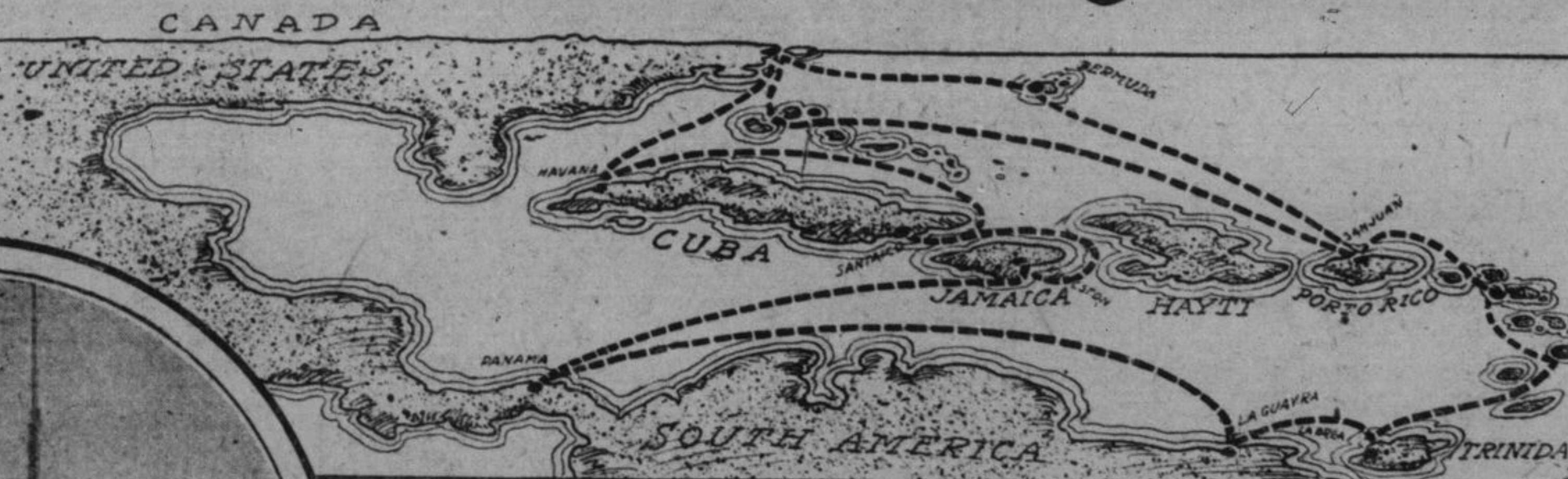


Winter Cruises on Sunny Southern Seas



scapes and seascapes are not easily forgotten. Tropical loveliness abounds everywhere, but particularly along the banks of the Rio Cobre and in the Castleton Gardens, and only the knowledge that this is still the threshold of the tropics spurs us on!

Following Kingston comes Panama, and its big ditch now nearing completion. Words are inadequate to describe this colossal engineering feat which must be seen to be appreciated.

cliffs as the train slowly wends its way upwards, and an everchanging panorama of remarkable beauty is unfolded from height to height, until, thousands of feet below us, the sea and sky are merged in one. Caracas, while almost on the equator, has a temperate climate, due to its great altitude. The city has much to interest but, like so many of the tropical cities of our Pan-American neighbors, closer acquaintance dispels some of the illusions of its fairly well-kept streets. Then comes Trinidad, another English possession. Port of Spain, the capital and commercial centre, is an important distributing centre of cocoa and sugar, while La Brea, forty miles south of it and also included in the itinerary, provides much of the asphalt that is familiar to us in many of our streets.

Hearn, in his charming sketches gathered together under the prosaic title "Five Years in the French West Indies." It was from the harbor of Fort de France, the principal city, that Count de Grasse, set sail with his fleet to meet Rodney on the memorable twelfth of April, 1782.

Continuing along the Leeward group another of the English possessions, Barbadoes, commands attention. Bridgetown, the capital, is one of the

To suggest a Winter Cruise in the amethyst seas of the beautiful American Riviera, the delectable West Indies, gives a delightful thrill of anticipation to the most loyal subject of the Frost King, for, tyrant that he is, all who live under his sway must bow in mute acknowledgment before the mantle of white, emblem of his reign, and the ruddy driven blasts that proclaim his coming and blight all nature with their icy touch.

Yet, not far afield, the gorgeous islands of the Caribbean, a veritable riot of color amid the luxuriant brilliance of tropical vegetation, smile an ever ready welcome to the wayfarer from climes less favored by nature.



A Scene in the West Indies.



And it is not only as a great winter playground that these islands hold our attention, but also as the scene of many romantic adventures during the centuries that followed the discovery and settlement of the New World.

It was to Columbus and the horde that followed on his heels, the gateway, not to a new continent with its hidden possibilities of a great world-power to be, but to El Dorado, that mythical land of fabulous wealth that stirred the hearts of many a brave and bold soldier of fortune to deed of daring and danger untold. It was to these islands and the Spanish Main that the Buccaneers held indisputed title for many a year, and their history unfolds a tale in which the names of such arch rogues as Teach, otherwise Black Beard, Cumberbund, sometime Earl Morgan, Capt. Kidd and their like, are freely intermingled with those of Diego, Cortes, Balboa, Pizarro, Ponce de Leon, Sir Walter Raleigh, and many another picturesque gentleman of fortune who had much to do with the discovery and early settlement of this region.

