

A

CHRONOLOGICAL HISTORY

OF THE

WEST INDIES.

1655.

UPON the appearance of Admiral Penn off Santo Domingo, with the fleet under his orders, the Spaniards, to increase their force, recalled their troops from Tortuga, of which island they had been in possession about 18 months. In compliance with his orders, the commander of the garrison, before he left the island, blew up the fort, burnt the church and all the houses and magazines, and laid the plantations waste!

Not long afterwards, an English refugee of considerable property, named Elias Ward (Élyazouïard), came from Jamaica, with his wife and family and a dozen soldiers, and with a commission from the general, settled upon Tortuga: he was soon joined by several English and French, and at the head of 120 adventurers.¹

Du Tertre, tom. iii. p. 127.

¹ "About the time of Elias Ward's establishing himself upon the island of Tortuga, some Frenchmen returned from Cuba to that island, and reported an occurrence sufficiently remarkable to occupy a place in this book: for they said that the great want of provisions which they suffered made ten or twelve of their brave adventurers land in Cuba, to take some pigs from two "corayls," which are the pens where the Spaniards breed a great quantity of these animals. That passing through a small marsh, a league from the first "corail," they fell in with the most horrible snake they had ever

heard of in America: at first they thought that it was a monstrous crocodile; but having fired all at the same time at the monster's head and killed it, they went to it, and found that it was a snake: that it was almost as big round the belly as a "miud," (a measure that holds more than five quarters of corn), and was fifty-five feet long.

"They pursued their route; and having surprised the owner of the first corail, they asked him if he did not know that there was a prodigious large snake in the marsh a league off?" He replied, 'no; but that for a long time he and his neigh-

The first cacao-tree which is mentioned as being in the French West India islands was discovered by some Caribs at Capsterre, Martinico, and was pointed out to M. du Parquet. From this tree the island was stocked with plants.

On the 1st of February, the expedition under the command of his Excellency Robert Venables, and the Right Honourable William Penn, consisting of about 3000 men, in thirty sail of vessels, one half of whom were victuallers, were collected at Barbadoes. The Great and Little Charity, two vessels, the one laden with artillery stores, the other with horses and equipments for the cavalry, were left behind, to the great injury of the service. The soldiers were immediately landed, and the ship's carpenters employed in putting together the shallops, the frames of which were brought out by the fleet.

March 31st, the whole being ready, and a troop of horse (raised in the island at the expence of the inhabitants) embarked, the expedition sailed from Barbadoes, and anchored, April 2d, off St. Lucia. It passed close by Guadaloupe, to the great alarm of the inhabitants. On the 6th they were off St. Christopher's, where they were joined by about 1300 men, making, with those from Barbadoes, 5000 volunteers, exclusive of women and children, many of whom accompanied the volunteers. Admiral Penn was splendidly entertained by M. de Poincy, at his hotel on the mountain, before he went to the English quarters to settle the government.

April 13th, the fleet were off the city of St. Domingo, and the next day 7000 infantry and one troop of horse, with three days' provisions, were landed ten leagues to the westward of the town¹.

Du Tertre, tom.ii. p. 184.—tom. i. pp. 472. 479. Harleian Miscellany, vol. vi. p. 377. Edition, 1810. Journal by J. S. an eye witness, printed London, 1655.

bour every day lost their pigs, and that the suspicion they had, that one robbed the other, had set them to law with each other.' At daylight our adventurers carried him to the marsh, where the poor farmer was near dying with fear at the sight of such a frightful beast. But he was much consoled when they opened the snake, and he found two of his largest pigs in his belly! Quite delighted to find that the cause of his dispute with his neighbour was discovered, he begged our adventurers to give him their word not to do his neighbour any injury, and to permit him to go and look for him. He obtained it, and brought him; and after having seen the beast, they were reconciled, and gave to the adventurers all that they asked from them. The farmers skinned the snake, and the skin was carried to the Havannah, and placed in the cathedral, where all

the inhabitants saw it with astonishment. M. d'Artigny, a man of honour, now living, and major of Tortuga, was one of those that fired at the snake, and has several times repeated this story to M. d'Ojeron, governor of the island of Tortuga, who gave me what I have written."—*Du Tertre*, tom. iii. p. 129.

