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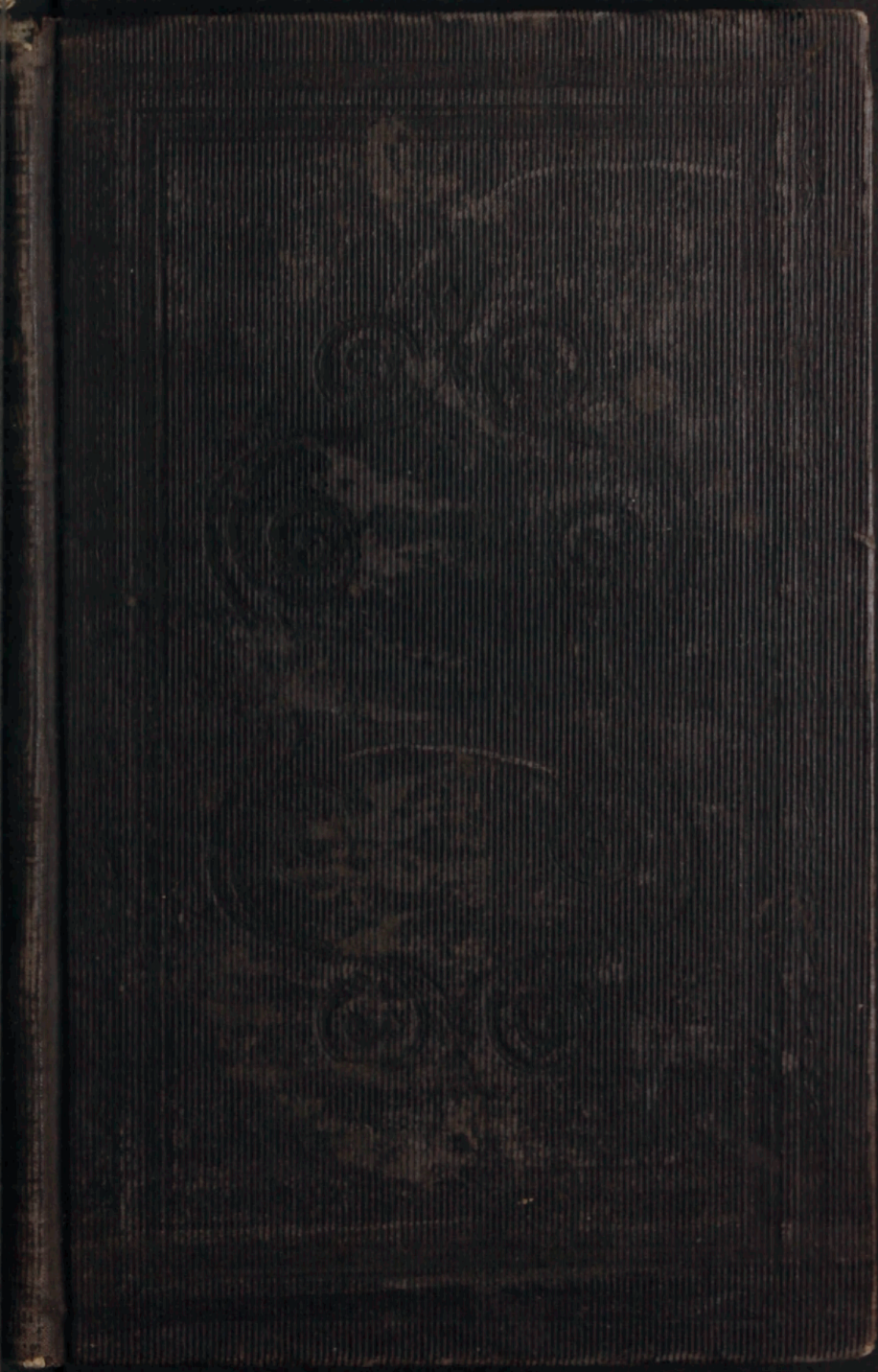
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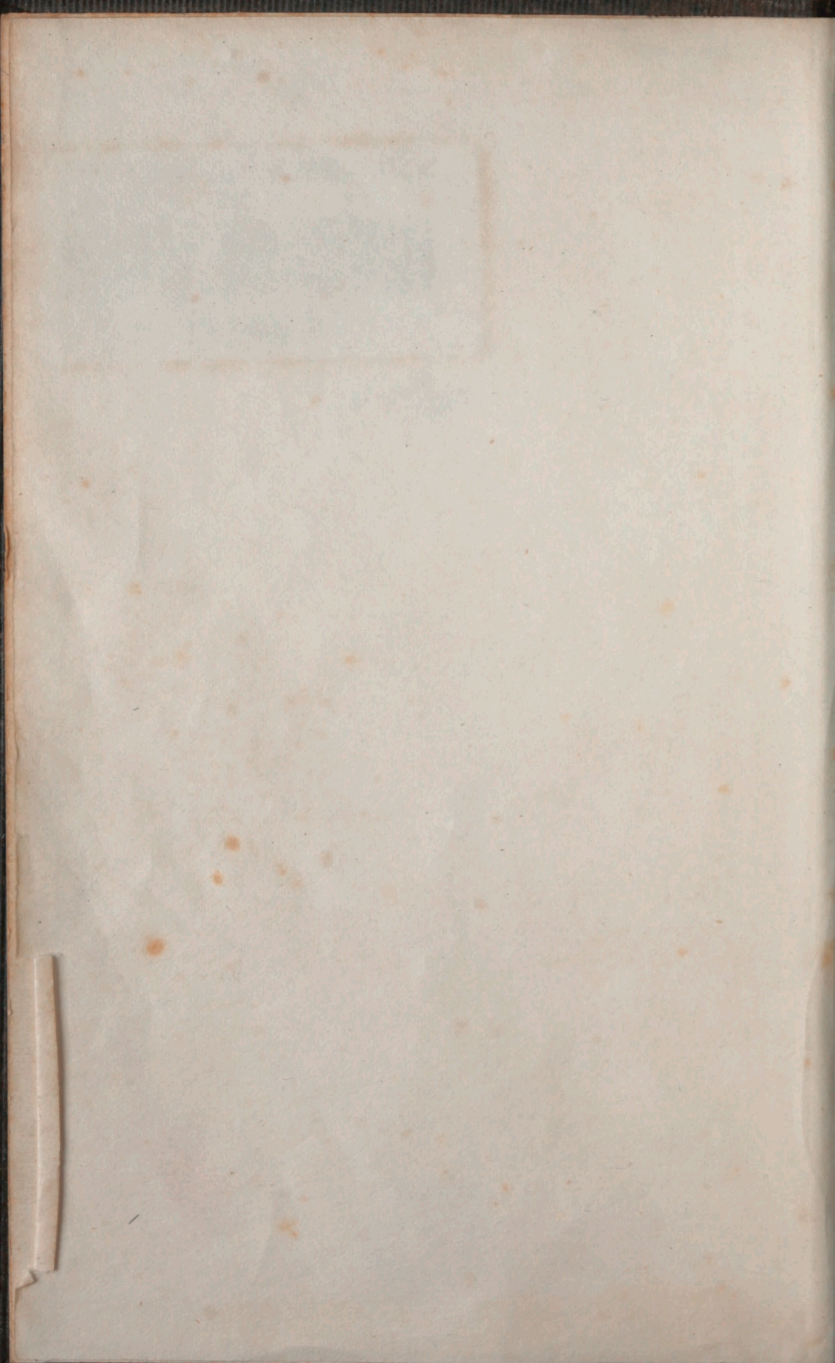


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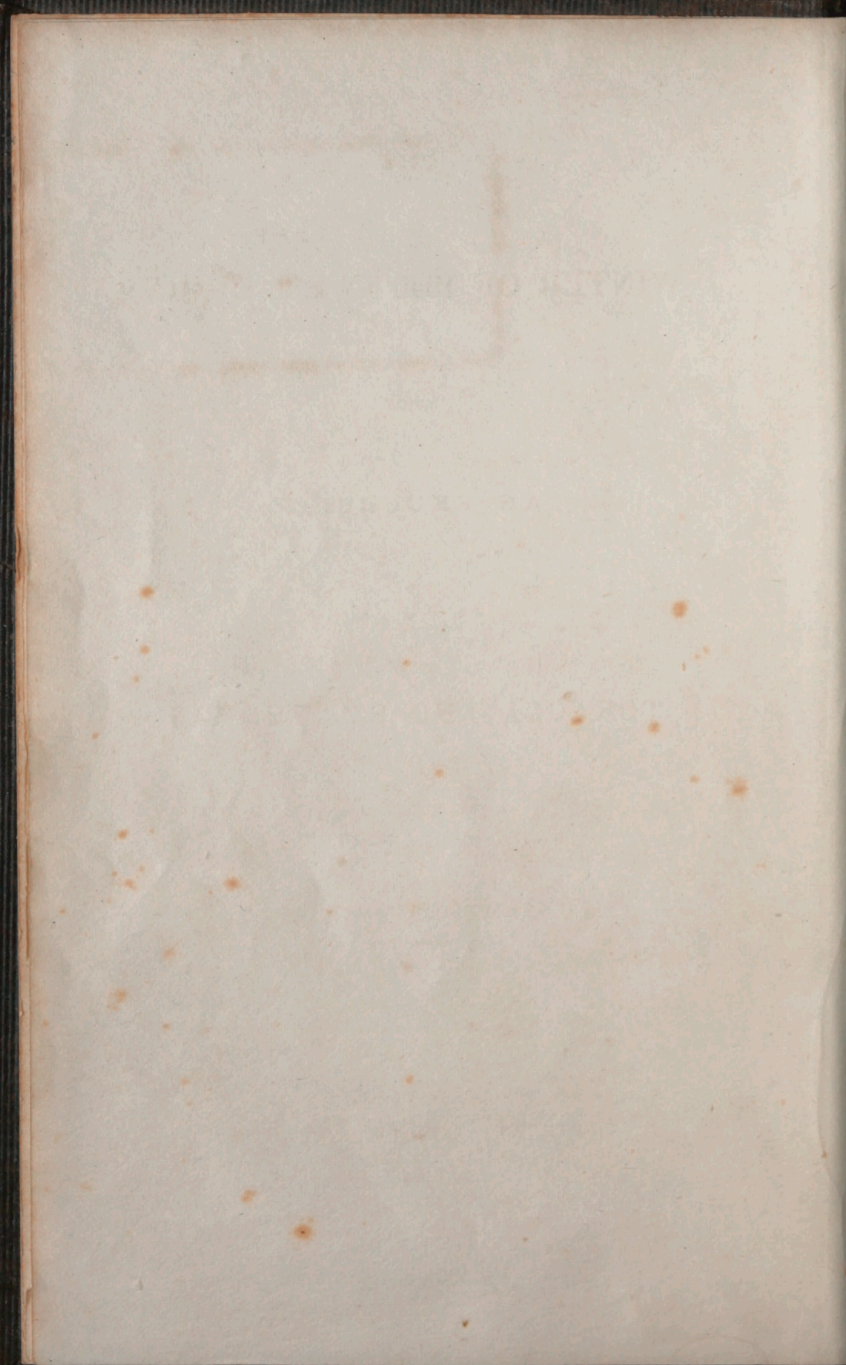




WINTER 1881



TO THE



THE
WINTER OF 1840 IN ST. CROIX,

WITH

AN EXCURSION

TO

TORTOLA AND ST. THOMAS.

BY JAMES SMITH, ESQ.

NEW-YORK:
PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR.

.....
1840.



117

WARRANT OF 1640 IN F.F. CROSS.

A. V. EXCERPTIO



TORONTO A. V. EXCERPTIO

BY JAMES H. H. H. H.

PRINTED BY WILLIAM OSBORN, 88 WILLIAM-STREET.



P R E F A C E .

A PART of the following pages, consisting of a journal, were written in St. Croix to a friend in New-York ; these, together with the rest, are now offered to the public. Very little has been published of this Island ; it is therefore presumed the work will be acceptable, and especially to those who visit the Danish Colonies. The details of the outward passage may be uninteresting to the general reader, while the traveller to St. Croix may find amusement in the comparative progress of the two voyagers.

PREFACE.

A part of the following pages, consisting of a journal, were written in St. Croix to a friend in New-York; these, together with the rest are now offered to the public. Very little has been published of this Island; it is therefore presumed the work will be acceptable, and especially to those who visit the Danish Colonies. The details of the outward passage may be uninteresting to the general reader, while the latter to St. Croix may find amusement in the comparative progress of the two voyages.

JOURNAL OF TRAVELS.

HAVING determined to pass the winter in St. Croix, we left Sing Sing on the 4th of November last, for the city of New-York; from whence we expected to embark on board the brig Eliza, between the 15th and 20th of the same month. The time for sailing was deferred from day to day, until the 2d of December, at 11 o'clock, A. M., when all hands being on board, and having a fair wind, we hoisted sail and commenced our voyage. The novelty of the scene on board the ship, fully engrossed my mind; the orders of the captain, the activity of the sailors in hoisting and spreading our canvass to the wind, the arrangement of our berths, the introduction of our fellow passengers, &c. &c., produced new and pleasurable sensations. The brig was commanded by Captain Lockwood, of Stamford, Connecticut.

Our passengers consisted of Mr. N—— and lady, Doctor S——, Miss B. S——, Miss Van B——, and Miss F——, all of St. Croix; Miss T——, of Porto Rico; Master R—— W——, of New-York; my lady, niece, and self; Thomas Brown and wife, our steward and stewardess, colored people, belonging to Tappan Sloat. In a few hours we passed down to the light-house, and having our pilot on board, proceeded two or three miles to sea, when the wind coming from the east, and the weather appearing unfavorable, we put back and came to anchor in the Horse Shoe, where we remained until Tuesday, at 12 o'clock, when we shifted our position and anchored nearer to Staten Island, with a view, so soon as the weather should permit, of proceeding directly to sea, without the necessity of beating round Sandy Hook light-house. The wind on Monday blew very hard; on Tuesday it became a perfect hurricane, which continued during Tuesday night with awful severity. Most of our ladies became very sick on Monday, and so continued for several days; my niece was an exception. After the first day she took her meals with us, and turned out to be a good seaman. For my own part, I was not sick to exceed one hour in all.

On Monday and Tuesday nights, I listened with much interest to the conversation of the captain, pilot, and others, who, having been long employed as sailors, gave many interesting accounts of voyages, shipwrecks, hair-breadth escapes, &c. &c., in all which it appeared that they had managed with great skill and judgment. We breakfasted at 8, lunched at 12, dined at 2, and took tea at 6 o'clock. At 12 o'clock at noon on Wednesday, having an easterly wind, we weighed anchor, passed the light-house, and put to sea. At 4 o'clock, P. M., we parted with our pilot, and proceeded on our voyage. The great object now was to keep off the land; fortunately, the wind enabled us to effect it, and by 12 o'clock at night our apprehensions ceased. We had a heavy sea, and continued our course, which was due south, making about eight knots per hour. On Thursday, the wind being still fair, we spread all our canvass, and made rapid progress. During the day, one of our sailors fell sick; the captain administered calomel and raw brandy, and the sailor recovered. At 3 o'clock on Friday morning I awoke, and was satisfied, from the motion of the ship, caused by a short sea, that we were in the Gulph Stream, which,

upon inquiry, I found to be so ; by 8 o'clock the same morning, we got through the Stream. The weather now became mild ; we took down our stove, and bid adieu to the winter. Our ladies came on deck, and we had many pleasant parties. The latitude this day was, by observation, $35^{\circ} 8'$. On Saturday, the wind lulled away a little, the weather became very hot, (say as hot as June at Sing Sing ;) I changed my dress, putting on summer clothes. Our latitude this day was, by observation, $33^{\circ} 29'$.

