

FROM A COLONIAL GOVERNOR'S NOTE-BOOK

by

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WITH II ILLUSTRATIONS

HUTCHINSON & CO.
(Publishers) Ltd.
LONDON

ST. KITTS

Called Liamaiga—"fertile land"—by those
Mysterious Caribs who dwelt there of old ;
Columbus, next, saw mountains that arose
As he sailed slowly past, and then unfold
Into a likeness of his name-saint, so
St. Christopher's he called it, and the name
(St. Kitts, for short, when English Warner came)
Recalls to-day that saint of long ago.

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And as that saint his precious burden bore
In safety through the river to the shore
And was thereafter blessed, so this dear isle
Has long been blessed by Nature's choicest smile ;
Its fertile slopes with cane and cotton green ;
A circling wreath to grace Antilles' Queen.

CHAPTER V

ADMINISTRATION OF ST. CHRISTOPHER-NEVIS

Warner of St. Kitts—Some predecessors—A quaint coat of arms—Philatelic ventures—How to get settlers—Labourers' wages—The wrong turning—Government House—Agricultural teaching—St. Kitts birds—Horrible insects—Basseterre—Nevis—An old-time spa—Water-spouts—Ancient memories—The sportsman's paradise—Mosquitoes and crabs—A curious island—A rich man's hobby—Warner Park—Slum clearance—One island, two nations—A visit from the Dutch Governor—Kidnapping a Governor—First flights in the West Indies—Agricultural shows—French officials come to learn—Two offers of promotion—Speeding up—"Coal-pots"—Cricket enthusiasm—Dined by the West Indian Club—My *Pepper-pot*—Mr. Amery translates a limerick—Ascots at home and abroad—A calamity—The "ladies" arrive—A welcome surprise.

ALTHOUGH I had once visited St. Kitts before, we had then arrived in the afternoon in a mist of rain; but this time as the rattling of the steamer's anchor awakened me soon after day-break, I looked across the bay and saw, framed in the port-hole, the loveliest picture in the West Indies—Basseterre and its surrounding hills touched by the early morning sunshine. Dominica, in the solemn grandeur of its mountains and valleys, is undoubtedly the most beautiful island I have ever known, but this approach to St. Kitts, and at that hour, was a fairy vision of delight.

Just as the Grand Old Man of Dominica had come off to welcome me there, so did one whom I can only call the Perennial Young Man of St. Kitts, Mr. Wilfred Wigley, the Acting Administrator, come on board to receive me here. He was at that time only forty-eight years of age, but had held every high office possible in the island, and was the

most respected and popular person there. His substantive post, like that which his father had held, was that of Legal Adviser to the Government, styled in these days "Crown Attorney," but if ever an Administrator, a Judge, or an Attorney-General of the Colony went on leave, it was always "Send for Wigley." He came of one of the old families long established in the island, and was a good sportsman in every way. He was a big man, but like an overgrown boy in many ways, and always unperturbed and with a cheery smile.

And writing of these old families reminds me that here in St. Kitts, more I think than in any other West Indian island, except perhaps Barbados, one constantly came across still existing links with the old days. I have already mentioned how Sir Thomas Warner, Captain of the King's Bodyguard, started a new life in St. Kitts in 1623 with a band of Suffolk farmers, and thus made St. Kitts the "Mother Colony of the West Indies"; and how Aucher Warner, late Attorney-General of Trinidad, and "Plum" Warner, of cricket fame, were his direct descendants. Warner called the estate he wrested from the Caribs and carved out of the virgin forest "Wingfield," after his old Suffolk home, and it is so known to this day; and he himself is buried in the ancient churchyard adjoining, beneath a marble tombstone bearing a quaint old inscription, and the coat-of-arms, such as was customary on most graves of the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century English settlers in the West Indies.

Soon after Warner arrived, as I have explained in my book, *The Leeward Islands during the French Wars*, there came to St. Kitts some French colonists, and the island, too big for one party to settle, was amicably partitioned between the two "nations," principally for their better mutual protection against the Caribs. But however good their intentions may have been, it was not long before war between their mother countries inevitably brought a local war in its train, and the island passed like a shuttlecock between the French and English for a period of a hundred and fifty years.

Thus it might in a way be said that, as the "Officer

Administering the Government of St. Kitts," I had as official "ancestors" both English and French Governors. And among the most famous of the latter was the Chevalier de Poincey, whose Government House was La Fontaine (now known as "Fountains," the property of Mrs. R. Berkley), up in the hills above Basseterre. This was a square fortified "castle" of stone, three storeys in height, and surrounded by large walled gardens and barracks. The historian Rochefort describes it in some detail, and also pictures a typical scene after a victory (over the English). . . .

. . . "On the occasion of a victory of His Most Christian Majesty's armies bonfires are lit; likewise horns and hautbois sounded with such force from the terraced heights that the neighbouring mountains and wooded hills reverberate with the penetrating noise, creating an echo which is audible throughout the island and far out to sea, while from the terrace and from the highest windows float the Fleur-de-lis, together with the flags and standards captured by the Governor from the enemy." . . .

They did things on the grand scale in those days! To-day there can only be seen an occasional piece of carved stonework, a few steps, and some of the surrounding wall.

Of my English predecessors, the best remembered is probably Lord Rosmead, who for five years as Mr. Hercules Robinson held office at St. Kitts before being promoted to the Governorship of Hong Kong. Subsequently Governor of Ceylon, New South Wales, and New Zealand, he ended up as Governor of South Africa during a critical period, for which he received his peerage. At St. Kitts he succeeded Sir Edward Drummond-Hay, whose nephew, Sir Robert, married my wife's niece.

Another Lieutenant-Governor of St. Kitts (they were variously styled Lieutenant-Governor, President, or Administrator) whose portrait I have was Sir William Cairns, who afterwards became Governor of Queensland, and after whom the city of Cairns is named. He is remarkable

for his fierce "mutton-chop" whiskers, which, I am told, a number of the black people copied in consequence.

In more recent times Captain John Churchill—a cousin of Mr. Winston Churchill—Sir Charles Cox, Sir Robert Bromley, Sir Thomas Roxburgh, and Sir John Burdon were my immediate predecessors. Mr. Cox, as he then was, was a great-nephew of that Lieutenant Fahie who made the gallant attempt to carry a message from Hood into the besieged garrison at Brimstone Hill, St. Kitts, in 1782. In after years, as Admiral Fahie, he was the last Commander-in-Chief of the Leeward Islands Station when it was abolished in 1821. Sir Thomas Roxburgh is still living, and only recently received a special message from the late King on the celebration of his diamond wedding. . . .

The next morning, after inspection of the Guard of Honour, I was conducted into the Legislative Council building, which was also the Court House, and there, after my Commission had been read, the customary oaths of office were administered to me by the Judge (H. H. Trusted), in the presence of a large gathering of people. The seals of the Presidency were then formally handed over to me by the Acting Administrator, and I addressed the meeting. My appointment as an Administrator, as is the case with all Administrators, was by direction of the King, the first I had held by the King's command.

The seals of the Presidency were interesting, as they showed, as on the postage stamps, in the arms of St. Kitts a representation of Columbus "discovering" St. Kitts through a telescope, which instrument was not invented till about a hundred years after his time! I once asked "Norroy King-of-Arms" at the College of Heralds if he could suggest any explanation of the origin of this anachronism, but in spite of all researches he could offer none.

People were not so careful about trifles of this sort in those days, and there is an excellent statue of Admiral Lord Rodney in Jamaica, dressed in a Roman toga. This was put up after his victory at the Saints, and some people say that the sculptor who was given the commission became confused about it and designed a Saint.

The " Presidency of St. Christopher-Nevis " is generally and colloquially called St. Kitts, after the fashion of the early settlers, and this habit has become so crystallized now that the nickname even appeared officially until recently on the postage stamps. The alternate values of the stamps had the arms of Nevis on them, to be fair to the other partner, as there is considerable jealousy between them. But poor Anguilla, the third partner, was given the cold shoulder, and left out. The Nevis arms depicted two young ladies apparently pouring out from a cocktail-shaker a Nevis rum-punch for a third one, who has presumably reached the " sliding on to the floor " stage. Actually it is intended to represent the offer to an ailing person of a draught of Nevis curative waters, but as these waters are only taken in the form of hot baths, which one doesn't, or shouldn't, drink, the design is not quite accurate.

In 1923 a new " tercentenary " stamp was issued, to commemorate the landing of Sir Thomas Warner in 1623, and the stamps show a picture of his ship coming to anchor in Old Road Bay. The twenty shilling value is now worth nearly twenty pounds. Stamps make a very useful form of revenue to small impoverished colonies, and though no one would like any unit of the British Empire to follow the example of some small American republics and make a living from them, it is possible to go to the other extreme and be too conservative. New issues of stamps have to receive the prior approval of the Colonial Office, and I suppose that the little island of Barbuda was fortunate that in 1921 I managed to get the necessary authority for an issue there, as it had been badly hit by a hurricane, and the sale of stamps in the one year made sufficient for the Government to repair most of the damage and help the people. One might almost say, with the Prayer Book, " A happy issue out of all their afflictions ! "

The tercentenary of the colonization of Antigua occurred nine years after that of St. Kitts, and this time we had four different views for the varying values of the stamps. Three of them were originally my suggestions, and elaborated by the engravers in England, but the fourth one, which was undoubtedly the best, was the design of a local lady, a

Mrs. Goodwin. This showed the "three arches of the centuries" with Warner's ship in the distance. The other three showed respectively "The old Dockyard," "Government House," and "Nelson's last visit in the *Victory*." Little Montserrat also commemorated *her* tercentenary with a special stamp issue in the same year.

A quarter of a century after the first settlers came to St. Kitts, there was alleged to be in the island a population of 12,000 whites, with a further 4000 in Nevis; but I always think these figures must have been exaggerated, although we know that emigrants were then pouring out of England attracted by the lure of this new "Eldorado." Nevertheless the islands were still hungry for more, to withstand French invasions, to resist possible attacks by the Caribs from other islands, and to balance the increasing numbers of African slaves.

There was published a good many years ago a most interesting old "journal and collected letters," called *A Young Squire of the Seventeenth Century*; and it is, in fact, the life of one Jefferson, who was a nephew of that Jefferson who was Sir Thomas Warner's lieutenant in his St. Kitts venture, and who, faithful to the last, lies buried alongside him.

