap.

Basseterre is situated at the outlet of a fertile plain, which contains all the cultivated land. One of the streets was walled strongly on either side, and

becomes a river during the rainy season. We passed along this to a plantation at the foot of Monkey Hill, at the back of the town. Although the cane was ready for cutting the mill was closed, as some machinery to replace broken parts was expected on the next steamer from England. The town, with its quaint houses, is quite picturesque. The long line of black sand beach, the rows of cabbage palms, the tall cocoanuts and the private gardens, all help to make a charming picture. The natives here, like in the other West India Colonies, are very poor. They live along without much concern about the morrow—smoke tobacco and eat cane when they have, while they work only when they must.

On the afternoon of January 5th the Admiral, Captain and officers of the "New York" gave a reception to the elite of the island. The administrator of the island and over one hundred residents were present. It was a gay scene, as boat-load after boat-load of the guests were brought on board. The ladies generally were dressed in white. The quarter-deck was well draped with bunting, the deck sanded and covered with corn-meal and Schultz and his band did their best. The uncertain squalls and rain drenched the people on the way home, and this was the only draw back to the pleasant afternoon. The German schoolship "Stosch" was here when we arrived and departed during our stay at Basseterre. The French vessel "Troude" arrived also, but did not remain long. No good feeling is shown by the natives of the British West Indies for the French sailors—this feeling is the opposite of that with which we have invariably been received.

Charlotte, our fat and talkative bum boat-woman, had tears in her eyes when, at 2:15 of the afternoon of the 6th, we got up anchor and steamed to sea. Ten miles out the ship was swung to ascertain compass deviation. At 2:45 a British Cruiser, thought to be the "Prosperine," saluted us, and we returned the same.

At 6:00 o'clock the following morning we again met the "Troude," and during the morning passed the Island of Dominica. The waters of this island are sacred to all Englishmen as once the scene of what they consider the greatest battle of all naval history—the battle between the fleets of Admiral Rodney and the French Admiral DeGrasse on April 12th, 1782. So great was this victory of the British considered at the time that it completely outweighed the defeat which their soldiers were meeting at the hands of the American colonists at the same time. This battle not only induced the French to a secondary position in the West Indies, but also established England's great position as a sea-power.

Upon nearing St. Lucia from the northward, it presents the same rugged aspect as do the other islands seen during our passage south from St. Kitts. When passing Martinique we almost imagined we could hear the bells of the churches calling the devout Catholics of that island to worship in the town of St. Pierre, at which we were anchored less than a year ago. It was in these waters also that in April of last year we had that exciting race with the "Massachusetts," "Indiana," "Texas" and "Brooklyn."

### A Floral Nosebleed.

Why speak of the lovely painted trilliums, with their three daintily crinkled petals, streaked with rose purple? says Bradford Torrey in The Atlantic. One after another I gathered them (pulled them, to speak with poetic literalness), each fresher and handsomer than the one before it till the white stems made a handful.

"Oh," said a man on a hotel piazza as I returned, "I see you have nosebleed." I was putting my hand to my pocket, wondering why I should have been taken so childishly, when it came over me what he meant. He was looking at the trilliums and explained, in answer to a question, that he had always heard them called nosebleed. Somewhere, then—I omitted to inquire where—this is their "vulgar" name. In Franconia the people call them Benjamins, which has a pleasant Biblical sound—better than nosebleed, at all events—though, to my thinking, trillium is preferable to either of them both for sound and for sense.

Turned the Joke to Account. Some friends once invited the late Tiny Waterman to their shooting club at Kings Lake, near St. Louis, and the first afternoon they stationed Tiny in a ducking tank, or sink box, where they well knew ducks had never been seen. He took the joke good naturedly, and that night at dinner he pulled a shell out of his pocket and tossed it on the table with the remark that he "thought he had put all of his shells away." Most naturally one of the diners cut the shell open with his pocketknife, disclosing the contents. Tiny seemed astounded at the number of "bullets," as he called them, and asked how many were in a shell. Of course no one could enlighten him, so he said, "If you fellows who are hunters really don't know, it seems to me that it is a good betting proposition."

"Good scheme," exclaimed one of his hosts. "Let's make it a dollar each as to who guesses nearest to the actual number in the shell."

"As there is only one bet in this proposition," Tiny suggested, "let's make it \$5 a corner," which was agreed to.

