

ST. MARY'S MOVIES

Tuesday, June 19, 1923, 8.15 P. M.

ELLIOTT DEXTER

IN

"THE WITCHING HOUR"

7 REEL DRAMA.

PRICES:

Reserved Seats 25c.
General Admission 15 & 10c.

LOCAL

The s. s. "Bolivar" sailed from New York on Thursday having 46 tons of cargo for Christiansted, and 12 tons for Frederiksted.

The s. s. "Guiana" will sail from New on June 26th.

Today Mr and Mrs. W. S. Abramson of this town celebrate the twenty-third year of their marriage, having been united in wedlock on June 18, 1900 in St. Thomas, V. I., by Rev. Father Branshaw, a French priest who was Superior of the Roman Catholic Church there at that time. We beg to extend to Mr. and Mrs. Abramson on this occasion our hearty congratulations and all good wishes for many more years of united happiness.

The s. s. Romanita with usual mail, cargo and some passengers among whom were Despatching Secretary Rappolee and Ass't. Public Works Officer Gebhart, made the round trip through this port on Saturday. Returning via Frederiksted yesterday.

The football match between the Athletic and Dreadnought clubs, played on Parade Ground yesterday was won by the former by one goal to none. The result indicates that the Athletics have made rapid strides in their playing.

Tonight the Prisoner of Zenda will be screened at the Christiansted Theatre as per ad in this issue. This film production is among the latest shown here and may be recommended as having won such popularity on the continent where it drew full houses at its presentation in New York City.

St. Thomas is considering tobacco cultivation say the papers of the sister island. In view of the spreading tendency in the United States to place "smokes" on the black list we would suggest chewing gum as being more

likely to win its way, if adopted as a Virgin Island industry.

The Native Brass Band entertained a large and appreciative gathering of listeners at its concert last night. The programme was well rendered and elicited lusty applauses and encores. "Election Day" composed by Mr. Herman Sarauw made a hit with the people.

Political Peonage In The Virgin Islands

By ARTHUR WARNER.

(The Nation's Special Correspondent in the Caribbean)

St. Thomas, March 1.

(From Saturday's daily Avis.)

Formerly our regime in the Virgin Islands called frankly a "naval government. Recently it has taken pains to say (without any change in character) that it is a "civil government". At the same time it has tried to break two of the pillars of civil government—an independent judiciary and a free press. The appointment of judges is commonly an executive function in democratic government; but the discharge of judges by an executive is never permitted for the reason that it would revive the evil of which His Majesty George III is accused in the Declaration of Independence: "He has made judges dependent upon his Will alone, for the tenure of their offices." In Danish times judges were removable only by judicial process. Governor Oman, of the United States Navy, finding himself displeased with Judge Malwin, discharged him while on the way to the United States on vacation. The United States Circuit Court sent Judge Malwin back, but he got only as far as Porto Rico when President Harding, exercising the supreme powers over the Virgin Islands, conferred upon him by the Congressional act, intervened. Judge Malwin received a message in San Juan in consequence of which he return-

ed to the United States. Admiral Kittelle who succeeded Governor Oman, went a step further last summer and tried to force through the Colonial Council of St. Thomas and St. John a measure giving him authority to discharge judges. When the Colonial Council refused to do his bidding, he dissolved it.

Governor Kittelle also begun the attack upon the freedom of the press which has been continued by the present Governor, Captain Henry H. Hough. An account of these maneuvers was given in a previous number of *The Nation*, and it is only necessary to recall here that two native have been prosecuted by the government and convicted of contempt of court for editorial criticism of the mildest kind, while for similar utterances two aliens have been deported.

One of the serious causes of friction during the American occupation has been the constant presence of sailors and marines. The sailors, engaged at the navy yard in St. Thomas or aboard ships in the harbor, are more or less inevitable as long as a naval base is maintained in the islands; the marines are altogether superfluous. In the early days of American occupation there was some savage attacks upon natives by sailors or marines. Latterly their behaviour has been better, but a fruitful source of trouble and annoyance is the fact that the Virgin Islands police—the rank and file of which are natives and Negroes—are not allowed to arrest sailors or marines for disorder or crime in the streets or public places; nor can sailors or marines be tried in the local court. It is necessary to summon the military guard and try them, if at all, by courts martial. In Danish days the police and insular courts had authority over soldiers in public places, a condition which exists in the United States and virtually all over the world. The denial of this authority in the Virgin Islands causes unnecessary delay in case of trouble and sets the sailors and marines up as a privileged class. The effect both on them and on the rest of the people is demoralizing. But the cruellest consequence of the American occupation of the Virgin Islands has been the introduction of the color line into a population nine-tenths of which is Negro. The Danes virtually ignored color. Danish soldiers married Negro women and took them home to Denmark when they went. At Danish social functions, official or otherwise, Negroes were invited without any thought of their color, and in general life of the islands the black man had no reason to feel inferior, or to think that others considered him so. In six years all that has changed. Negroes are no longer invited to social functions among the whites. The colored man first dazed, later chagrined, finally resentful—has been initiated into that unreasoning prejudice against a black skin of which the United States is so tragic and exponent.