In these letters, Jefferson describes how he has been appointed, during a "leave" home to England, as "Agent" to further the interests of the St. Kitts Government, and he realizes how vitally necessary it is that there should be more settlers sent out at all costs, even "malefactors, the spawn of the gaols," if no others are available. And he reports that he will try and get for this purpose the influence of the Secretary of State for the Colonies (in those days "The Secretary for Trade and Plantations"), but that he very much doubts whether this influence can be obtained "without a gratification of 20 to 30 guynnies to him." Imagine offering a tip of twenty or thirty pounds to a modern Secretary of State in order to get a little private influence!

To-day there are only 1035 white people and 21,380 coloured people in the island of St. Kitts, and this proportion has been fairly stationary for the last few generations.

The expression "coloured" includes all shades of complexion, from those who are to all intents and purposes white, to those, very few nowadays, who, through little or no ancestral mixing, retain the very dark colour of certain West African peoples. The word "creole" is often misunderstood, and taken to mean "coloured." Actually, it signifies anything native or indigenous to the older tropical countries, and thus members of long-established white families are, strictly speaking, "creoles." And locally bred horses are so styled. The last race meeting I attended out there had an event "for creole horses."

A large crowd assembled, three days after I arrived in the island, for the official Memorial Service to Queen Alexandra, and I had an opportunity of seeing, in addition to the better-class people, a typical well-dressed and orderly concourse of St. Kitts' labourers. In their well-laundered and neat clothing they naturally look very different to their very ragged appearance in old clothes when working in the fields. At first sight to the tourist driving past the fields on a weekday they appear to be the most destitute people in the world; and when he is told that their wages are about a shilling a day and that there is only steady work for about half the year, he feels confirmed in his assumption. But without defending the low wages, which I emphatically do not, and which I hope fair and just means will be found before long to remedy, it is only right to point out the other side of the picture and to say that their cost of living—for *their present desires*—is proportionate, and that they often earn in one way or the other more than a shilling a day. Also that they have usually a small bit of land on which to grow food, that they keep fowls and goats, that medical attendance is free, that their hut is usually their own, and that the tropical sun renders heating and much clothing superfluous. They are probably better off than the English country labourer was when, within my own lifetime, he only received fifteen shillings a week. . . .

Some of the people on this occasion had come in from the country, travelling on bicycles, on donkeys, or on foot. Very few were to be seen bare-footed, though some

used "alpagatas," a curious sort of sandal introduced from Venezuela via the southern islands. By the time I left St. Kitts, cheap motor omnibuses, with very rough-and-ready covered "bodies," had become common and served a useful purpose for the poorer classes. But I saw no double panniers on donkeys such as were customary in Antigua. It is strange how different, and how conservative to its own customs, each island is.

I noticed some of the women wearing home-made straw hats, clapped on the top of their bandana head-kerchiefs, giving them the rather ludicrous appearance of wearing two hats.

The stone church, with its square tower, was very "English" and might have come straight from some small English town. Just in front of it was a sign-post with a straight bar across it, one half pointing in one direction and saying "To Dieppe Bay," and the other pointing in the opposite direction and saying "To Dieppe Bay." The reason for this is because the road is a circular one, thirty-two miles in length, round the island, and Dieppe Bay is just about the half-way point from Basseterre, the capital.

After a few months I bought my first motor car, a Canadian "Rugby," and learnt to drive. The first day after finding out what to do with the different levers I took the car out with some trepidation, and not daring to let Daniel, my chauffeur, know, and started for a short drive along the road, which is a narrow one. After I had gone about a mile I found that I could not manage to turn the car round, and in spite of other traffic I felt there was only one thing for it, to go on right round the island in order to get home! Luckily I remembered a friend's house about three miles down the road, with a circular drive, so somewhat to their astonishment I careered round this without stopping and was able to point the car homewards again. In doing so I cannoned into some bushes overhanging the drive and filled the back of the car with leaves. Finally I collided with one of the entrance gates at Government House and rather badly dented one of the wings. Shutting off the engine, and getting out as coolly as I could in the circumstances, I felt rather like a naughty

schoolboy when Daniel met me and said, reproachfully : " I witness you takin' de car, Sah, an' I observe you has brought back a lot of leaves wid you, and now I pereceive you has also buckle de wing. Praps, 'nother day you liking me to drive, Sab." And that was that ! . . .

There were two Government Houses at St. Kitts, one for the use of the Governor-in-Chief on his periodical visits, and one for the permanent residence of the Administrator, a very wise arrangement. The latter house, called " Springfield," was the Rectory before " disestablishment," and therefore Government property and available for other purposes when the Church had to provide its own rectory. It was then enlarged and converted into one of the best of the smaller Government Houses of the West Indies. I had it still further enlarged during my occupation, by doubling the width of the verandahs, adding an extra room, and doubling the size of the swimming bath. This latter was a gorgeous asset.

The house was well adapted for entertaining, and there was a very great deal of this to be done. In addition to many passing visitors, there were about two hundred and fifty local people, from the three islands, on the Government House " list," to be invited to balls on such occasions as the King's Birthday, Christmas, or visits of ships of war ; to say nothing of innumerable dinner-parties and afternoon " At Homes." My wife and I like to have our friends around us, even if the position had not called for a lot of " official " entertaining, and though as a rule, but not always, the salary just held out, I fear it would have been a minus quantity if we had had children to provide for.

The house was beautifully situated on high ground at the edge of the town and looked across the bay to Nevis, twelve miles off. The blue water of the bay, the cone-shaped mountain of Nevis, and the smoke-cap of cloud that almost always surrounded its summit, gave one a very realistic impression of Vesuvius and the Bay of Naples.

The terraced gardens were a delight. Green lawns and tennis-courts—I had a third one made while I was there—and flower-beds bordered on the sea side by a long pergola of pink rambler roses as a background to the fountain and

small lily pond. At one side was an enormous shady tree, a "Barbados Evergreen," which dropped down rootlets from its low spreading branches, and these rootlets were coaxed into the ground through large hollowed hamboos and eventually formed living pillars to support the massive weight of the boughs.

At the back of the house were vegetable gardens, servants' quarters, stables, etc., and beyond them the Agricultural Experiment Station, which I subsequently had enlarged to three times its original size, in order to have better facilities for the all-important work of agriculture. I also was able to persuade ten benevolent persons each to provide one "Agricultural Scholarship" at the Grammar School, so as to enable ten selected poor boys to study agricultural science there, as I realized how much the future prosperity of St. Kitts depended upon a better trained and educated type of junior overseer on the estates. The Agricultural Station was not only a cotton and sugar-cane breeding station, but also a depot for developing minor industries and for studying plant diseases and pests.

The pests were mostly insects or bacteria; though rats and mongoose, to say nothing of monkeys, did a certain amount of harm to the crops. The mongoose had been introduced from India a generation or so ago, as they similarly were into Fiji and into Antigua, to keep down the rats which were destroying too much of the sugar-cane. But they seem to have turned their attention very much from rats to domestic chickens, and also to bird life generally, so that one gathers that there is a big decrease in the numbers of birds in these colonies, which to some extent has reacted with an undesirable increase of insect life.

There are still, however, many interesting birds in both St. Kitts and Antigua, and while I was there we had visits from two well-known ornithologists, Mr. James Bond, Research Associate of the Academy of Natural Sciences, Philadelphia, who made investigations in St. Kitts, and Professor S. T. Danforth, of the College of Agriculture, Puerto Rico, who took Antigua as his field. The latter found three birds, the Chicken Hawk, the Clapper Rail,

and the Antigua Bullfinch, which were absolutely confined in their range to the island of Antigua.¹ He also found twenty birds as not having previously been known to exist in Antigua, though not necessarily rare elsewhere. Mr. Bond, too, made some interesting finds in St. Kitts.

A very pretty little bird was the yellow-breasted "Honey-bird," a variety of "Creeper." He used boldly to come in to one's bedside with the early morning tea, and while one pretended to be asleep he would pick away at the bead-fringed muslin fly-cover over the sugar basin until he had dislodged it and was able to cat the sugar to his fill. He had a long curved beak intended for burrowing down to the centre of big flowers and thus tapping the honey at the source. But other birds not so singularly adapted by Nature used another method, and there was one small bird with a shorter beak which used to attack the hibiscus flowers from the rear, perforating them with one quick puncture and simultaneously taking a drink of honey through this short cut.

Another remarkable partnership of Nature was the relationship between a similar honey-seeking bird and the flower of the Flamboyant tree. This flower has five flame-coloured petals, but one of the five is also slashed with yellow. And that particular petal, and that one only, *has a hollow tube running direct into the honey store*, and thus the bird has an unmistakable sign-post to direct him, and he always unerringly follows it.

Humming-birds of three varieties were numerous in the Government House garden, the red-throated, the green-breasted, and the crested "bee-throated" respectively. Their extraordinary stationary poise in mid-air, like a miniature autogiro, in front of a flower while they were making up their minds to commence proceedings, was a source of never-failing delight to watch. Although they will accept syrup when offered it by man, their favourite diet consists of minute insects, which their feathery tongue shoots out at and entangles. They made

¹ The Chicken Hawk is known also as the Broad-winged Hawk. It is alleged to live chiefly on grasshoppers, in spite of its name. The Clapper Rail of Antigua was a new sub-species, hitherto unknown.

their diminutive toy nests in all sorts of places, but one that particularly impressed itself on my memory, with good cause, was in the middle of a growing bunch of bananas. I had watched it for some little time and had then had to go away on a visit to some other island. By the time of my return I guessed that the young birds had probably been hatched and flown away, but to make certain I reached up on tiptoe and inserted my little finger into the nest to investigate. But the only thing my finger discovered was a hornet that was sitting there, and I quickly ceased to have any interest in the humming-bird's domestic affairs.

But even a hornet's sting was not so bad as the poisonous sting of a centipede. One had had previous experience of these gentlemen in Fiji, but the West Indian ones appeared to be twice the size, horrible creatures eight or nine inches long, entering the houses silently and swiftly and wriggling across the polished floors and even on to the beds. And if one were killed his wife used to appear soon afterwards to try and take revenge. Certain houses seemed to be especially frequented by them, and Government House was one. I escaped being bitten there, however, though twice I suffered from them in Fiji. In Fiji, too, there was a very small, thread-like variety, about three inches long, that was phosphorescent and left a shiny mark along the bedroom floor as he wriggled his way towards one in the dark.

