

throat was strangling him now, he heard faint cries from the other prisoners and thought the gaol was on fire. He found the water can and drank thirstily, but the rasping sensation did not leave his throat. His hair was nearly all burned off, his chest was burdened with the feeling of a great weight upon it, and his pain was so great that he forgot his hunger.

All day long on Thursday he was wondering why people did not come to relieve him. If the gaol was burned down, surely someone would think that there might be a survivor, and there was nothing to give him the slightest inkling of the extent of the horror. If he had known of it in his solitude he would have died of fright, but every morning light came and every night darkness came, and so for three days and four nights he lay listless and indifferent but not losing count of time and wondering how long he could live in this way. On the Sunday morning after the day of desolation he drank all that was left of the water and ate nearly the last of the food he had. Late in the day, he heard an indistinct sound like the rolling of stones, then the sound of a voice groaning; he cried out for his mother and heard a human voice somewhere near. As loudly as he could he shouted and a voice cried, "Where are you?" but he fell back too weak to answer. After a little while the grating was darkened and a man stood before him.

It was a long time before he was led out. He fell asleep and was awakened by the blows of a sledge hammer breaking the fastenings of the door; for when it was discovered that a man was alive in the dungeon one of the rescuing party had been sent to Morne Rouge, five miles away, for the implement. The Abbe Marie of Morne Rouge was the first to enter the cell. "Sonson" was lifted out and carried to Morne Rouge. As he was carried through the gaol he became terrified at the aspect of the place, at the chaotic mass of ruins with the dead bodies lying around.

Through the ruined city and up the road to Trois Ponts the sight of smoking ruins and dead bodies came to him like some awful vision. St. Pierre was the most desolate sight that the eye of man had ever gazed upon.

It was this St. Pierre that was shunned even by curious travelers for many a year; its site was viewed from the harbor, but it was a gray waste and until a year ago no one ventured to inhabit the territory. Some of the old inhabitants ventured back at last, daring to approach the scene of desolation. They knew the danger, but they braved it because of the associations of home for them, and their example inspired others to follow. In a surprisingly short time the telegraph, the telephone, schools, churches and residences have been reestablished.

For a long time no vessels would go within five miles of the island, for the marine insurance would not allow of a nearer approach. If it were necessary to have any dealings with Martinique a small boat was sent ashore. Now French capital and Yankee enterprise have braved the fear of another eruption of the volcano and money has been furnished the native islanders to reclaim what is left of their old homes.

Even now the traveler to the West Indies can see the fires of Pelee at night. Out in the ocean miles and miles away from Martinique the sky is aglow with the red lights that are ever burning in the crater of the great volcano. Sometimes approaching Martinique the heat is so intense as to bring to those unaccustomed to it the fear that Mont Pelee is just about to break into eruption. It is this constant smoldering of the volcano that lulled the people of St. Pierre into their fatal feeling of false security; it had smoldered so long that they lost the fear of danger from it. They built their homes and carried on their business without thought of the rumbling mountain, so accustomed were they to its menace.

There have been some daring explorers who have gone to the summit of Mont Pelee. They have found that its name, for Mont Pelee means "the bald mountain," is a misnomer, as the summit is not actually bare. The uppermost ridge is not devoid of plant life and on Morne Lacroix, the topmost peak, a species of lichen, with fibrous fronds of a light green tint, used to flourish before the eruption. From the summit there is on clear days a view as far north as Antigua and as far south as St. Vincent and some of the Grenadines.

The few who have gone up to the summit over the crater of Mont Pelee since the last eruption have found the gorges filled with sulphurous mud streams, but without apparent indications of immediate eruption. But Pelee is an uncertain proposition. Sometimes she has warned and no eruption came, then lesser eruptions have come

without warning, and it is this variable quality of the volcano that makes the venture of the new city on the site of St. Pierre all the more hazardous. But the people of Martinique have a way of accepting the worst in the peculiarly tropical spirit of caring only for the day, a lesson Nature itself in the tropics teaches them readily.

In a very short time after the eruption of Mont Pelee, the district was almost covered with tropical vegetation which sprang up in the volcanic matter covering the numberless dead buried beneath it, and the vegetation was most luxuriant on the side where the lava had flowed down to the sea—a strange example of the way in which Nature heals its wounds.

Fort de France, the seaport of Martinique since the destruction of St. Pierre, seems to have no fear of the fate of her sister city. Why should she, when there are others in Martinique ready to go to the very place of disaster? Little Morne Rouge, the famous health resort, only five miles from the city of death, lives its existence just as contentedly today as if it has never been within the shadow of death. It is at Morne Rouge that the king of Dahomey and three of his wives live in exile.

Martinique is a French colony, one of the most interesting of all the islands. It is by no means a large island, only forty-three miles long and nineteen miles wide, and as there are only three hundred and eighty square miles on the island, it will be seen what sixty square miles of total destruction meant.

The great mass of the population is Creole negroes and half castes of various grades, ranging from "saccatra," who have hardly retained any



View of the Ruins of St. Pierre as they are today

trace of Caucasian blood, to "Sangmele," with hardly an appearance of negro admixture. The whites are few in number, still it is the white history of Martinique that makes it important.

