

One Family Circle.

THE FIRELIGHT ON THE WALL.

When the frost is on the window
And the snow is falling fast,
Driven in a raging maelstrom
By the wildly shrieking blast;
When the night is closing round us
And the chimney-farries call,
Then I love to watch the firelight
As it flickers on the wall.

How it quivers, leaps and dances!
Like a spirit of unrest
Now it glows with wondrous radiance,
Like the sunset in the west;
Then it fades, and sombre shadows,
Silently and swiftly fall,
And I sigh for the lost splendor
Of the firelight on the wall.

But again it springs in beauty
From the embers' blinking light,
Brightening into golden glory
The grim darkness of the night,
And my heart grows warm and tender,
And fond memories I recall,
As I sit and watch the firelight
As it flickers on the wall.

—Alice Fenton Pettis.

A VISIT TO THE WEST INDIES.

ST. LUCIA—(Continued)

While passing along one of the streets, we noticed a dark writing. We went up to him: he cordially received us, stating that his mother-in-law was dead and that he was sending out notices of the burial, etc. He handed us one written in a bold hand on black-edged paper as follows: "Gentlemen, you are highly solicited. I respectfully beg of your to attend the funeral of Mrs. Godard who died at 12.45 am the funeral is to take place at Labourie Street No. 5 the beloved mother of Annie Godard, John Joseph and Sussanah Godard,

aged 99 years
rest in peace."

The name of this worthy scribbler is Ralph Francis, 46 Victoria St., Carrires, St. Lucia, West Indies. We had a long and interesting conversation with him and his wife, and he promised to write me how he got along. He was highly elated at our visit and will treat any white man from America with kindness, should they call on him. He and his wife are Christians, and belong to the Methodist church.

Hundreds of women are employed here loading and unloading coal and loading logwood—the poor creatures are to be pitied.

The story of a lad 15 years, who showed us round, was sad. His mother, he said, worked at the coals, he had three sisters and two brothers and they lived at their grandmother's in one room. His father lived with another wife in the same town, and had eleven children in the second family, and "he is getting married to another wife to-morrow." Such is the condition of St. Lucia. The fact is, the man was never married legally.

BARBADOS.—(R. W. L.)

The next stop is at the British Island of Barbados, which is 18 miles long, by 12½ miles wide, and has more people to the square mile than any other country outside China. This fact gives it an importance in the eyes of a Barbadian, second to no other country in the world. The whites form the governing race, nearly the entire wealth and business of the islands being in their hands, although they form but a small and constantly decreasing fraction of the whole population, which is viz.:

Whites	15,613
Mixed	43,976
Black	173,000

The good Barbadian is an enthusiast no matter where he is; there is no country like Barbados; when he dies he wants another residence just like it. The blacks here are the most insolent in the West Indies. They are, however, industrious, because with so many it must be work or perish, and they are moderately intelligent. Barbados lies east of the other islands; this is why they are called the "Leeward Islands," because they are to the leeward of Barbados. The Barbadian divides all the divisible world into two parts, one part of which is to "leeward," the other to "windward" of Barbados.

The chief town is Bridgeport, with a population of 40,000, clustered together like a bee-

hive, the social and moral condition being similar to the other West India Islands, very low. The black people are extremely primitive in dress and manners. Boats and oars are as primitive as their progenitors had, as they fished from the banks of the Niger or Congo a thousand years ago. The town contains little of interest or beauty apart from the public markets where a good opportunity is afforded of studying the native characteristics of the people. The negroes are very excitable and create a great noise when they get excited. They buy and sell in very small quantities, and live on very little. There are no foreigners to be seen, as none are allowed to remain. Hence the markets are entirely their own, with no outside competition.

There is an excellent Public Library, the largest and best we have yet seen in the West Indies. The public schools are very poor, there being few trained teachers. The Young Men's Christian Association occupy a fine building and is free from debt. We had a very pleasant interview with the respected secretary.

The religious condition of the island is entirely governed by the Anglican church, for out of the entire population

160,000 are Anglicans,
14,000 are Methodists,
700 are Roman Catholics,
7,000 are Moravians,

the balance unknown.

The heat, as we walk along the streets, is intense, and although we had divested ourselves of every piece of unnecessary clothing, we were roasted.

The civil condition of Barbados, is—

Married men 16,759, women 17,787.
Single " 63,019 " 77,337.
Widowed " 1,337 " 6,077.