¹ "M. de Poincy, after the alliance between the two nations was renewed by the treaty, permitted Admiral Penn to pass through his territory. The general passed through the middle of the French inhabitants, who were under arms, and so arranged, that after one company of infantry there was one of cavalry; and they have assured me (*Du Tertre* says), that M. de Poincy, to make his troops appear more numerous, had given orders to 120 "cavaliers" to proceed by the back roads, and get beyond the admiral, so

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Orders were then given, “that when they should enter into the town, they should not plunder any money, plate, or jewels, neither kill any tame cattle, upon pain of death.” This order produced some discontent among those who had volunteered principally for the hope of plundering the Spaniards! The march was through thick woods, where the want of water was severely felt.

Two days afterwards, the 15th, three regiments, under Colonel Bullard, were landed two leagues to the westward of the town, near a river which was appointed the place of rendezvous. Colonel Bullard, without waiting for the rest, marched towards the town, but soon retreated without doing any thing. The main body of the army coming up, after some short refreshment at the river, proceeded towards the town, about three miles from which the advanced guard, consisting of 500 men, were attacked and forced to retreat: some regiments sent to their assistance were also repulsed, and the general himself escaped with difficulty. More troops coming up, the Spaniards retreated into a fort near the sea side, which commanded the passage from the wood to the town.

The exceeding distress for water, and the fatigue and losses of the army, induced the general to retreat to the river, where preparations were made to advance again.

April 24th, the army moved forward again, the guides promising to direct them a way which led to a river about two miles on the north side of the town: they mistook the path, the soldiers by turns drawing the “mortar pieces and small drakes,” as they were without horses. The day following, by noon, they approached the fort again, with worse success than before: the Spaniards charged the “forlorn hope,” beat them back to the general’s regiment, and routed those also. Major-General Haines, in the van, was shamefully deserted by his soldiers: he begged, for God’s sake, but ten men to stay by him, but not one would do it! He therefore died like a gallant commander, selling his life as dear as possible.

The Spaniards followed up their victory, destroying the fugitives, who made no resistance, near half of the army flying before them, to the amazement of the rest, who were not up. Tired with slaughter, the Spaniards returned to St. Domingo with seven English colours as sure trophies of victory. Six hundred English were slain outright, and 200 more, that fled into the woods, and

Journal by J. S. an eye witness, printed London, 1655.

that he might pass them again: at five or six different places he saw always the same men, but differently arranged. Not recognising them, he supposed that there

were a great many more French in the island than he had been informed there were.” — *Du Tertre*, vol. i. p. 479.

were left behind, were killed by the Negroes. There were also 300 wounded, “most of them all receiving their hurts in the backs!”

“The Spaniards exceeded not in all fifty men,” exclusive of Negroes and Mulattoes.

Adjutant-General Jackson was cashiered for a coward, and the ceremony performed of breaking his sword over his head!

“The army lying in the bay, as formerly, had not that supply of victuals from the ships as before, but were necessitated to go abroad in parties through the woods to seek for cattle, and oftentimes meeting with some few Negroes, were by them put to the rout, and divers slain: others, casting away their arms, betook themselves to their heels and so escaped the fury of these naked pagans; and at some times, when neither men nor beasts were near, only the leaves of trees making some little noise, and *crabs stirring in the woods*, possessed them with such eminent fear, that leaving their weapons behind, they ran over cliffs into the sea!”

Venables, in his Narrative, says, “our planters we found most fearful, being only bold to do mischief; not to be commanded as soldiers, not to be kept in any civil order, being the most profligate, debauched persons that we ever saw, scorners of religion, and indeed so loose as not to be kept under discipline, and so cowardly as not to be made to fight; so that, had we known what they would have proved, we should rather have chosen to have gone ourselves as we came from England, than to have such for our assistants, who, we fear, with some others put upon us in England, have drawn heavy afflictions upon us, dishonour upon our nation and religion!”

May the 3d, the army re-embarked 1700 men short of the number landed, which was 9700. The Spaniards, content with what they had done, did not attempt to molest them. The next day, the fleet made sail for Jamaica.

May the 7th was ordered as a day of humiliation; and, in consequence of the great cowardice which had lately been shewn, it was proclaimed to the whole army, “That whosoever should be found to turn his back to the enemy, and run away, the next officer that brought up the rear of that division should immediately run him through, which if he failed to perform, himself was to suffer death without mercy.”

