

palms and sugar-cane, interspersed with native huts, each surrounded with its little plantation of bananas and other fruit, suggesting the boundless liberality of nature.

During our stay it was a daily treat to stroll along the shady streets, and out through the pleasant roads, particularly on Saturdays, which seemed a sort of gala day, when the roads were usually thronged with natives of both sexes on horseback, riding up and down at full gallop, and seeming perfectly at home in the saddle—the women even more so than the men: they sit astride barefooted, with their bright-coloured riding-dresses, like banners, streaming behind them; all apparently happy and reckless: their bright eyes flashing, their long black hair, encircled with garlands and wreaths of flowers—making a gay and graceful spectacle. The men looked hardly less attractive, for they had wreaths of bright flowers round their hats, and garlands around their throats.

Sometimes a crowd of these careless riders came galloping in from the plains, full of fun and laughter, accompanied by a lot of blue-jackets on leave from the *Challenger*, rushing on, helter-skelter, upsetting everything and everybody they came in contact with; bestriding their horses as they would a topsail-yard in a breeze; hanging on to manes and saddles, and evidently enjoying themselves to their heart's content.