Sunday, December the 8th, our passengers being collected in the cabin, we read a portion of scripture, and one of Bishop Porteus' lectures—our latitude was $32^{\circ} 48'$. We were now opposite the Bermudas—had a fine gentle breeze. On Monday, December the 9th, the wind carried us one point off our course—had some rain and squalls—took in our sails ; all the passengers are employed in reading. Tuesday, the 10th of December, a clear sky, very long waves—the brig rolls excessively—the latitude is $30^{\circ} 12'$, and the longitude is $66^{\circ} 08'$. We had now arrived in the horse latitudes, so called because ships here are apt to be becalmed for days together, to become short of water, and be obliged

to throw their horses overboard. It is known to most persons, that our ships carry out horses for the West India markets. We passed through these latitudes with a fair wind; after which, on Tuesday night, we were becalmed. The sailors said it was an Irish hurricane, because we could not tell from what quarter the wind blew, but the vessel still rocked most uncomfortably, by reason of the heavy sea, which our captain said must be occasioned by a storm on the American coast.

Wednesday, the 11th December, had a fine wind—saw a schooner within a mile of us. During the night, a large bird came on board, which we kept for some hours, when it escaped. We had two chronometers on board. By these, after making our observations, we ascertained our longitude. We corrected our watches daily, as we changed our longitude; our latitude this day was $28^{\circ} 59'$, and longitude $64^{\circ} 25'$. We had a party of ladies this evening in the bow of the ship, to hear the sailors sing "I'll make little Mary my bride;" the moon shone bright, and the evening was very pleasant. Thursday, December 22, had a head wind. The weather was excessively hot. We put up our awning, but

had great difficulty in being comfortable—our latitude was $28^{\circ} 05'$. Friday, December 13, wind nearly ahead—latitude $27^{\circ} 10'$, longitude $63^{\circ} 40'$. Saturday, December 14, had a fine fresh trade wind—at 5 o'clock, descried a vessel, supposed to be a French brig, bound to New-Orleans. We saw several vessels during this day—the sailing was rather dull.

Sunday, December 15, wind ahead—latitude $22^{\circ} 08'$, longitude $62^{\circ} 30'$. This day we read the Episcopal service, and also a sermon.

Monday, December 16, very little wind—latitude $21^{\circ} 26'$. This was a fine moon-light night—all the ladies were on the deck of the vessel.

Tuesday, December 17, wind ahead—all the passengers called to see a whale. At 12 o'clock, we saw a great many flying fish—latitude $20^{\circ} 02'$, longitude $61^{\circ} 42'$.

Wednesday, December 18, a perfect calm. The ship turned to the north—the waves ran exceedingly high and long; we judged there had been at the north a heavy north-west gale. We saw a brig five miles ahead, which completely disappeared with every rolling sea. Great numbers of dolphin now appeared about the ship; the captain and all the passengers are much engaged

in graining them. After striking several, the captain finally succeeded in graining one of them, which, to the great joy of the passengers, was brought on board. It weighed about fourteen pounds. The various bright colors which it assumed in its dying struggle, were exceedingly curious and beautiful. We ate it for dinner; it was rather a coarse fish. Our latitude was $19^{\circ} 29'$, longitude $61^{\circ} 40'$.

Thursday, December 10, a fair wind. We sailed six knots per hour—are said to be one hundred and thirty miles from St. Croix at 8 o'clock, A. M. It is said we are not to exceed sixty miles from land; the sea water puts on a greenish color, in place of the deep blue, which it has heretofore exhibited. The captain predicted that we should see the highland of St. Martins by 12 o'clock, and a little after eleven we descried them. This is in evidence of the great accuracy with which these mariners now navigate the ocean. We had been out of sight of land for fifteen days, and yet it is almost exactly known where we are. In the course of an hour we were greeted with large flocks of gulls, and other sea-birds, which came to welcome us to the West Indies. Every thing now put on a cheer-

ful aspect, and our voyage (which was considered a long one) was supposed to be ended ; but in a short time the wind became dull, and our progress was slow. During this day, we descried St. Bartholomew's and Saba, which islands we left some forty miles to the south-east. Our course is about south-west. Towards evening, this day, we hove in sight of a brig, which, after viewing attentively, our people considered to be of a very suspicious character. Some apprehensions were entertained that she might be a pirate ; and I observed more or less anxiety upon the countenances of the captain and some of our West India passengers. This state of things continued for an hour or two, when, on a nearer view, she was determined to be what the captain called *a black bird*, or slaver, bound undoubtedly to Porto Rico, with slaves from Africa. We came within a half a mile of this ship, when we distinctly saw her wind sails, and could count between sixty and eighty men on the deck, who were supposed to be the fighting men of the crew. It was now after sun-set, and the slaves were undoubtedly shut up in the hold of the vessel. During the day, these slave-ships bring their prisoners on deck, oil their limbs, and make them dance. We were not yet

quite relieved from our apprehensions, for we feared that if the slaver wanted water or provisions, she would, without ceremony, and without compensation, take them from us. We therefore passed her in great silence, and were glad that she discovered no disposition to intermeddle with us.

I would have paid to the full extent of my ability, to have seen an English man-of-war encounter this devil incarnate; and at this moment I felt more than ever my friendship and affection for our mother country. If this splendid nation was withdrawn from the earth, what a naked void would be left behind.

Friday morning, December the 20th, was a fine morning—very little wind; we were said to be seventy-six miles from St. Croix. At 9 o'clock, from the mast-head, we discovered the Virgin Gorda, latitude $18^{\circ} 25'$. At 5 o'clock, P. M., saw the Virgin Gorda from the deck of the vessel; also descried the Island of Tortola. And the next morning, being Saturday, the 21st of December, at 7 o'clock, A. M., found ourselves opposite the north-east end of St. Croix. And now looking to the north-east, we saw Virgin Gorda, Tortola, and St. Johns, and at the north-

west, St. Thomas. We passed with a moderate gale down the north side of the island, in full view of the highlands, interspersed with some few plantations, windmills, green fields of canes, &c. &c. Shortly thereafter, we passed the town of Bassin, or Christian Stedt, and very soon approached the west end of the island. Several beautiful plantations are now visible, amongst which I enumerate Hamsbay and Mount Washington; the former belonging to Mr. F——, and the latter to Mr. N——, one of our esteemed fellow passengers. As our brig smoothly glided along the border of the island, we had many greetings from the plantations on the shore, and especially from the beautifully situated mansion house on the Hamsbay estate; the cambric handkerchiefs were flourished from every window. This scene was rendered more exciting, from the fact of our having on board a young lady, a daughter of this mansion, who was just returning from the United States, where she had been for her education; her greetings, and the excitement which a child naturally manifests on a near approach to a long absent parent, contributed not a little to heighten the scene. In a short time, too, the splendid road on the margin of the sea was

covered with carriages, all driving with great glee to meet their friends. On our arrival, at 2 o'clock, P. M., we anchored off West End, or Frederick Stedt, and in a few minutes we were boarded by the custom-house officers, and likewise many of the friends of our passengers. Here was much greeting, and many cordial welcomes. I could not but mark especially the hearty manner in which the return of Mr. N—— was welcomed. When he landed, it appeared as if he would have been pulled to pieces; so many people wanted his hands and his arms. This gentleman is one of the most essential inhabitants of the island; he is a judge of the reconciling court, and as such, well entitled to the character of a peace-maker. We were speedily landed, and conducted with great civility in a private carriage to our lodgings, at the well known boarding-house of Miss Betsey Briggs, where we have permanently taken our lodgings. Every thing is now new. All that we see, all that we feel, all that we touch, and all that we eat or drink, produces new sensations. The village of West End faces the sea on the west, and looks down to Porto Rico, which island, as well as several others, can be seen from the highlands of

St. Croix. The first street is called Strandgade—contains about twenty-five buildings, situated on the east side of the street, (the west side being the Caribbean Sea.) The lower parts of these buildings are stores, or counting-houses, and the upper stories are residences. There are no chimneys except in the kitchens. There are two other streets in the rear of Strand-street, of equal length; they are called Kings and Queens streets. There are no fine buildings in the town. There are two principal churches, the Danish and the Episcopal, besides which the Moravians and the Catholics have places of worship. There are no Methodists, Baptists, or Quakers. Upon inquiry, I have been informed that neither of those sects would be permitted by the government to reside here. There are perhaps three hundred whites, and one thousand blacks, in 'Frederick Stedt. The heat is not oppressive, nor are the moschetos troublesome.

On Sunday, the next day after our arrival, I went to the Episcopal church, to hear the celebrated J. J. Gurney preach; he is an orthodox Quaker. I made his acquaintance, and felt that I was much honored in being permitted to know one who knew his Master's will, and did it. This

gentleman was an intimate friend of the great Mr. Wilberforce, an individual who, in a religious point of view, has done more for the world in the last half century, than any other man of his time. Mr. Gurney is travelling through the West Indies with a view of preaching the gospel. He is a gentleman of great taste, and takes sketches of much of the remarkable scenery of the country. He preached here by the special permission of the governor, and received great and marked attention from the leading men of the place.

On Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays, we were engaged in obtaining our baggage, and in receiving calls from friends; and on Thursdays and Fridays, we received presents of fruits from several of the planters, such as oranges, pomme de cythere, shattucks, sappeditlos, Caraccas plums, belle apples, alligator pears, bannanas, muscatelle grapes, cocoanuts, &c. &c. Our tables literally groaned with fruit. We could not eat the tenth part of it. We supplied not only our friends, but the public table where we boarded, for several days. The ladies of my party also received elegant boquets of flowers, roses, &c. &c.

ST. CROIX.

ON Tuesday afternoon, being accompanied by our respectable friend Doctor S——, we rode round a tour of some eight or ten miles by the estates called Mount Victory, Annally, Rose Hill, Spring Garden, &c. This was decidedly the most romantic and interesting road I ever travelled; beside the novelty of the objects, the surprising manner in which the road winds through the deep valleys, engrossed much of our attention. The first objects which attract the visiter, are the villages scattered over the country at distances of two or three miles. They are made up of the dwelling-houses of the planters and their overseers, the wind-mills, boiling and curing houses, outhouses, and the cottages of the slaves. The whole settlement is usually comprised in two or three acres of ground, depending upon the extent of the plantation, which is commonly one hundred and fifty acres; but it occasionally happens that two or three of these are united, making in all four or five hundred acres under the cultivation of one proprietor. The negro huts are perhaps eight feet

high, thatched with canes, or covered with shingles; they are very compactly located, and there are fifty and upward on an acre of ground. It was Christmas eve, and we observed the negroes of a large plantation, say one hundred in number, collected in front of a store-house receiving their rations for Christmas day. The scene was new, and excited much interest. The rations ordinarily consist of indian meal and dried fish; but upon this occasion, wheat flour, pork, sugar and rum were dealt out. While some were receiving their boons, others having obtained them, exhibited their articles on a small cloth spread on the ground. The jabbering of these one hundred slaves, and the confusion that attended the scene, very much riveted my attention. It appeared to me as if, in some instances, they were disputing about the measure of food that had been meted out to them. We rode past the finest orange, lime and other trees loaded with fruit, and presenting a luxuriance of foliage wholly new to us. The grounds were often yellow with the ripe fruit which had fallen from the trees. We had the use of a carriage and horses four hours, for which we paid two dollars. On Wednesday, being Christmas day, we were invited to the

house of an eminent physician, who is the proprietor of one or two plantations, and whose slaves, according to custom, on that day visited their master in a body, shook hands with him, and received an entertainment given by him, after which they danced for his amusement, or that of his friends, for several hours. We were much entertained, as well by the music as the dancing of these people. This gentleman is the proprietor of one or two hundred slaves, and it was no inconsiderable task to greet so many; it occupied much of the morning. Their instruments of music were rude drums, upon which they made a loud noise by tattooing with their hands, the women at the same time singing somewhat like the Shaking Quakers; after this music they danced without much order. They did not exhibit much hilarity in this exercise, for the most part their countenances were rather sad; probably they were restrained by the presence of their master. Christmas day and the day thereafter, are days of recreation for the slaves. Our boarding-house was visited by several hundreds, who danced for our amusement, and who introduced their queen to our inmates. She was a very good looking girl, and was dressed in satins,

with decorations of flowers, jewels, &c. &c. She was preceded by two waiting-maids, bearing on staffs some insignia of office. These girls danced quite well, after which, a large circle being formed, the queen herself appeared in the centre of it, and after many graceful courtesies she commenced to dance alone, and continued to amuse us for twenty minutes or more, when she retired. This queen is herself a slave to a colored woman. She is chosen for life, and her decorations are furnished by contribution of the slaves. It is said this custom of having a queen is traceable back to Africa. I knew a planter from Demarara, who, upon one occasion, purchased a lot of Africans from on board a slave ship; for some considerable time they were observed to pay great deference to one of the females of their number, and to endeavor, upon every occasion, to screen her from severe labor. Upon inquiry, it was found that she was the queen of their nation, and had been taken prisoner and enslaved with the rest of them. And what is remarkable, this deference is said to have continued until her death.

There is something very gratifying in the appearance of the Sunday school connected with

the Episcopal Church in this town. There are upwards of five hundred pupils, principally colored people; they are learning to read, and I occasionally found portions of them convened in evening schools, with some of their most advanced pupils employed as teachers. On Friday I received a polite invitation to dine with Major G., at whose house I met the acting governor, and other principal gentlemen of the island. In the course of this entertainment, the probable effect which a recently reported ordinance of the French government, manumitting their slaves, would have upon the Danish government, was alluded to. It seemed to be admitted that this government could not hold out long against the combined influence of the English and French courts, and that manumission would soon follow in the Danish islands. I think the planters here, (if well paid for the slaves,) will not oppose the measure. Both the condition of the master and the slave would, in my opinion, be much benefited by it. I have observed the slaves as they labor in the fields and elsewhere, and I am satisfied that it costs the planter more to work his land under the slave system, than it would do if he could hire every thing done by the job. I

would not pay them by the day. I would survey a plantation, and have it cut up into acre lots, and pay by the acre. The lazy and unambitious manner in which the slave moves in and about his work, would exceedingly try the patience of our people. Upon some occasions, when the wind turned the wind-mills briskly, I heard the planters complain that they could not procure the canes to be brought from the fields fast enough for the supply of their mills, which I could very well conceive, when I saw the manner in which this labor was performed; twenty mules, each attended with a slave, were employed in bringing (piled on iron hooks) small burdens of canes; and thus supplying the mills. I presume that four good horses, with two large wagons, and six laborers, would do more of this work than fifty slaves with a proportionate number of mules, allowing the canes to be brought the distance of one half mile. It appears to me, too, that the ground might be prepared for the reception of the young cane, by ploughs suitably constructed. I saw upon one occasion about fifty men and women, with their hoes, engaged in forming a cane row or furrow. The overseer, with a large straw hat, was sitting on a

horse, about ten feet in front of them, to see, as I presumed, that they worked faithfully. He appeared satisfied with their performance; but I thought I could perceive that for fifty laborers they were doing very little work, and that one large plough, with two pair of oxen and two hands, would have done twice as much. I have been told that labor cannot be conducted here with the energy that I imagine and that nothing but the lifeless sloth of the slave can be sustained. It is alleged that even horses lose their spirit and activity in a few months. I do not subscribe to these opinions. I aver, in the first place, that slave labor has been always the same, whether in cold or hot countries; that while it existed in the State of New-York, it was marked by somewhat of the same character: indeed, a slight knowledge of human nature will satisfy us that it cannot be otherwise. The human body cannot be brought to labor industriously, without mental stimulous. A continual incentive of profit, pleasure, or honor, seems indispensably necessary to the accomplishment of an object. A few years since, the planters of this island were permitted to hire slaves to labor on Sundays by the job; (the custom

has been now very properly suppressed by the Danish Government ;) while that practice existed, however, it was remarked that the slave performed more than three times the labor which he did on any other day.

