

### A LAND OF LONGEVITY.

A Canadian official, who has recently returned from the Bermudas, seems to have been strongly impressed with the uncommonly long duration of existence among the people of those enchanting islands, and by the active competition among representatives of life insurance companies for business. For the information of any of our readers who may desire to enjoy a greater number of declining years than most men, and who may be tempted to sail in search of them to a land of sunshine and lilies, onions and arrowroot, we venture to recall memories of many visits to the cluster of islands generally known as Bermuda.

When reading Mark Twain's "Innocents Abroad," one must feel that justice has not been done to the book by those who regard it as a volume of fun alone, and not as a guide book to things worth seeing and remembering when doing Europe. So, in the same way, in the pages of "An Idle Excursion," by the distinguished American author, underlying the humour therein, is a faithful record of what every visitor to the Bermudas should see and observe closely, each in his or her own fashion, during a visit to those islands of sunshine and flowers.

On the back of a photograph of the islands, we find these our own first recorded impressions of the Bermudas:

"This view merely gives you an idea of a group of islands as you see them from the top of a high tower, and does not convey to the mind the slightest impression of the almost marvellous colours of sea and sky, and the really eye-dazzling effects of the white roads, whiter houses, brilliant plumaged birds of scarlet and blue, and sweet-scented roses of every shade of pink and red. Bermuda is something more than the market garden of New York and Boston. 'Tis the home of a people far removed from the cares of daily business; troubled with letters only once in a fortnight; knowing nothing of telegrams from neighbouring cities and cablegrams from abroad; and in all the indolence begotten of seclusion and sunshine, breathing an atmosphere so full of ozone (and onions, when in season), that the natives live to a disgracefully old age, and a death seems such a rarity that the relatives of a Bermudian who does contrive to run the risk of reaching a better land usually contrive to pop the foolhardy traveller out of sight 'neath the cedar trees ere his friends are able to assemble for the funeral. To expire at 4 a.m., means a plaining of the expired one at noon sharp. But the place is so agreeably pretty that I can almost imagine a hardy Northerner might in time be found longing for the pine woods, the rivers, and the grey tints of Canadian scenery."

Since 1882, when the foregoing was written, some of the charm the islands possessed for invalids and lovers of solitude has been effaced by the establishment of cable connection with the mainland. But Hamilton remains the winter resort of thousands of rest-seeking Americans and Canadians.

Seen in the hazy distances from the deck of a vessel, on a calm, sunny morning, the clump of islands

looks like a big white table-cloth dropped down on the blue ocean. We have heard Bermuda described as a pinnacle of the lost Atlantis; as a table land of coral, supported on pillars likely at any moment to be undermined by the action of the waves; as a ledge of rocks, into the crannies and crevices of which enough wind-blown soil has settled to give earth room to the crops of onions and tomatoes; as a three-years' prison house for marching regiments of the British army; as the winter station of the North American Squadron of the English fleet; as an El Dorado for photographers.

Bermuda may be any of all these. But these lovely islands are also to tourists and occasional visitors, during the months of March, April, and May, a veritable fairy-land—a region of perpetual delight to the eye, and pleasure to the other senses.

Nearing the coast, one can gaze down into the blue water to such a depth that it would seem possible to see the bottom of the ocean, with its wealth of coral caves and marine plants, and the mermaids of song and story. Can anything be more soothing to the senses of a Northern visitor to these Southern waters, accustomed, as he is, to the grey and neutral tints of everything—breezy-looking clouds, and dark, foam-tipped waves—than to behold (as he rounds the first promontory of rock, with its single cedar tree silhouetted in sharp outline against the cloudless background), a surface of unbroken blue water, hardly rippled by the softest of summer air, and then to observe, rising out of the wonderful water what looks, when seen from the deck of a ship just entering port, like a town built out of white marble.—St. Georges.

No one who has found rest for the tired brain and body in a three months' sojourn in this veritable Fairyland will be surprised to learn that an insurance official has been struck with the longevity of Bermudians. What possible excuse or reason for dying could be found by a dweller on the South Shore of this Land of Longevity. Even the thoughts and fancies of a jaded editor would be stimulated by the walk from Hamilton to the spot we now recall. Leaving a lane, shaded with overhanging trees and fringed on either side with oleander bushes, save where low stone walls overgrown with feathered ferns and cushioned moss marked the boundary of some estate, we struck a footpath through a grove of cedar trees, and skirting one of the onion patches, found all over the islands, saw before us a tangled growth of wild grape trees, and then a scene which no dream of the tropics described in song or book of travel can ever efface.

Stretched out before us lay the sea, blue, nay, bluer than the sky above, its sheeny surface free, far as the eye could reach, from sign of sail. Down at the base of the rocks, twenty feet below, was a long stretch of sand, upon which we almost expected to see traces of the marvellous blueness of the surf lazily breaking at long, long intervals. The air was heavy with the tropical warmth and quivering with