Each one wrote on the tablecloth his guess as to the number contained in the shell, and when the pellets were counted it was found that Tiny had guessed the exact number. He accordingly gathered in the \$30, and when he had it safely bestowed he casually inquired, "What do you fellows think I was doing in that blamed tank all afternoon?"—San Francisco Argonaut.

A Very Restful Rest. Adolf Menzel, the German artist, was at one time engaged on a mural decoration. He had rigged up a scaffolding in his studio, on which his model was requested to stand. For two long hours the poor "poseur" stood up aloft in a most fatiguing posture. Menzel in the meantime worked at his sketch, heedless of the fact that his model was growing tired.

At length the model found it necessary to speak. "Herr professor," said he, "how about a recess?" Menzel apologized profusely for his forgetfulness. "Certainly, certainly, my dear sir," said he. "Come down and rest yourself a bit."

The model had clambered from the scaffolding to the ladder, which led down from it to the studio floor. "Stop!" cried the artist suddenly. "That pose is fine! Don't move a muscle!" And once more the model was forced into strained rigidity, while the enthusiastic draftsman set about sketching him.

At the end of half an hour Menzel looked up from his work. "There," said he, "that will do nicely! Get back on the scaffold. We have had our rest. Let us get back to work again."

What the model said is left to the reader's imagination.

How Mayne Reid Won His Bride. It was through his novel, "The Scalp Hunters," that Captain Mayne Reid won a bride. He was 30 years old when he met a damsel of 13, with whom he at once fell in love. The child took no notice of him, but he gave her the story to read, as effective a manner of courting in this nineteenth century as ever Othello's in an earlier one. Two years later the young lady was at a public meeting where Captain Reid spoke on behalf of the Polish refugees. "An electric thrill seemed to pass through me as he entered the room," she said afterward, and when the meeting was over she went up to him. "I leave for London on the next train," he said hurriedly. "Please send me your address."

"I do not know where," she replied with some embarrassment. He instantly handed out his card and was gone. A formal little note followed: "Dear Captain Reid—As you asked me to send you my address, I do so." By return of post came the answer: "Only say that you love me and I will be with you at once," and then the reply. "I think I do love you."

His Vote. "Well, suh," said the old time colored voter, "de ways er de canderdate is past findin out. All de year I been lak one cryin in de wilderness, en no man 'spon ter my cry. I holler fer bread, en dey give me a Belgian block en 30 days. En now look at 'em! Leckshun time come on, en bless God ef dey ain't pay my house rent, took de mortgage off my mule, settle my street tax en gimme enough ole cloze ter go ter preachin. En all I got ter my name is one vote en der rheumatism!"—Atlanta Constitution.

White and Red Wines. White and red wines owe their difference to the fact that, while the former is permitted to ferment without the grape skins, these are allowed to remain in the case of the latter. The color of the grapes makes no difference whatever to the color of the wine which they produce, for the juice of all grapes is as nearly as possible colorless. For instance, the grape which yields champagne is almost black in outward appearance.

Hard Luck. Perry Patetic—Please, lady, help a poor man wat's bin outer work fer more'n a year. Kind Lady—Here's a quarter, poor man. Can't you find anything at all to do?

Perry Patetic—No, lady. It's so long since I done a job o' work dat I don't tink I'd reckernalize one now if it come up an took its hat off ter me.—Philadelphia Press.

The first coffee house in London was opened in 1552 by the Greek servant of a Turkey merchant.

It requires three years before many species of birds acquire their mature plumage.

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## J. P. JONES, ASSIGNEE OF HAUGH & KEMMING.

### ONLY A LAUGH.

Only a laugh, but the joy of the hours in it, Dropping so blithely from out of the gloom, Down from the casement that has the red flowers in it. Flooding with sunshine my poor little room. Only a laugh, but I know well whose choice it is; Oh, I can guess whose lips that can chaff, Whose is the smiling mouth, whose bubbling voice it is. Putting such perfume in only a laugh! Only a laugh! My long life is so shadowy, Tinged with the darkness that solitude grows, Most of the lightness missed, most of its glad away, Most of its tenderness chilled by the snows. Only a laugh, but so much of the gay in it! Oh, were there love 'twould be sweeter by half! I could forget that my hair has its gray in it Were it for me more than only a laugh! —New York Press.

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