I have also been the more confirmed in this opinion from witnessing the dances of these negroes when wholly freed from the master's restraining influence. Those dances have been conducted for two days in this village, with an untiring activity and life, which convinces me that the black man, even in St. Croix, only wants a sufficient object to animate his exertions, and to lead him to labor as faithfully, and to husband his resources as economically, as the white laborer of other countries.

The roads in this island are remarkably fine. For the most part, they are equal to the Third Avenue which leads from the city of New-York to Harlem, without the hills which occasionally occur on that road. Horses on these roads are driven without judgment or mercy. I have ridden myself a distance of six or seven miles without breaking the trot. This is enough to kill any horse ; it is therefore no wonder that a good horse soon loses his spirits here. A gentleman

from one of our eastern States, who has been with us but a few days, and who brought his horse and carriage with him, has been in the habit of riding out on these fine roads for some eight or ten days. He observed to me yesterday that his horse did not seem to be quite well. I informed him I thought he could find the cause of the indisposition in the fine roads of St. Croix. I understand that horses are known to do better in hilly than in level countries. The owner of this fine animal is tempted here as often as he rides out, to push him beyond his strength. There are, I am told, many instances of horses here remaining fine for years with the same kind and proper treatment which they receive in the United States. A blacksmith from the State of Maine, who pursues his business in this village, tells me that he can do as much or more work here than he could do at home.

In this island slavery exists in its mildest form. The Danish government, with great justice and humanity, regulate and restrain the relations and duties which subsist between the master and the slave. Amongst other things, if the slave is desirous to buy his freedom, and has laid up a sufficient sum of money for that purpose, (which a

prudent slave can always do,) it is not discretionary with the master whether he will sell or not, nor can he demand an arbitrary price for the slave ; he is bound to sell, and that for a reasonable price ; and the authorities, at the instance of the slave, appoint appraisers who affix such price ; and so desirous is the master to sell, that I am told it is not unusual for him to take one hundred dollars less than the appraised value. So in regard to punishment. The slave does not labor here under the influence of the lash. The master cannot inflict punishment at his discretion. I copy the following from the ordinance of Governor Van Sholton, bearing date the seventh day of May, 1838:—"The chastisement with tamarind whips or rods on the bared body is henceforth abolished on every estate, and the owners, administrators, or managers, are authorized, in cases where corporeal chastisement may be necessary, to inflict it with a tamp, and which tamp will be delivered from the police office for a reasonable payment. A male is only to be given twelve and a female six stripes, the men across the shoulders, and the women as heretofore, but over two garments. The latter should as rarely as possible receive this chastisement ;

but at all events, neither males nor females are to be punished on estates oftener than twice in a week. During field work, the drivers are henceforth to use instead of tamarind whips, a cane of three feet long and one and a half inches in circumference, with which, if necessary for the immediate preservation of order, he can inflict two stripes at one time, and not oftener than twice in one day.

“It is also permitted the respective owners, administrators, or managers, to dictate a punishment on the estate not exceeding forty-eight hours solitary confinement on bread and water, or eight days’ confinement during their hours of rest; but when the fault is of such a nature as to deserve a severe punishment, the transgressor is to be sent to the police. Every punishment ought accurately to be inserted in the estate journals, and no punishment must be inflicted on the roads or in the field; but every punishment, (such alone excepted as in the foregoing is permitted to the driver during the field work,) shall be inflicted during the hour of breakfast on the estate, near the works, in the presence of the whole gang; and it is incumbent on either the owner, administrator, or manager, to be present,

and not to intrust it to the overseer, who shall dictate no punishment."

In regard to labor, also, I found the following ordinance :—"The hours of work for laborers on all estates, during the working days, and on such holy days as have hitherto not been considered exempt from labor on estates, shall commence at sunrise and cease at sunset, (except in certain particular cases hereinafter to be mentioned,) with the following intervals of rest, say one hour, namely, from 7 to 8 o'clock for breakfast, and two hours, namely, from 12 to 2 o'clock for dinner. The regulation of these hours will be by the ringing of bells from certain estates in every district, (to be repeated by all the estates,) and which district estates will be hereafter named; thus the ringing of the bell in the morning will be at half an hour before the hour at which the sun rises, (which time will be made known by the discharge of the guns from the respective forts, which for the future will take place half an hour before sunrise,) so that the list may be called in the field and the labor commence at sunrise: for breakfast at 7 o'clock; for work 7 3-4 o'clock; for noon 12 o'clock; for work 1 3-4 o'clock, and for ceasing with the day's labor at sunset. During the

stipulated hours, all the field labor must be performed, including the throwing of grass, and after sunset no other labor than that of stabling, penning, foraging, and otherwise taking care of the stock, &c."

To prevent imposition, the slaves are also clothed by an ordinance designating what they shall have to wear, &c. &c. Recently large and commodious school-houses have been erected all over the island, intended, as it is understood, for the education and instruction of the slaves. One of the Moravians informed me that some of their clergymen were in England acquiring a knowledge of the English language for the purpose of instructing and preaching in these buildings. The Governor General is now absent in Denmark, but is shortly expected to return here, when an ordinance regulating these schools and churches will be issued. The present Queen of Denmark is a princess of great piety, and it is understood that many of these humane regulations have their origin with her. There is certainly a good spirit at work somewhere, which I trust will ultimately improve the moral condition of the colored population of this island.

There are some features in the jurisprudence

of this government, that I should like to see introduced into the several States of our Union. I allude particularly to the reconciling court. There are in this island two judges of this court, George Nelthrop and William Gorden, Esqrs. Before any suit at law can be instituted or proceeded in, except in special cases, the plaintiff is obliged to apply to one or the other of these judges and to state his case; the judge then appoints a day on which the parties, plaintiff and defendant, are directed to appear before him. At the time appointed, he meets the parties alone in his private office, and after hearing their allegations, he endeavors to reconcile them, and proposes terms of reconciliation; if they will not be reconciled, he appoints another day, not exceeding one week, and admonishes the parties in the mean time of the trouble and expense of a law suit. If the parties by the further day will not be reconciled, the judge delivers them over to the law. No costs or expenses, save seventy-five cents, attend these proceedings: and I am informed by one of those judges, that they succeed in settling nine-tenths of the disputed cases which are thus brought before them. If a suit is commenced without this proceeding, the plaintiff is

nonsuited forthwith. The law court requires a certificate of the reconciling tribunal that they have in vain endeavored to settle the controversy. I entertain a hope, that in the further progress of our people towards a more perfect state of jurisprudence, that this feature of the Danish code will be adopted. I do not presume that it will answer with us in all cases ; but I am satisfied that many law suits are commenced while the parties are under improper excitement, and which, by the interposition of a judicious friend, might be adjusted to their mutual satisfaction. If this system is not altogether practicable in a commercial city like New-York, it may nevertheless be adopted in the country, and in cities it may be extended to a large portion of the controversies which occur.

At the dinner parties at which I have had the honor to be present, a singular Danish custom seems to prevail ; when the guests rise from the table, they shake hands and express these words in the Danish language, to wit : “ *Vel bekomme den,*” which, being translated, is, “ *Much good may it do you.*” I understand three toasts are ordinarily drank at these dinners : First to the king ; secondly to the lady presiding at

the table, and thirdly to the gentleman so presiding.

We made a party of ladies and gentlemen and rode to Signal Hill, an elevation of about six hundred feet above the level of the sea, and distant from Frederick Stedt about one mile and a half on a straight line. The road which we were obliged to travel to obtain the summit of the hill was full six miles. We arrived nearly at the hour of sunset. The view was exceedingly grand and beautiful. Several islands, to wit: Porto Rico, St. Thomas, Tortola, and St. Johns, were all to be seen from this elevation. On the northerly and north-easterly sides were estates curiously interspersed amongst the mountains; on the south, south-east, and south-west, we beheld an extensive plain of fine alluvial lands. The several estates of Concordia, the Whim, Good Hope, Campo Rico, Carlton, William's Delight, Cane, Hogensburgh, the Diamond, Paradise, Mount Pleasant, Golden Grove, and Bethlehem, all lying between us and the ocean. The finely improved estate of Carlton, consisting of several estates united, extends from the foot of this mountain to the sea. Within a short distance from the base of Signal Hill, the proprietor

has selected a location which he calls his garden, having several natural advantages, and upon which some former owner had (no doubt in reference to its eligibility) began to make improvements by planting ornamental and fruit trees. This gentleman has erected his new mansion on the upper portion of the plat in question, the whole of which may be considered as a triangle comprising two acres of ground. On the north, west, and east, are high lands rising some hundred feet above the level of the ocean. On the south is a plain open country extending to the Caribbean Sea. On either side of the garden there is a gentle stream of water, which streams, at the base of the triangle, are some fifty yards apart; from thence they gradually converge until they form a junction one hundred yards in front of the mansion house, where they supply with water an ornamental fish-pond. The garden is elevated in the centre, and gradually slopes east and west to the respective rills of water. The trees, shrubs and flowers, of which there is a choice variety, are tastefully arranged, so that in front of the mansion there is a broad avenue opening to the sea, on either side of which there are ornamental shrubs, fruit trees, and flowers. The

residue of the grounds are decorated with oriental, native, and other fruit trees, many of which were in full bearing; also many rare botanical and medicinal trees with hard names difficult to be remembered. We also observed the tea-plant growing here very luxuriantly. Amidst all this rare and valuable collection, my attention was drawn to what is probably supposed to be the greatest curiosity in the garden, viz: a simple little apple-tree, about five feet in height, with a cluster of three or four small apples upon it, such as a judge of apples would not care to eat. The success which had attended this attempt to grow apples in St. Croix was spoken of with much apparent self-complacency, naturally amusing to a man who, like myself, had rarely during his life been out of sight of an apple-tree. There were also some thrifty peach-trees growing in these grounds; arbors of grape-vines, Caraccas plums, shattocks, orange groves, trees of the forbidden fruit, grape-fruit, limes, lemons, sugar-apples, mangoes, purple and yellow tamarinds, sapadillas, grenadillas, bell-apples, &c. &c., with flowers in abundance. It is delightful beyond description, to one who has never seen tropical fruit growing in all its luxuriance, to pass through

a garden of this character. The dense foliage of the orange and forbidden fruit-trees, with their golden apples hanging in such immense clusters, continue to remind you of that garden in which our first parents ate of the fruit which entailed sin and misery on their posterity. My attention was particularly drawn to some immense clusters of fruit at the end of one small limb, not more than three inches in circumference. On this limb I counted thirteen apples of the forbidden fruit growing in one cluster. These apples are of the color and shape of an orange, but twice as large, so that the fruit hanging at the end of this small branch was equal to twenty-six oranges. I had often seen the rose-bush growing in great luxuriance and sweetness, but I never before saw it in all its glory. It was several feet higher than my head, and might truly be called "a rose-tree in full bearing." It appeared to me much more attractive than the highly esteemed apple-tree, to which my attention had, with so much solicitude, been already directed.

I visited the town of Basin or Christian Stedt, fifteen miles distant from Frederick Stedt. I remained here, with the ladies of my party, for several days, being entertained at the house of a

much esteemed relative and friend. On the first evening of our arrival, a pleasant party was given in honor, as I presume, of our visit. At this party were convened most of the fashionable and accomplished inhabitants of Christian Stedt. The music was good, and the waltzing was conducted with the most untiring hilarity I had ever witnessed. I was introduced at this party to several of the officers of a Danish ship of war lying in this harbor. There may be eight hundred houses in this town, and a population of three thousand two hundred and fifty inhabitants.

I ascended here what is also called Signal Hill, from which I had an extensive view of the town and surrounding country, of which I shall not at present attempt to give a description. I was permitted to pass through the government buildings. The most spacious apartments were the billiard, the dining, and the ball rooms; the latter of which (being say one hundred feet in length) is filled up with mirrors and decorated with portraits of the royal family of Denmark; it also contains a side gallery of statuary.

I was received with great civility by the acting governor of the island; and I avail myself of this opportunity to say, that I have been most politely

and kindly treated not only by the authorities, but by the inhabitants of St. Croix. This town is very compact; the streets are narrow, and the houses are generally old and about two stories high. I was kindly received and treated by our consul, David W. Rogers, Esq., whose house I considered the best private dwelling in the town. The invalids staying in this town are very few. They generally prefer Frederick Stedt, which I think to be the most lively town; but whether more healthy or not, is a question about which there are conflicting opinions. By the politeness of Mr. W., I attended in this neighborhood a public sale of a plantation for a debt due the king. It was the third and last vendue. The highest bid is taken at three auctions respectively; it is then reported to the government, and the proposed sale is ratified. There were perhaps twenty persons in all attending. The conditions of the sale were read in the Danish language by the sheriff of the district, after which the biddings were called for. The highest offer was thirty-eight thousand pieces of eight, equal in value to twenty-four thousand dollars. This estate, 1815 twenty-five years since, was valued at eighty-thousand dollars. Property in this island has

greatly depreciated, and the soil is said to be gradually exhausting.

Aliens, as well as citizens, may take and hold real estate, as well by descent as purchase. But where non-residents are seised, they are subject to a tax of five per cent on the annual value of the sugar they raise, which value is estimated according to the custom-house rates. This tax is very onerous, and must affect injuriously the prices of estates, because it deters non-residents, in most cases, from becoming purchasers, or from entering into competition as such purchasers. The tax extends also to residents when absent more than six months at a time. So that the citizen, on going abroad to any other than the mother country, must make his arrangement to return within six months, or else he will become subject to the tax in question. No person can leave the island without obtaining a passport, for which, if he goes to another Danish island, he pays two dollars and fifty cents; if to any other West India island, four dollars; if to the United States or Europe, nine dollars, for a single person. The object of these passports is merely to give a revenue to the government. They are of no use to the traveller.

The water which you drink is rain water ; for although there are many springs and wells in the island, yet the rain water, from the manner in which it is purified by large filtering stones and kept cool by earthen pots, is much preferred to any other. I am myself induced to give it a preference over the water which is generally drank in our own country. It is always moderately cool, and never too cool for health. It is preserved in very large cisterns, and in ordinary times the inhabitants have an abundant supply. There are no ice-houses in any of the Danish islands, and of course no ice-cream gardens. An establishment of this kind, especially in the city of St. Thomas, would be very profitable. The proprietor should also keep refrigerators to sell.

In regard to health, the mild, uniform temperature of the atmosphere of St. Croix is what principally recommends it. From December to March, the thermometer is rarely below 76, and at mid-day generally about 81. It is necessary to keep dry, or to avoid the showers of rain which frequently happen, but rarely last more than ten minutes. One must also be cautious not to sit in drafts of air while warm. The evening air is not more injurious than in the city of New-

York. Sea-bathing is not much resorted to here, the danger from sharks being much apprehended.

The St. Croix market is supplied with great quantities of excellent fish; the colors are remarkably gay. Delicious yellow, deep green, bright red, indigo, sky blue, white, gray, black, variegated, and speckled, are the colors of these inhabitants of the deep in the West Indies. They cost from fourteen to sixteen cents per pound. The only common bird in St. Croix is the black witch; it resembles both in appearance and size the black bird of our country; it is never ate. I occasionally started up a flock of quails; they live in the canes, and are about as common in this island as they are in Westchester county. I do not recollect to have seen any other bird here. Bread is double the price which it is in New-York; and butter, which is usually Danish, costs from twenty to thirty cents per pound; it is a fair article. Fresh butter is made on some plantations, and sold at the rate of fifty cents per pound. The mutton is good—it costs twenty cents per pound. Veal is rarely seen. Beef costs sixteen cents per pound, and is for the most part but a poor article. Fresh pork is good

and cheap, being only ten cents a pound. Poultry in general is indifferent ; it is also thirty-three per cent dearer than in New-York. Board is ten dollars per week ; washing about the same as in New-York. The dinner hour of the resident gentleman is five o'clock. Dinner parties are very frequent ; and those, together with dancing parties, constitute the principal entertainments and pleasures of the island. There are two Episcopal, two Danish, two Moravian, and two Catholic churches in this island. The Danish or Lutheran churches are connected with the government. The Episcopal churches here are about what they are in the United States ; by which I mean to say that a good Churchman may or may not be a religious man. The Moravians have greatly depreciated ; they can no longer be identified with those truly evangelical people who suffered so much persecution at Hern Hutt. In some of the islands they keep their shops open on Sundays ; and it is to be apprehended that they are, for the most part, practically destitute of the religion of the gospel. This is indeed a great falling off, and will be learned with deep regret by every true disciple of our blessed Saviour.

