

The Family Circle.

A SERMON IN RHYME.

If you have a friend worth loving,
Love him. Yes, and let him know
That you love him, ere life's evening
Tinge his brow with sunset glow.
Why should good words ne'er be said
Of a friend—till he is dead?

If you hear a song that thrills you,
Sung by any child of song,
Praise it. Do not let the singer
Wait deserved praises long.
Why should one who thrills your heart
Lack the joy you may impart?

If you hear a prayer that moves you
By its humble, pleading tone,
Join it. Do not let the seeker
Bow before his God alone.
Why should not your brother share
The strength of "two or three" in prayer?

If you see the hot tears falling
From a brother's weeping eyes,
Share them; and by kindly sharing,
Own your kinship with the skies.
Why should any one be glad
When a brother's heart is sad?

If a silvery laugh goes rippling
Through the sunshine on his face,
Share it. 'Tis the wise man's saying—
For both grief and joy a place.
There's health and goodness in the mirth
In which an honest laugh has birth.

If your work is made more easy
By a friendly, helping hand,
Say so. Speak out brave and truly,
Ere the darkness veil the land.
Should a brother workman dear
Falter for a word of cheer?

Scatter thus your seeds of kindness,
All enriching as you go—
Leave them. Trust the Harvest Giver,
He will make each seed to grow.
So, until its happy end,
Your life shall never lack a friend.

A VISIT TO THE WEST INDIES.

NEVIS.

Almost attached to but yet separated from St. Kitts, is Nevis, a small island 7 by 6 miles; 37 square miles in area, very mountainous, the highest point being nearly 4,000 feet high; the population, almost entirely black, is 11,000. The town shows signs of past greatness, and the country is studded with ruins of noble country houses. The white population at one time numbered 4,000, now scarcely 50—once the population was 20,000. There are very fine roads and sulphur baths; a short distance out of town is the ruins of a great stone edifice built in 1803 at a cost of £40,000 sterling. The morals of the people are very low, and it is said that human sacrifices are offered in the centre of the island, a case had very recently occurred, and is now being investigated by the Government. It would take little to allow these people fall into actual barbarism.—Our time here is short, as we take ship in the afternoon for

ANTIGUA,

which we reach early the following morning. The coast line of this English Island is very bold and extremely dangerous to shipping. The water close to the very edge is of immense depth, our ship drawing 22 feet sailing within a few yards of shore—in fact, the same can be said of all West Indian Islands. On a prominent hill to the right of the town (St. John's) is the Fort, while the town lies snugly in a valley shaded with tropical trees. The vessel anchors three miles from the harbor, which is being dredged to admit large ocean vessels. The North American channel war fleet which left Bermuda, was at anchor here, and we passed under the stern of the *Blake*. It was a grand sight to witness their departure at 8 a.m., shortly after our arrival. About a mile from where we lay [at anchor] was a wrecked steamer, the waves beating in white spray over her. On the opposite side of the harbor is the General Hospital, and alongside the Leper's Home. There are many cases of this horrible disease on the various islands.

The most prominent building is the English Cathedral, built in 1845, at a cost of £40,000—on the brow of a hill. It has two steeples, and double walls as a preventive against earthquakes. The other churches are the Methodist and Moravian.

As is usual on landing on West Indian islands we were met by a crowd of men, wo-

men and children—all anxious to be of service to us in some way. As we went along one of the main streets, we saw a novel sight; about 100 blacks were harnessed to a house, which they were moving to another part of the city—one man kept time by singing—the rest would join the chorus.

The houses are mostly built of wood, low and irregular. There is, however, a very fine Free Library, containing a large assortment of foreign papers. Strangers are allowed the use of the building for one month free.

The moral condition of the people is very low, most disgusting scenes occurring on the main streets, which would almost shock the modesty of the most depraved.

The semi-annual sitting of the High Court began on the morning of our arrival, service being held first in the Cathedral by the members; the bells rang and there seemed to be a general excitement in consequence of this great event.

Antigua was discovered by Columbus in 1493, and received its name from the church Sancta Maria de la Antigua. It was added to Great Britain in 1667. The circumference is 54 square miles, and 108 square miles in area; population of the island 34,000. The principal town is called St. John's. This is the seat of Government. The next largest is Barbuda, on the other side of the island.

