

NASSAU.

BY L. A. T.

ON Thursday, the 17th of January last, the good ship *Santiago* steamed out of New York harbour bound for the West Indies. The *Santiago* belongs to Ward's Cuba Line of Steamships, one of which leaves New York every fortnight for Cuba, calling at Nassau on the way out and back. We had a very pleasant voyage, each day growing warmer as we journeyed southward, and on the Monday morning, after a journey of four days, we arrived at Nassau, the chief town and capital of the Bahamas, built on the island of New Providence.

About a mile and a half from the shore is Hog Island, a long stretch of land forming an excellent protection to the harbour, and off this island we lay for some hours waiting for a tender to convey the passengers to land. No one can imagine a more charming picture than the scene before us as we came slowly up the harbour. The beautiful greenish tints of the crystal water first attract the eye of the stranger, while the low latticed houses seem buried in masses of brilliant foliage, and far above them the tall palm trees wave gently in the breeze. We land at a coral limestone wharf where a crowd of people, both black and white, have gathered to see the new comers. Indeed we must look queer to them carrying our heavy coats and furs into their warm clime.

If Nassau looked lovely from a distance, how much more so now. Orange and lime trees perfume the air; the natives in their picturesque dress move quietly along the clean white streets; everywhere do we see flowers of the most beautiful description, and to us Canadians fresh from

a land of ice and snow, it seems a veritable fairyland. We had already secured a house for our party, and as the distances are not great in this coral isle, we were not long in arriving at our Nassau home—a quaint old house built of white stone, with green shutters, two wide piazzas, an upper and lower one, roses climbing all over the front, and an orchard at the back of orange and lemon trees. Almost all the houses as well as the roads and fences are constructed of this white coral limestone rock. It is sawn out of the quarries in large blocks, and is soft at first, but hardens by exposure to the air and rain. When a man wishes to plant a tree he makes a hole in the rock with a crow-bar and then sets in his tree where it will grow quickly.

Nassau is a city of about 9,000 inhabitants, three-fourths of whom are coloured. It has a library, public building, Government House, and the grand "Royal Victoria Hotel," which is thronged with wealthy Americans every winter in search of sunshine and health. The coloured people dwell chiefly in small settlements in the suburbs of the city. Their homes are miserable little cottages, but surrounded by bright flowers and fruit trees. Grant's Town, the largest of these settlements, was a favourite haunt of ours; we would wander there at all times for flowers. Roses bloom abundantly here, and for 2d or 3d we were able to get all we could carry away with us. Though walking is very pleasant in this paradise of flowers, it is not safe to do too much of it where the temperature is between 75 and 80° in the shade, but then there are other amusements. The