Other unpleasant, though harmless, insects were giant brown flying cockroaches, about one and a half inches long, which squelched horribly when killed. As they could crawl through the smallest aperture as well as fly through an open window it was difficult to keep them out. In the night one could hear them at work on one's favourite bedside book (they seemed to prefer green or blue bindings), and if not driven off they had bitten it all over by the morning. Their jaws were extremely powerful, and it is alleged that they chewed up the edges of razor blades; but this was probably because they were after invisible fragments of soap left thereon. In Fiji they were said to attack the toenails of sleeping travellers

in the cabins of trading cutters, and I have seen one of these cutters temporarily sunk in Lomaloma harbour as the only way of getting rid of them, and of the copra beetles which assisted them.

The most curious insect visitation we ever had was a plague of fleas in Fiji. Suddenly, without cause or warning, there appeared one day a black mass of fleas on the verandah of our house, and thence they invaded the rooms. We could see them and hear them pattering up and down as they hopped about the floor mats. Sluicing with disinfectant they took no notice of, and we had to admit defeat for several hours. And then, just as suddenly, they passed on out of the house and we never saw them again. Fleas are, I think, rare in the tropics, and except for these I do not remember seeing any either in Fiji or in the West Indies. The dog flea and the dog tick were, of course, common enough, but they did not touch human beings.

But I think it is time to leave insects and this "irritating" side of tropical life and recall memories of something more pleasing. My first impressions, and I can truthfully say my last impressions, of Basseterre were of a small but well-built town that could stand comparison with anything of its size in the West Indies; and as the new Administrator of St. Kitts I felt very proud of it. In the first few days, however, one could not help noticing certain deficiencies which, if it could possibly be managed, one resolved to try and remedy at an early date.

For instance, as a medical man I felt that the hospital, good as it was, might in some directions and at small cost be improved. I consulted Dr. Branch, who was at that time acting as C.M.O., and the enlargement of the operating theatre, a fireproof staircase, and a new concrete frontage to the main building were before very long the outcome of our deliberations. Dr. Branch was a member of a well-known and highly respected West Indian family, eminent in Medicine, Law, and the Church, and was himself a popular and cheery sportsman in St. Kitts. He was decidedly what Arnold Bennett would have called "a card," but many of the poorer classes had reason to

bless the name of "Dr. Edmund," as he was affectionately called, and the hospitality of himself and his wife to one and all was proverbial.

But the hospital, and indeed the whole town, was much handicapped by the fact that it was still only lit by old-fashioned oil lamps. Yet a whole electric light system for a town cannot be produced in a day, and it was eighteen months before details were in sufficient shape to get my "Electricity Supply Bill," for the floating of a loan for the purpose, passed through the Legislative Council.

There were public institutions to be inspected all over the Presidency, and during my first month I paid a visit to the island of Nevis, staying for a few days at the Government House there, which was theoretically reserved for the use of the Administrator but actually occupied by the Warden of Nevis. Nevis was an island of strange contrast in prosperity to St. Kitts, and that contrast was caused almost entirely by the Nevis mountain. In other words, here was a small circular island with such a high mountain (3600 ft.)—for the size of the island—that its steep sides ran straight down to the sea, leaving very little flat land, and therefore very little land of easy methods of transport for agriculture. And agriculture means everything in these islands.

Secondly, the steepness of the island caused any rains that fell to run straight off into the sea and to be wasted as far as agriculture was concerned. And, lastly, the mountain was merely a quiescent volcano, and in comparatively recent geological time it had erupted millions of separate boulders of stone, which littered every yard of the island in a remarkable manner, so that it was almost impossible to do any ploughing.

The result was that under modern conditions this steep and dry and stony island could not compete at sugar-growing for the world markets, and there was really no other drought-resisting crop that was a paying one. In consequence Nevis, which a hundred years ago under slavery and without competition was a prosperous sugar island, to-day is almost derelict.

In 1671, when "the Leeward Caribbe Islands" separated from Barbados, the headquarters of the new colony were placed at Nevis, because Nevis was very "English," very healthy, and comparatively prosperous; and here the headquarters remained for the next quarter of a century till they were moved to Antigua. In those early days, as Jefferson informs us, the very latest thing in peruques, in short-swords, in cravats, had to be obtained if one wished to ruffle it with the best at Nevis. When the Governor-in-Chief moved his residence to Antigua, Nevis still remained on the same footing as the other islands, that is, a separate small Governorship under a Lieutenant-Governor, and with a Legislative Council and a House of Assembly of its own. Nevis was only united to St. Kitts in 1882, and can never quite forget that she was once an independent island. St. Kitts, on the other hand, does not forget that (though the facts are not easy to establish) hard-up Nevis is said not to be contributing her due share towards the combined cost of administration, and thus the partnership is apt to rankle a little on both sides.

But Nevis is not always hard up, and in spasms of ample rainfall and of good sugar prices, or better still, of good cotton prices, for cotton is her real crop—she can have her memories revived of "the good old days." She is the earliest discovered island of the West Indies by English-speaking people, for Captain John Smith, the adventurer among American Indians, wrote in 1629 that: "More than twenty yeares agoe I have remained there a good time together, to wode, and water, and refresh my men." . . . He adds, speaking of the now well-known curative hot springs: "Here we found a great poole, wherein bathing themselves they found much ease. . . . They were well cured in two or three days." . . .

To-day there stands, and is still in good use, a large stone hotel over the hot springs, built by John Huggins, the Deputy-Treasurer, in the early years of the nineteenth century. This hotel was in its day a fashionable resort as a spa, on the lines of English spas of those times, for inhabitants from all the other West Indian islands, and is the central theme of Gertrude Atherton's novel *The*

Gorgeous Isle. The waters are said to be radio-active, and also contain large amounts of magnesium, sodium, and sulphur. Both my wife and myself found them of considerable benefit to rheumatic tendencies when we went over to Nevis on my frequent visits of inspection.

After one of these visits, returning on a hot still afternoon in a very small launch across the twelve miles of open water that separated us from the town of Basseterre—though only four miles from island to island—I saw close at hand a large water-spout, apparently making straight towards us. It was still some distance off, but moving fairly rapidly, and I told the steersman to swerve off to the right as much as possible but at the same time to put on all speed, as we were within a short distance of our landing. It was a race between us, but luckily the "spout" broke up while still some way off, and the roar of it we could hear distinctly, making some of the ladies in our party more than a little nervous. It was shortly after this that one of these menaces, which usually both form and disperse at sea, came down on the land at Nevis, and literally scooped away two hundred feet in length, and eighteen feet in breadth, of a solid macadamized road, leaving a deep gaping chasm where it had been.

While I was in Fiji one came down on a coastal village and smashed several large native houses to pieces, so that the effect of one of them breaking on a small launch at sea may well be imagined. The best preventative is said to be to scatter them by concussion before they have time to assume big proportions; and for that reason I used to keep a small brass signalling cannon on my yacht in Fiji, but I am glad to say I never got really close enough to one to test it. Probably with the same idea of concussion of the atmosphere the Fijians in the old days used to hammer vigorously with heavy clubs on the sides of their great hollow war canoes when they got near one. That they simultaneously threw overboard as an offering to the gods a root of the sacred kava was merely incidental, though probably all the results were attributed to the latter.

Evidences of the old Nevis families are found in the

names of the estates, most of which, as in other islands, are still called after the original owner, though occasionally a pathetically whimsical name has been given, such as "Needs Must" in St. Kitts, or "Hard Times" in Nevis. "Hamiltons" is the estate once belonging to the family of that name, one of whom was the famous Alexander, who drew up the Constitution of the United States. He himself was born at their town house in Charlestown, Nevis, in 1757.

At Clay Ghaut still revolves the old windmill over whose doorway is a contemporary inscription to say it is, or was at that time, the property of a Mr. Herbert. He was once President of Nevis and was the grandfather of Nelson's wife. The mill is now owned and worked by a Mr. Yorke Wilkin, whose daughter Eva is noted for her paintings of West Indian life. I considered myself fortunate to get the special coloured illustrations for my book, *A West Indian Pepper-pot*, done by her.

A few miles beyond Clay Ghaut is a huge stone house, now roofless, which was completed but never occupied, as the legend is that one of the two brothers who owned it killed the other in a duel at the house-warming party. Large but now ruined stone buildings are to be seen in many parts of Nevis, and in some of these, on the fringe of the mountain forest, the only signs of life to-day are occasional inquisitive monkeys, and perhaps one of the wild peacocks. The latter, descendants of escaped tame ones, became for a time quite a nuisance to the planters, and in 1926 when I was there parties were organized for peacock-shooting!

The ruins are pathetic witnesses to former prosperity, and of estates on a large scale, but though, for the reasons I have given, big estates will probably never pay in the face of modern competition in this island, there is no reason why there should not be a return to a modified form of prosperity by means of small holdings, and it is hoped that the land settlement schemes which I started in the colony with the help of the Colonial Development Fund may bring this about. I once wrote the following lines about Nevis, and I look forward to the day when

with better water conservation and a more intense cultivation of small lots of land this prosperity may return.

NEVIS

Where are now the ancient glories?
 Where the former busy scenes?
 Lost in long forgotten stories,
 In a world of "might-have-beens."

Pale ghosts haunt your silent lanes,
 But your beauty still remains.
 The mountain sides are still as green
 As when you reigned West India's queen.
 And what has been can be once more—
 The rich earth waits to spill her store.

Mentioning peacock-shooting reminds me of other "game," such as it has been, in the colonies in which I have served. Not having been in African colonies I have, to my regret, never had any opportunity after big game, while in the Pacific and in the West Indies all that has been possible has been a little pigeon and duck shooting. The commonest West Indian pigeon was *columba leucocephala*, not a very swift flighter, and the two ducks usually shot were the Bahama and the Tree-duck, although a small blue-winged teal was also plentiful at certain seasons.

Barbuda Island was for years known as "the sportsman's paradise," and at one time deer, and duck, and wild guinea-fowl were numerous. I have written of the deer that old Christopher Codrington bred there in the seventeenth century. They were fallow deer, and when strictly preserved they thrived and multiplied. But now that the Barbudians own guns poaching has sadly diminished the deer; and, moreover, dense bush has made it difficult to get even a sight of them.

