

A TOUR AMONG TROPICAL ISLANDS

[Special Correspondence.]

Nassau, New Providence, Bahamas, Feb. 23.—It is evident that at last the tide of winter travel from the United States is leaving southern Europe and setting toward the Indies of our own magnificent western continent. At the sudden outbreak of the war with Spain one of the leading magazines of America wanted an illustrated article on Porto Rico and wanted it quick. The magazine editor searched among newspaper and magazine writers for weeks and finally found just one literary man who had been in Porto Rico and could write intelligently of it. One man in a country of 70,000,000 people who had made the tour of one of the most famous and fertile islands in the world! That shows the ignorance of Americans concerning their own side of the



WEST INDIAN TYPES.

world in 1898. For more than a century they had traveled to Europe and ignored the wonderful, beautiful tropical islands lying at their feet. The Spanish-American war called their attention to these islands, and now a few of them are beginning to spend on their own side of the world some of the money they have gained in the United States instead of rushing off to scatter it in Europe.

The tide of winter travel has this season set more strongly than ever before toward the West Indies. This old town of Nassau appears to be attracting many Yankee tourists who seek to escape the trying cold of their own climate. No doubt the well organized American has such control over himself that the rigors of the United States winter climate simply serve to brace him up, but for people who are so far from well organized that very cold weather fairly draws them up double and sends them, shivering, through the year from December first till March last no spot of earth is more delightful than Nassau. In Europe it has been noted for generations because of its benefit to consumptive invalids. The climate is ideal almost. In Porto Rico, our new West Indian possession, the American sweaters with the melting heat in January. That heat is moist and sticky, like the climate of Manila. Here in the beautiful Bahamas the high temperature is not so trying. Besides, the Bahamas have not many mosquitoes.

Nassau is about 600 miles north of the northern point of Porto Rico, which makes the Nassau climate cooler. It is one of the most accessible points from the States. This island of New Providence is only one night's sail from Palm Beach, Fla. It is a favorite trip. From New York by steamer the journey requires three days. The tourist parties now planned from the States bring these lovely tropical islands within reach of all ordinarily well to do Americans. The usual plan is for an itinerary to be laid out to include a certain time, which may be anywhere from one week to six. A steamer takes the party aboard, then sails from one seaport to another among the West Indies, delivering freight and passengers, stopping from six to thirty-six hours at a port. This gives passengers opportunity to go ashore and sample the glories of each island.

Several steamer lines are engaged in this traffic, some having their route among one set of islands, others another set. One tour will perhaps take in the island of St. Thomas (Danish), next ruined, hapless French Martinique; then Grenada, Porto Rico and Cuba, finishing with Nassau, Bahamas, before returning to the States. Another route will be laid out only to Porto Rico and Cuba.

Four or five different nations are represented in the ownership of these islands, yet Spanish ways and architecture are traced in all, a melancholy reminder of the centuries when all these waters were called the Spanish main, because Spain was mistress of the West Indies and of the seas.

During the trip the tourist lives upon the ship, making excursions to points of interest while the steamer is in the ports.

Each island and group of islands has its own charm, the prolific African predominating as an inhabitant in them all. At Nassau one of the places to look at is the marine garden, a landscape under the sea. You are conveyed slowly over the waters of the bay at this point in a glass bottomed boat. You look down through the boat's bottom away into the depths of the pure green water and in the mud and slime you see wonderful and beautiful plants of many kinds growing. Nature placed them there, and there they live and thrive. WILHELMINA SCHIFF.

THE FOLKS WHO WRITE.

Gossip and Anecdotes Concerning Authors You Know.

[Special Correspondence.]
New York, March 2.—William Allen White, the Kansas writer, delights in a good joke; also he is lacking in reverence for those individuals who are known as personages in what he terms "the effete east." Mr. White was in Washington a short time ago watching the antics of congress, when he saw a chance to have some fun with Frank N. Doubleday, the New York publisher, and Edward Bok, the editor of the Ladies' Home Journal.

White received a telegram from Doubleday and Bok that they were coming through Kansas on a certain day and on a certain train. Thereupon White notified all the newspapers in the state that Mr. Bok intended to make rear platform speeches at all the principal stations and would be glad to meet his subscribers. He further said that Mr. Bok at the stations where he did not find it convenient to make speeches would be found in the train prepared to give advice on matrimony, how to save money, the care of the teeth, embroidery and how to build houses on a salary of \$6.06 a week. It was announced that Mr. Bok was pining to talk personally with his subscribers and that Doubleday was there to meet all authors who had manuscripts to sell.

White thinks that Doubleday and Bok had a nice neighborly time in Kansas, but he came east without waiting to find out.

No matter where their homes happen to be or where they pass other seasons of the year, most popular authors spend a large part of the winter in New York. Thomas Nelson Page is an exception. He is rarely seen here, for his winter home is in Washington.

Mr. Page has made a fortune from his books. He married Mrs. Field, the widow of Mr. Leiter's partner, who is also possessed of very great wealth. Their home is one of the largest and finest at the capital, and both Mr. Page and his wife, being fond of gaiety, entertain frequently. Their dinners are noted not only for the menus, which are prepared with taste and judgment, but for the bright people one is sure to meet at their mahogany. The Page dining room is extremely handsome, and the living rooms are so homelike and attractive that a noted clubman said he disliked ever to go there, for it pained him to come away. Mr. Page is the president of the Chevy Chase club, which is devoted to hunting and outdoor sport, and a leading spirit in the Metropolitan club.

