

HOME LIFE IN ST. PIERRE

Martinique Girl's Story of Her Former Home.

SOCIAL LINES RIGIDLY DRAWN.

Interesting Habits and Incidents of Life on the West Indian Island Recalled by a European Girl—Wealth of Fruit and Vegetables—Women Fine Embroiderers.

The eyes of a pretty Martinique girl were heavy with tears while she talked with a New York Tribune reporter the other day of her former home in St. Pierre and of her many friends who were there at the time of the disaster. The young woman and her sisters, like most white girls at Martinique, received their education in Europe. The convent school, the girl explained, admitted all applicants, negro as well as white children, and as the social lines are rigidly drawn in Martinique white people in rare instances patronized the school. The speaker recalled many interesting habits and incidents of Martinique home life.

"We were never apprehensive of danger from the mountain," she said. "Indeed, we never even thought of it as a volcano. To us it was always 'the mountain,' on the side of which grew such luxuriant verdure as no one can realize until he has seen it. The lake in the crater was the favorite resort for the young men who bathed in it and camped around it. Women and girls seldom visited the crater because of the steep and difficult climb as one neared the summit.

"The drive from St. Pierre to our summer home at Morne Rouge was a delightful one. Along parts of the way big sugar cane plantations waved their silken arms in the breeze. At Trols Points, a village on the way, barefooted women wearing big hats, which they wore from palm leaves, were always to be seen washing their clothes in the river. The river bed was covered with huge boulders, which the washers use in place of washboards, standing in the river and slapping the garments on the stones with a vigor that would have insured destruction to the fabric had the process been applied by uninitiated hands. Out of the palm leaves the women also made kitchen fans, which served them in place of bellows to encourage their fires.

"The Jardin des Plantes was a beautiful place, but it was infested with snakes, as are the forests of the island. Visitors had to look out for them. There were beautiful ferns in Martinique, but I always noticed that where they were most luxuriant snakes were the most numerous. No one thinks of exploring the woods for flowers, as they do here, because of the serpents. Beautiful orchids and other lovely wild flowers grow in the forests. The orchids are usually found in inaccessible places, difficult even for the natives to reach. The country surrounding Trols Points is especially wild and picturesque.

"Among the attractive sights of St. Pierre was the early morning market, to which country women brought their produce in big wooden trays on their heads and from which women buyers took home their purchases in the same fashion. The wooden head tray was, too, the laundress' only vehicle when she called for and delivered her customers' wash. The women dressed in the most brilliant hues obtainable.

"At Fonds Core, outside of the city, it was a picturesque sight to see the fishermen bringing in their big nets in the early morning. A great variety of excellent fish was plentiful in Martinique, and it was sure to be fresh, for it could not be kept from one day to another on account of the climate. Ice was expensive, but was used by the white people. An ice-making plant was one of the enterprises of St. Pierre.

"People of Martinique are early risers. The colored population starts for market by 4 o'clock, and the white people are awake and ready for their first coffee by 6 o'clock. Many people drink coconut water, which is said to have the virtues of vichy, the first thing in the morning. The coconuts are procured by the little negroes, who climb the trees for the fruit and deliver it fresh to their patrons when the water is cool and sparkling. The jelly-like pulp of the young coconut is a great delicacy. The dry nut, in the condition it is received here, is grated and made into a delicious ice cream.

"Breakfast is, as a rule, served between 7 and 8 o'clock and usually consists of a cocoa or chocolate, with bread or biscuit and butter. The mid-day repast at noon is the hearty meal of the day, and there are always a fish course, a meat course, vegetables and a dessert of fruit in one form or another. A lighter meal is served at 7 p. m., at which there are always a meat soup, a vegetable or two and a dessert. Pastries in the shape of pies and puddings are little used. There is a wealth of fruit. Some of the vegetables common in the north, such as asparagus and artichokes, are much smaller when grown in Martinique, but others are larger. The cucumber, for instance, which attains a giant size in the islands, would hardly be recognized here. Concombers farcis sausages is a favorite dish. The big cucumbers are peeled, the seeds are removed and the cavities left are filled with sausages; then the cucumber is cooked in butter much in the fashion of a pot roast. It is sliced when served at the table. Cucumbers are also used for salads. Apricots are a different fruit from those common here. A story is told of a man in Martinique, a stranger to the country, who amazed his servant by sending for a half dozen apricots. He was surprised to re-

ceive six unfamiliar fruits, each about the size of a melon. A frequent method of serving the apricot is to slice it and serve it with wine and sugar. Liquors are made from the seeds of the sapote and from the vanilla bean. The chadock is much like the grape fruit, but bigger. There are two varieties: one with a white pulp is sour, and the other with a pink pulp is sweet. The skin is crystallized and used as a conserve. There are many sorts of oranges, figs and bananas. The latter are an important factor in the diet of the negroes.