Sir Sydney Armitage-Smith, whom I took over with me on one occasion in H.M.S. *Dauntless*, was a keen deer-stalker, and had shot them in the Highlands, in the Carpathians, and in other parts of the world. Reading

in a guide-book of "the sportsman's paradise," and of the Barbuda deer, he had brought with him to the West Indies various rifles, many cases of ammunition, and, in spite of my warnings, much optimism. I had some official business to attend to that afternoon, and had to leave him to his own devices. I did, however, see that he had the best guide available. The haunt of the deer was a long way off and could only be reached by walking, mostly along the beach as there were no roads and but few tracks through bush. But his zeal was still alight and off he went. It was about sunset when I returned to the ship, and I was sitting comfortably on deck with Captain Vivian, enjoying a whiskey and soda, when we looked shoreward and observed a dejected-looking figure carrying a rifle at the slope and heavily ploughing through the loose sand. It was poor Armitage-Smith, and he *was* cross when he at last arrived on board; and it was not until he had had a drink or two that we could get a word out of him but subterranean murmurs and curses. It appeared that he had fought his way all day through scratchy bush, surrounded by clouds of flies and mosquitoes, and once he *thought* he had seen a deer!

The same swamps that provide duck shooting for man also unfortunately provide man baiting for the mosquitoes. Sometimes, as in Nevis, the mosquitoes are anophelines, and occasional outbreaks of malaria in consequence appear. There was one bad one in Nevis during my last year as Administrator, and it followed the 1928 hurricane. I am inclined to think that the sand that was piled up on the sea beach blocked the outlets of the trickling currents from the swamp and thus furnished better breeding grounds for the mosquitoes.

The holes made by land crabs were also a nuisance in this locality, as there was always a little stagnant rain water at the bottom of them. These land crabs were considered good eating (when not too near cemeteries!) and were caught at night by torch-light. They always showed fight when cornered, and would back up, for instance, in an angle made by two stone walls and shake one big claw menacingly at their pursuers. After capture

they were usually kept for a week or two in good clean surroundings, and then killed, cooked, and served up, mixed with herbs, in their own shells, a very popular dish known locally as "crab-in-the-back."

In St. Kitts there were no anophelines, but occasionally from off the swamp there would invade the town, and Government House, swarms of very large black mosquitoes, something like those we once met on the Mississippi River. . . .

The next island in my jurisdiction that I had to visit was Anguilla, which I did early in the New Year. This meant a rather choppy sea journey of more than seventy miles, and in a sailing boat, the only transport available. It quite reminded me of the old days in Fiji.

Anguilla is an extraordinary place, quite different to the usual type of West Indian island. It is very flat, the highest "mountain" being only about 200 feet, and is of coral limestone, providing a natural surface for excellent roads in all directions. The inhabitants are a sturdy, independent type, and at the time of my visit there were hardly a dozen young men in the place, because out of the 6000 inhabitants every available man had gone off, as usual, to work for the four or five months' season on the sugar-cane estates in the semi-Spanish territory of Santo Domingo. Here they used to receive good wages, and—*mirabile dictu*—to bring back the money each year, and with it they built houses or employed it in other useful ways at home. The result is that this large island of thirty-five square miles is covered with separate, well looked after holdings, each with a good substantial house in the centre of it, and each house well stocked with the amenities of life. During the remaining part of the year the people grow provisions on their lands, plant up cotton, and perform the operation known as "reaping the salt ponds."

I landed at the principal harbour, the "Road," at the head of which is a little cluster of houses, one of the only two townships there are. Here was the Harbour-master and Customs Officer; and here, waiting for me with a car, which I was surprised to see as I did not expect such things

in this out-of-the-way place, was Dr. McFadyen, the Doctor-Magistrate and general Pooh Bah of the island. To get to his headquarters we had to drive out in an easterly direction and up a steep hill, and here he paused for a moment and asked me to look back. And I saw a scene that almost took my breath away.

Two hundred feet below, sparkling in the sunlight, was the blue-green clear water of the harbour from which we had just come, with our schooner lying at anchor but with some of its white sails still unfurled and reflected in the water. At the edge of the harbour was a narrow strip of yellow sand, with little red-roofed houses scattered among picturesque green coco-nut palms. And on this side of the sand was still more water, a wide flat shallow lagoon, the Salt Pond, which from this height I could see was covered with a thin film of sparkling crystal salt, but by some trick of prismatic reflection of a distinctly pink colour, a most amazing sight. The whole effect of this variegated picture, with its colours contrasting yet curiously blending, was that of some very beautiful scene spread out in a miniature theatre, far away. I have seen nothing like it elsewhere in all my travels.

A little to the right were some enormous white glistening mounds, like giant sparkling haystacks. These were the heaps of salt, representing the season's "crop" that had already been reaped and was waiting to be shipped.

Later in the day the whole population of the island assembled at the Court House, and some of the leading residents presented me with an "Address" of welcome on my first visit, to which I had to make a suitable reply. After this I inspected the various buildings connected with the Government, and especially the schools, to the children of which I then gave a holiday for the occasion. Their eager little faces lit up with pleasure when I announced this, though as far as I could see their labours were not very strenuous and all days must have been more or less holidays with them.

In the neighbourhood of the Court House there was the beginning of a hospital, but for some reason it had left off abruptly when a few feet from the ground. The

ways of Government, and the convolutions of red tape, are mysterious and wonderful. Although the island is remarkably healthy accidents are apt to occur in the best regulated families, and I felt that a small cottage hospital was really necessary, so I set this in motion immediately on my return to headquarters, and on my next visit had the pleasure of formally opening the completed building. In the next few years of my connection with the colony it was also possible to install a telephone system, a much needed pier, a good water supply, and an agricultural station, the last two items with the help of the invaluable Colonial Development Fund. Anguilla is a wonderfully healthy and cool island, with splendid sea-bathing and fishing, and some day, with better means of access, should become a great attraction for tourists.

We had another uncomfortable journey back to St. Kitts, yet if I had only known it and could have waited I could have gone to Anguilla and back in the greatest comfort possible, for soon afterwards a magnificent yacht steamed in to Basseterre, the *Sapphire*, owned by a millionaire, Mr. Urban Broughton, M.P. ; and after I had made his acquaintance he most kindly offered to take me anywhere within my territory.

Mr. and Mrs. Broughton called at Government House, and though we asked them to dine they suggested that we should go off and dine with them on board, as it might be a change for us. We were very glad indeed to do so as the experience would be a novelty to us, who had known something of small yachts but never seen at close quarters a floating palace such as this.

The *Sapphire* was then, and possibly still is, the largest British yacht in existence, and by an extraordinary coincidence, as visits from yachts were very rare, that same afternoon Pierpoint Morgan's yacht *Corsair*, the largest American yacht, came into harbour and anchored a biscuit throw from the *Sapphire*.

One of the party in the *Sapphire* was Miss Audrey Pauncefote, a daughter of the late Lord Pauncefote, who had once been Chief Justice of the Leeward Islands. Another was a Mr. Coc, a wealthy American railway

magnate with a passion for growing tropical hibiscus in a temperate climate, a hobby in which only millionaires can indulge. He found what was to him a new variety in my garden, and I gladly gave him cuttings from it, and was interested to read some time afterwards an account of his general success in reproducing the West Indian ones about that time, so I hope mine were among the fortunate ones. Among his various houses in the U.S.A. he owned one which had once been the home of Jerome Buonaparte while there, and it was in the gardens of that house that he planted my hibiscus.

There were other interesting people in the party, and it was amusing to watch the keenness with which all had associated themselves with the *Sapphire*, as shown that evening at dinner when from time to time one would look across at the *Corsair* and murmur : " I wonder if she really *is* as big as the *Sapphire*," or " I think the bows of the *Sapphire* are more graceful, don't you ? " etc. But I suppose yachting people all the world over are very much like rival horse owners. The *Sapphire* certainly was not only a sumptuous but a graceful yacht. She was purchased with all her furnishings, just as she was, from the late Lord Furness.

Urban Broughton was an elderly and rather sad-looking man with a reputation for being " urbane " in the evenings and rather the reverse in the earlier part of the day. I did not meet him at breakfast, a meal when any man over forty is justified in greeting both his food and his neighbours with frowns ; but I can testify that at dinner he was a charming and delightful host, and his reminiscences were most interesting and amusing. An engineer by profession, he had, like most engineers, had experiences in all parts of the world.

Mrs. Broughton was a very kind-hearted American lady from, I think, Connecticut ; a daughter of Huttleston Rogers, once a well-known railway contractor. The eldest son, named after this grandfather, was with them in the party and showed me after dinner a beautifully illustrated book which he had written on the historical uniforms of his regiment, the Guards. Broughton senior

died a year or two after this, just on the eve of his elevation to the peerage; and the title of Lord Fairhaven was conferred upon this son in his place.

Broughton indulged in the excellent habit of keeping a sort of discursive "log" of these yachting cruises and producing them in book form to send to his friends. He was good enough to send me the following Christmas the one about this particular cruise, and I extract one paragraph from it which quite casually shows Mrs. Broughton's thoughtfulness for others.

. . . "We stopped at Charlestown, the capital of Nevis, not to see the register of Nelson's marriage, or the house in which Alexander Hamilton was born, but to call on Lucretia Forsyth, a coloured woman who was a nurse in C.'s (his wife's) family in New York over forty years ago. C. has never lost trace of her, and they have corresponded intermittently." . . .

About this time I had been in negotiation with Mrs. Wade, a proprietor of large estates in St. Kitts and Montserrat, to purchase a piece of land at the north side of Basseterre for conversion into a recreation ground with the money, nearly five thousand pounds, derived from the sales of the 1923 tercentenary stamp issue, which had not up till that time been utilized for the purpose originally intended. After prolonged correspondence, as the lady lived in England, I was able to acquire sixteen acres of land for £1600, which seemed high, but I suppose was reasonable in view of its proximity to the town. The balance of the money was used for levelling and planting the ground and for erecting a very good building which formed a combined pavilion, grandstand, and concert-room. The place was called Warner Park after the founder of St. Kitts, and I formally opened it on the occasion of an agricultural show held there some little time later.