Martinique was discovered by Columbus on the 15th of June, 1492, ten years after his first discovery of America, and it was at that time inhabited by Caribs, who had expelled or incorporated an older stock. In 1635 a Norman captain, D'Enbuc, coming from St. Christopher's took possession of the island, and in 1637 the nephew of the captain, one Duparquet, became captain-general of the colony.

Exclusive of the Caribs, who were soon exterminated, Martinique had by 1660 a colony of five thousand people, and later the French government purchased Martinique from the children of Duparquet. The island was then assigned to the West Indian Company, but in 1674 it again became part of the royal domain. The French landholders, called habitants there as they were in the Canadian colony, at first devoted themselves to the cultivation of cotton and tobacco. It was in 1650 that the first sugar plantations began work. In 1726 the coffee plant was introduced by Desclieux, who had shared his scanty allowance of water on the voyage with the seedlings, going thirsty himself in order to preserve the plants.

Slave labor flourished in Martinique, and by 1736 there were seventy-two thousand blacks on the island. Political conditions in Martinique were often disturbed. The island was captured by Rodney of the English fleet in 1762 and held for one year, when it was restored to France, then the English held it for eight years after the conquest by Sir John Jervis and Sir Charles Grey in 1794, and the French held it till 1809, when the English recaptured it and held it till 1814, when it was returned to France.

Marie Josephine Rose Tacher de la Pagerie, empress of France was born at Trois Ilets, Martinique, on the 24th of June, 1763. Her people, a family of the county of Blois, had settled in Mar-

tinique in 1726, and at the time of her birth her father held the post of harbormaster at Port Royal.

It was at the Convent of the Sisters of St. Joseph in Port Royal that Josephine Tacher de la Pagerie received her education. She was a charming young girl, noted for her beauty even in Martinique, where the girls of pure French blood are famous for loveliness, and was only thirteen years of age when her family betrothed her to the Viscount Beauharnais, a scion of an old family of the French nobility and the son of a former governor of Martinique.

Before she went to Paris to wed the viscount the story goes, Josephine met an old negress of Martinique, who was credited with the possession of wonderful powers of divination. The old woman told the fortune of the beautiful Creole and predicted for her that she would be "more than queen," but that she would live the last years of her life in great unhappiness.

The Viscount Beauharnais came to Martinique in 1786 to try and find grounds for divorce against his wife, of whom he was distractedly jealous, but the parliament of Paris dismissed his complaint. In the following year Josephine, then one of the great beauties of the court of Marie Antoinette, came back to Trois Ilets, the little town where she was born. She would probably have stayed there had not the uprisings on the island rendered her residence there dangerous. She went back to France, but she never forgot Martinique, and it was her interest in the West Indies that led to her ardent espousal of the cause of Toussaint L'Ouverture.

Martinique has not forgotten Josephine. The statue of the empress stood in the city of St. Pierre until everything was swept away on the terrible 8th of May, and it is likely that a new statue to the empress will arise in the new St. Pierre.

The oft-repeated phrase that "this is South America's century" is no idle one and the enterprise that is rebuilding St. Pierre will probably reap a large reward. The British government has realized the possibilities of the West Indies, and when the eruption of the Soufriere on the 7th of May, 1902, rendered half of the English island of St. Vincent uninhabitable, England subscribed three hundred and fifty thousand to the Lord Mayor's Fund for the relief of the island and its rehabilitation.

The commercial opportunities of the West Indies are yet in their infancy, and the interest which the United States has displayed in their trading possibilities is doing more for their future than centuries of foreign colony systems ever did. French capital, however, has now awakened to the chances Martinique offers it. And there is an element of romance in the Indies that appeals to the Gallic imagination, while there is an element of chance that appeals to the American gambling spirit.

The harbor of St. Pierre will in time no doubt present a scene of activity, the city will again flourish, despite the rashness of the attempt to live over a volcano. Pelee will smolder and in time men will again forget the dangers, for this is the way of the world.

SEX EQUALITY - - A SOLUTION OF THE WOMEN PROBLEM.

A wise man has come to the fore with some new conclusions concerning women. The theories advanced are based on the teachings of Darwin and Spencer, as well as on those of the latest and foremost supporters of the doctrine of evolution. Sex equality teaches that women are more intuitive, refined, unselfish and spiritual, but at the present time are distinctly inferior to men in initiative, resource, power and breadth of view. Sex equality shows that these mental differences between men and women are not fundamental nor the result of sex, but are caused by environment and heredity; that when each sex is fully developed there will not be, as now, masculine traits and feminine traits, but simply human traits; that women will be as mathematical, logical, philosophical and inventive as men, and men will be as intuitive, refined and spiritual as women. Sex equality is a strong plea for extending democracy into all phases of human life. Furthermore, there are given good reasons for believing that the diminutive stature and inferior strength now characteristic of women are the result, not of sex, but of habits of life and heredity. Those who accept the doctrine of evolution will have difficulty in denying these conclusions.