"Bananas is sure to be a favorite with foreigners. It is the pulp of the stem of a tree and is used with French dressing as a salad or is boiled and served with a white sauce.

"The avocado pear is rather a vegetable than a fruit. It has a marrowlike pulp, which is eaten uncooked with salt. Farine manioc is very much used. It is manufactured from the grated tubers of Manihot utilisissima, which sometimes weigh forty pounds apiece. By submitting the grated product to great pressure a deleterious juice peculiar to the plant is removed. Breadfruit is common and is boiled and served whole or mashed. The Caribbean cabbage, which does not resemble the northern cabbage, but which is more like a turnip, is very good. The natives are particularly fond of red pepper. A savory dish of vegetables and onions highly seasoned with it is known as piment confit. Sweet potatoes and bananas are the favorite products of the negroes, who subsist chiefly on beans, salt codfish and breadfruit.

"There is little social life in Martinique, and unless there is a dancing party the population is pretty sure to be in bed between 9 and 10 o'clock in the evening. Dancing is the principal pastime, and the young people can never get enough of it. The climate does not encourage games. We introduced tennis, but no one played it after we left. There are no teas and few dinners. A festivity or celebration occasionally takes the form of a very formal luncheon, which is in reality a heavy dinner and about which there is little gaiety.

"The women, both black and white, who have been educated in the convent do exquisite embroidery and lacework. The white women also make wax fruits and vegetables which are remarkable for their lifelike appearance. I have seen pineapples, apples of various sorts, sugar cane and the like which it was hard to recognize from the real. I have never seen anything to equal this waxwork in France, Germany, Holland or England.

"A profusion of roses, honeysuckles and other flowers grow about the houses. Few wild birds are seen, and none is heard."

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THE DOCTOR'S ROOM

Mr. and Mrs. Dr. Trenton were together with Trenton's brother, and Dr. Trenton suggested that his wife tell the story of how she came to marry.

"Herbert, my brother, had written that it would be impossible for him to meet me at the station and that I must take a cab and drive to Kings Court Mansions.

"When I arrived at King's Court, I walked bravely up the stairs with my traveling bag, the cabman following with my trunk. The length of the stairs took my breath away and she deprived me of all power of calculation, and in my ignorance I was unaware that the entrance does not count.

"Therefore, when I arrived at the landing where a door was standing open and an old manservant just replying to an inquirer that the doctor would not be in until 2 o'clock, I concluded that I had reached my journey's end, for my brother also rejoices in the title of doctor, though his degree is in music.

"To old Colonel James' astonishment I walked in, saying: 'The doctor expects me. Please have my luggage taken to my room. I am his sister.'

"With that she admitted me, muttering, 'Never heard of a sister,' into the smoky, dusty apartments I assumed to be my brother's bachelor quarters.

"To distract my thoughts I picked up a magazine, opening it where a letter had been placed to serve as a mark. My eyes fell on the first words, and my attention was riveted in a moment.

"Now comes the disgraceful part of my confession. I could not refrain from reading the letter. It was signed, 'Your old friend, Ned Harwood.'

"Dear Old Man—So you have decided to install that dreadful little thing in your house, though you acknowledge yourself that all the peace and comfort of your life will be gone. Do be advised and give up the idea of such folly. At any rate, don't be surprised if I cut your acquaintance for the present and leave you to solitary enjoyment so long as Dolly forms part of your establishment. Luckily I am off tomorrow, and by the time I come back you will have found out your mistake and sent Miss Dolly back where she came from. Your old friend,

"NED HARWOOD."

"My dear lady," cried Harwood, "you don't mean to say that any misunderstanding arose out of that?"