The most ornamental trees on this island, are the mountain cabbage and the cocoanut. They are generally seen on the sides of roads and about the settlements of the wealthy planters. Neither of them are natives. The cabbage tree grows forty or forty-five feet in height, when it has a splendid top consisting of green branches of fifteen feet in length. At the distance of forty feet from the roots the woody part of the tree suddenly ceases, and the residue of the body (say for five or six feet) has the appearance of a green vegetable substance. The interior of this portion is occasionally used as a vegetable, and is boiled like a cabbage. It is perhaps from this circumstance that the tree takes its name. The cocoanut tree grows without branches, rather higher than the cabbage, and then commences to bear fruit, which grows in clusters on stems of twelve or eighteen inches from the body of the tree. This tree is in bearing at all seasons. The fruit is understood to be the perquisite of the slave. One of the most common trees on the island is the tibbot tree; it bears no fruit, but affords a dense shade. Almost every description of fruit-tree have their season here as well as in northern

climates. I saw many trees that were said to be wintering.

The roads are districted and worked by the planters, under the direction and inspection of road commissioners. One of these commissioners receives a salary of eight hundred dollars per annum, and devotes his whole time to his office. These roads are all macademized, and they are kept in prime order.

The public markets are held on Sundays only; that is, one in each of the two towns. They are supplied by the slaves, who, having this day to themselves, come in from the plantations with the little articles which they have for sale. There is a small grove in each town devoted to this object. Under these trees, and generally on the ground, is spread their marketing. It consists very commonly of Indian meal in a box or upon a napkin, (this article is what they have saved during the week out of their rations;) also, sweet potatoes, yams, sour sop, cakes, bread, dressed pork, (generally pigs,) some few fowls, now and then, though rarely, a turkey, various small fruits, such as oranges, limes, forbidden fruit, &c. &c., bundles of grass for horses, pigeon peas, fish, &c. &c. Several stores adjoining the market are

open and busily engaged in vending groceries, dry goods, &c. Beside the above market, there is the week-day market, being attended by a few persons, colored children, sick women, &c. They supply a few of the articles above enumerated.

Schools are at a low ebb in this island. Most persons who can afford it, send their children abroad to be educated. The creoles of this island, if educated here, have an unpleasant habit of drawling out their words so as to be almost unintelligible.

The character of the inhabitants is that of hospitality; the ladies are fond of dancing, which they do with great hilarity and untiring pleasure. I had the honor of dining with an officer of the Royal Danish Navy, a brother to the Governor. This entertainment was got up with much taste. I met here many gentlemen of consideration. I feel under obligations to this gentleman for his civilities to me since I have been in this island.

January 12—I dined with the ladies of my party at the mansion house of an eminent physician of this place, who has been fifty-five years in practice. His is the most improved and desirable residence in Frederick Stedt. We met here many accomplished persons who are the elite of this

beautiful island. The entertainment was elegant. Some articles from the doctor's own estate of Campo Rico particularly attracted my attention. The green marrowfat peas, with fine salad, seemed, on the 12th of January, to be out of season. The land crab, prepared and baked in some peculiar way, constituted a great delicacy. On this state of Campo Rico there is an extensive sand beach which produces these crabs in great abundance; they burrow in holes, and are much superior to the crab of our market.

On the 15th of January, I strolled at noon into the Episcopal church, where I witnessed a christening. Some of the principal inhabitants of the island were convened, and amongst others I observed several citizens in a military garb. Upon inquiry I found that an order of the Governor required all military officers to appear at weddings, christenings, and funerals, in their military dress. This christening was rather a great occasion; and on the evening of the day a ball was given in honor of the ordinance. I cannot permit this opportunity to pass without expressing my condemnation of the practice, which prevails as well in our own country as here, of making this solemn ordinance an occasion of merriment.

We have a fine drink here which I think may be had in New-York. It is made from the peelings or rind of the pine-apple. Put to one quart of water the rind of one pine-apple, sweeten it well with loaf sugar, add a little ginger, let it stand in an open vessel or pitcher for twelve hours, then put it in a quart bottle, *cork it tight*, and in six hours thereafter it will be fit to drink.

There are in Christian Stedt three thousand two hundred and thirty inhabitants, three-fourths of whom are probably colored; in Frederick Stedt one thousand two hundred and twenty-five, of whom a like proportion are colored; beside which there are nine hundred and fifty-eight white inhabitants in the country, and eighteen thousand nine hundred and seven slaves. There are fifty-one thousand and fifty-four acres of ground in the island, of which only twenty-two thousand nine hundred and sixty-one are under cultivation.

There is very little thunder or lightning in these islands, save during the months of August, September, and October, which are denominated the hurricane months; even during these months such phenomena are by no means severe. The inhabitants are constantly in want of rain; and a

common toast at a dinner party is "More rain." I was told an anecdote of a St. Croix planter, who, being at a dinner party in Holland, where they are perpetually afraid of rain, lest their dykes should be broken down, involuntarily gave the usual toast of "*More rain,*" and thereby gave great offence. The showers rarely last more than five minutes, and ten minutes is considered a pretty fair rain. The best and most productive plantations are in the centre of the island, next to which are those on the southerly side thereof.

One excellent feature here is the precise manner in which the laws and ordinances are executed. None of them appear to be dead letters. The slightest infractions are sure to be punished. One anecdote, in corroboration of this fact, was related to me. The wild deer inhabit the mountainous parts of the island—it is not lawful to kill them; and a penalty equivalent to thirty-two dollars is imposed upon the aggressor. The Governor General was about to have a dinner party; a Mr. B., a planter, seeing a fine deer on his estate, and knowing of the dinner party in question, considered that it would be highly gratifying to his excellency to treat his guests to a saddle of veni-

son, and that the breach of the law would, in such a case, be overlooked. He therefore sent a servant for his gun, and succeeded in killing the animal. It was dressed, he took a portion of it to the governor, and observed to his excellency that, knowing of the intended feast, and believing that the venison would be acceptable, he had taken the liberty of shooting the deer, and then had the pleasure of tendering it, &c. His excellency thanked him kindly for his politeness, and desired him to come and partake, &c. At the dinner the venison was highly commended; but one of the guests observed that he thought it was unlawful to kill deer; upon which his excellency observed that he was indebted to Mr. B. for that luxury—that Mr. B. could inform them what penalty attended the breach of the law, as he probably had or else would abide by it. The next day, Mr. B. received a summons from the police, issued upon the complaint of his excellency, and was thereupon fined thirty-two dollars for killing the deer, and twenty dollars for permitting his servant to carry a loaded gun across his fields.

There is no fighting in the streets; the parties are immediately apprehended and taken to the

fort. Nor do I recollect to have seen a drunken man in the streets since I have been in the island. The people are very civil and respectful in their deportment; you can pass a dozen times through their market, without being asked to buy a single article.

Intelligence of the death of the late king of Denmark, Frederick the Sixth, reached here, by the way of New-York, on or about the 25th of January ult. But the official account thereof was not received until the king's birth-day, which was the 28th of that month. Great preparations had been made, according to custom, to celebrate this day. The acting Governor General was to have given a ball. We had received an invitation to attend it, and were preparing accordingly, when the news in question came to hand. The military, or militia, of this island, consisting of two regiments, (dressed in handsome uniform,) one of cavalry and the other of infantry, (the latter being colored soldiers commanded by white officers,) were immediately convened. They were drawn up in a hollow square, when his excellency the acting governor with his retinue appearing in the centre, made the following proclamation :

“King Frederick the Sixth is dead. King Frederick the Sixth is dead. King Frederick the Sixth is dead!” After which followed—
“Long live King Christian the Eighth. Long live King Christian the Eighth. Long live King Christian the Eighth!” At the end of these proclamations the people shouted “Long live King Christian the Eighth!”

The military were then required to take the oath of allegiance as follows: each soldier raising his right arm, erected his two forefingers and thumb in token of his acknowledgment of the three persons in the Trinity, when the acting governor administered in the Danish language the oath of allegiance, which being translated is as follows:

“I promise and swear allegiance to His Majesty King Christian the Eighth, my most gracious Lord and King, and unto his legal descendants and successors to the throne; and with all my power and strength to support His Majesty’s sovereignty over all his lands; that the same may descend unaltered to his legal successors by sea and land. And as a faithful warrior to serve and obey without hesitation, and to risk my life and my blood for the good of my King and my

country, as becomes a faithful servant and warrior—so help me God and his holy word.”

The ordnance at the fort then commenced to fire in honor of the new king, and continued to do so for an hour or upwards.

An official order of the Danish government requires all persons to mourn for six months. The ladies here are seen with black bows on their caps, and gentlemen in suits of black. Our boarding-house is very gay. There is dancing and waltzing every night. I observe, however, that the Danish officers, as well civil as military, refuse to dance since the death of the king. There are in this island some good fat offices; and it is said that the new king has his favorites, and no little apprehensions are entertained by the incumbents lest changes of an unpleasant character should take place. By the bye, these politicians and office-holders all over the world, have some feelings very much in common with each other. The long sad faces which those gentlemen wear here at this moment, has reminded me very forcibly of the human face divine under like circumstances of apprehension in the state of New-York and elsewhere. There are two parties here. One abuse the governor and speak

disrespectfully of the late king. The other, on the contrary, laud and approbate those authorities. I heard a warm debate here yesterday between an officer of the navy and a Danish military officer, in which they respectively contended for and against those authorities. The navy officer averred that the late king had been a great friend to the navy and army; the other gentleman contended that he had been their greatest enemy. The captain of one of the brigs of war lying in this harbor, informed me a few days since, that the present king had received the Governor General (who is now at the court of Denmark) most graciously, and had even embraced him. A military officer told me that his accounts were of a very opposite character; and that his majesty, upon the governor being announced, had refused to receive him. So you will perceive that the people cannot agree.

The Danish standing army consists of about twelve thousand men, and the navy is as follows:

Six 84 gun ships.

Eight 48 gun frigates.

Two steamboats.

Five sloops-of-war.

Five brigs-of-war.

Three schooners, and about
Sixty gun-boats, carrying two guns each.
We are perpetually beset with pedlers, offering for sale, shells, bead-work baskets, and various other goods. They demand a high price, from which they invariably come down. They remind me of a Chatham-street shop-keeper, only that they sometimes lack shrewdness of character, which the latter never evince, for in the same sentence in which they ask six old bits for the article, they offer to take four. When charged with demanding exorbitant prices, they reply that the goods belong to another, whose instructions they are pursuing. A day or two after a lady arrives here from the United States, she gives almost any prices that are demanded for shells, and for the most part pays more than thrice their value; this she continues to do until her eye-teeth are cut by experience. The prices thus paid are denominated by the negroes "*pepper and salt prices.*" I presume the ladies of my party would sell out their stock of shells at a handsome discount on the prime cost thereof.

There are very few dark or gloomy days in this island. We have been here nearly two

months, and the sun has shone every day, and for nineteen-twentieths of the time. The thermometer for that time has only varied at mid-day about 4° ; it ranges between 78° and 82° of Far.—the coldest winter weather not being lower than 74° . The showers are frequent, but in general they only last from two to five minutes. One of ten minutes' duration is a good shower. The sun always shines immediately before and after the rain. The clouds are very small; one plantation will often have a good rain, while the next is quite destitute.

I have become acquainted with several Danish officers. One of them informs me that his family are by profession officers of the navy, and that he can trace his ancestors as such officers for upwards of two hundred years.

I have procured a literal translation of the address of the inhabitants of this island to the new King, which is as follows:

Most Gracious King—Nearly two months after the time when the rejoicings of the Danish people resounded upon the Danish plains with the solemn and impressive exclamation, "*Long live King Christian the Eighth,*" did we also,

who inhabit this distant island, receive the joyous message. We will not conceal that our joy was mixed up with serious and melancholy feelings, for a Danish king was dead; a king of whose love and good will we were convinced, and the tidings of whose death reached us in the midst of preparations to celebrate his birth-day. Yes, the same day, which so long had been with us a day of rejoicing, was changed to a day of grief. But it became a day of rejoicing again; for it announced to us your accession to the throne. Melancholy could not then damp our joy, nor grief hinder its lively expression; and while mourning the death of the deceased king, we made our vow of allegiance to death towards yourself—a vow which came spontaneously from the heart, and which sprang immediately out of the feeling which inspires us. Yes, most gracious sovereign, this feeling is but one, and therefore it is strong; it is all comprehensive, because it is a harmonious union of love, hope, and confidence. Nor could it be otherwise, for that prince, who has been always the true friend of the people, has the love of the people, the love of all; but now that the boundless good fortune is ours, that that prince is become our king, our

hope must consequently be raised, that we likewise, in this far distant colony, will participate in your gracious notice. Where love and hope exist, confidence cannot be absent; the confidence in your wisdom which will know how to spread a happiness and a blessing over this isle. These are the weak and humble words, with which we, the burghers and inhabitants of this place, have ventured in all submissiveness to approach with our congratulations the throne of our king. The attachment of our hearts you have long possessed; allegiance we have now vowed, and all we can add is, that we with good will and honest endeavor will meet your majesty's wishes for the welfare of this colony, and will contribute our part towards their being accomplished in the fullest manner.

"St. Croix, Jan. 31, 1840."

One objection which the enemies of our republic urge against it, is its tendency to corrupt the people. They contend that among politicians there is an end to all real sincerity and friendship. Possibly this may be true; but I must say, that I think men mean as little by what they say to their

monarch, as our politicians do by what they say to the people.

On the 13th of February instant, the military of the island were again convened to hear a proclamation from the present King. It was read to them by the acting Governor General. It announced again the ascension of his majesty to the throne, expressed great confidence in the love and affection of his royal subjects in this island, declared that they had been faithful to all preceding kings, and contained assurances of his desire to promote their welfare, &c. &c.

I conversed to-day with a colonel in the Danish militia in the island, who, being a Briton, also holds a commission in the English army. He has been a planter here for thirty years. He thinks he owes allegiance to both governments. It strikes me that an embarrassing conflict may hereafter arise between the two obligations, but this is perhaps an affair of his rather than of my own.

It was the latter end of January when we dined with Mr. J. G. McCall, at his estate of Cane Valley, which is situated about four miles from Frederick Stedt. A team in place of a wind-mill

is employed here, as well as on all other estates similarly situated. This plantation is in a valley. Upon it is a large fruit garden, consisting of several acres, beautifully cultivated. I rode through it. The dense foliage almost darkens the atmosphere. Here is some of the finest fruit in the West Indies. The real forbidden fruit, so called, is scarcely found elsewhere. The proprietor cannot consume the one-twentieth part of the products of this garden; he is however a gentleman of fortune, and takes pleasure in bestowing its delicious fruit upon his numerous friends and acquaintances. I found a negro hut in this garden, inhabited by several old slaves, whose only business was to guard the premises and keep them clean. It contains every variety of tropical fruit, and is understood to be the finest fruit garden in the island. Mr. McCall is a gentleman of probity; he is the upper guardian of all the minors in St. Croix, and has the care of their property. The guardian of the person of the minor can only receive the accruing interest or income, and is obliged to account annually to the upper guardian for all his doings pending the year. We had a sumptuous dinner, and were much pleased with the hospitality we received here.

