



Jubilee Market, Kingston, Jamaica

The Jamaican Calamity

A FRENCH writer has spoken of January as the month of disaster. It may be that the opening of another calendar year and a new diary makes us more sensitive to such reports. The heavy storms and railway wrecks this month are in keeping with the tradition, reaching a climax in the destruction of the capital of the largest island in the British West Indies by earthquake shock.

There has arisen out of the catastrophe an Anglo-American complication which is regarded by all parties as decidedly unfortunate. The correspondence between Governor Swettenham and Rear Admiral Davis has been published with comparatively little Canadian comment. We are waiting to hear why the United States marines took such an enthusiastic initiative and why the surgeons were in such a desperate hurry to hunt up fractured

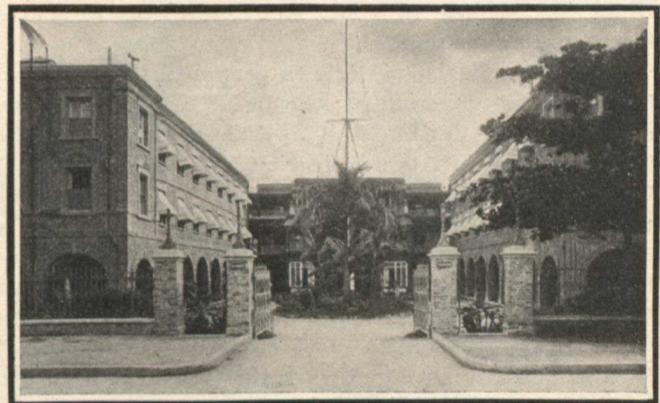
patients. Then we may appreciate the apparently un-called-for sarcasm of Governor Swettenham's reply.

Prominent Canadian journals have reminded John Bull that Canadians understand the United States people far better than the English do. The reason is entirely obvious. We may not love our neighbour as ourselves but we certainly know him very much better than do those across the seas. The United Stateser is warm-hearted and unconventionally ready to lend a helping hand. An Englishman, on the contrary, is likely to request an introduction before accepting a life-preserver.

A Canadian would have understood that the impulsive action was the outcome of sheer friendliness and would



Port Antonio Harbour, on the North Shore of Jamaica



Myrtle Bank Hotel, Kingston

have treated it accordingly. But a Canadian would also have been able to "see" the games that have been played from the days of Ashburton to Alverstone. We can appreciate American camaraderie but we also know a little about the poker cast of countenance. The Swettenham-Davis incident is merely an unpleasant episode that will not interrupt the smooth course of the Anglo-American true love.

J. G.