The editor of the reformed and Harperized Metropolitan Magazine, Mr. John Kendrick Bangs, like the rest of



MR. BANGS WAS PAINED TO OBSERVE.

humanity, suffers occasionally from the vagaries of parlor maids. Not long ago it was decided that his library shelves should be thoroughly dusted. Accordingly the books were carefully removed.

Now, Mr. Bangs had a grandfather who wrote quite as voluminously as himself, though upon a rather more religious range of subjects. All these pious volumes had been carefully and respectfully segregated. Mr. Bangs supposed they always would be.

But he had failed to reckon with the agency of the parlor maid. When he next entered his library, he was pained to observe his grandfather's volume of "Letters on Sanctification" standing shoulder to shoulder with his own "Houseboat on the Styx."

Mr. Bangs is said to have murmured, "And the sins of the children shall be visited upon the fathers."

Miss Beatrice Harraden in a recent interview makes some rather interesting revelations of her methods of work. She could not, she says, write with other people around her, so she retires in the morning to a studio standing in a delightful old garden. Here she composes her story. Two hours of steady labor is all she requires of herself at one sitting. She recognizes that some may consider she escapes rather easily, but she says she has a way of thinking out her stories beforehand, so that the actual writing is done very swiftly, without hesitation, and at the end of the two hours she has produced a considerable quantity of work. She points out also that with all her facility she has not been prolific and speaks of having spent five years on one book.

RICHARD TUPPER.

At the Virginia Springs. He—We must economize. She—Then you should give up smoking and I will have my gowns cut lower.—Judge.

HATS FOR SPRING.

An Advance Peep at the New Easter Millinery.

[Special Correspondence.]
New York, March 2.—There is something decidedly new in the finest of the hats designed expressly for Easter. They are not only new, but striking and remarkably becoming. I refer to the turban shape, which has just enough of that form to distinguish it from the others now in vogue.

One exceedingly striking hat was in turban shape, with the brim two inches deep, standing straight up all around and being set out from the crown nearly three inches in front and an inch and a half in the back. The whole was covered with cream colored velvet and overlaid with rich chuney lace, mat white. Under the brim was a series of folds of crepe lisse in a deep cream. Across the crown and reaching down to the edge of the brim was a flat band of mink fur held by a fancy button. Across the back was set a bunch of frosted grapes and leaves. The grapes were in several stages of ripeness. Most of the leaves were white, and so were the grapes, but the upper leaves were shaded and frosted so that the whole made a beautiful arrangement of color.

Another beautiful hat is in a modified turban shape and is of ivory white velvet, fine white chip and dark green velvet. The hat is of the chip, all except the brim, which is of green velvet bound with ivory white velvet top and bottom. There is a drapery of the white around the crown and at the back is a donkey ear bow of both white and green, two ends standing up and two falling over the hair in the back.

The flat styles are quite as fashionable as they have been. An example of this shape is made of greenish gray velvet, with the brim surrounded by a drapery of handsome white lace, which falls in the back to the collar. A very unique trimming is formed of white velvet calla lilies and their foliage. These droop with the lace at the back. Another hat was made on these same lines, but had morning glories in all their delicate and velvety tints instead of the callas.

It is rare to see such large blossoms on hats, but this year it seems as if each person had her own ideas and worked them out at will. Some of the hats of the season have the most fragile and delicate flowers, and then again we find great chrysanthemums, roses, pond lilies and now callas. The manufacture of these flowers is real art, as the tiniest defect of nature is copied, even to having some of the blossoms faded and browned by the sun. Leaves bitten by worms and twigs with spider webs woven in them are often found.

There was one hat with something of a faraway look of oriental royalty about it. One might think it originally intended for a shah if it were not among the new head coverings for the fair women of our own free land. The turban had a deep brim, full three inches, and set out but about three inches over the brow and was quite close in the back. The whole was covered with white Indian crape, which has the deepest and most pronounced crinkles of any crape. This gave a beautiful effect of light and shade. On the left side was a large ornament of pearls, bordered with a line of black and gold cord. Two rows of this crossed the front and were festooned up at the right side under another pearl ornament and then reached the center of the back.



EASTER MILLINERY.

forming a military loop with tiny piquets at the end of the cord. At the left side and held by the ornament was a beautiful incurved aigret of white with a faint yellow tint.

For more ordinary wear there are basket weaves in all kinds of straws, the most of them coarse, but still with quite a number of the always desirable chips, both black and white. The folded chiffon brims are still among the favorites, and many will be worn all next season. The chiffon must be black and well applied. It is by no means an easy thing for an amateur to do. There are shapes of the folded chiffon already prepared for those who wish to trim their own hats, and they are far cheaper in the long run than to try to make them. I speak by the card.

Speaking of flowers on one of these hats reminds me that I saw a hat made of soft folds of French gray chiffon. The crown and under the left side of the brim were covered with beautiful parma violets. Here and there a green leaf showed, and all the rest was as though one had fastened as many close bunches of those lovely flowers to the hat as could be made to stay on. Gray in that particular shade with velvet parma violets and a little green make something very Frenchy and stylish.

A gray zibeline suit for Easter has a turban hat to go with it. This is trimmed only with violets, but such masses! The combination is very elegant and also springlike. OLIVE HARPER.

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