

as it seems, the surprise is quite as great to the actors themselves as it is to you who will be but an onlooker." Here my face assumed an air of incredulity and I said that my friend's statement seemed absurd, for how could actors possibly proceed with a play if they did not know exactly beforehand what part they were to be called on to take.

My friend's countenance wore an amused look as he replied: "Ah! there, my dear Sir, is just wherein the interest lies, and this alone is what calls such numbers of onlookers hither. This great tragedy called 'Life' is the only one in the world in which the issue is veiled alike to spectators and tragedians."

My readers can imagine that I was really staggered by this information and you need not be surprised when I tell you I did not believe more than half of what my friend told me, though later I found it to be all quite true.

(To be continued in the July Union.)

### Pen and Ink Sketches of Jamaica.

There are very few places in the world, perhaps, of which the generality of people have so false an idea as of Jamaica. Few places, indeed, there are that can boast of more *natural* loveliness, of a vegetation more luxuriant, of views more glorious and extensive, or of climate more delightful and varied. In the planes on the southern side of the Island you have a tropical climate from June to October. In the mountains you have an atmosphere of the most exhilarating freshness; and on some of the highest peaks, positive cold, so much so, indeed, that the houses are built with fireplaces. And to be without a fire in the afternoons and evenings in the winter months, is to be much more than merely chilly—it is to really shiver with cold!

At Cinchona, 6,500 feet, one of the highest inhabited points in the Blue Mountain range, a fire is always necessary for comfort all through the year. It is generally lighted at four o'clock in the afternoon. Very delightful I found this fire, in the charming old fashioned open fire place, a bright fire of cedar and bul let wood.

In Manchester Parish (one of the 14 into which the Colony is divided) the temperature is invariably cool, and most equable, the thermometer averaging from 65 degrees to 78 degrees all the year round.

In some strange, but not unaccountable way, Jamaica has got the name of being one of the pest holes of the world. And it will be many a long year before the world in general will be disabused of that idea, the current opinion being, that to go to Jamaica means probably to die of

yellow fever, Jamaica and yellow fever meaning pretty much the same thing. The belief that yellow fever is always lurking somewhere in Kingston or Port Royal is quite erroneous.

That in years past the Island has been visited by epidemics is only too true. But it is also a fact that the chief sufferers have been English soldiers and sailors. That here and there a case is heard of, is true, but it is likewise true that constantly that case is traceable to some flagrant indiscretion or imprudent act, or is occasionally introduced in foreign shipping. It is a climate in which to get chilled means danger. But in what climate is there not danger in getting chilled when heated? In another climate that chill means congestion or inflammation of the lungs; but in the West Indies the danger from a chill or congestion of the skin is fever. The healthy action of the skin is the great safety valve and security for health in a tropical climate. New comers are prone to disregard this fact, even if they know it. Also, in not a few cases they think old residents fussy, who caution them as to unnecessary exposure.

As you approach Jamaica in the soft early dawn, the scene is one of unsurpassed loveliness. The "Blue Mountains," rising from the central ranges, lift their great indigo peaks up into the clouds which are ever rolling down their sides in white drifts of downy splendor, and now and then pierce through the cloudy veil which floats above them. "Blue Mountain" peak, 7,800 feet high, the loftiest of the range, rises in the distance like a small cone-shaped island in a sea of rosy undulating cloud waves. Such glorious mountains! Such light and shade play over their mighty sides every moment of the day! An island, indeed, of mountain beauty. Port Royal, the Royal Naval Station and first stopping place of shipping, at the entrance of Kingston harbor, is at the westernmost end of a sandy spit, over twelve miles long, and less than a quarter wide. It forms the natural breakwater to Kingston harbor, and nearly altogether encloses one of the most spacious and conveniently approached ports in the "new world." It is known as the "Palisadoes," and a long beach on both sides of the conspicuous white tower of Plumb Point Lighthouse, was planted some thirteen or fourteen years ago by the Colonial Government with coconut trees. This plantation, with its "plumy palms" rising over the sea level, after sighting "Plumb Point" Lighthouse, is the second evidence of Government effort which meets the visitor, and its greenery mingled with the mangrove fringes springing out of the clear shallow water is effective as a marked bit of local coloring. As you steam up the harbor everything delights the

eye and pleases the imagination, which cannot be said when you near Kingston wharf.

I doubt if there is any other capital in the world of like importance that presents so unhealthy and neglected an appearance. And yet were its great natural advantages turned to account, what a handsome, and I believe, healthy urban settlement Kingston might be made. There is a splendid "fall" to the harbor, if the town were drained, which it is not. The water supply is stated to be abundant for "flushing" purposes, but while the authorities are discussing the respective advantages of underground and overground drainage, and urging the danger of sending sewage into the bay in a diluted state, it is allowed to soak into the site of the town, and accumulate until nature over-rides the feeble human attempts to depopulate the place; and by the water power of the May and October rainy seasons sweeps the refuse and surface of the yards and streets into the sea, as it has done from the beginning. This sharp and salutary treatment, however good for the health of the citizens, has turned the streets into mere water courses, and cut them down so low that householders have had to build flights of stone and brick steps to escape from their unintentionally elevated dwellings. The consequence is intense inconvenience to all traffic. The streets have been narrowed and "wrecked" for driving over, while the sidewalks for foot-passengers are disconnected platforms, the latter being interrupted by step-barriers at every town lot.

These "storm-waters" which deluge the town to such an extent that several persons were drowned at the crossings of streets in October, 1897, during an unusually heavy rainy season, could easily be kept within bounds and sent out to sea. It will hardly be believed that there is a natural water-course on both sides of the town. These are, however, so smothered with obstructive bush, rubbish from the neighboring houses, and objectionable accumulations of their own debris floated down, that they cannot carry off the surplus water, and the readiest outlets, the streets, have to do the duty. Were these channels properly cleared out, protected in a few cases, and connected by a masonry-lined cutting on the north or upper end of the town, the ceaseless lamentations of Kingstonians, as to the "sad state of streets," might cease.

Apart from the cleansing influences of the tropic rains, there can hardly be any point on any sea-board which enjoys a more steady and vigorous atmospheric circulation than Kingston. Seldom are there six hours of perfect stillness out of the twenty-four in any day of the year.

Early in the forenoon the sea-breeze