This gentleman, like many other planters in the West Indies, prefers celibacy to a married life, and seems to have reconciled himself to his solitary manner of living: taste of this description is to be regretted wherever the subject of it possesses fortune, and has in other respects the necessary qualifications for domestic happiness.

Adjoining this plantation on the north is the estate of Beck's Grove, belonging to Samuel Betts, Esq., who is well known in the city of New-York. We received a handsome entertainment from Mr. B.; he is a gentleman of the old school. There is as much taste displayed about the cottage of this planter, as I met with at any time during my travels. These premises also abound in fine fruit. I saw here the cucumber tree, the fruit of which resembles a young cucumber, and is used to take stains out of cloth, for which purpose it is very efficacious; it is also employed in soups, &c. On our leaving the island, we received a barrel of fine fruit from Mr. B., which contributed much to our enjoyment on the homeward passage.

There is very little of politics discussed here. I dined about this time at the house of a Scotch gentleman, who savored strongly of tory princi-

ples; at his table was an Irish radical. I heard, between these gentlemen and others, upon this occasion, a warm political debate, which was conducted with great extravagance. Amongst other things the Irish gentleman observed *that*, upon mature reflection, and after casting about the world at large, he had made up his mind that Daniel O'Connell was the greatest and best man living. This opinion, which from its absurdity produced laughter in most of us, served highly to exasperate our Scotch friend, who replied that he did not think there was a greater villain unhung than Daniel O'Connell. Another Scotch gentleman observed, by way of offset, that he had never known an Irish member of parliament that was not susceptible of a bribe.

The taxes are exorbitantly high in St. Croix. A planter informed me that he ventured on a recent occasion to ask a principal officer of the government how those enormous taxes were disposed of, to which question he received the following answer: "*Sir*—it is your business to pay taxes—it is ours to impose them."

The law expenses of this island are extravagant beyond any thing that I could have supposed. For entering up what we call a judg-

ment by confession, between nine hundred and one thousand pieces of eight, equal to between six and seven hundred dollars, was lately charged against, and paid by, an acquaintance of mine. To partition an estate between heirs at law, costs between two and three thousand dollars. The costs on the sale of an estate, by virtue of one of the king's mortgages, lately amounted to between three and four thousand dollars. I cannot myself believe that these exorbitant charges are known to, or approved of, by the Danish government. The Danish lawyer, at home, works for a very moderate compensation, and considering that this is a just government, I cannot believe that it would knowingly permit the people to be thus fleeced.

While in this island I advanced a sentiment which I knew to be unpopular, but as I did not intend to keep terms with the world at the expense of my conscience, I hesitated not to declare my opinion, when asked, of Sir Walter Scott's novels; which was, that they had done much more harm than good in the world; that, being works of fiction, they were also works of literary taste, and as such a large portion of the reading community had bestowed much time upon them,

which time might have been more discreetly employed in the perusal of useful books. It cannot, I think, be doubted, that if a truly wise man should sit down and estimate the merit and utility of all the books that have been written, and one should undertake to read them in the order of their utility, beginning with the Bible, that he would not arrive at Sir Walter Scott's novels in one hundred years; and consequently that human life is too short, when wisely employed, to read those novels; and yet I have been informed by a respectable clergyman, that he had read them repeatedly. I am aware that my sentiments are deemed treasonable fanaticism by nominal christians; and although I admit that there are exceptions to the rule, (and that the clergyman above alluded to is one of those exceptions,) yet I cannot believe that an experimental christian will in general find time to read those books. It was urged by way of argument, that they were historical, and contained excellent delineations of character. To the first position I replied that it was at best history mixed up with fiction, and much of it, if real, unworthy to be recorded; and that the world is beginning to learn that a great deal of real history is no longer useful; all that is use-

ful in Rollin's Ancient History, (which is itself a condensation of other histories,) ought now to be summed up in the one-twentieth part of his pages. The truth is, the time has arrived when men cannot read the details of history as they have done heretofore; nor have they, in my opinion, any time to appropriate to the perusal of works of fiction. That in regard to character, Sir Walter Scott fell far short of perfection; by which I mean that he was not himself an experimental christian, and therefore not qualified to sketch the character of a perfect man. The Rev. Mr. Channing, some time since, published a sermon, in which he contends that christianity is adapted to the highest possible state of civilization. And my doctrine is, that you cannot form a perfect character without the finishing touches of christianity; the gentleman formed without it is exceedingly civil, kind and gentle, as long as you please him, but touch what he supposes to be his honor, and he becomes a perfect tiger. He will take your life for a mere breach of etiquette. In short, man without religion is a savage at heart, and a polite education merely varnishes the exterior, and renders him a counterfeit or a hypocrite who is not sound at the

core. He is not in fact what he appears to be. We have no time to waste. Every moment of our lives should be improved to the greatest advantage.

The plantations in this island are all what are termed sugar-estates. There are some few *cattle-farms*, so called, in the mountainous parts of the island, but they are of little value. I presume many of these farms may be bought for less than two dollars per acre.

While in St. Croix we dined frequently with an esteemed friend and relative, Hugh Kerr, Esq., at his residence on the paradise estate. The situation of the mansion-house of this gentleman is one of the most beautiful on the island; it is located on an eminence, and commands an extensive view of the ocean. I met here many of the most important personages on the island. Mr. K.'s dinners were very splendid, and his table was occasionally decorated with ornamental confectionary, made in the city of New-York, and also rare articles from Denmark. He is the attorney for several fine estates, and is one of the most thrifty inhabitants of this island. On leaving here we received from this gentleman and his

family many presents of fruit, &c.; some of which we still preserve in Sing Sing.

I visited the observatory of Sir Andrew Lang, who is a gentleman of science, and has obtained much celebrity as an astronomer. He made some discoveries in regard to islands in the Caribbean Sea, which attracted the attention of the King of Denmark, and induced his majesty to confer upon him the honorable title of Knight of Dannebrog. This gentleman resides on a mountain some two miles east of Christian Stedt. His observatory commands an extensive view of the ocean; from it he is enabled to descry ships at a great distance. He has a good collection of astronomical apparatus. I was received and treated by him with great civility, and permitted to look through several powerful glasses.

While in St. Croix a dispute arose in regard to the celebrated Southern Cross, a constellation well known to astronomers. An officer of the Danish navy assured me it was to be seen in the latitude of St. Croix, and pointed it out to me; while other gentlemen held that it could not be seen above the tenth degree of north latitude. Mr. Lang soon satisfied me, from its elevation, that it was to be seen in that island.

The celebrated John Joseph Gurney now returned to St. Croix, after having been absent for several weeks on an excursion to the Windward Islands. I called upon him, and ascertained that he was willing to hold a religious meeting, provided the authorities could be prevailed upon to allow him so to do. Upon his former visit here, he commenced to hold meetings and to preach the gospel in private families; but when this came to the ears of the governor, he forbade him to do so. Mr. Gurney, however, went immediately himself to the governor, and by the kind influence of the Rev. Mr. Lukuck, an evangelical minister, he succeeded in getting a license to preach once in the Episcopal Churches in each of the towns of Christian Stedt and Frederick Stedt, upon a stipulation that he should say nothing on the subject of slavery. It was pursuant to this license that he held the meeting heretofore mentioned by me. Mr. Gurney was unwilling personally to make a further application to the governor; but feeling myself desirous that he should preach again, (with his approbation) I sat about feeling the way for a further license. I applied first to the Rev. Mr. Lukuck, with whom I was on terms

of christian intimacy. He informed me that when the former license was obtained, it was reluctantly given, and was accompanied with a condition that no further application should be made for a similar object. This seemed to be an estoppel to any further attempt. But I was encouraged notwithstanding to hope, that inasmuch as King Christian the Eighth had ascended the throne since Mr. Gurney's former visit, and as the queen was a lady of great piety, so much so as to get the reputation of being a fanatic among the enemies of the gospel, and as she was said to have visited the celebrated Mrs. Frey, the sister of Mr. G., and obtained from her much information in respect to various charitable institutions, that by representing these facts I might still succeed. I accordingly saw some influential gentlemen, to whom I suggested my reasons, &c., but I soon found that they were unavailing.

There is a great apprehension of mischief from Quakers, Methodists and Baptists in this island; and finding further exertions futile, I abandoned the object. Mr. Gurney would, of course, have renewed his stipulation in regard to slavery; and I would not myself have thought it safe or proper for him to have spoken at all on

that subject. There is a population of eight blacks to one white man, and any excitement on the subject would have been dangerous in the extreme. I was desirous of hearing the Moravians preach, but I found their discourses were principally in the German language, although sometimes, but rarely, in English. I applied to one of their clergymen to know when I could hear a sermon in English; he gave me no satisfactory information, but after some conversation said, "why, Mr. Lukuck preaches in English, that is enough."

We were frequently entertained by our friend, Dr. S., who certainly has every thing at his command on this island. There are brooks running through the Carlton Estate into the sea, in which great quantities of the fresh water mullet and other delicious fish are taken. He has only to send a fisherman to these brooks a short time before his entertainment, and he procures a plenty of fish. I breakfasted here with many of the principal officers of the Danish navy, and other important personages from the island of St. Thomas. Every thing was got up in a style of great elegance. The Doctor also gave a maroon party, upon which occasion we dined on the sea

shore. The late President of the island of Tortola, with a respectable companion of his, were of this party. The Carlton Estate is bounded for a considerable distance on the sea, and the green fields extend down almost to the water. It is not unlike, in this respect, our fashionable watering place at Long-Branch. There are two or three buildings here which were formerly occupied by the Government as a branch of the custom-house establishment, to watch and detect the operations of smugglers. We strolled on these shores with great delight. The trade wind was so fresh that I found it difficult to keep my hat in its place. We had a sumptuous dinner. It was quite cold weather; the ladies put on their shawls, and we did not dine uncovered.

We made frequent visits to the splendid garden of this gentleman, where we were always entertained with fine fruits, wines, &c. Amongst other curiosities here, may be mentioned the fantail pigeon, exceedingly beautiful; they were so tame as to light on the arms of the proprietor and eat seed from his hands. The lizzard abound here; they destroy flies, are very harmless, and are supposed to know and distinguish the owner of the grounds from other persons.

I cannot permit this occasion to pass without expressing my condemnation of a law regulating baptisms, funerals, and weddings; but more especially the manner in which the holy ordinance of baptism is fettered. The invitation in the Scripture is, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that hath no money, come ye buy and eat; yea come buy wine and milk without money and without price." But I think the Danish ordinance is made to conflict exceedingly with this invitation. No white person can be baptized unless he pays a fee of eight dollars to the clergyman; a free colored person must pay two dollars, and a slave must pay one dollar. (I believe, however, that the master is obliged to pay the latter fee.) On a marriage of white persons, the legal fee to the clergyman is twelve and a half dollars; free colored persons two or four dollars, and slaves one dollar. Slaves are not allowed to marry until they are baptized, and as adults they cannot be baptized in the Lutheran church until they can say the creed, the Lord's prayer, and answer some questions in the catechism. The clergyman's fee on a funeral is eight dollars, and the clerk's fee is four dollars, besides other exactions which I cannot enume-

rate. So it would seem that there are many persons who cannot afford to be baptized, get married, or receive a christian burial.

We were politely invited, by Mr. Stevens of the Castle Estate, to visit the Blue Mountain, which is situated immediately on the north side of his estate. It is, I believe, the highest in the island, and has an elevation of eleven hundred feet. We were to have ascended it on mules, and partaken of a collation on the pinnacle of the mountain. After making several partial appointments for this occasion, we were obliged to forego the pleasure of it, the time having now arrived for making an excursion to some neighboring islands.

It was the latter end of March when we were visited at our residence by Wm. R. Isaacs, Esq., late President of Tortola, who politely invited us to that island, and at the same time offered to send a vessel to convey us thither. Tortola is about forty-five miles in a northerly direction from St. Croix. We accepted with much pleasure this polite invitation, and on the 29th of March, the vessel in question having arrived, and being in waiting for our reception, my party, together with the Misses F.'s, embarked for Tortola. We had

a slight breeze, experienced more or less sea sickness, and about 11 o'clock at night arrived at the principal settlement in the island. For ten or twelve miles prior to landing, we sailed up a bay which was completely land-locked by islands. This bay has an excellent harbor, and has accommodated, upon one or more occasions, fleets of upwards of a hundred English ships. The moment we set foot on the island, the hospitality of its inhabitants was showered upon us. We were received, lodged and entertained by our respectable friend, Mr. I., whose mansion is large, but his heart and that of his lady are still larger. The next morning after our arrival, I commenced to explore the island — it belongs to the English ; is about twelve miles in length, and five in breadth ; it is exceedingly mountainous. The town consists of one crooked street at the foot of the mountain, which is perhaps from a half to three quarters of a mile in extent. The houses are generally poor, and not to exceed two stories high. There are an Episcopal Church and a Methodist Chapel. There are only one hundred and twenty white inhabitants on the island, and from four to five thousand blacks, who are all free. The island is fast depopulating. The laborers here get but about

eleven cents per day and find themselves. They are however attached to the plantations and have some lands assigned to them, which they cultivate for their own emolument. There is no carriage on the island. The inhabitants travel principally on mules; there are a few good horses. There are no level roads. The narrow rough paths over and about the mountains are almost impassable even for mules. I was furnished by my friend with a good horse; and the first object which attracted my attention, was a residence on the summit of the mountain immediately above the town. I determined to obtain this object, and after probably one half hour's ride up the mountain I arrived at the mansion. It was the residence of the Chief Justice of the English Virgin Islands. I introduced myself to him, and found that he knew me already, and was apprized of the arrival of my party. I was received with much ease and kindness, and after an introduction to his lady, he directed his horse to be saddled, and accompanied me on some more elevated mountains in the rear of his dwelling. I was here much gratified with an extensive view of the Caribbean Sea, and of many of its islands. We were about one thousand feet above the level of

the ocean. This gentleman had been a practising lawyer in the city of London, where, finding his health declining, he embarked for the West Indies. It was calculated that he would die on the passage, but to his happy disappointment he rapidly recovered. He had found the gentle climate of the West Indies remarkably well adapted to his constitution. We dined this day, (Wednesday,) with our friend, Mr. I., in company with the Chief Justice W. and lady, and Mr. R. and lady. We did not, in the West Indies, set down to a more sumptuous dinner than this. Tortola certainly affords many luxuries. Among other things I mention the prawn, a description of shrimp some four or five inches long, which are obtained from the fresh water brooks that run into the sea. The fish caught here are excellent. The fine butter is a real luxury; it is so unusual to get good butter in the West Indies, that one is more apt to appreciate it here than elsewhere. On Thursday we also dined at Mr. I.'s with the same party. On Friday morning, having planned an excursion over Sage Mountain, our horses were in readiness, and in company with Mr. Roger, we departed at an early hour. Our company consisted of Miss F., my niece, Mr. R. and myself.

We rode to the south circuitously along the sea shore at the foot of the mountains, and after crossing one of considerable elevation, we arrived at a plantation called Pleasant Valley, the property of Mr. I. The level portion of this estate is alluvial ground made from the sea. At this estate we were kindly treated by the manager. We were now at the base of Sage Mountain, which is about sixteen hundred feet above the level of the ocean. The path up the mountain is narrow, rugged and obscure. The manager kindly volunteered to be our guide; and mounted on his mule, he led the way. We travelled through fields of cane in a serpentine track for a mile and a half, when we arrived at a small negro settlement; from this point our path was plain, and our guide returned. We continued to ascend the mountain for some time, when we entered a thick forest, so that we could not see to exceed ten or fifteen feet ahead, unless in the direction of our path. The trees now became large and exceedingly high. What very much attracted our attention was the vines which encircled these trees and ran up them for sixty or seventy feet in height. The leaves on some of these vines were as large as umbrellas. We procured some of

them, and the stems which bore them were several feet long. The ladies used them as umbrellas. The forest was silent, very damp and quite cool: after merging from it, our views became most commanding. We could see the principal islands for fifty miles. Those of St. Croix, St. Johns, St. Thomas, Virgin Gorda, Porto Rico, (with a great many small ones comprising the group of the Virgin Islands,) were in full prospect. We contemplated with wonder many objects of deep interest. Our friend, Mr. R., was able to answer our numerous inquiries, and gave us much satisfactory information in regard to the surrounding scenery.