In July, 1926, I became Acting-Governor again, for the sixth time, and went down to the Antigua headquarters for a few months. By the time of my return to St. Kitts

the War Memorial was nearly ready, and on Armistice Day it was unveiled at a very impressive ceremony.

Events rapidly succeeded each other, and I was at this time kept very busy with the general supervision of a number of projects that were being carried out simultaneously. These included the long delayed construction of a Home for the Aged and Infirm Poor (the "Infirmiry" for short), the filling and draining of an unhealthy swamp to the east of the town, known as the Pond Pasture; and the preservation of the historical fortress of Brimstone Hill.

Also I made a start on the matter of slum clearance, and tried to introduce a little light and fresh air into the overcrowded slums of the western half of Basseterre. These were dealt with by buying strips of land, compulsorily when necessary, and driving new streets, all parallel and draining straight down to the sea. Incidentally this helped to relieve pressure when flood waters accumulated, a menace that had often threatened in the past.

A story is told about the Basseterre flood of 1882, a calamity so great that for long afterwards illiterate witnesses in court cases were prone to use it to fix certain dates. The years went on and gradually all who remembered the occurrence died off, until at last only one was left. He was inordinately proud of this distinction and used to go round boasting to tourists and newcomers that he was "the sole survivor of the great Basseterre flood!"

At last he in turn entered the gates of heaven; but it was not long before he went to lay a complaint to St. Peter.

"What is the trouble?" asked the Saint.

"Well, Sah," replied the aggrieved one, "I tink dese people jus' too rude, an' one of dem turn his back on me jus' now when I start to tell him of de great Basseterre flood!"

"Which one was that?" asked St. Peter with a twinkle in his eye.

"Dat one over dere, wid a roun' hat an' a long green coat," said the man.

"Choops, man," said St. Peter. "That's Noah!"

The best of the small houses from the purchased lands were removed bodily on to a new suburb outside the town boundary, which as it grew the Council were good enough to name after me, as they also did the principal and longest street through it. The more dilapidated ones were removed to another temporary site away from the town until such time as it would be possible to provide their owners with good houses in lieu, on a hire-purchase system which even then I had forming in my mind. In all this work I had invaluable assistance from Mr. Thibou, the Superintendent of Public Works.

By February, 1927, it was time for me to visit Anguilla again, and on this occasion I took with me the Colonial Secretary, Edward Baynes, who with his wife were staying as our guests at Government House for a week or two. He was not too good a sailor and by no means enjoyed the voyage in the sailing-ship—a graceful schooner called the *Ismay* it was on this occasion. On our return journey he was not sorry when the captain thought the weather so bad that it might be advisable to put into the Dutch island of St. Martin's for the night.

I also welcomed the opportunity, because I was very anxious to have a glimpse of the administrative conditions prevailing among my foreign neighbours, and I was not supposed to leave my own territory unless some special reason such as this arose.

The Dutch Lieutenant-Governor very kindly invited us ashore to dine, after the Captain had told the Harbour-master who I was; and we were most hospitably entertained at one of the longest dinners I have ever faced. Course after course came on, and out of politeness I did not like to refuse, but I felt almost too heavy to rise from the table at the end of it.

But all the same we spent a very pleasant evening afterwards with his family circle and some other friends whom he had asked in, singing choruses of all the latest English songs. The Dutch in these islands are nearly all old settled families, and from close association and intermarriage with neighbouring English islands their

customary language has now become English; and in fact it is only specially imported officials from Holland, like the Governors and Treasurers, who can speak at all fluently in Dutch. The Dutch Government in Saba Island pays a subsidy to one of the Bishop of Antigua's English clergymen to go and reside in Saba. Of course all the black people in the Dutch islands speak English, though they proudly point to the Dutch flag as theirs.

I should have mentioned that earlier in the afternoon when we first went ashore the Governor had as a preliminary produced glasses of a rather sweet champagne which he insisted on our drinking with him, after which he had taken us round in his car to see the sights of Philippsville, the capital. This did not take long, and then he said: "Shall we now call upon the Governor of French St. Martin's?" . . . It seemed like the Governors of the two Carolinas coming to life again, especially in view of what happened at the meeting. . . .

I was delighted at the opportunity, and after he had spoken on the telephone to his fellow potentate we started across the island for the short run of four or five miles to Marigot, the French capital. About half-way, on a lonely part of the road, was a Dutch sentry, complete with a coloured striped sentry box, and a little further on a French one, similarly housed. It looked rather like a scene in a toy theatre, especially as there was a comical looking palm tree between them, with a donkey and a pig, each tethered to a rope, contentedly lying under it. The contrast in the two halves of this small island was at that time very marked, as the Dutch capital and roads were very clean and well kept, whereas the corresponding French part was not; but in fairness I must say that I have heard there has been a vast improvement in French St. Martin's in the last year or two.

Arrived at Marigot we duly paid our call on M^{rs}. Fleming, who despite his English name was a Frenchman, and immediately North Carolina produced—glasses of a rather sweet champagne! This was somewhat embarrassing, as it was only half an hour since the previous round, but we nobly did our duty.

On being taken round Marigot the impression we gained was of a small sleepy French town, with grass growing among the stone pavements and very few people moving about. In one shady street we saw a whole row of gamecocks, fighting birds, each tied well away from each other by one leg. I was subsequently told that the inhabitants made their living principally by breeding these for export to the Spanish islands; and also by a "racc-off" on liquor brought in to this duty-free port and then re-exported to "an unknown destination." At that time prohibition reigned in the U.S.A. and also in the American colonies of St. Thomas and Porto Rico.

By next morning the gale had abated and we proceeded on our way. Besides these more flippant experiences I had had, during the twenty-four hours there, one or two more serious talks, especially with the Dutch Governor, on subjects that affected our islands mutually, and I think the visit was really a useful one. It is to my mind very important that the personal touch should be kept up far more than it is among all these West Indian islands.

Curiously enough, it was only a month later that I had a letter from Curaçoa to say that the Governor-General of all the Dutch West Indies (Dr. Brantjes) was about to come up on a visit of inspection of his northern islands by a mail steamer from the south, but that he would probably have to wait a day or two in St. Kitts until a little local steamer was due there to take him on. I, of course, offered to put him up during the interval, though I was a little nervous that he might only speak Dutch, and the Dutch Consul, who had not yet met him, could give me no information on this point.

He duly arrived, accompanied by a rather stiff-looking A.D.C. in a high collar and a very starched white uniform. To my joy I found that the A.D.C. knew a little English, while Dr. Brantjes spoke it fluently, and even made use of idiomatic expressions. That night at dinner, for instance, he surprised me by speaking of a certain company as having "watered its stock." The "Doctor" was, I ascertained, a doctor of laws, and had been Attorney-General of Amsterdam at

one stage in his career. He was a short stout man with a big grey moustache and a very genial smile. A delightful companion who relished life in all its aspects, and we thoroughly enjoyed having him with us.

He was interested in our garden, and when he retired to Holland shortly afterwards he remembered this and took the trouble to send us out a large case of selected Dutch tulip bulbs. We planted them all over the place with the greatest care, and I also sent some to the Agricultural Department with special instructions to look after them like children. But the only results we got were some nice-looking green blades about ten inches high, with never a flower. They had had a narrow escape before that, as our cook took the bulbs for a new kind of onion, and we very nearly had tulip soup! He also once gathered some very young English melons that I had been anxiously nursing, and actually boiled these and served them as a vegetable. But I doubt whether the melons, any more than the tulips, would have come to real maturity, for cool though the St. Kitts climate was it was not cool enough for such products of the temperate regions, and that is ever the way. The occasional northern flowers that *did* grow, like roses, changed their character and lost their perfume while most other things died before reaching full growth.

Dr. Brantjes apparently retired at the right moment, because his successor was the unfortunate hero of an episode which must be unparalleled in the history of modern colonial administration, whether of British or foreign colonies. It would have been almost too much for Hollywood to swallow.

One day a band of Venezuelan revolutionaries took shelter in Curaçoa, the headquarters of the Dutch West Indies, and after being there a little time they decided to help themselves to money, munitions, and a steamer at one blow, and with the help of their booty to make a bold bid for the conquest of Venezuela!

So they suddenly rose in the night, captured first of all the Chief of the Police, then proceeded silently to the Governor's palace and had the audacity to capture the

Governor himself. They forced the Chief of the Police to hand over all the rifles, ammunition, and other war stores he had, they looted the Treasury chest, and finally they seized a vessel in the port, and taking all their spoils with them, *including the Governor*, they made the captain steam for Venezuela on peril of his life.

Here, however, they met their match, as the grim old President Gomez was ready for them, and they and other revolutionaries who had arranged to meet them at a certain point were summarily defeated by the regular army. The Dutch Governor was returned with the island property in the same steamer, with many apologies, and there the matter ended ; as it was obviously not the fault of the Venezuelan Government, and the revolutionary rabble herd had either disappeared or had been silenced for ever.

In April, 1927, we saw the first 'planes in the West Indies, four American Government seaplanes which were making an experimental tour past the islands, but they did not come very near or fly very low. When Lindbergh made his memorable flight two and a half years later, and landed at the islands, it was a very different affair.

I was then Governor of the colony, but happened to be at St. Kitts on a visit. The United States authorities had written for permission for him to fly over, and land at, Antigua, but I telegraphed back a special invitation to him to call at St. Kitts as well and meet me there. This he readily agreed to, though it was only possible for him to spare a few minutes, as it would be an addition to his already carefully arranged itinerary.

There were thousands of people lining the water-front to greet the first arrival of a flying machine, and still more so to greet the world-famous Lindbergh. Knowing that he would not have very long on shore a public reception had been arranged for him in front of the Treasury building within a few yards of the pier, and I had also had champagne and sandwiches set out in my office for him and all the Members of Council, whom I had invited to meet him.

But he was late in arriving, probably owing to similar

extra stops previously *en route*, and he was obliged to make Trinidad harbour, which would be strange to him, before dark ; so that all he could do was merely to come ashore with his bride, to whom my wife presented a bouquet, and to utter a few shy and almost inaudible words in reply to my brief speech of welcome. But his disarming smile counted for much. He was wildly and enthusiastically cheered by all the multitude, and the brass band, which had been practising "The Star-Spangled Banner" for weeks, was completely drowned in the noise ! A tall, upright young man with wavy fair hair, he gave one the impression that he was a shy youth who needed befriending. His wife was a pretty little dark-haired lady with an engaging smile. And all St. Kitts, especially the ladies, were moved by the romantic touch that this was their honeymoon tour.