As seen from the sea, the island presents five conical hills, but on nearer approach the high lands of five islands. The climate is generally dry, subject to frequent visitations of drought in consequence; the luxuriant tropical vegetation common to the other islands is absent. The trees never attain the height or beauty of St. Kitts. We obtained some fine samples of petrified woods, which is obtainable in the centre of the island and sold by the natives. We are charged here 2s. 6d. to go ashore, this being a government charge. In the afternoon we left for

MONTserrat

(English 9 x 6 miles; 35 square miles area. Population 9,000, all black), distant from Antigua, 30 miles. The ship anchors a half mile from shore, and the charge for going ashore is sixpence. The coast is extremely bold with deep soundings—was discovered by Columbus 10 March, 1493. The island is very mountainous, the highest point 3,000 feet, and clothed with dense primeval forests, which give it beauty, and which is enhanced by the many shades of green of the cultivated slopes at their bases. It was first colonized in 1632 by the French, but came into possession of Britain in 1668.

The island was originally settled by wild Irish, by which name the native Irish were formerly known, in order to distinguish them from the English and Scotch settlers. It is not surprising, therefore, that the descendants of the slaves that belonged to the Irish settlers all have Irish names and speak a jargon of Irish, English and African—they are noted for their blarney. The climate is salubrious—called the Montpellier of the West Indies. The island produces sugar, arrowroot, aloes, ginger, etc., and in fruits, papaws, tamarinds, bananas, oranges, breadfruit, etc. The mountains abound in a delicate "mountain cabbage," a vegetable rivaling our asparagus. Also many valuable drugs, such as gums, sarsaparilla, cascarilla bark, quassia, etc.

The chief town is Plymouth. The houses are mere huts, and the streets crooked and narrow, and crowded with men, women and children almost in a nude condition. The country drives are very nice. There are three churches, English, Methodist and Moravian. There is a good public school. We only spent a few hours here, when we passed on for our next stopping place, the island of

DOMINICA,

also discovered by Columbus, and received its name in consequence. Since 1783 it has been in possession of Britain, and curious to note, the language is French, although a British possession. It is 27 miles long by 13 wide, and is the most picturesque in appearance of any of the islands yet visited. The view from sea is very fine, dozens of sugar-loaf mountains rising in all directions. The volcanic eruptions must have been very great to cause such upheavals, the whole having the aspect of having been twisted and torn and rent asunder.

The population of the island is 30,000. The chief town is Roseau, with a population of 4,000; very old fashioned and houses of the poorest and most primitive style. The inhabitants huddle together, as many as a dozen families live in a small courtyard. The moral and religious condition the very lowest, and strangers are harassed continuously for "a penny, sir," by men and women—particularly the women, who follow you wherever you go. They live on dry fish, rice and fruits. All are barefooted and very scantily clothed—the children go naked. There are no conveyances on the islands, and the only locomotive power is the pony—and half-starved creatures at that. The language spoken is a gibberish of French, English and African.

After seeing all that could be seen in the town, we concluded to take a ride up the mountains. There were seven in the party, and after some little difficulty in securing ponies we started. We followed the street which led past the jail, over an excellent bridge, passing under the white cliffs of St. Aromant, followed the Roseau River, which flows through a beautiful valley covered with banana, citron, cocoa and lime groves, to the very base of the mountain, then up, higher and higher, the path growing rocky and slippery, past the lovely valley Shawford. When a mile and a half above, we enter a deep ravine, 2,000 feet or more, where are the first perfect tree ferns on the trail—the largest and most beautiful that can be imagined. The gorge is filled with them and the banks along the path are covered with smaller ones, infinitely beautiful. Up the mountain sides we climb slowly, over 5,000 feet above sea level. Here is one of the wonders of the Caribbeas and has been visited by very few white men—the Boiling Lake. It was in a state of wild fury of ebullition, and the basin is filled with steam from the internal fires below. No bottom has been found at ten feet from the edge with two hundred feet of line. At this great height, oranges, bananas and lovely roses could be seen in all directions.

After a good rest, we began the descent, which is a much more difficult undertaking than ascending. When getting ready our ponies were together, and one of our party got kicked in the side, but was not hurt seriously. This, however, was the first accident, but others followed ere we reached the bottom. The path was very slippery, so that great caution was necessary. We proceeded in single file slowly, but surely, until Our Boy, Alford's pony, missed his footing and fell just in the most dangerous pass, where the path was not more than six feet wide, and right on top of the deepest gully; fortunately, the animal fell towards the rock which rose perpendicular on the right hand side. Alford did not get hurt, and as soon as we got the animal on his feet he got on his back once more. Had the animal fallen on the left side, both would have gone down 1,500 feet before reaching bottom. After this accident all acted more carefully.

