

with the climate of Jamaica. The mean temperature of summer is only a few degrees above that of winter, and the variation from day to day is never sudden or extreme. The island is too small and too much exposed to the sea to know the extreme heat of a Canadian summer; but one finds the middle of the day too hot for much exertion. The average rainfall is very heavy, and in many parts rains are frequent, but the rainfall is greatest on the north coast and interior. As the prevailing winds are from the north and east, and the mountains arrest the southern movement of the clouds, the south coast is often quite dry, even though the rivers may be much swollen. Vegetation is everywhere luxuriant, and few of the native plants are known in the north outside a conservatory. The roads curve round the hillsides, running up and down through the valleys so that "short cuts" are impossible. Points only a short distance "as the crow flies" are connected by so circuitous a route that one drives a long way to make a short distance. The charming picturesqueness of the way, however, is abundant compensation for its crookedness; and the roads are excellent. One seldom loses sight of the sea, and from mountain top to shore palms, orange trees, flowers, ferns and mosses grow everywhere. Altogether it is an interesting experience to a northerner to land in Jamaica, and, taking the customary mode of travelling—on horseback—to ride through banana fields where the plants rise twenty feet, with leaves of one year's growth meeting over one's head; to find melons, tomatoes and corn growing in January, and to see numberless tropical plants blooming at the roadside. Perhaps a guide takes you over the mountains and across rivers, where the fords are sometimes swift and occasionally dangerous. A genuine mountaineer, he knows every place and every person on the road. "Mornin', Miss Katherine," he calls, and "Mornin', Massa Grant" rings back from a cabin on the hillside. Nowhere in the

world, perhaps, could be found a happier or more social people than the Jamaica negroes. A stranger is saluted with "Mornin', Massa," "Mornin', Busha," or "Mornin', Bokra," from morning till dark. In their social relations they do not stand on ceremony nor make formal calls. A Jamaica negress can out-talk half-a-dozen ordinary women, and would exhaust two or three reporters. She may be addressing her stream of eloquence to a neighbor sitting on a doorstep across the street and some distance down, pounding chocolate in a mortar, when, if there be not too many similar harrangues going on at the same time, a woman at the market with a tray of provisions makes a third in the discussion. The conversation is Greek to the stranger. He can make nothing of it but a rapid jumble of incomprehensible sounds. On the main road and through the fertile districts the settlers are numerous. They live in little houses about twelve by sixteen feet, made of poles thrust in the ground to support a cottage roof; bamboo splints woven through these form the sides, and the roof is thatched with palm leaves. Their pigs and chickens are not quite so well housed, as they have no roofs. Clothes are washed at the rivers, and stones serve as washboards. This method may be not quite so rapid as the steam laundries, but it has quite as marked an effect on the fabric and buttons,

My boarding place is in a town of about 2,000 inhabitants. Perhaps not more than 1,950 of these are negroes. (These numbers are exclusive of goats, chickens and dogs, which, if added, would greatly increase the census.) Few of the buildings would greatly impoverish their owners if destroyed by fire. The streets are wide enough to allow carriages and foot passengers right of way to the same path—except when they meet. The sign boards, whatever their effect on trade, can hardly fail to attract the attention of strangers.