A year or so later, on reading the news that a son and heir had been born, a group of St. Kitts ladies posted to the Lindberghs a very fine lace perambulator cover ; but, alas, before it could arrive the dastardly kidnapping and murder of this innocent child had taken place. And Lindbergh's own life had also been threatened a little before this, so that the authorities had had to prevent him receiving any parcels through the post, for fear of bombs.

He heard, however, through some mutual friend of one of the St. Kitts ladies, that this gift had been sent, and in spite of his worries he wrote me a letter asking me to thank the ladies for what they had done and to explain how it was that he had been unable previously to acknowledge their kind action. I think if ever there was a case of the sympathy of the whole world going out to one individual it was to Lindbergh (with his wife) for the dreadful thrust of fate that had been inflicted.

Lindbergh's flight through the West Indies was made under the auspices of the United States Government as a sort of "goodwill tour" to inaugurate the new Pan-American air service, and St. Kitts was not really one of the recognized stopping-places. Being seaplanes, they had to make their stops where sheltered harbours could be found, and in the British West Indies they could only rely

at that time on Antigua, St. Lucia, and Trinidad. A sea-plane had come, with permission, to Antigua a couple of months before this to reconnoitre, and I had put up for the night the two American officials, Mr. Thatch and Major Hulse, who had made the pioneer flight to it. That 'plane had been the first ever seen in Antigua, and when the great dark winged "bird" swooped down nearer and nearer with a mighty roar some old village women, in spite of preliminary announcements, fell flat on their faces crying out "De Lard am come, de Lard am come."

A month or so later they hardly bothered to look up from the fields where they were working when the 'planes came along on their bi-weekly visits.

And writing of the women working in the fields reminds me that I have been digressing again, and that I really intended to say something of the Nevis Agricultural Show, which took place in the same month (April, 1927) as the flight of the first 'planes which I have mentioned and which caused that digression.

Ever since my arrival it had been increasingly evident to me that the best hope for Nevis lay in the direction of peasant agriculture, and in the possibility of supplying the Canadian market with "out-of-season" vegetables. Cotton was too precarious and too much of a gamble; and sugar on a really large scale was not very practicable, and also was at an unsaleable price. I knew that it could only be a question of months before the new Canadian Government steamships would, according to contract, be calling at Nevis, and it seemed therefore highly desirable to make preparations at once and stimulate an interest in this new possibility.

Thus I was only too glad to take up, *con amore*, the suggestion that an Agricultural Show, which had not been held for many years, should be revived. It proved a great success and we purposely arranged that the prizes should be many but small, as at a children's school, so that almost everyone of the peasants should have some direct encouragement and yet be made to feel that he had grown and prepared his exhibit not as a commercial proposition

to make a big money profit, but merely in healthy rivalry to show how he could do as well or better than his neighbour. It is surprising how much this show caused a renewal of "market garden" activity all over the island, which has not ceased yet.

But it was obvious that two other important adjuncts to a fruit and vegetable trade with Canada would be necessary, one being Land Settlement, to put more and more peasants on the land ; and the other a local " Cold Storage " Plant, which would cost several thousand pounds, to preserve their perishable products for the few days that would often have to elapse between picking the produce and the arrival of the steamer.

The first of these I was able eventually to bring about, or rather the Administrator brought about with my fullest approval and help, through the medium of the Colonial Development Fund, after I became Governor. The Cold Storage scheme I myself was able to give birth to while I was still Administrator, by means of a loan in conjunction with the St. Kitts-Nevis Electric Light undertakings. This, in fact, was the first such plant to be arranged for in the colony, as the other ones were effected through the subsequent Colonial Development Fund.

In May, 1927, I was again called upon to go down to Antigua as Acting-Governor for six months, after first of all carrying out a formal and enthusiastically attended opening of the new Home for the Aged and Infirm at St. Kitts.

During that Antigua period I had some interesting correspondence with the French Governor-General at Martinique ; and this was followed up in December by a visit to me in St. Kitts of a number of French officials who frankly said they had come to learn something of British Colonial administrative methods. This was all very well, and I did my best to help them by passing on each French head of department to the office of his English opposite number to confer with him, but as the Frenchmen could speak very little English, and the Englishmen could speak less French, they did not really get very far. But I think

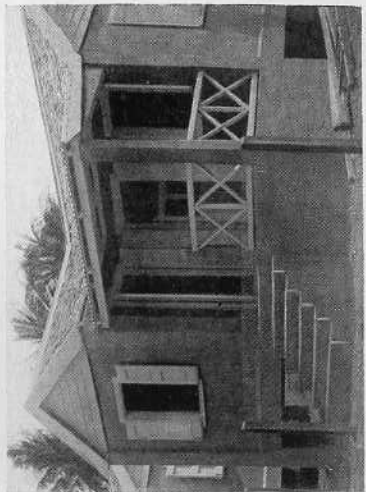
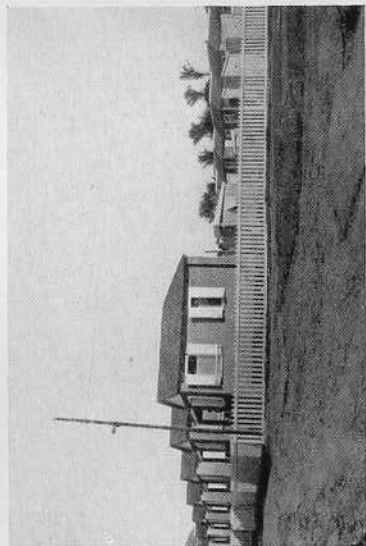
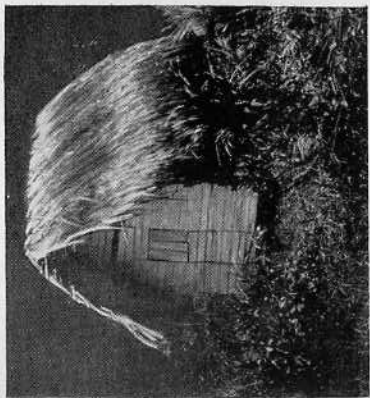
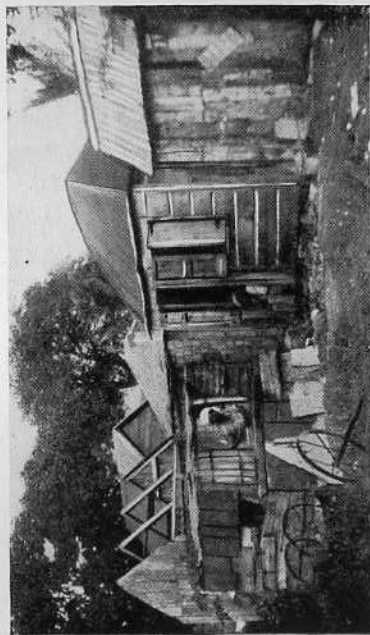
the visitors at least thoroughly enjoyed a large cocktail party I gave in their honour and they went home quite happy and full of promise "to come again."

They also added that the St. Kitts rum was "magnificently Heaven's nectar" compared to their own Martinique rum, which I think was merely Gallic politeness. They were, however, genuinely interested in the St. Kitts new types of sugar-cane, from the molasses of which the rum was made, and in certain other articles then being prepared for an Agricultural Show which, following the Nevis success, was about to be put on in St. Kitts.

This Agricultural Show also gave me the opportunity of opening the new Warner Park, where it was held, and in the pavilion of which the handicraft sections were installed. I thought at one time that I should not have been there at all, as four weeks previously I had received a telegram from the Secretary of State—through the Governor—offering me the appointment of Administrator of St. Lucia.

I hesitated a little, as it would have meant a change of surroundings and work, and also a little more salary, but I did not hesitate long, as I liked St. Kitts and its people, and the same afternoon I telegraphed back a polite refusal. I had also grown so interested in the various projects I had in hand that I wanted to see them approaching some sort of completion.

A few months later, when on leave in England, I received a note from Sir Charles Davies, of the Dominions Office, asking me to call and see him. Wondering what on earth I could possibly have to do with Dominions matters I duly called upon him, and he then asked me if I would care to become Resident Commissioner of Swaziland, then looming into the horizon with some importance both from a political and from a developmental point of view. This time the salary would have been an immense improvement on the St. Kitts post, and moreover the appointment was really in the nature of a small Governorship; but again, after some little hesitation, I refused. I felt that the time could not now be very long before my years of service, and the senior



(Above) Typical insanitary "shacks," replaced by
(Below) the St.-Johnston model villages (commenced at St. Kitts, 1928).

appointments I had already held, would probably entitle me to be considered for some actual Governorship, and that it would be better to wait.

But to go back to St. Kitts. During the first few months of 1928 I think there must have been greater activity in Government undertakings and public works than for a good many years before, as we were making every effort to put through the very large programme that had been arranged for in that year's Estimates, and I was also anxious to get matters well under way before going on the leave for which I was due in April.

The ornamental Esplanade along the sea-front, which was in reality a strong defensive sea-wall, was extending rapidly onwards yard by yard; the large fireproof Petrol Store was nearing completion; the new concrete Pier was practically finished; and, last but not least, the groundwork for the new Market was started. This latter had meant buying up a number of small pieces of slum property at arbitration prices from the landlords, who had been making a good thing out of them, and entailed endless negotiations. And in many instances we had to find, as an inducement, new and better sites elsewhere for the discarded houses, mostly small wooden ones, which had stood in the way of the improvement scheme.

In addition to this I had been able to get the first few houses erected under my model housing scheme—which formed part of the General Public Works Loan that included the town electric lighting plan and other matters. These houses were attractive-looking little detached bungalows, in fireproof and hurricane-proof concrete, and contained a bedroom, a sitting-room, a verandah, and separate kitchens, and outside offices. They were to be let on the hire-purchase system at half a crown a week each, a price which should have been well within the means of the artisan class for whom they were intended. In the following year the Colonial Development Fund enabled the model housing scheme to be extended on a wider scale, and the small original arrangement was absorbed in the greater scheme. But the reinforced concrete style was continued in the new plan.