Having arrived home, we dined at five o'clock, P. M., with Mr. Roger. His place is pleasantly situated on the border of the bay. Our dinner party consisted this day of the same persons with whom we had previously dined. On Saturday, the fourth of April, we dined with Judge Wigly. At 5 o'clock, P. M., accompanied by many colored people, who had charge of our horses, our party of ladies, joined by Mrs. and Mr. R., with a young gentleman from Scotland, rode up the mountain on mules, horses, &c. While at this dinner, (which was exceedingly pleasant,) we

found the weather cold, so much so that the ladies required additional shawls. We remained here till nine o'clock at night, when we prepared to descend the mountain. It was quite dark, the road was bad, and in some places very steep. The ladies being well mounted, we commenced our ride. Our horses were surrounded by negroes; some by the necks, others along our sides, and at the tails of the horses. In this way, with much shouting and halooing, we rode cautiously down the mountain. It was so dark that I could but faintly see the lady behind whom I rode at a distance of twenty feet. We arrived in safety at the foot of the mountain, and felt that it was a subject of some congratulation. The negroes, who accompanied us up and down, took care of the horses, and we remunerated them for this service.

The condition of the colored people in this island is very degraded. They are free, it is true; but they are poor and indolent. Begging is a very common employment. I rarely walked out that I was not asked for charity. They are, however, very moderate in their demands; in general they want a dog. This is equal, if I recollect, to about two cents. It was my humor

one day to embarrass an old man. I was riding in company with Miss F. The poor mendicant stopped us and begged for a dog to buy some food. I feigned to be ignorant of what he meant by a dog, and said to my companion, what does the old man mean? A dog is an animal that has four legs and wears hair. I have nothing of the kind to give. The old man perceiving we were strangers, concluded we did not understand their currency, and for a while seemed in doubt what to say. He finally bethought himself of the word money; it was money he wanted. I then admitted that I understood him, and after some conversation we parted, both sides being pleased with the interview. Every thing seems on the decline in this island; the black laborers are embarking for Trinidad, where it is understood they can get good wages. I was informed that the sugar raised this year, on this island, would not pay the expense of cultivation; and that, in all probability, the island would be abandoned by the planters in five years. I hardly met with an individual who was not disposed to remove to the United States. A question which was frequently put to me was, how much would a farm cost which would afford

a support to a family, &c.? Doctor Stobo, their principal physician, informed me that he was disposed to come to our country and turn farmer. This gentleman appeared to me to be an intelligent physician, and I should think he might calculate on a good living in the United States, by the practice of medicine. Mr. Isaacs and his lady are much beloved in this island. They are looked up to for much that is good and charitable. They have, I believe, both the means and the disposition to consider the poor and the fatherless.

On Sunday I went to the Episcopal church. The Rev. Alexander Botts is the rector of this parish. It being the first Sunday in the month, he administered the sacrament of the Lord's supper. His discourse was adapted to the occasion, and I confess I never before felt so sensibly the divine efficacy of the words, "As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death till he come," as upon this occasion. Believing, as I do, that every thing which belongs to a holy life is a fruit of the atonement, I felt the necessity of being reminded of this great truth. The Methodist chapel was within one hundred feet of the Episcopal church; and I went in the evening to their meeting. The moment I entered

the building I was reminded of the Methodists of our own country. The preacher was a talented young man, a Wesleyan missionary. He preached with great energy and effect. I occasionally heard a hearty "amen!" responded to his sentiments. His hearers were exclusively colored. There were probably six hundred persons in the congregation, and my friend and myself were the only white persons present except the wife of the missionary. I talked with him after service, and found his soul full of the subject of his mission. For my own part, I confess I should not like to reside out of the atmosphere of the Methodists.* About five miles from our residence, on the opposite side of the bay, was a native African settlement. It consisted of about one hundred buildings, and perhaps five or six hundred inhabitants. The history of these people is this: The English, some years ago, captured a number of slave ships, and it became a question whether they should colonize the people or send them back to their native country. They determined on the former project, and the location

* This is a missionary station, and the expenses of it are paid by the Methodist Missionary Society of England.

in question was selected for that purpose. These people are Episcopalians, and the Rev. Mr. Botts officiates as their rector. On Sunday afternoon he invited me to go with him there, but by reason of some accident we were prevented from going. They are a poor people and live from hand to mouth. They go to the city of St. Thomas as servants, pick up a little money, return home, and remain idle until it is spent.

This evening a fire broke out on the plantation of a Mr. H., on the opposite side of the bay from our village. It was on a mountain in full view of our residence. It burnt with great rapidity, until the whole field of cane was consumed. The father of this planter was executed many years before for the murder of one of his slaves. This unfortunate man was connected with some powerful families in England, and probably had been accustomed to have things in his own way. He became displeased with a slave, and directed him to be flogged; and he was chastised with so much severity that he died. It is said that the authorities in Tortola would have passed over this offence, but a report of the case reached England, and produced so much excitement, that a positive order

was issued directing his prosecution. He was accordingly indicted, tried, convicted and executed, for the crime in question. On the gallows he averred his innocence of the crime for which he was to suffer; but admitted that he had been a cruel master, and had probably caused the death of several of his slaves. It was said that he had compelled some of them to drink boiling hot water. During this fire my friend mentioned to me that this plantation had often been on fire. The relation of the melancholy fate of the father, and the repeated afflictions of the son, cast me into a sad train of thought—as if the hand of God was seen even now scourging with fire the spot upon which these cruelties had been inflicted on the helpless slave.

I now received from the President a permission to leave the island, for which I paid nothing. And on Monday morning, April the 6th, we left this land of hospitality, and embarked in a small vessel for St. Thomas. We had a pleasant breeze, and sailed westerly through what is called the middle passage, leaving the Island of St. Johns on the south. This is a very interesting route. We saw many islands of a very picturesque appearance. And at 4 o'clock, P. M.,

sailed into the harbor of St. Thomas, which is twenty-five miles west of Tortola. St. Thomas being a free port, is the greatest commercial metropolis in the West Indies. It is a large city; contains probably four thousand buildings, and a population of twenty thousand inhabitants. There were say fifty sail (being vessels of all nations) anchored in this harbor. One or two of these were pointed out to me as being slavers, fitting out for Africa. I spoke to some of the inhabitants in respect to these vessels. They informed me that it was impossible to prevent them from buying munitions of war, but that they did nothing else there. There is no decent hotel or tavern in this city. There are but two private boarding-houses; one kept by Mrs. Richards, and the other by Mr. Cunningham, who formerly resided in the city of New-York, and was a broker in Wall-street. A Frenchman, a Mr. Bonelli, had erected a large hotel here, but it was not yet opened for the reception of visitors. We procured lodgings at Mr. C.'s, where we found ourselves very comfortable. On Wednesday, we dined with the Hon. Mr. Berg, one of the king's counsel. His situation is probably three hundred feet above the level of the city. It is by far

the handsomest residence at St. Thomas. There are no carriages,* or even saddle horses, to be hired here. There are but two short rides in the island. I procured a very indifferent horse, of a colored woman, to ride about two miles west of the town, to see the great silk cotton tree, the branches of which extend three hundred feet along the public road. For the use of this horse I paid one dollar and fifty cents. There are on the high grounds, adjacent to the city, one or more old stone castles, resembling light-houses. The correct history of these is unknown. It is generally believed that they were built by pirates in the early settlement of the West Indies.

On Thursday, the 9th, we dined with a Scotch planter, by the name of Mackay. St. Thomas is a great mart. Almost any description of goods can be obtained here. There is a long street of heavy wholesale stores, equal to almost any in the city of New-York. On Friday we embarked for St. Croix. The price of a passage is four dollars. On Saturday morning we landed in Christian Stedt. We availed ourselves here of

* The ladies of my party had the use of the governor's private carriage.

the politeness of Mr. Rogers, the American Consul, and proceeded in his carriage to West End or Frederick Stedt. The kindness of this gentleman has rendered him exceedingly popular. There are but few Americans who cannot attest to some act of favor from his hands.

The middle of the month of April arrived, and we made preparation to return home in the barque ship Condor. Among other things to my great annoyance, was a requisition that we should obtain what is erroneously called a passport. We were in fact prisoners of the Danish Government, and our persons were to be detained in St. Croix until we paid to that Government a sum of money for leave to quit the island. This requisition is of an extraordinary character, and what renders it still more so, is the fact that the United States of America are not only at peace with Denmark, but that we have with that nation a subsisting treaty of peace and commerce, whereby the citizens of the two nations are permitted freely to trade with each other, and for that purpose necessarily to have egress and regress. I was under the impression that the civilization of international law had, in 1840, progressed too far to admit of a requisition of this cha-

racter. I protested strongly against this exaction, as being altogether incompatible with the treaty of commerce existing between our two nations. That treaty secures to the citizens of each nation the right to enter freely for the purposes of trade into their respective territories, and freely again to return home. This much is necessarily implied in every treaty of commerce. When I contended that this exaction was contrary to our commercial compact, I was informed that the Danish government imposed this tribute upon the subjects of every nation; and that we had no right to complain, being put upon the same footing of all others. This I conceived to be no answer. The article of our treaty, which provides that we shall be permitted to trade upon the principles of the most favored nation, has reference to custom-house duties, tonnage, port charges, &c. It surely has no reference to the locomotion of the citizen. Other nations have submitted to this exaction, but this is because their subjects have not complained and brought the question before their governments. A Frenchman or Englishman rarely visits St. Croix, but Americans are constantly there in great numbers; and hence, unless compelled, this tribute will not be submitted

to. The paper which you receive upon the payment of this ransom money, is improperly called a passport. It does not enable you travel. It only disenthral your person. It enabled me, as an American citizen, to go on board an American ship and return home. The police officers undertook to palliate the matter by alleging that England, while it possessed the Danish islands, kept on foot the same practice. I reminded them that England took this island during a war with Denmark, and held it but a short time, and did not undertake to change any of their laws or customs ; no doubt constantly calculating on an ultimate surrender of them to the Danish government. I visited Tortola, an English island, and on my departure I received a license to quit ; but I paid nothing for it. This did not involve at all the principle of ransom money. It was a mere police or municipal regulation.

I could freely travel over any part of St. Croix without a passport, but the moment I proposed to quit them, or to return home, the answer was in substance : no, we cannot permit this, unless you will pay us a sum of money for your ransom. And hence, it will be observed, that this license to quit the island was not a mere municipal regula-

tion ; because as such I could not have complained of it. It was not merely intended to prevent me from quitting without paying my debts or fulfilling my contracts ; because these obligations were in general superadded to the other. In all suspicious cases, they require a bond, with approved security, that you shall pay your debts, &c. Nor was the amount exacted as a compensation to the police officer for examining my case, and giving me the passport. The sum demanded is nine dollars and sixty-two cents for each individual. The monies thus received go to the government ; and a part of its revenue annually arises in this way. And here I beg leave to notice a fraud that is in many cases practiced upon that government. The monies thus exacted belong to the king when the traveller is going to a foreign port ; but when to another Danish island, they belong to the police officer who gives you the license. Now in the latter case the tribute money is only two dollars and fifty cents ; and consequently it is for the interest of the traveller and the police officer that the license should be given for the Danish island. This state of things leads to the frauds to which I have alluded. And shortly be-

fore I left the island, a brig, notoriously bound for New-York, at the instance of the passengers, and by and with the connivance of the police officers, cleared out for St. Thomas, and went directly to New-York without touching at that island. It was also the practice of many people to take their passport, (falsely so called,) for St. Thomas, when they intended coming to New-York. In such cases they give to the boarding-officer a small bribe, and he merely looks at the exterior of the license. The police officers are also in the habit of receiving from some persons much less sums than from others for these licenses. A gentleman who came out in the same ship with me, told me that he declined giving the full amount demanded of him—that after some controversy they received nine dollars for a passport for himself and lady. The fact is, that the exaction is so manifestly wrong, that many people think themselves authorized to evade it by any means in their power. That the principle is entirely inadmissible, will be seen the moment you admit that it is a sum of money exacted of you for the ransom of your person, for if they can demand nine dollars and sixty-two cents, they can demand ten thousand dollars. Whenever an

arbitrary amount can be required, you show that such a principle is wholly incompatible with the treaty of commerce; for there would be an end to the treaty if every American is to remain a prisoner until he pays a ransom of ten thousand dollars. Go a little further and the inadmissibility of the principle becomes obvious. Suppose the Danish government were in the habit of hanging every foreigner who is found within their territory, could we be told (when they hung us under like circumstances) this is no breach of your treaty, for we treat you as we do the subjects of the most favored nation? A municipality has a right to do whatever it pleases within its own jurisdiction. But if it makes a treaty of alliance and commerce with another nation, its municipal rights are abridged, so far as is necessary to carry that treaty into effect. We ought neither to be hung nor subjected to the payment of ransom money, so long as we have a treaty of commerce with that government. That a municipality has an undoubted right to impose such an exaction on its subjects is admitted, but not upon the citizens of other nations with whom they are under the obligation of a treaty of commerce. A

Danish subject belongs to his own sovereign. He is domiciled on Danish territory.

An American citizen belongs to and resides in his own country, and if permitted by treaty to go to St. Croix and trade with its people, he must in like manner be permitted to return home without being subjected to the payment of ransom money.

I have inspected our treaty of commerce with this nation, and although there are provisions that the resident citizen shall submit to municipal laws, yet these do not extend to laws incompatible with such treaty. There are certain obligations applicable only to the natural born or naturalized citizen, as, for example, to take an oath of allegiance, to do military duty.

The right to return home, or the privilege of locomotion under these circumstances, is peculiar in its character. A sovereign may rightfully detain his own subjects within his own territories, but I am not aware that any civilized community, professing to be governed by the laws of nations, has, except in the instance now alluded to, exercised such authority over the citizens of others. Denmark may lawfully break up our treaty by imposing a prohibitory port duty upon

the vessels of all nations. This is within the pale of its contract. But she is prohibited, as well by the laws of nations as by treaty, from making prisoners of the citizens of a friendly nation, who have with her an existing treaty of commerce, and whose citizens have committed no crimes, nor failed to perform any contracts made with the subjects of that country.

I entertain a hope that this matter will attract the notice of our government; and that the moneys which have been thus illegally exacted, will be restored; or at all events, that the obnoxious practice will be abandoned. I am confident that the Danish government have not duly considered this subject; and that the fallacy of the principle upon which the tax is levied, will be detected by the present king, whose character for justice and intelligence is deserving of much commendation.

I have procured a translation to be made of the license which I obtained upon this occasion. It is as follows:

“His Royal Majesty of Denmark, &c. &c. &c.

“I, Johannes Von Sobidtker, chamberlain of the order of Dannebrog and Dannebrogsmænd,

appointed Vice General Governor pro tem. and commander of the Danish West India Islands, make known, that it is granted Mr. James Smith, lady, and niece, and Master John Dubois, to go from hence to America. And it is my particular request that the said James Smith, lady, niece, and Master J. Dubois, shall pass free and unmolested on this voyage.

“Given under my hand and seal,
Government House, St. Croix,
April 13th, 1840.

“*Police Office,*

“J. J. ANDERSON.”

