

Approaching the islands from the southward, their general effect is somewhat sombre. The land is low, rising nowhere to a height greater than two hundred and sixty feet, and by far the greater part forming gentle undulations at a height of from twenty to sixty feet above the sea-level.

Although very valuable crops are raised, it is by a system of market-gardening in isolated patches rather than by agriculture, and the islands can not be said to be generally or uniformly cultivated. A great part of the higher land is covered with a natural pasture of inferior grasses, mixed with a low scrub of what they call wild sage, a species of *Lantana*, which has been introduced in comparatively late times, and has spread in a wonderful way, so that it is now a perfect nuisance. The whole area of the islands is not more than 12,000 acres, and of these only about 1200 are under cultivation.

The principal islands are well wooded, but the great preponderance of the Bermudian cedar (*Juniperus Bermudiana*), with a close and rigid foliage of the darkest green, gives a gloomy character to the woods. As we got a little nearer, however, and the white houses of St. George's and the white tents of the encampment on Prospect Hill came into view, and the long fringing beach of bright coral sand with its outer border of intensely blue water breaking into dazzling white surf, the gravity of the scene was greatly relieved.

As we shall see hereafter, there is a total want of springs and wells of fresh water on the island, and it has become an almost universal custom to roof the houses with thin slabs of white limestone, and, further, to whitewash both roof and walls; the rain-water collected on the roof, and kept clean and fresh by the constantly renewed whitewash, is carefully led into a tank, and forms the only supply of pure water. Every house of any pretension is provided with such a tank, also covered with a sloping whitewashed roof, which, while it checks evaporation, adds to the contents of the tank by its own rain-catch. The