Some friend of Sir Andrew Balfour's had, unknown to me, passed through St. Kitts at about this time (when I was temporarily away from the island) and he had seen the new streets that were being driven through the slum areas, and the model houses that were starting to replace the old insanitary hovels. As a result Balfour wrote me a very encouraging letter, saying incidentally: . . . "Accept my congratulations for all you are getting done in your part of the world. It is very gratifying to hear of such progress, and shows how useful it is to have an Administrator who has been through the mill of medicine and realizes the value of preventive work." . . .

There had been from time to time disastrous fires sweeping through the wooden town of Basseterre, and I was always on tenterhooks that there would be another one in my time. The people in the smaller houses were extraordinarily careless in their cooking arrangements, and such fires usually started owing to the overturning of a "coal-pot." Practically all the cooking was done in these, which were the domestic stoves in general use throughout the islands. The coal-pot consisted of a red earthenware basin moulded upon a broad circular pedestal, which was hollow, with a big lateral aperture for draught. The whole thing stood about a foot or so high; and the saucepans, frying-pans, kettles, etc., were heated as required, upon the top portion, which contained a thick layer of red-hot charcoal. The coal-pots in use in St. Kitts were nearly all made in one clay district in Nevis, and there was quite a little export industry in them.

Even the cooks in the bigger houses made use of them, and our cook at Government House, though he had also a large wood-burning kitchen range, always had a number of these charcoal-burning coal-pots going as accessories on the occasion of a dinner party.

Two years had usually been the intervals between my "leaves," but this time it had been three years, and a particularly strenuous three years, so that I was really very glad to get on to the boat and take a rest. We went

down to Barbados by a "Canadian National" semi-cargo steamer, as the long promised new passenger ships were not yet ready; and from Barbados we took an Elder and Fyffe banana boat, the *Camito*, home.

On this ship was the 1928 West Indian cricket team, going over to tour England, and a very lively and amusing crowd they were. Nunes of Jamaica was their captain, a son-in-law of H. Hutchings who was to become Commissioner of Montserrat, one of the islands within my jurisdiction, in the following year. Hoad of Barbados was another prominent player. He brought a team of Barbadians up to play the Leeward Islands a few years later. My last official act in the colony was to take the chair at a "welcome" luncheon given to them on that occasion.

But the outstanding figure of that tour was undoubtedly the coloured Trinidadian, Constantine, who surprised all England by his versatility and demoniacal bowling (his ball was once calculated by a Cambridge mathematical professor to be travelling at 85 miles an hour at a point half-way down the pitch). The very popular George Challenor, of Barbados, was also a member of the team, and his wonderful batting prowess in the earlier tour might have brought him the captaincy but that he wanted to take things easily and not be bothered with too much responsibility. Challenor really was in his day a marvellous bat, but some of the Barbadian newspapers were so overcome by the reflected glory that one of them, writing about Jack Hobbs, described him as "the George Challenor of England." *Punch* amusingly took this up, and riposted with: "Who is this chap Hobbs? Batsman, we presume?" . . . Constant practice was the order of the day on board ship, and even innocent unoffending passengers, like myself, were occasionally roped in "to make a Roman holiday." A sharp crack on the finger was my entrance—and my exit—fee.

On the whole that 1928 team did very well in England; but the only time I myself was able to see them, the test match at Lords, was unfortunately not a great success. Both the West Indian team and the English team were good enough to give me as a souvenir of our association

their signatures all down a bat, a treasured trophy which I ultimately presented as a special prize for a Leeward Island cricket tournament later on in the year.

Cricket was as enthusiastically taken up in the West Indies as it was in Fiji, and both white and black onlookers used to display the utmost excitement at every match, however small. The latter would swarm round the grounds like bees, and also perch themselves up in the branches of bordering trees like over-ripe clusters of fruit, till sometimes a big bough would ominously crack and down would topple a handful of them. Smiling and unperturbed, up they would clamber again to applaud wildly every hit of the home team—and to give them their due, they would equally applaud every good stroke of the visitors. But the taking of an enemy wicket meant a deafening roar from thousands of throats, the air would be darkened with hats flung up, and in some cases catharine wheels of sheer *joie de vivre* would be turned by those on the outskirts. . . .

Shortly after we arrived in England there took place the Golden Jubilee dinner of the Royal Empire Society, at which the President, the Duke of Connaught, took the chair and made the speech of the evening; and the Duke of Gloucester also made a brief but happy little speech, which I think must have been one of his first public efforts. I believe that over seventy people sat down to this dinner. Dinner speeches to such vast numbers have only been rendered possible or audible in recent years by the use of the microphone; although even in the old days the voices of some practised speakers, like Joe Chamberlain, were so clear and incisive that everybody in a huge audience could hear him.

I am told that my own voice, though not powerful, is a fairly good "carrying" one; but I was certainly very glad that I had only a comparatively small audience to speak to when, shortly after this, a dinner was given jointly to W. E. Jackson and myself by the West Indian Club in London. I frankly confess that I was more than a little nervous when I got up to speak on that occasion, partly because it was my first public appearance of this

sort in London, and partly because of the, to me, rather embarrassing nature of the event.

The West Indian Club has a very hospitable habit of giving a "send-off" dinner to all new Governors, Administrators, and senior Colonial Secretaries going out to the West Indies to take up their appointments, and mine was a long postponed one, as I had been unfortunately unable on becoming an Administrator in 1925 to accept their kind invitation owing to an unexpectedly hurried departure. Jackson (now Sir Wilfred Jackson, K.C.M.G., Governor of Mauritius), had, like myself, also been previously out in the West Indies and was then home on leave. This dinner was on account of his new Colonial Secretaryship of Trinidad. But I think we both survived the ordeal all right, and much appreciated the hospitality and good wishes of the members. About a year afterwards I was asked to become a Vice-President of the Club, and remained so until my retirement from the Service. The Club, like the West India Committee, fulfils a very useful purpose in keeping together in friendly relationship all those interested in the West Indies.

That month my *West Indian Pepper-pot* was published, and Mr. Amery, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, was good enough to write a foreword for it. I called it a "pepper-pot," as it was an assorted collection of studies and sketches of all the West Indies thrown into one volume, and anyone knowing the West Indies would appreciate the allusion. For a pepper-pot is an old family heirloom of a dish, sometimes a hundred years old, and composed of pieces of chicken and fish and anything tasty, with vegetables to match. For seasoning it has various spices and red chillie-peppers (hence the name), and, as a sort of preservative, a stiff infusion of grated Cassava root, called Cassareep, which has the strange power of keeping such food wholesome and good for an indefinite period. The pepper-pot is kept simmering and heated up from time to time, and, as I have just mentioned, becomes in some families a regular heirloom.

The book seemed to have some success, and was also evidently carried abroad, for some little time afterwards I had requests for permission to translate it into Dutch, and soon after that into Danish. The Dutch edition was beautifully got up, and the coloured illustrations lost nothing by their further reproduction in that country. The only difference was that a Foreword by Dr. Fock, a former Governor-General of some of the Netherlands colonies, was substituted for that of Mr. Amery.

Mr. Amery is a remarkably versatile and quick thinker. I had a good instance of this when, a week after the West Indian dinner, I was invited, as a Colonial Administrator and one who had also been a doctor, to attend the "coming-of-age" dinner of the Royal Society of Tropical Medicine, held at the Café Royal. There were several other "guests of the Society" on that occasion, chief of whom was Mr. Amery, who was sitting next to the President, and between Mr. Amery and myself was Professor Brumpt, the great parasitologist, who had come over from Paris specially for the occasion.

Fortunately for me the Professor spoke fairly fluent English, but at one time he was completely floored. After-dinner speeches were being given, and Manson-Bahr in a witty oration made certain kindly and amusing references to each of the guests in turu, and also to the President, Professor J. W. Stephens, who happened to be a keen ornithologist.¹ The speaker proceeded to quote some old limerick about "the voice of the birds," and at the conclusion of the speech poor Professor Brumpt whispered "This Limerick. I do not understand him. Is it that he is a poet?"

Quick as a thought his neighbour said to him in French: "It's a rhyming nonsense verse, and might be translated something like this," and seizing a pencil he wrote, on the tablecloth, without a pause, *the same limerick, rhyming in the same way, in French!* Which I thought was a wonderful feat.

¹ Manson-Bahr himself is also a noted ornithologist, and has written some well-known books on the subject.

Admiral Gaskell was on my other side, and I think was as much impressed as I was ; only he said, with a twinkle in his eye : " I think I could give him some appropriate limericks which, even in French, he wouldn't care to leave on the tablecloth of the Café Royal."

Sir Arthur Gaskell represented the Navy, and Sir Matthew Fell the Army, on this very medical occasion. Both of them were very amusing raconteurs, and the former told me some good stories which I treasured for quite a time.

The day of that dinner was the famous Ascot " wet Wednesday " of 1928, when a deluge came down and in a few minutes had turned not only the course but the enclosures into swimming pools. My wife and I had the customary Royal Enclosure tickets for the week, but in purchasing beforehand the daily railway tickets we had decided that attendance on every day would be rather more than we wanted, and that we would miss one day. We couldn't quite make up our minds which, and eventually, as luck and my wife had it, decided to leave out that fatal Wednesday. I think it must have been feminine intuition that had foreseen this, but in the usual male state of dissatisfaction I afterwards wished that the same feminine intuition could have discovered a few more winners on the other days !

Ever since my student times I have always been fond of a bit of racing ; but even before then I think my interest must have been aroused by my nurse one day pointing out the great Fred Archer to me as he cantered by to some trial at Cleve, near Cheltenham. It could not have been long after this that his suicide ended the career of the finest jockey of all time. His record was only beaten recently, generations later, by Gordon Richards, but it has been argued that with Richards' choice of mounts, under modern conditions, Archer would have maintained his championship.

My first Derby bet was made just before I left school, my shilling being on the Duke of Westminster's Batt (which, sounding like a cricket bat, seemed a sufficiently good omen). It just beat Dieudonné for second place ; but,

alas, both were beaten by a hundred-to-one chance in Jeddah. That was in 1898, nearly forty years ago, and though scientific breeding has undoubtedly produced better and faster horses in these days I still think that one or two of the old marvels like Orme, Bend Or, etc., could give the best of the modern ones a good run if they could be brought back to life just as they were in their prime.