"I do mean to say so," she replied, laughing. "It was quite possible I should assume those words referred to me, and you cannot be surprised that at first I was highly indignant and then began to weep."

"My resolution was soon formed. I would go at once. I would not even see the heartless brother who had discussed me with his friends in such a manner. I quickly repacked my traveling bag. While doing so I came upon a photograph of myself, which had been taken as a memento for the friends I was leaving.

"A sudden thought made me write a few words upon it and lay it on the table where the flowers and luncheon still remained. Then I put on my hat and mantle and was just going to open the door when I heard a latchkey inserted in the other side. It was Herbert, I thought. He should not find me there, and, seeing the door of a small room open, I slipped in and closed it behind me."

"Now let me tell the rest," interrupted Dr. Trenton, "for I was the principal actor. I fancied I was dressing as I became aware of the invitingly spread table. Then I saw two covers laid as if for a delightful tete-a-tete and upon my dinner napkin a photo of the sweetest face I had ever seen. Look—that's the picture. I have not given it up since. And listen what was on it:

"As I am so ugly that I destroy your peace and drive away your friend, I leave you and shall find a home elsewhere."

"I puzzled over it in vain, for your letter never entered my thoughts. I could reach only one conclusion—that the original of this captivating picture had been here and that I had missed her.

"James thought I was mad. At last I extracted the facts from him, at least so far as he knew, for he did not know where my 'sister' had disappeared to. I caught up my hat in the hope of discovering some trace of her. We were both on the threshold when I heard a faint cry. I opened the store-room door, and Dorothy, in tears, fell into my arms."

"If I had not been frightened to death in that dark room," said Dolly, "when that horrible monkey jumped on my back I would have stayed there for hours rather than call for help."

"Just think, Mr. Harwood, your special aversion, Miss Dolly, had already disturbed Jack's peace to such a degree as to be banished to the dark storeroom. No sooner had I entered it than the mischievous pet jumped on my back and would not move till Jack came to the rescue."

"Yes, I was obliged to restore my household fairy to Herbert, who had been waiting anxiously for her since 2 o'clock. However, I did not let him enjoy her company long, for soon she had to descend to the third floor flat again and preside over my breakfast, luncheons and dinners."

Ned Harwood was obliged to admit that, all unconsciously, he had proved a very useful matchmaker.

Squaring the Circle. The phrase "squaring the circle" is another way of saying "attempting an impossibility." The allusion is to the mathematical question whether a circle can be made which contains exactly the same area as a square, and the difficulty is to find the precise ratio between the diameter and the circumference of a circle. Popularly it is 3.14159, etc., but the numbers would go on to infinity. This problem has given rise to an amount of labor only equalled by that bestowed upon the equally impossible one of discovering perpetual motion.

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Retail Market Report.

The following quotations were made up this afternoon, and is an impartial report of the prices paid by Jacksonville dealers:

Wheat—75c per bushel.
Flour—\$1.70 @ \$1.80 per 100 pounds.
Oats—36c per bushel.
Barley—Rolled, \$1.25 per cental.
Hay—Per ton, baled, \$18.
Potatoes—\$1.50 & \$2 per hundred.
Onions—2 cts per pound.
Butter—35c @ 60c per roll.
Beans—3c @ 5c per pound.
Lard—15c per pound.
Eggs—20 cts per dozen.
Sugar—D. G. \$4.75 @ \$5.25 per cwt.
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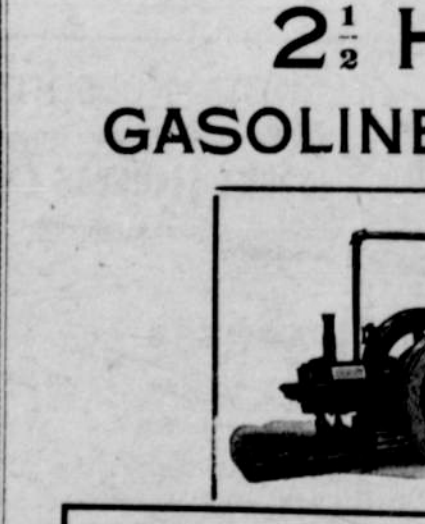
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