The next accident was to one of our party whose horse ran away on account of the breaking of the bridle, throwing the rider to the ground. There was a lively chase after the runaway horse, but it was not overtaken until near the town.

We passed Boiling Springs on the way; the water boiled and steam rose into the air in four different places.

As we passed along the river side which is near the town, we noticed scores of women washing clothes, some standing, some sitting, others squatted on a boulder; it was a rare sight—very few wore more than a thin piece of cotton round their waist.

The fruit of this island is of the best quality, and much superior to any of the other islands.

ST. LUCIA.

The next island we called at after leaving Dominica, was Martinique (French). The chief town, St. Pierre, is long and narrow, lying at the foot of a steep hill. There is no harbor, vessels anchor close to shore with their bows all facing seaward. The general appearance of the town is French, the roofs being painted in all colorings. The streets are long and narrow, with a deep gutter on each side. The population, chiefly black, is 34,000, and the total population of

the island is 154,000. This is one of the "wet" islands and is purely French—we could not get anyone who could speak English. The currency is French.

Nearly three years ago a great hurricane and earthquake, which unroofed and demolished a great portion of the town and shipping, took place, and in which over 300 lives were lost. We saw the most perfect rainbow here, the coloring being very distinct.

After casting anchor close to shore in fifty fathoms, several darkies came out in small boats made out of ordinary boxes, 2 feet by 1½, and capable of holding one only. They sat in the primitive-looking boat and paddled with a small board in each hand using their arms for oars; they were excellent divers—for a halfpenny thrown in they would dive down after it and bring it up every time. They were entirely nude, and how they would manage to get into their boats without upsetting was marvellous. They would yell out, "Throw a penny, massa; me dive for it." They got a good many pennies.

We visited the factory in which macaroni was manufactured, and, curious to note, no buggies or horses could be hired, as there were none in town. The social condition of the people was much the same as some of the other islands, and as to morals not much better. The Roman Catholic is the only church here. We had not much cargo for this port so that our stay was only six hours, when we left for

ST. LUCIA (English).

Here there is a beautiful, almost land-locked harbor, very similar to St. Thomas. At the entrance we noticed the wreck of a large three-masted vessel, the masts only appearing above water and not 30 feet from shore; she was a "coolie" vessel from Calcutta and had 700 on board when she struck—all were saved.

St. Lucia is the coaling station for the West Indies, and a large number of vessels were in port. There is a splendid pier, built by the English Government; vessels arrive with coal from England and United States, and load up with logwood, this being the chief industry of the people. The town is closely built and the moral condition is the worst yet. It makes one blush to think of the horrible state of matters. A mother offered to the writer her baby, only two months, for 5s. Oh for the Salvation Army to take possession of these islands for Christ!—no other denomination would be successful. The Roman Catholic Church is the main one here and their attempts to reform—well—

Castries is the capital, with a population of 15,000, while that of the whole island is 31,000. The island is said to be unhealthy, full of fevers, but we could not verify this, as we could not hear of any case from inquiry. The harbor is full of sharks, but the darkies do not fear them much as "the sharks are as frightened of them as they are of the sharks—only white men they attack."

St. Lucia is 35 by 12 miles, the highest mountain being the volcano Soufriere, 4,000 feet. The chief objects of interest are the two Pionons, superb, conical peaks rising sheer from the sea, 2,715 and 2,500. We pass at the south side of the island and quite close.

St. Lucia is one of the most interesting of all the Caribbeas to the student of history who delights in the story of battles upon land and sea. The Caribs made a desperate resistance here. In less than two months after the first settlers landed from the English ship *Olive Blossom*, in 1605, the Caribs descended upon the settlement, and all the colonists were either killed or driven from the island. Again, in 1659, a company of English settlers attempted its colonization. Scarcely had they laid the foundation of their settlement when the Caribs, stirred to hostility by the French at Martinique, or outraged by the attempt to make slaves of their countrymen, fell upon the English and killed all they could lay their hands upon, expelling the survivors from the island.

(To be continued.)

In judging of others, a man laboreth in vain—often erreth and easily sinneth; but in judging and examining himself he always laboreth fruitfully.—*Thomas a Kempis.*