I was treated with marked civility by the presiding officer of the police, and in place of thirty-three dollars and sixty-one cents, the amount of the legal fees, (Master Dubois being half price,) he unsolicited received from me about nineteen dollars and sixty-two cents. He also dispensed with the security bond that I should pay my debts, &c. I certainly, therefore, have no right to complain of the manner in which this unjustifiable law was enforced by the ministerial officer in my particular case. So long, however, as the ordinance is continued, there should be an uniformity in the charges made.

On my quitting the English island of Tortola, a paper was given me, for which I paid nothing. The following is a copy of it :

“ Virgin Islands,

“ Tortola.

“ Permission is hereby granted unto James Smith, Esq., and family, and the Misses Fales, to depart from these islands, the law in such case made and provided having been complied with.

“ Given under my hand, the

sixth of April, 1840.

“ JNO. C. ISAACS,

“ Colonial Secretary.”

Having but a few hours to remain in St. Croix, we were now engaged in taking leave of our friends. During our residence we had exchanged visits with the family of Mr. Sempill, of the Butler's Bay Estate. I was much pleased with his situation, and particularly with the appearance of a location called the Cottage. It was enveloped in a dense shade, formed by orange and other fruit trees. I had some idea of making it a winter residence, and inquired of him whether he would lease it to me for twenty-one years, and

if so, at what rent. He replied very promptly, that I should occupy it for that number of years without any rent whatever, upon the condition that I would enlarge the Cottage to suit my family and leave my improvements at the end of the term. This liberal offer won very much on my feelings, and together with the companionable character of Mr. Sempill, whose habits and manner of thinking are not unlike my own, induced me to think more favorably of the project; the extent, however, of the voyage which I should be obliged semi-annually to perform, presents a formidable barrier in my way. I cannot doubt but that in process of time, when a steamboat communication shall be established between our own country and this lovely spot, but that many gentlemen will spend their winters here. It is not one of the most, but I verily believe, (for a winter's residence,) taking it all in all, the most delightful residence upon this earth—there is no other West India island to be compared to it. The latitude is about what it should be, and travel round the whole globe, you will not find a domicile so unexceptionable in its character. This is not mere declamation. I invite gentlemen to travel with me in thought, and to fix upon any spot in

this same mild, friendly latitude, that is for a residence equal to it. Our own continent affords nothing to be compared to it. I was in perfect health during my entire visit. I did not take a single cold; nor was my constitution subjected to any trial. My blood did not circulate too fast to-day and too slow on the morrow; there was a harmony in the working of the entire system, which I am sure is congenial to health. In my whole life I never passed a winter so unruffled and so free from indisposition.

The question will perhaps be asked whether, in consideration of these advantages, I conclude that the inhabitants of St. Croix are happier than those of other countries. To this I answer, that I have no doubt there is less of disease here than elsewhere; but in order to happiness, the harmony of the moral affections are as necessary as those of the natural functions. And although a healthy action of the body is apt to lead to a quiet state of the mind, yet this does not always happen. There are some things which operate unfavorably to human happiness on this island. The influence of slavery is highly prejudicial. Its effect upon the morals of a community are strikingly depicted by Mr. Jefferson in his Notes on

Virginia. As this great statesman was himself a slave-holder; as he was born, brought up, and lived, and died in a slave-holding country, he certainly was quite competent to judge of its effects upon the morals of a community. "The whole commerce," says he, "between master and slave is a perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions, the most unremitting despotism on the one part, and degrading submission on the other. Our children see this and learn to imitate it—for man is an imitative animal—this quality is the germ of education in him; from his cradle to his grave he is learning to do what he sees others do—if a parent could find no motive, either in philanthropy or his self-love, for restraining the intemperance of his passions towards his slave, it should always be a sufficient one that his child is present. But generally it is not sufficient. The parent storms—the child looks on—catches the lineaments of wrath—puts on the same airs in the circle of smaller slaves—gives aloose to the worst of passions, and thus nursed, educated, and daily exercised in tyranny, cannot but be stamped by it with odious peculiarities. The man must be a prodigy who can retain his manners and morals undepraved by such circumstances,"

What this great man has so justly described, I saw abundantly verified, even in St. Croix, where slavery exists in its mildest form. I witnessed ebullitions of passion of a most odious character. Slavery not only affects injuriously the morals, but it, in the long run, almost always impoverishes the community. While in St. Croix I was curious to ascertain whether the descendants of any of the land-holders of the last generation remained in the possession of the estate of their ancestors, and I cannot say that more than one or two cases were pointed out to me. The estate of a planter is generally much in debt, and if he is enabled to retain it during his own life, he rarely transmits it to his posterity; it is sold and passes to his creditors. I found several once wealthy families laboring in great poverty, and being mere tenants by sufferance on their former domains. They seemed in constant apprehension of the want of bread. Their estates in some instances belong to their former overseers, (men whom they would not once have associated with;) in other cases the large European capitalists are the present proprietors.

Again, it rarely happens that the son of a

planter who has been brought up and educated in St. Croix, is capable of earning his bread ; and this is the more to be regretted since he is generally doomed to poverty. Add to all this, the soil is gradually exhausting, the island is becoming less and less productive, and this is the result of slavery. Slavery begets prodigality : a planter is in general profuse in his expenses ; he wants to use his crops before they can be sent to market. He anticipates them: he cannot afford to buy manure, or to let his land lie idle long enough to recruit it ; and consequently his estate is always depreciating.

That all slave-holding countries will sooner or later become poor, is a proposition abundantly obvious to the statesman. A new country does not immediately feel the deleterious effects of slavery ; it is a slow, but a sure poison. The states of Virginia and Maryland were once flourishing communities. I call upon my reader to contemplate them now. Large and once valuable portions of the Old Dominion, so called, will scarcely reward the agriculturist for his labor.

In travelling some years since from Washington to New-York, in the winter season, there was a deep snow on the ground, the weather was cold ;

a portion of the day was spent in passing through the state of Maryland, where we saw much to excite our commiseration. The farm-houses were poor and out of repair; panes of glass were broken out and replaced by old hats, coats, &c. The negroes were badly clad, and shivering in the cold; every thing bespoke poverty and suffering. Of a sudden the scene changed to comfortable dwellings and a well dressed smiling population, having every appearance of happiness and prosperity. Without understanding or reflecting on the cause of this abrupt change, I called out to the driver of the stage coach, halloo! halloo! what is the cause of this sudden change in the aspect of things? We have, said he, just crossed the line, and entered the state of Pennsylvania. The people of those two states have been for some time sensible of the cause of their poverty, and have not required the abolitionist or the anti-slavery men to give them this information, and especially to do so, in the harsh, uncharitable language with which they have been addressed.

It was my intention, some time since, to have travelled in our southern states. I communicated it to a friend who was acquainted there.

You will see, said he, a different picture from that exhibited in the free states. In the latter every thing is on the march of improvement; new houses are building, splendid public edifices are erecting, villages are every where springing up, cities are extending, lands are becoming richer and more productive; while in the former, all is on the decline, all bespeak a melancholy decay. Most things are old and out of repair. Villages are sinking into ruin, cities are declining, lands are becoming poor, and the inhabitants still poorer. You will scarcely be able to find a decent tavern in all your excursion. The roads and the manner of travelling will be intolerable. This picture discouraged me, and I abandoned my design. If any one doubts, in respect to the injurious consequences of slavery in a state, let him compare the State of Kentucky with its neighbor, the noble State of Ohio. I advance these doctrines independent of moral considerations; I appeal to men as statesmen for the truth of them. If I should undertake to urge upon my fellow citizens of the southern states, or the inhabitants of St. Croix, that they were sinners, I could find, in the depravity of the human heart, many other topics beside that of

slavery to descant upon. I am not prepared to say that the unholy affections of the human heart, as exhibited in revenge, hatred, malice, cupidity, &c., with the vicious practices of backbiting, fraud, and cruelty towards dumb beasts, are not each of them as sinful in the view of Omnipotence as the supposed sin of slavery. I myself am morally and religiously opposed to slavery, and so in like manner am I opposed to backbiting, envy, hatred, malice, and revenge, and, by God's grace, I hope to lead a life free of those vices. The legislature may abolish slavery, but they cannot destroy cupidity. The question is, what is the legitimate ground upon which a legislature can proceed in the passage of a law?

First, Can they be governed by the abstract question of moral evil? or, secondly, Are they alone to inquire into the political expediency of the law? The latter evidently is the only proper object of inquiry. In regard to questions of moral evil, men may and they do differ essentially. Many believe that it is not *mala in se* to hold a slave, and if the legislature sanction it, there is no sin; others hold a contrary opinion. Now, it is not the province of a legislature to decide questions of ethics; but whenever they

arrive at the conclusion that slavery is politically inexpedient, then it becomes a proper object of legislation. But inasmuch as they are about to change the law on a point affecting materially the property of the citizen, it must be done in such a way as not wantonly to impair the vested rights of individuals. The anti-slavery men have declared for immediate emancipation—every thing with them is to be carried by storm. This was not the manner in which the founder of our religion proposed to do things. While he was upon the earth, slavery was almost universal. He had all power in his hands ; he could have decreed and enforced immediate emancipation, but he did not. His precepts inculcated forbearance, gentleness, and universal benevolence. If our anti-slavery friends had now the like power which our blessed Saviour possessed, how differently would they exercise it? No one can doubt, but they would instantly abolish slavery in every country upon earth. I admonish them to consider that Omnipotence has now the power to do what they appear to be impatient to accomplish, but he does not exercise it ; he is forbearing, and has provided for our redemption the mild, efficacious doctrines of the Gospel. Upon

the whole, however, I contend that slavery, even in the mild form in which it exists in St. Croix, is one cause of unhappiness in that lovely island.

In the next place, St. Croix is not a large island. And in all small communities there is much of scandal. I regret to say that many of those with whom I conversed had something to tell me against their neighbors. And these communications, in general, did not appear to be made to me with any good object. If there was no malicious intent, they were, to say the least of them, idle tales of a very censurable character. My maxim is, that one should not utter even a slanderous truth, much less a falsehood, against another, unless for the sole object of doing good; and I must confess that I am invariably prejudiced against the man who speaks evil of his neighbor, unless I can clearly perceive a virtuous purpose. I do not pretend to confine these charges to St. Croix, they are applicable to most other small communities; but it is nevertheless an objection that may be urged against a small island, when its eligibility as a residence is under discussion.

The inhabitants are principally nominal Christians. This description of religion is somewhat

beneficial to the orderly government of a state, but it does not promote individual happiness. The harmony of the moral affections is deranged. The meek, the gentle, the benevolent Christian is almost unknown in St. Croix.

The disease called elephantis, (which is quite frequent amongst the slaves, and occasionally, though I should think rarely, attacks the white man,) is of a most loathful character. The limbs of the subject, particularly the legs, swell to an enormous size. An eminent physician of that island informed me, that he attributed its cause to a small insect called the jigger. This little being, scarcely as large as the head of a pin, bores its way into the feet and other parts of the body, and having made a nest, breeds its young, which spread industriously about the parts, and produce the disease in question. It is scarcely perceptible for the first few days, after which succeeds an itching sensation, which is finally attended with pain and an enlargement of the limbs. It is said that elephantis is unknown except in countries where the jigger prevails. Some of our inmates were troubled with them, but by having them extracted without delay, the principal inconveniences were avoided. The slaves

are said to neglect them until disease ensues. I was careful myself not to walk across my bedroom without my slippers, and by this means I avoided them.

The centipede is quite common in the island of St. Croix. We found several in and about our apartment. They are a worm of from three to twelve inches in length, and sometimes an inch in dimension, with (as the name imports) an hundred feet. Their bite or sting is very poisonous; it is perhaps twice as severe as the wasp; it swells largely, and for two or three hours is attended with much pain. I did not hear of any one having been bitten by them while I was in the island. The scorpion resembles a large spider with a long tail. They are frequently seen here. They rarely bite. An established physician informed me that in the course of his practice he had known but one case, which was in the island of St. Thomas.

Intermittent fevers are the prevailing complaints. They break the fit by dashing cold water over the patient, when the paroxysm is at its height. These fevers do not attack strangers as frequently as natives of the island. The objections to St. Croix, which I have enumerated, are

applicable chiefly to a permanent residence. The mere season visiter, with caution, need encounter none of them. The hurricane months are August, September and October. These are of course to be avoided.

If emancipation should now take place in the Danish islands, I apprehend that most of the present generation of slaves would become idle vagabonds, as they are at present in Tortola. They have been accustomed to labor for their masters as mere eye servants, and have contracted bad habits which it would be difficult to eradicate. There are about nineteen thousand slaves here. I believe that five thousand of them, with a proportionate number of cattle, would work the island much better. And while the cattle would manure the ground, they would till it much cheaper. Every two acres of tillable land now employs a negro. Certainly four negroes, with two pair of horses, could till twenty acres much easier. The inhabitants of Madeira employ a vegetable to manure their ground, which I should think might be used with advantage in St. Croix. The English name is the lupine. The seed is a flat bean of the size and color of white corn. It is sown in the ground

and grows with great rapidity, somewhat like our buckwheat. The bean is gathered when ripe, and the stalks are pulled up and strewed on the ground; here it rots and forms a valuable manure. Where the seed is not wanted, it is pulled up while in flower, and left to rot on the ground. The latter method is supposed to be the most beneficial. The seed is also used as food. Soak it in salt and water until it becomes soft, when it is fit to eat. This seed can be obtained in Madeira, and I hope it will be tried as a manure in St. Croix.

We were frequently treated with a drink they call *bub*. Take a quantity of rum, sweeten it well with sugar, milk a cow into it; it will curdle; skim it off, then milk into it again, and it makes a delicious beverage. A common amusement here is to suck the juice of the cane. The slaves are often seen chewing and extracting it. The planters say they almost subsist on it during crop season, (which is from December to July,) and consequently are able to save much of their Indian meal which they receive as rations. I found it occasionally a pleasant amusement to chew these canes. You are generally invited at the mills to drink the juice. The process of

making the sugar is very simple. The windmill is on the highest ground; the juice is pressed out here as in our cider-mills. It is then conducted by a leader some three or four rods into the boiling-house. Here it is subjected to the process of boiling, until it becomes of the consistence of molasses; it is then dipped into a large vat, and being stirred about and skimmed off, it is changed from vat to vat until it is finally left to cool and granulate into sugar. It is then shovelled into hogsheads, which are placed on a frame work over a large cistern, say fifty feet in length, and thirty in breadth, and here it drains molasses. The rum is formed from molasses, together with the substance thus skimmed off during the aforesaid boiling and cooling process.

A very common object here is the wind-mills. Almost every estate has one or more of them; and when the wind blows briskly during crop-season, they are all under way. A familiar expression is that the mills *are about*. It appears quite lively to see the brisk motion of these large points or wings moving with great power and velocity in every part of the island. The mule drivers are for the most part children from twelve to sixteen years old. You meet a dozen of these

together; often cracking up their mules and running after them, laughing and giggling in high glee. I presume these people are as happy as they would be if free. The females labor in the field as well as the males, except during certain weeks of their pregnancy, when they are allowed a respite. They are careless about raising their children; they are said to neglect them. A few planters have found it for their interest to give the mother a premium for every healthy child of a certain age which they present to them; which, on some plantations, is about three dollars. This is said to be effectual. What a degraded condition must that be in which the mother disregards her sucking child, and can only be brought to attend to it by a paltry bribe of three dollars.

The practice of sponging the body daily, in water, prevails very much. Sea water is preferred. A tub of water for this purpose is daily found in your bed-room. An experienced physician informed me, that he preferred rubbing the body thoroughly with a dry napkin; that he had found the sponging process to give colds; and that the dry napkin, with a flesh-brush, was in general more beneficial.