May the 9th, the fleet made sail for Jamaica; and having sailed about sixteen leagues along the south side thereof, the day following, came to an anchor in a spacious harbour, “called also Jamaica.” The troops were soon landed, without the loss of a man. The Spaniards, after a few shot, retreated to Oristano, an unfortified town about six miles off, from whence they sent their

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families and their valuables farther into the country. The English advanced towards the town, which they entered the following morning, and found it empty: here the general fixed his headquarters, and opened a negotiation with some of the principal Spaniards, who came into the town to treat. The governor, an old decrepid man, was brought in by two men in his hammock to sign the articles, by which it was agreed that the Spaniards should evacuate the island. The inhabitants, however, did not consider themselves bound by the treaty, and many of them escaped through the woods, with their moveable property, to other parts of the island. Colonel Bullard, with 2000 men, was sent after them, who returned with his party on the first of June, bringing with him some cattle, and giving notice of the great abundance that there were of them in the remote parts of the island.

The Discovery, one of the largest vessels in the fleet, was set on fire by filling brandy-wine in the steward's room, by the flame of the candle, and entirely destroyed. Some of the frigates that were ordered to cruize off Española sent in some prizes: so that the importance of the conquest was immediately felt, and grants of land were made to the officers and men.

June the 25th, the fleet bound for England set sail from Jamaica. Vice-Admiral Goodson, in the Torrington frigate, was left commander-in-chief in the Indies, with the frigates and best sailing Flemish ships, making twelve sail, exclusive of victuallers and prizes.

The homeward-bound fleet passed through the Gulf of Florida, and on the 8th of July lost the Paragon Navy, a second-rate: she was destroyed by fire, supposed to have taken place by some neglect in the steward's room.

August the 30th, the fleet made the Lizard, and anchored the following day at Spithead.

Venables was soon afterwards sent to the Tower.

Major-General Fortescue was left at Jamaica, with the command of the army.

Major Sedgewicke was sent out to Jamaica as a commissioner, in the place of Butler, who had returned to England with Venables. Sedgewicke arrived there in October; but finding the other commissioners were dead, he, with the principal officers, framed an instrument of government, constituting themselves a

 Rapin, tom. ii. p. 595.

 Edwards, vol. i. p. 202.

¹ "It was supposed by Sedgewicke, that the soldiers had killed 20,000 (cattle) in the course of the first four months after their arrival; and as to horses, they were

in such plenty, says Goodson, that we accounted them the vermin of the country. — *B. Edwards*, vol. i. p. 195.

Supreme Executive Council for governing the island. General Fortescue was declared president, and dying soon afterwards, Colonel Edward D'Oyley, the next in command, was chosen to preside in his room.¹

At this time not a single descendant of the aboriginal Indians existed on the island. When the Spaniards first settled upon it, there were 60,000 at least!

“Articles and agreements concluded and settled between the two nations residents and inhabitants of the Island of St. Christopher, between Brother Philippes de Longvilliers, Bailly de Poincy, Counsellor to his Majesty of France, in his Councils of State and Private Councils, Governor and Lieutenant-General for his Majesty in the American Islands, Territory, and Confines dependant upon the French Government, and the Honourable Colonel Edward Eward (Everard), Governor of the English in the said island, by the authority of His Highness the Lord Protector of England, Scotland, and Ireland, assisted on each part by the undersigned officers, commissioners:—

“In the first place, the articles settled between the governors, Captains d'Enambuc and Du Rossey and Mr. Thomas Warner, the 28th of April, 1627; those of the 3d of October 1638, between M. de la Grange Fromenteau and the said Mr. Warner; those between the said Lords de Poincy and Warner, of the 14th September, 1644: as also, those between the said Lords De Poincy and the Honourable Rowland Rich, governor, of the 18th October, 1649—shall keep their full force and power, according to their contents, except such as are here altered.

“To maintain the union between the two nations, it is agreed that the articles which follow shall be faithfully observed:—

“1. That nothing disrespectful shall be spoken by any of the English, relative to the respect and honor of his Majesty of France—of his government and governors; neither shall any of the French say any thing disrespectful of the respect and honour of His Highness of England, the Lord Protector of England, of his Government, nor of his governors, neither of the nations in general.

“2. That the old marks, separations, and divisions of the lands shall be replaced.

“3. That the frontiers of the anchorage of Sandy Point shall be marked by a right line, drawn from the fig-tree straight to the

Edwards, vol. i. p. 169.

Du Tertre, tom. i. p. 476.