The first authentic record of a white settlement in the New World is the Colony established by Columbus on the north shore of Santo Domingo, in 1493, and called Isabella in honor of Spain's reigning Queen. On the south shore at Santa Domingo, the town, is the reputed tomb of Columbus and, while not established before reasonable doubt there is quite as much evidence for as against the site.

And so their history has been made, much of it written in blood, but the verdant beauty of their tropical loveliness remains unchanged, and the quaint customs of bygone days have not altogether yielded to the onward march of an unromantic, if very practical, civilization.

The first of the islands visited on the cruise organized by the White Star and other well known lines, is Cuba. The capital city, Havana, and Santiago on the southeast coast, reproduce the life of the languorous Andalusian, with all the "sang froid" of Seville, and while the commercial interests of both cities are important and far-reaching, particularly in respect to sugar and tobacco exports, the tourist will probably find more to in-

terest him in the street life in Havana, the busy shops along the Rue Obispo and O'Reilly with their irresistible appeal to the purse strings.

At Santiago, too, is the famous Morro Castle, which protected Cervantes' feet before the fateful dash that was one of the culminating events of the Spanish-American war, and San Juan Hill, where the Americans won a memorable victory over the Spanish troops.

In Jamaica, a busy English colony, having important relations with Canada and the United States, the general atmosphere of "something doing" is a great contrast with the easy nonchal-



Primitive Transportation W.I.

ance and indolence that characterizes the Latin in Cuba. England wrested this island from the Spanish in 1655, and has held it ever since, colonizing and developing its great natural resources with true Anglo-Saxon persistence, until to-day it is one of the most important islands, commercially, in the archipelago. Kingston, the capital, is a city of 50,000 population, and, for situation, is lovely beyond words. Built on a gentle slope with a beautiful mountain environment and overlooking a magnificent harbor, its land-

scapes it to say, there is no feeling of disappointment with the magnitude of the work when first viewed, as is often the case when a long anticipated wish is realized. Much might be said of the dauntless soldiers of fortune, who made the isthmus the stage for many of their performances, and were wont to take toll of the avarice of these bold adventurers, but time and space are all too short to chronicle their deeds and mis-deeds. The water will soon be turned into the big ditch, and many of the marvels of man's ingenuity and skill in conquering nature forever hidden from view. Leaving

like Jamaica, the tropical beauty of Trinidad is beyond description, except by some master of word imagery like Kingsley, who, in his "At Last—Christmas in the West Indies," has so carefully cultivated island in the voted many chapters to this beautiful island. No mention of Trinidad would be quite complete without reference to its "Big Trees," attaining a height of 150 feet or more, with a mighty spread of limb. Another day's journey, and the good ship casts anchor in Fort de France, Martinique, one of the French possessions in the West Indies. In fact, it is not unusual to meet with some of the French squadron in this harbor, as it is a frequent rendezvous of the great floating engines of destruction. The negroes of Martinique are quite as French as the population of Cuba is Spanish, and many amusing contrasts of fashion, combined with the gay colors that delight the negro heart, may be seen here, particularly on the arrival of the ship, when the whole town is in gala attire. A few miles along the coast the almost buried ruins of the once brilliant St. Pierre mark the dreadful havoc wrought by Mt. Pelee, on the fateful night of May 8th, 1902, when the whole city was wiped out of existence in the twinkling of an eye. Little remains but a few crumbling walls and vine-clad mounds to mark the spot, but Mt. Pelee, vengeful and sinister, stands sentinel like, wrapped in an eternal cloud of vapor slowly mounting from its crater. Much of our knowledge of this most cosmopolitan of island cities, has been vividly pictured by that greatly misunderstood genius Lafcadio



A Child Peddler Porto Rico.

most thriving and interesting cities in the islands. Many beautiful walks and drives extend in every direction, and the Savanna, the playground of the Barbadian aristocracy, is of all the most interesting. Barbadoes is said to be the most densely populated and carefully cultivated island in the West Indies, and one may well believe it from the thrift and enterprise seen everywhere. It is also well known to West Indians as a health resort, and the salubrious climate at all seasons has led many eminent English physicians to endorse its claim to this distinction. St. Thomas, Danish West Indies, and Porto Rico, a United States possession, follow. Both are naturally interesting in their own way, but Porto Rico has made such rapid strides, both as a tobacco growing and sugar producing country, under the United States dominion, that, commercially it is attracting a great deal of attention. The automobile is a well-established institution here and makes possible a drive to Abonita, nearly forty miles inland, over one of the finest roads anywhere, and entirely of military construction. The drive is well worth while, as both San Juan on one side, where the ship lies, and Ponce on the other, are to be seen from this point of vantage, which is just about mid-way across the island. Much might be written of San Juan for it is complete with reminiscences of Old Spain, but we can only stop to mention San Cristobal, a fort built by the Spanish army in 1771, and long considered impregnable—a challenge to any one who dared dispute their fendish ingenuity of the Spaniard contriving tortures for the victims



View of the Panama Canal and the Lock Gates.



Coolie Woman B.W.I.



Bolivar Square & Cathedral Caracas.