

with him? No! the last day on which such a direful accident had taken place, the chief actor had not even been an acquaintance of the victim of to day. The man who lay dying within sight of us, had read an account of the last accident in the papers and had given it nothing more than a passing thought. The future had been darkly veiled to him; he had gone along totally and happily oblivious to his impending fate, and performed the last tragic act in a human being's career, with the astonishing earnestness and reality of one accustomed to the performance of such an act. I remarked to my friend in the adjoining seat, this has been a great day for that man!

I also remarked to myself, when I beheld the stricken faces of this unfortunate man's wife and child, that this had been a great day for those poor souls!

Though painful to witness, this calamity to a man with whom the majority of the onlookers were not even acquainted, naturally elicited nothing more than a few sympathetic exclamations, such as "Poor man, he is out of pain and care; I pity his poor wife!" etc., etc.

To be continued.

## Pen and Ink Sketches of Jamaica.

(CONCLUDED.)

One is struck in travelling by the scarcity of dwelling houses. The scenery is strangely wild and "bosky," and little cultivated. You may travel for miles without seeing a house or habitation of any sort. The coffee patches are intermingled with trumpet, sour apple, cocoa, mango trees, etc., which will grow thickly about the wattle and thatch cottages of the so called "small settlers."

The flowers and ferns tempt you to pick them at every moment, but such a thing as walking about freely in that part of the Island is out of the question, owing to the ticks in the grass. You cannot journey very far in Jamaica without soon being made acquainted with the pest of the place. Three kinds (or sizes in different stages of growth, as a great many affirm it to be) of ticks infest the grass and cover the bushes. The smallest kind—which are grass lice—are the most troublesome. They are so small that it is almost impossible to see them sometimes without looking very near. These are in size not much larger than a pin's point. The red tick, called so from its reddish hue, is about the size of a large pin's head. Then there is the silver tick, a flat silver grey insect of a loathsome appearance, the size of a small fly. These are the natural sizes of the ticks, as seen on the bushes and grass, not their size

when in a state of repletion, which depends entirely on the quantity of blood they have sucked. If, for instance, one has been faithfully sticking to you all night, by the morning his flat body will have become bloated to very rotund dimensions.

Merely to touch a small bush or blade of grass is often enough to cover you with these insects. In one moment you are literally swarming with them. I have seen a blade of grass so thickly covered with them that no atom of it was visible, but it looked more like a woolly stick, so closely was it covered. They have hardly touched you before you are painfully conscious of the fact. They rapidly pierce through your clothing and take possession of your body. To preserve a serene and smiling countenance under these circumstances, would require the stoicism of a saint accustomed to penance. They stick to you, or rather bury their heads into your flesh with such pertinacity, that it is neither easy to brush nor wash them off. They have to be picked off. In the country where the horses feed on the commons and in the grass pieces, the negro grooms always speak of *ticksing* the horses in the morning.

The bite is particularly poisonous. The intensity of the burning irritation depends on the length of time the tick has been biting, and very much on the state of the blood, as to whether the bite becomes a bad sore or not. But however healthy the blood, the irritation is sure to torment you for some weeks. It will altogether cease for a day or two, and then begin again. And very often the last state of that bite is worse than the first. Frequently at night you will find you have awakened yourself by scratching at some bite inflicted weeks previously. After the rains in May the ticks almost disappear for four months, except in the thick grass pieces, where they always abound. When they are quite in season, there is no escape from them for they will frequently blow in at the open windows. Some parts of the Island are as yet quite exempt from this plague. On the Port Royal Mountains and the Blue Mountain Ridge, they have not yet made their appearance; but if, as affirmed, it is true that they are spreading over the Island, the outlook is decidedly bad. The oldest inhabitants agree that some 24 or 26 years ago such a thing as a tick was not known. That they were imported with the Cuban cattle into the Island there seems to be no doubt. That they have now become a curse in many districts is a painful fact; and it is also a fact, that where much stock is kept, there the tick is in great abundance. In Manchester, for instance, in all the "Penns" they are a perfect scourge; also, about Spanish

Town, and on the north side, where there are many cattle.

There are grass pieces in some of the "Penns" which so swarm with the ticks that the cattle will hardly remain in them.

There are no poisonous snakes in Jamaica. The yellow snake is the largest, sometimes measuring 12 feet in length, but quite harmless. And except the ticks, there are few poisonous insects. Occasionally, you hear of a centipede or scorpion, generally on the plains. The mosquito is rather troublesome at certain times of the year about the plains, and strange to say, even up in the cool mountains. I have known them very tormenting occasionally at Flamstead in the afternoon, 3,000 feet above sea level.

The birds sing sweetly in most parts of the Island. The Jamaica nightingale chants a thrilling melody, a clear continuous trill of peculiar sweetness. I have heard it warble off and on throughout the whole night. On a moonlight night it literally pours out its tiny bird-soul in a passion of plaintive pleading. In the Port Royal and Blue Mountains you frequently hear the solemn notes of the solitary more melancholy than sweet. Many beautiful birds frequent the trees. Numbers of tiny humming birds are ever darting in and out among the flowers and in the flowering trees, of which there are so many. The throats of the humming birds flash like brilliant rubies and emeralds. But the most brilliantly gorgeous little bird that I noticed was the Jamaica robin, a bird of the most vivid green, with a throat aglow like a gleaming coal of fire. The great juncrow, a species of vulture (*cathartes aura*) is one of the first things which strike you unpleasantly on your arrival. These huge black birds, the size of a small turkey, with smooth red heads, swoop about everywhere, or in twos and threes, sometimes more, on the roofs of houses, ready to pounce at any moment on their prey. The juncrow is the natural scavenger of Kingston, which certainly needs his services badly. Indeed, these birds are scavengers for the whole Island. Their value is so well appreciated that there is a law prohibiting anyone from shooting them. But even in the country the juncrow does his duty, for if an animal dies, it is left to the juncrow to make off with the carcass, and in a wondrously short time nothing is left but a heap of bones to whiten in the sun. You see these funeral looking birds in flock, all over the Island. They preside on the roof of Government House as well as on that of the negro hut. They are the hideous but ominous present necessity of Jamaica.

The rainy seasons come in the months of October and May. They generally be-