¹ Three commissioners were sent out to superintend and direct the operations, Winslow, Serle, and Buller:—*Edwards*, vol. i. p. 201., the commanders disagreed in their views, and the commissioners

could not controul them. Edward Winslow, the principal commissioner, died on the passage from Hispaniola to Jamaica. — *Hutchinson*, vol. i. p. 187. a. a.

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sea, between which fig-tree and the sea shall be raised a pillar in a right line, and the limits of high lands shall be taken, SE. by E. straight upon the top of the mountain.

“ 4. That no vessel, either French or English, or freighted by any one of either nation, shall remain more than twenty-four hours at anchor in the road off Sandy Point, without permission from the English governor; neither shall the English governor suffer any vessel to anchor, above all, an enemy to the French nation, without permission of the French governor.

“ 5. That the French nation has a just title to the half of the mines and sulphur pits; as the English have also a just title to the half of the salt-ponds, of which, and of the adjacent lands, an equal separation, division, or partition shall be made, when it shall be found convenient to do so.

“ 6. That the liberty of cutting wood and of hunting shall no longer be general: each shall take and hunt upon their own lands.

“ 7. That if any servant or slave runs away from his master, and withdraws himself into the territories of the other nation, and it shall be sufficiently proved that he has been employed more than twenty-four hours by any inhabitant, or sent off the island, the said inhabitant shall be obliged to repay his master the full damages and interests which the governor of his nation shall judge proper to condemn him to pay — exclusive of 2000 pounds of tobacco for the benefit of the master for whom he should have kept the servant or slave. The governors of the two nations bind themselves to constrain, by force, such as shall contravene this convention.

“ 8. That no man of either nation, although he be free, shall be retained to work for any inhabitant of the other without a passport from the governor of the nation where he resides, under the penalty of 1000 pounds of tobacco from the offender, payable each to his own nation.

“ 9. The great roads in the lands of either nation, whether they lead to the salt-ponds, mines, or sulphur pits, shall be common for the passing of the subjects of both nations, either on foot, or horseback, or in a carriage, as the occasion may require.

“ 10. If the subjects of either nation, Christians or slaves, commit any theft or unjust act, or assault any person, he shall be referred to four honourable persons of each nation to prove the fact, and then sent before twelve persons, that is to say, six of each nation, by whom the delinquent shall be tried; and if convicted, he shall receive the punishment on the lands of his own nation, upon the lines and frontiers of the two nations.

“ 11. That the merchants shall not refuse their merchandize,

either in the French territory or in the English, at the same price which they sell to the nation where they reside, under the penalty, for disobedience, of 2000 pounds of tobacco, to be paid by the merchant who shall sell at a higher price, and of 1000 pounds by the inhabitant who shall have paid more than the price — payable to the nation where the fault shall be committed.

“ 12. That a publication or order shall be issued, for returning the servants or slaves which may be found in the one territory belonging to the other, because eight days afterwards, if they are seen, the delinquents shall be punished according to article the seventh.

“ 13. That all the articles that are not comprised in the present agreement and ratification shall be held as null. And the present shall be published, as they have been concluded for the friendship of the two nations, to be inviolably observed on both sides, as acts of agreement made without constraint.

“ That the said Lords de Poincy and Everard, with the undersigned commissioners, have promised and sworn to maintain and observe, upon their faith and honour, each for his nation.”

A treaty of peace, between France and the Republic of England, Scotland, and Ireland, was signed at Westminster, upon the 3d of November, 1655; and by an additional article, the United Provinces of the Low Countries were included in the treaty: — “Comme aussi tous les allies et confédérés des deux Etats, qui dans l'espace de trois mois prochains en suivant la date de ces presentes desireront estre compris audit Traité.”

This additional article is dated the 23d of November, 1655.

An accident happened at Mariegalante, which threatened to occasion a war with the Caribs. Captain Baron, the Carib, friend of M. Houel, was at Mariegalante with a piragua full of his countrymen, and invited by the commandant into the fort, and made very drunk. Baron having had occasion to go out, upon his return was refused admittance by the sentry: upon this Baron made some disturbance, and was put in irons. The commander of the fort sent an exaggerated account to Guadaloupe of Baron's conduct, and received an order to send him immediately to Guadaloupe, which was done.

