


A MIDWINTER RESORT.

503



A PEDDLER.  
(SKETCH OWNED BY MRS. MARTIN BRENNER.)


ence, made no provision for a harbor, beyond throwing up the outlying reef called Hog Island, which only partly protects Nassau from the force of the sea. There is scarcely room between the two islands for an ordinary coasting steamer to manoeuvre, or sufficient depth of water in the channel to float a vessel of any size. The steamers that call here lie outside and drop their passengers over the bulwarks on to the retired New York tugboat that does duty as a transfer vessel. Like the other valetudinarians laid up in ordinary here, it has come South to lengthen out its days.

But transfer to the hotel by this means is comfort compared with the experience to which many visitors are subjected. With contrary winds and seas, approach to Nassau is impossible, and the steamer must make a harbor under the lee of the land, miles away. In some winds it is even compelled to go entirely around the island to South Bay, and dump its passengers on the beach, to get over the distance of fourteen miles to the hotel in carriages as best they can. There is a spice of adventure, but not such as invalids seek, in finding your way across a tangle of wilderness, through a country you never saw before. Fortunately for them there are no wild animals there larger than a hare, and the only representative of the ophidians is the chicken-snake, which is perfectly harmless, in spite of the fact that it is reported sometimes to grow to fifteen feet in length. The tarantulas or ground-spiders are the only venomous creatures on the island, unless we include the mosquitoes, which are said, with patriotic discrimination, to confine their visitations to foreigners. But these pests are citizens of the world, and extended their attentions even to the crew of the *Jennette*, icebound in an Arctic sea.

Once safely landed at the Royal Victoria, everything will be found most comfortable, and

the balmy breezes from the sea will woo the invalid from thought of his pain. As he is there only for the winter, he is not disturbed by the reflection that the city of Nassau is the hottest place in the colony. The fact that it is built upon the slope of a ridge of land which shuts it out from the prevailing southerly breezes concerns only its unhappy summer residents. The "out islands," as all but New Providence are called, have attractive sites for health resorts, but furnish no accommodations for visitors. What the hotel at Nassau would do if it were dependent, as the residents are, upon local supplies, it would be hard to say. All of its meats are brought in huge refrigerators from New York, where everything seems to be obtained, excepting fruit and fish, of which there is abundance in delicious variety. It is impossible to give a complete dinner without calling upon the resources of the hotel. A few vegetables are grown in the hotel grounds in soil brought, like that in which the Capuchins of Rome are planted, from a distance. There is scarcely any soil upon the island, except in the pockets of the coral rocks; scarcely any foundation for it, indeed. The trees in this climate seem able to live upon the air, and you see them growing to large size on top of walls. Over the sides their roots spread themselves, until they reach the crevices in the rock below and take anchorage there. Cut down a jungle, and you find beneath nothing but a mass of conglomerated rock, formed of finely comminuted coral, shells, and various marine deposits of recent origin, with red earth composed of vegetable mold and the detritus of the limestone rock, scattered irregularly in patches of a few inches in depth. The roads through the town are made by smoothing off the top of the coral rock, and they are nearly as dazzling in the sun as a white-washed wall.

The walls that border them are built of the



A NASSAU GATEWAY.  
(SKETCH OWNED BY E. W. HOOPER.)

CP 6707

A Peddler

Date  
February, 1887  
Primary Maker  
Winslow Homer

Medium  
Electrotype from wood engraving, with typographic text on paper

Dimensions  
Sheet: 9 1/4 x 6 1/4 in. (23.5 x 15.9 cm) Image  
(2003.195.a): 1 3/4 x 1 5/8 in. (4.4 x 4.1 cm) Image  
(2003.195.b): 1 5/8 x 1 3/4 in. (4.1 x 4.4 cm)

Credit Line  
Des Moines Art Center; Richard and Kay Ward Collection, 2003.195.a-b