There is an idea prevalent that Barbados is a grave for Europeans, and that an enforced residence is equivalent to a sentence of death, but as far as I could learn, it is a grand sanatorium, and just the place for all affected with lung trouble. There are two seasons the "wet and dry," and "hot and cold," or the spring and the crop time. The wet season begins in June to end of October. The dry season from November to May. The temperature ranges from 85° upwards. There is no pier, all vessels anchor out in the harbor, and are loaded and unloaded by lighters. Barbados is the headquarters for vessels doing business in the West Indies—they all come here for orders, Barbados being connected by cable with all parts of the world. Over fifty large ocean ships lay at anchor in the harbor awaiting orders. The sight was very beautiful as all these vessels lay quietly at anchor. The harbor is full of sharks, large and small, and their flesh is sold on the markets, and bought by the poorer class.

There is a very fine hotel about 112½ miles from the city, called the Marine, and the largest in the West Indies. It is easy of access by street cars. The sea bathing is the finest in the world, the temperature of the water being about 80 degrees, suitable for the most delicate invalids. The attractions of Hastings (where this hotel is situated) and the places of interest in the neighborhood point to it as the natural centre to be chosen by tourists who desire to see with comfort all the beauties of coast and inland scenery which Barbados affords. Here we parted with three of our party to await the arrival of the Royal Mail steamer for Jamaica.

The chief productions of the island are sugar, cocoa, rum, etc. The land is more level than any of the other islands, and is in consequence all productive.

There is a regiment of red coats stationed here, and the men appear smart.

We feel the heat intensely—at night; we sit on the deck with very scanty clothing, and few of us turn into our berths, preferring to lie on deck all night than be suffocated below.

TRINIDAD. (R. W. L.)

After leaving Barbados in the afternoon we sighted the shores of Trinidad and Tobago the following afternoon (Sunday). For many years we had a longing desire to visit this well-known island of Presbyterian Missions and now we are within reach of gratifying that curiosity. As we approached more closely, the shores presented a bold and dangerous appearance, while the mountains are covered with vegetation from base to summit. We

pass through a channel on the north-western end of the island called the Bocas. There are several openings through which large vessels can pass at this end of the island and the view is very fine. We pass close by the nearest point in the Venezuelan mainland of South America. The ocean currents here are very strong, running at from 3 to 4 miles, and the water, a greenish shade, caused, it is said, by the waters of the Orinoco, which empties itself on the Venezuelan coast. After a lovely sail down the Gulf of Paria, we come to anchor five miles from shore, alongside, almost, of a Russian man-of-war. There are a great many ships at anchor, and the chief town, Port of Spain, does not by any means present an attractive appearance, only the front buildings and the wharf being visible and a few scattered houses on the hillside, while on the summit of this hill stands a small church with a tower. We enquired if that was the Presbyterian Church, from a black man who boarded us, but he did not know what that big word meant; never heard of such a church; he knew of a Scotch chapel in town, but the church on the hill was a Spanish synagogue. The water men are furious in their charges here to row ashore, and as we wanted to go to church we had to pay 2s. each way for each individual. The captain, chief engineer and the writer went ashore, and after a good deal of enquiry we succeeded in finding the "Scotch chapel." The services had already begun. We were shown into a seat. The general appearance was very Scotch. The faces of the majority present were good old Presbyterians. About 150 persons in all comprised the congregation, of whom 30 or so were black, and as many colored, the balance being white. The church was very comfortable, cushioned seats, and all the wood-work mahogany, with a very handsome organ and good choir. The sermon was of the Scotch style too, the minister reading very closely. The text was, "The wicked shall be turned upside down." The collection was taken up in small red bags, handed from one to another. The minister's name is Rev. Mr. McCurdy. No one offered to speak to us, but we enquired at the door the name of the minister. The whole service was dull and uninteresting. We stepped into the Anglican church across the road, on our way to the wharf. Here was a congregation of 1,070, actual count, and we were surrounded by white and black to bid us welcome. We were cordially invited back. The cathedral is very handsome and surrounded by beautiful trees.

The street cars run on Sunday, and the small fruit stores are open, otherwise we could not tell it from a *Torontonian* Sabbath. Our first impression of Trinidad was very favorable and could compare favorably with eastern cities. We saw nothing out of the way.

On Monday we did the town (Port of Spain, which has a population of 30,000) well. The stores are large and well-stocked, the streets are all asphalt, and the buildings modern. Everyone seemed to be busy and very few loafers, or hangers-on, as in the other islands, the exception being the coolies, who certainly from what we saw, are a worthless race, lazy, dirty and almost inanimate. They squat on the sidewalks, in the streets, in the stores, everywhere. Some selling, some begging, others doing nothing, but sit on their haunches all day long.