Baron's relatives at Dominica, uneasy at his long absence, went to Mariegalante to inquire for him: three of them were immediately put to the sword, and one of the three was Baron's youngest and favourite boy, Marivet. When the news reached Guadaloupe, Baron became frantic with rage and grief, and made all possible exertions to escape, that he might rouse his countrymen to revenge. To appease him, the commandant of Mariegalante

was put in irons in Baron's presence, to whom a promise was given, that the murderer of his son should be punished with death. In expectation of seeing the sentence executed, Baron staid at Guadaloupe; the governor deferring the execution from time to time, till at last he persuaded Baron that it was necessary it should be put off until the arrival of his brother !

The Carib chief returned to Dominica; but on coming back to Guadaloupe, and discovering that the offender was at liberty, nothing could pacify him. The governor, therefore, applied to his countrymen, pointed out the disadvantages that must result from their making war against the French, and contrived to soothe them, so that they refused to recommence the war.

The Spaniards in Jamaica had little intercourse with the mid-land and northern districts, except to their old town of Seville. Their trade consisted chiefly in supplying the Spanish homeward-bound ships with fresh provisions, which the island produced in great abundance. They killed 80,000 hogs every year for their lard, which they sold at Carthage.

With the English, the first objects of military rage were the religious edifices. Parties were sent in quest of the Spaniards: twenty-four were taken, and fifty surrendered; the rest skulked in small bodies. Having driven their cattle into the mountains, and ruined their provision-grounds, the English troops were suddenly in want of food, their allowance being half a biscuit a day to each man. In less than one month after their landing, only five field officers were in health. Many officers and men had died: 2000 were sick, and the rest mutinous !

Oliver Cromwell issued a proclamation relative to Jamaica, in which he states, "That the island, being well stored with horses and other cattle, *healthful* and fertile, and generally fit to be planted; and that divers merchants being desirous to undertake settlements upon the island — he had, by the advice of his council, taken care, not only for strengthening the island, but for settling a civil government, by such laws as have been exercised in colonies of the like nature. And for the encouragement of such persons, he had given orders that every adventurer to that island should be exempt from paying any excise or duty on any goods which he or they should transport there for seven years to come, from the Michaelmas following :

" Also, that no tax should be levied upon any commodity, the produce of the island, imported into the dominions belonging to the commonwealth, for the space of ten years, to be accounted from the Michaelmas following :

" Also, that no embargo, or other hindrance, upon any pretence whatsoever, be laid upon any ships or adventurers bound to the island :

And, “That whatsoever other favour or immunity or protection shall or may conduce to the welfare, strength, and improvement of the said island, shall from time to time be continued and applied thereunto.

(Signed) “OLIVER, *Protector*.”

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M. Houel, unable to persuade M. Boisseret to sell his part of the island of Guadaloupe, returned to that island with a determination to be master of the whole; and soon after his landing, he sent his brother, the Chevalier Houel, off the island, and he returned to France. Houel then proceeded to sell all the effects of his brother-in-law Boisseret, notwithstanding the remonstrances of his son: these effects sold for a million five hundred and twenty-nine thousand pounds of tobacco, and were purchased by M. Houel's partizans. Some of his nephew's menaces, for unjustly selling his father's property, being reported to M. Houel, he sent the young man off the island.

The population of Grenada, this year, amounted to 300 persons, under the command of M. Vauminier: every house almost was a little fort, capable of resisting the incursions of the savages.

The 15th of June, M. de la Vigne sailed from Nantz, with an expedition to establish a colony near the river Oürabiche: they arrived at Martinico the 19th of July, where they remained until the 23d of October, and then sailed, without any person on board that knew the coast. They at last determined to land and build a fort at the entrance of the river Oüanatigo, upon a hill on a peninsula: they named the fort St. Anne: it was surrounded with palisades, and defended by four guns and two peterardes. De Vigne, having left his colonists upon good terms with the natives, returned to St. Christopher's in December.

The colonists were soon afterwards attacked by the Spaniards, and deserted by the natives; and though they succeeded in defending themselves, they resolved to abandon the country — some got to Tobago and others to St. Domingo; and thus ended the attempt of the Company of Terra Firma to make a settlement on the main land!

There was a remarkable mortality, this year, among the Gosiers or Pelicans: all the shores of the islands of St. Lucie, St. Vincent's, Bequia, and all the Grenadines, were edged with their bodies.

Du Tertre, tom. i. pp. 549. 482. tom. ii. pp. 41. 273.