Some very quaint race meetings in different parts of the world come back to my memory. One at Lomaloma, Fiji, on the King's Birthday in 1909 (which was November the 9th in those days), merely had the beach for the race-track, but it was a very sporting little meeting for all that.

All the planters had assembled from different islands, and some of their horses had done long distances in sailing cutters, but a couple of days' rest and feeding were considered adequate to remedy this. The track itself was carefully prepared, and every possible bit of stone or coral or coco-nut leaf removed—by a gang of prisoners whose reward was to look over the concrete wall of the gaol compound, an excellent grandstand near the winning-post. I imagine they had bets among themselves, and I am sure the warders kept Nelson's good eye on the track and the blind eye on the prisoners on this occasion. After all, was it not the King's Birthday?

The sand was hard and firm and level, and a six furlong race was just possible, though the shorter distances were really more suited for tropical conditions. Cups were competed for; jockeys turned out in silk racing colours; a totalisator was set up; *and there were even printed programmes.*

We ourselves entered four horses, but our only winner was one belonging to my wife, ridden by the cook-boy in fine style. He had each stirrup firmly gripped between his big and second toes, and never lost hold for an instant. But some of the native jockeys, entering and riding their own mounts, were not so particular about such trifles as saddles and stirrups, and in some instances were even content with a piece of rope as a bridle and reins. One sportsman got so excited on finding himself near the winning-post some lengths in front of his nearest com-

petitor that he dropped even this and galloped past waving his hands above his head.

Occasionally a horse would run wide and dash into the sea, and one planter seeing this threw his hat on the beach and despairingly shouted out : " There goes at least three hundredweight of copra for me." The planters thought not so much in terms of putting their shirt on, but of putting their last sack of copra on. . . .

In the Falklands the races took place at the warmest time of the year, at Christmas, and the track was over spongy peat just at the back of Government House. The horses were of a much hardier and sturdier type than the Lomaloma ponies and could make longer distances, but they were not so speedy at sprint races. I have a snapshot of the principal race of the day, the Governor's Cup (which I had sent home for, but which of course did not arrive till some weeks after the event), and prominently in the foreground in the special enclosure is the sporting Dean of the Cathedral, who was one of the Stewards of the meeting. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed these gatherings, which did a lot of good in shaking up an otherwise somewhat dull existence for many of the outlying farmers.

And now I have reached the St. Kitts races, for which we just got back from leave in the nick of time. Preparations for this annual August event had been going on for some time, the Pond Pasture track had been rolled and weeded, and any odd holes had been filled in by megass from the sugar factory. Mr. King, the postmaster, a keen enthusiast, could be seen at dawn each day riding round the track minutely examining every inch of it, and we all felt that, given a fine day, success would be assured. Some of the planters had bought three-quarter bred horses from America or from Trinidad for the occasion ; others had imported special jockeys from Barbados : " Dr. Edmund " had organized a monster sweepstake ; and finally a brass band had been engaged, so we *knew* it would be all right. And so it was, and everybody had a glorious and hilarious day.

Which was just as well, as four weeks later there fell upon the island with little or no warning (except that the

frigate birds, like the barometer, dropped low) the worst hurricane within the memory of man. The 1924 hurricane had done comparatively little harm, except through flood, to St. Kitts itself, but this one smote us hip and thigh. Fifteen hundred houses in St. Kitts, and eighteen hundred houses in Nevis, were either destroyed or badly damaged; the excellent cane crop was reduced to not much more than half its estimated amount, and many of the older Government buildings were unroofed or injured beyond repair. All this meant an immense amount of urgent and unexpected additional work for me; and I was truly thankful then that for the last three years I had wherever possible been substituting new and solid concrete buildings for the previous flimsy wooden ones.

Some curious results of the havoc were to be seen. The Superintendent of the near-by Wireless Station had, after the collapse of his own home, rushed across with his wife and three small children for shelter to a house over the road, and on the way dropped the youngest in the dark and mislaid it for a time in a ditch. Recovering it he had reached his haven of safety but in a naturally very agitated condition, and therefore I attributed to this his strange statement early next morning to me that as he had crawled past the Grammar School he had seen the Science Laboratory, despite the drenching rain, going up in flames. But this was really so, for we found a charred ruin there, which on investigation proved to have been caused by the breaking in of a wall containing shelves of bottles, among which was one of phosphorus, that in the crash had spontaneously ignited.

Sections of the Agricultural Department's Storehouse had settled down in our garden, and pieces from some of the hospital buildings had fetched up near our gates. Altogether it was a big smash up.

Poor Nevis, which had already suffered so badly in the 1924 hurricane, was again decimated, since, as usual, the actual path of the storm had curved through Montserrat, Nevis, and one portion of St. Kitts. It was a heart-rending sight to see the havoc in Nevis. I requested a steamer which happened to come along next day to take me,

specially, over there ; and then found that the Nevis pier had been washed away, enormous ocean rollers were still crashing on the beach, and the first boat that attempted a landing was rolled right over, capsized, and nearly smashed to pieces. In the second boat I managed to effect a landing, and during the next few hours was able to take some sort of stock of the wreckage of the island.

It is these successive hurricanes that have done their share in reducing Nevis to its present plight, and it is interesting to recall in contrast how, more than a hundred years ago, the author of an old book, *Six Months in the West Indies* (1825), mentioned that in the prosperous island of Nevis there were two steam sugar factories, the only ones then in the West Indies, except one in Trinidad !

There was very little money collected for relief purposes for this hurricane, as there had been disasters in other colonies since the 1924 one, and, not unnaturally, the fountain of benevolence was not inexhaustible ; and thus the islands affected were thrown much more on their own resources. Fortunately the Presidency of St. Kitts-Nevis had a small reserve fund, and I had to do the best I could with this and with a certain proportion of outside help. With the experience of the 1924 hurricane before me I was determined not to hand over any cash payments to the peasants to repair their houses, but to put each district into the hands of a sub-committee which would negotiate directly with the carpenters and builders, and pay only for the work actually done.

With a considerable amount of driving and constant supervision we managed to get practically all the mess cleared up in just under six months, which, considering that over three thousand houses had to be separately dealt with, was not too bad. And though the damage to property was, on the whole, greater than in 1924 the death roll was not so heavy, so there was something to be thankful for after all. And it certainly gave a much needed opportunity to replace some of the older wooden buildings by better and more solid structures in concrete. . . .

At the end of the year there was a distinct impetus to trade, and to the beginning of a tourist business, when the first of the new Canadian Government steamships, the *Lady Nelson*, arrived. The whole of Basseterre was *en fête* for the occasion, and when the great gleaming white ship, with her red, white and blue funnel, dropped anchor to the sound of patriotic tunes from a relayed radio on board, there was quite a cheer from the mass of people who had come down to the water-front to welcome her.

The Directors of the Company, who were travelling with her, gave a large "inauguration luncheon" on board, to which all the leading citizens from St. Kitts were invited, and speeches were made. A précis of my own speech must have been telegraphed down the islands, for to my surprise within an hour or two I received a telegram from a group of merchants in Dominica thanking me for the encouraging and helpful remarks I had made, not only about St. Kitts but about all the islands in the colony.

While the directors were at the official luncheon on board, my wife had the ladies of the party to a luncheon at Government House to meet some of the local ladies; and on the return trip north a gigantic picnic was arranged for the whole ship's party at the old fortress at Brimstone Hill. This, some of them said, was *the* "high spot" of the whole tour.

Lord Willingdon, the Governor-General of Canada, had written to me to say that he had half hoped to be able to get down on this inauguration tour, but pressure of official duties at the last moment prevented it. He did, however, come down in the following year, a visit of considerable importance to the islands, to which I shall presently refer.

The next three or four months flew very rapidly, and the numerous public works on hand were getting into final shape when, on April 24th, I received a telegram from a friend in England congratulating me on my appointment as Governor of the Leeward Islands! It had appeared in the English *Times* that morning, but the personal letter that I ultimately received from the Colonial Office did not arrive till nearly a fortnight afterwards.

I was, needless to say, delighted at the news. I knew that my name was being considered for some sort of Governorship in due course, and I had rather hoped that my intimate knowledge of all the islands of this particular colony would lead to my appointment as its Governor, but there had been nothing at all definite, and it therefore came as a very welcome surprise. In the meantime I had heard not a word from the retiring Governor, and until I got the letter from the Colonial Office I had, of course, no means of knowing what the origin of my friend's telegram was, or whether it was really based on authentic information or not. I was therefore diffident about making direct enquiries, and the Governor did not write to me or say anything about it until a month had elapsed, when on May 24th he publicly announced it in an Empire Day speech at Antigua.

In the interval I had received scores of congratulatory telegrams from all sorts of people in all parts of the world ; and by the first mail after *The Times* announcement over a hundred letters arrived. The Governor left for England a few days afterwards, on June 8th, and I moved down to the Antigua headquarters a fortnight later, after settling a number of local matters, and being given a number of "good-bye parties" by our various friends.

The Executive and Legislative Councils organized a farewell dinner at which all the leading representatives of the community were present. As the Chairman said : "The numbers were only limited by the size of the building into which they could be squeezed, and some of them were of a rather unsqueezable size." They borrowed the Federal Government House for the occasion, and the tables extended all down the long dining-room and into the passage beyond. The dinner was a men's dinner, but two nights later a ball was given by the ladies of St. Kitts to my wife and myself, and in the middle of this an illuminated address was presented.

It was a great wrench having to leave the Presidency where we had spent nearly four very happy years, but it was mitigated by the fact that as Governor I should have opportunities of returning from time to time and seeing

again the places and the faces that had become associated with that happy period.

Within a few days of my arrival at Antigua I received a telegram to say that there had been another change of Government in England and that Mr. Sidney Webb had succeeded Mr. Amery as Secretary of State for the Colonies.

By the time I was sworn in as Governor I had put in over nine years in the Leeward Islands, four years at the War and in the Falklands, etc., and nine years in Fiji. Curiously enough, almost simultaneously with my own appointment as Governor of the Leeward Islands there was announced the appointment of a school-fellow of mine, Sir Murchison Fletcher, as Governor of Fiji.

And now, though I did not know it at the time, I was to embark upon six of the most strenuous and difficult years of my life.