Some who sit and sell seem to be well off, if the quantity of jewellery is any indication of wealth (the coolies think so). We noticed some coolie women with rings in their nose and ears, bracelets on their wrists and arms (some had their arms almost covered), tinglets on their ankles, with three to six necklets, from which hung silver pieces of all sizes. We asked them why they wear so much jewellery: "Oh, its pretty. It looks nice." It is said they convert all the silver and gold they get into articles for adornment. They live on 5 cents a day, and are said to be good workers in the sugar estates. Leaving this class out, Port of Spain can be classed amongst our modern towns.

A great hurricane took place here in 1810 and an earthquake in 1825, causing great havoc. Slavery was abolished in 1833. There are several fine public markets, at which the various productions of the Island are sold. The people

are civil and obliging and very honest. A railway connects Port of Spain with San Fernando, forty miles distant and opened in 1876. The style of cars are English, and the trains are always crowded.

The spiritual wants of the people are looked after by the Anglicans who "hold the fort." The Methodists come next; their first church was opened in 1827 besides these there are the Spanish, Dutch, Roman Catholic, Hebrew, Moravian and Presbyterian churches. All classes and conditions of people are found here. The Creole, Mulatto, Negro, Coolie, French, Dutch, Brazilian, Russian, Syrian, etc. The Creoles are almost white and are native born, while all the others are foreigners. The police regulations are very strict and the punishment for minor offences terribly severe. In to-day's paper we read of a black boy, sixteen years old, sentenced to two years for stealing an egg from his father, and for plucking a flower in any of the public gardens, or fruit from any tree, the punishment is severe.

There is a Government savings bank for the accommodation of the people, as also district savings banks. The total population is 200,000: males 108,000, females 92,000. The island was discovered in 1496 and named La Trinidad or The Trinity.

The chief produce is sugar, cocoa, etc. The other exports are cocoa nuts and asphalt from the Pitch Lake, one of the wonders of the world. Only 350,000 acres of the island are under cultivation or about one-fifth of its area. San Fernando, the second town of the island, is situated on the Gulf of Paria, midway between Port of Spain and the south-western end of the island. It is built on two low hills; its population is about 7,000.

The third town is Arima, sixteen miles inland to the east of Port of Spain. It is the terminus of one of the lines of railways (there are three lines on the island) and the outlet of most of the cocoa which grows in the valleys to the north of it, and in the rich lands which slope towards the east coast. Its population is 3,500. The communication between San Fernando and the south-eastern end of the island is chiefly by steamers which ply tri-weekly.

Here more of our company separate; a young lady from Bermuda, with her attendant, who comes to seek a home of her own, and our good friend Mr. King, a Montrealer. We take on board a few for Demerara and some deck passengers. All the colored people who travel are carried as deck passengers; they sleep and eat on the deck, no covering but a canvas sheet spread over them, and they all seem quite happy. We carry a large number of negroes as deck hands and loading and unloading the cargo. They are engaged at St. Kitts for the round trip to Demerara at 50c. a day (the coolies work for 15c. a day.) They are not required to work on Sunday, our captain being a strict observer of the Lord's day and in every other respect a man of honor and thorough integrity, and has around him a band of men like himself. Since we came on board this ship, we have heard no coarse language or outbursts of anger and everything goes on nicely and smoothly day after day, making the trip very enjoyable. The captain is full of information and is full of esteem for and appreciation of the work of Rev. Mr. Grant at San Fernando, and hopes to remain long enough on the return trip to enable the writer to go to see him.

On Sunday morning we met with the derbies in the forehold of the ship, and had a pleasant and profitable talk with them. They were most attentive and anxious hearers; all seemed to understand the plan of salvation and several expressed themselves as anxious to know more; by and bye our number increased by a large number of the white men joining us; all listened attentively to God's word as expounded in a simple way, and our best friends on the ship are the black men. They cannot do enough honor as we meet. We often visit them in their quarters, and are greatly delighted that the white man should condescend to sit down in their quarters and talk with them.

We left Trinidad at mid-day for Demerara, from which place will be my next letter.

(To be continued.)

Never bear more than one kind of trouble at a time. Some people bear three kinds—all they have had, all they have now, and all they expect to have.—*Edward Everett Hale.*