The washing of clothes is done altogether in

the brooks. In passing one of these streams you see many women standing half leg deep, beating or battling the clothes on large stones or rocks ; this is their method of cleansing them. It is extremely destructive to linen, as I know from my own, which was subjected to this process. A dozen black children, stark naked, are playing about these women. It is well that the inhabitants require but little clothing, for the blacks are in general badly clad, so far as appearances are concerned, although in regard to comfort, it may be quite as well. It certainly costs very little to clothe and feed a slave in this island, and yet, notwithstanding these advantages, slavery is destructive to the body politic. The maxim is as true with a nation as it is with an individual : "*He that commits sin, swallows poison which from that moment begins to operate.*"

Porters carry every thing on their heads. I have seen a man carry a burthen in this way that required two men to raise it up. I suggested the propriety of employing wheelbarrows, but was told that they would not be used ; that some gentleman had theretofore attempted to introduce them. He procured one—the slaves seemed to like it—they loaded it, but after some reflection

concluded to carry it on the head, and it was elevated accordingly.

I was amused one evening, in Christian Stedt, to see a pedlar of sweetmeats bearing on her head a large tray, containing perhaps a dozen bowls of different kinds of preserves. These she carried about with perfect safety, and passed through a narrow gate, in which it appeared to me as if the tray almost touched the sides of the passage.

Although St. Croix is a Danish island, yet the English language is universally spoken. Even the slaves speak a sort of creole English. The Danish language is spoken by the officers of the customs, the navy officers, &c.

I met with an intelligent gentleman at my boarding-house, who came from Buenos Ayres for his health. He was a Catholic and a citizen of the Argentine Republic, which is composed of the United Provinces of South America. I obtained from this gentleman much important information. Amongst other things, he informed me, that religious toleration as established there, had had the effect of agitating their community to a considerable extent. The Catholic clergy of their country, he admitted with regret, were

in general men of dissolute character ; they were the gamblers, horse-racers, and sportsmen of the country. Piety formed no part of their character. The introduction of the Protestant religion, and the exemplary character of their clergy, had drawn the attention of Catholics very much to this subject, and had determined the great body of their people to effect a reformation in the Catholic church. The subject had been brought before their legislature, and was at that time under discussion. Amongst other things, they had determined that it was not convenient to have the head of their church reside in Europe ; and that they ought to have a pope or presiding bishop of their own. A moderate party had succeeded so far as to prevail upon the innovators to present a respectful petition to the Pope, representing the great inconveniences under which they labored from the distance at which the acknowledged head of the church then resided, and calling upon him to express his opinion in favor of creating one who should reside in their own nation. That it was nevertheless understood that the measure was in any event to take place, and that the Catholic church was to be reformed in such way, as that its clergy should not continue to

bring a reproach upon the religion of the Gospel. That the Catholic church will improve in all free governments cannot be doubted. A Catholic born and brought up in the United States of America, is a different religionist from an imported one. His eyes are opened to see and detect most of the absurdities which have been engrafted on that church in the old world; and he boldly repudiates them. A Catholic priest struck an Irish laborer who was employed in building a church at Saugerties, in the state of New-York. Why, said a gentleman present, do you not hit him back again? *Sir*, said the Irishman, my arm would drop off if I should raise it against the holy *praist*. You could not have found an American born so blinded by religious superstition as this man. I am satisfied it would be unsafe for a Catholic priest to strike one of his Yankee parishioners. I am told that the Catholics, in some parts of the State of Maryland, are preaching and praying, and making converts not unlike the Methodists. Our people need be under no apprehension of the injurious consequences of Catholic ascendancy in this country, for before it can acquire that ascendancy, it must become a religion of the Gospel of Jesus Christ,

Persons going to St. Croix and taking horses with them, should select such as have the heaves, as they can be purchased very cheap here, and as it ceases to be an objection to a horse in that island. The climate, and food which they eat, cure the disease. I found that most persons to whom I spoke on the subject, had never even heard of this disease in horses, and did not know what it was.

Gold is the proper currency to take with you. Spanish republican doubloons, which can be bought in New-York for fifteen dollars and a half, pass in the West Indies for sixteen dollars. The price of a passage to St. Croix is seventy-five dollars. Unless you intend visiting the Spanish islands no passport is necessary. But it is generally prudent to take a passport from the Spanish consul, which may save you some trouble.

It was the sixteenth day of April, and the hour for sailing had arrived. Our barque was ready, and it remained to take leave of our friends and inmates. We had made a pleasant visit. Our boarding-house was in all respects comfortable—the apartments, the beds, the living, the attendance; in short, every thing had been well, and no person, however fastidious, could have complained

of Miss Briggs' accommodations. There was a harmony about the concern that rendered it very agreeable. Kindness to the servants is a characteristic trait here which often attracted my attention. The names of Johnny, Sukey, and Edward, &c., in place of Jack, Suke, and Ned, by which slaves and even servants in our own country are too frequently called, won very much on my feelings, and led me to draw comparisons unfavorable to like establishments in the city of New-York and elsewhere. I had been particularly amused with a courtship which a mulatto servant had in good faith conducted with a girl of his own stamp. She was somewhat unkind; and several letters passed between them. On his side the advice and counsel of the ladies at our establishment, who were supposed to be *au fait* in such matters, was taken. They assisted in dictating letters, &c., but all their wisdom had not, at the date of our departure, brought matters to any favorable result. We parted most reluctantly from our friends and acquaintances, and as our party was too large for the ship's boat, Captain Christmas, the owner and commander of a large Danish vessel lying in this harbor, politely sent his boat to our assistance, and afterward

avored us with a visit on board the Condor. He bears the commission of a commandant in the Royal Danish Navy, is a pleasant gentleman, who possesses many polite accomplishments. He is well known to the beau monde in these West India islands. He brings from Copenhagen the choicest articles of luxury, such as fine cherry cordial, the best champaign wine, prime flour, beef, pork, &c. The arrival of his ship was spoken of as one of the pleasant things which annually happened to St. Croix. It was said the gay season would not commence till after the arrival of Captain Christmas. Several ships come here from Copenhagen loaded with goods during the fall of the year, dismantle, and lay all winter in the harbor—the masters taking store-houses in the town, set up shops and retail their own goods; and in the spring of the year load with sugar and return home. This is a common practice, of which the regular store-keepers complain loudly.

It occurs to me to mention here, that during our visit the Danish Government attempted to monopolize the sale of drugs, and thus to create a new source of revenue. They forcibly closed all druggist shops by sending officers, and nailing up doors, &c. They licensed two druggists only, and compelled all persons to buy at their stores.

This was considered oppressive, and was submitted to with an ill grace by the physicians of St. Croix. Having reached the deck of the Condor, we were much engaged in answering signals from our friends on shore. Cambric handkerchiefs were flourished from the houses and wharfs; and while the ladies on board the ship were attending to these matters, the gentlemen were employed in exhibiting their passports (falsely so called) to the boarding or police officer. All things having been found regular, at six o'clock, P. M., we spread our canvass and departed, steering north-westerly with the intent to pass through the Sail-Rock Passage.

We had approached the island from the east, and we now left it by going to the north-west. The wind was fresh and fair, and we ran eight knots per hour. Captain Ward commanded the ship, and our passengers were Mr. and Mrs. B., of Hartford, Connecticut, Doctor B., Mr. H., and Mr. F., of New-York, Master Dubois, of Tortola, Mr. Gomez and Master Pizarro, of St. Thomas, together with my lady, self, and niece. The Sail-Rock is situated a short distance from the west end of the Island of St. Thomas. We came to the passage at two o'clock in the morning. It is a small island composed

of high rocks, and resembles a large ship under full sail. I strolled in the bow of the ship where I met a sailor who, like myself, was a stranger to that coast. We saw this island and concluded it was a sail; and on a nearer approach it became very large, and he suggested to me, that there was probably two ships heaving to. We soon discovered that it was the Sail-Rock, so called. It is said that when the English and Dutch nations were at war, that a squadron of the latter nation mistook this island for an English man-of-war, and fired several broadsides at it, before the delusion disappeared. It was a beautiful moon-light night, and we passed within a mile or so of the Rock. The wind continued fair, and the weather pleasant for several days, during which time we made good progress. On the 21st of April, the weather became rough and continued so during the day. Most of the passengers were miserably sick, but we shot ahead finely. On the 22d of April we descried an object which, on a nearer approach, turned out to be part of a ship's rigging. It was a jury mast with a sail attached. Our boat went to it, and found hundreds of fish in and about the sail. We tried in vain to bring it to the ship. It passed us, or rather we passed it too rapidly.

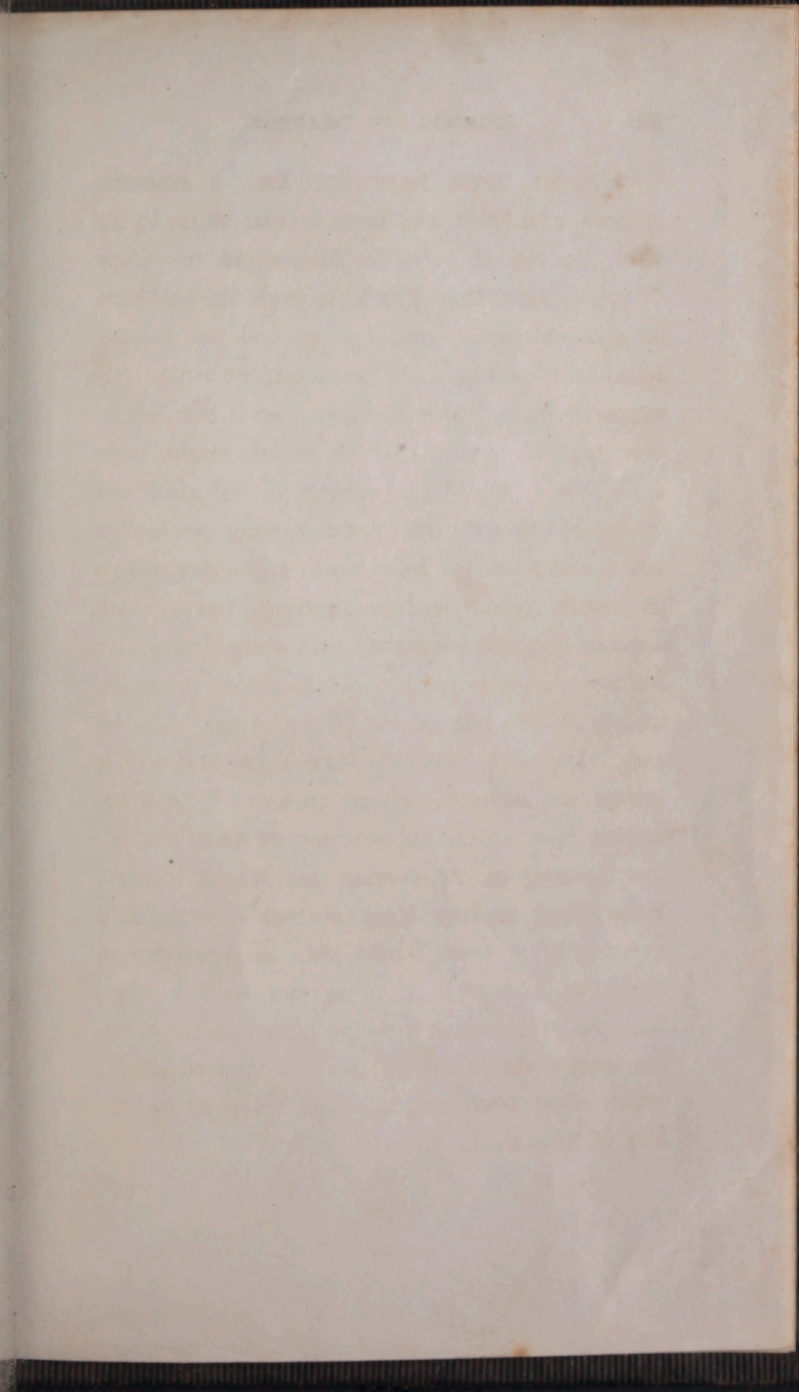
After this blow we had a great calm, and although we were well, we made little or no head-way. This state of things lasted two or three days, and we were rendered quite miserable by ennui. To vary the monotony of the scene, our captain hoisted out the long-boat; and my niece, with a party of gentlemen, made an excursion. They rowed about the ship and amused themselves with catching Portuguese men-of-war, a small gelatinous fish which swim on the surface of the sea. They spread a thin transparent sail, and are carried along by the wind at the rate of two or three miles to the hour. Soon after we left the island of St. Thomas we found ourselves attended by many birds, which are usually called Mother Cary's chickens. They resemble, both in size and appearance, the common martin of Westchester county, and are only distinguishable from them by a tuft of white feathers under the tail. We tried ineffectually to catch them with a snare. We shot one, and our boat brought it in. We also saw, during this calm, many whales, sporting, generally at considerable distances from the ship. They seemed to throw up the water several hundred feet. They did not come so near as to enable us to inspect them. A large land bird of

the size of a goose, now arrived at the ship. It lighted along side, and caught up most voraciously every article of food—coming close to the vessel, we let a sailor down to catch it. It lay hold of his bare foot, and bit it so sharply that we were obliged to draw him back. It probably mistook the foot for an article of food, an idea which the man was quite indisposed to ratify; it finally rose out of the water and flew away. We saw every where at sea an abundance of a small gull called the shire-water. They fly, or rather dart very rapidly a short distance, and disappear in the water. Mariners entertain the idea that they produce their young at sea by hatching them under their wings, or on the water; and that they never go to the land. Flying-fish are for the most part gregarious; they are seen quite frequently, are good to eat—they resemble at a distance a flying-squirrel. We were visited also by the *pilot*, a description of bird about the size of a Muscovy duck, having but one tail feather, which was two or three feet in length. This bird was very shy; it flew near the ship for an hour or two and then disappeared. We had a barrel of fine fruit, principally sappedillas, which being perishable, stood open, and as every one helped themselves, it soon disappeared. After

our calm we had heavy weather again, the wind blew quite hard, and we calculated we were within three hundred miles of New-York. On Sunday, the 26th of April, at 36° of latitude, we entered the Gulf Stream. It was a pleasant day. The wind blew hard, and several land birds having been blown off the coast, came near the ship; one (a red-headed woodpecker,) fell almost exhausted on the deck of the vessel. After a little while it recovered and eat most voraciously. It remained with us for a day or two, and seemed quite tame. For greater security, some one placed it in my hat. Not liking the confinement it pecked several holes through it, which still remain to remind me of the incivility of this visiter.

On Sunday evening, having crossed the Stream, we congratulated ourselves with the idea that our voyage was nearly ended. About two o'clock, on Monday morning, the 26th of April, I was awoke by a great noise on the deck of the ship. I heard the captain giving orders under much excitement. I also heard some one say it was Cape Charles' Light, and there are breakers, &c. I listened with some apprehension for half an hour or more, when the noise and hurry seemed to subside. Upon inquiry, the captain informed me, that after we crossed the

Stream, we must have got into a counter-current, and by it had been carried so far to the west, that all at once he discovered the Cape Charles' Light; that in order to avoid the breakers, he was obliged to tack about and put to sea, which the course of the wind had now most fortunately enabled him to do, for had it been otherwise, our ship, with all on board, might have been lost. After this affair we continued our course at sea until the next day, when we tacked again and stood for New-York, and a day or two thereafter arrived within soundings, but in such a dense fog, that we were again obliged to put to sea to avoid shipwreck. We finally took a pilot, and came into port on the 30th of April. On the 1st of May we arrived in New-York, and on the 8th of the same month returned to Sing Sing, having been absent six months. Two of our fellow passengers, Mr. Gomez and Master Pizarro, on arriving in New-York, embarked in the ship Poland for France, which ship, on her voyage, took fire and was burnt to the water's edge. The passengers took the long boats and remained for forty-eight hours in this perilous situation, when they were rescued and returned to the city of New-York.



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