

at the end of next week, unless mining is resumed by that time and fresh supplies of fuel are obtained. The iron and steel works of the plant, are already shut down. Unemployment on the register of the labour exchanges, at the end of April totalled 1,865,500 with the number working on short time, totalling 1,077,009 these figures are exclusive of the 1,200,000 idle miners. It is estimated that each day of the stoppage of coal mining, adds fifteen thousand people to the unemployment list. The idleness of the miners is the chief cause of 1,160 ships being laid up in the 36 principal ports of the United Kingdom, while the effect was further reflected in the Board of Trade returns yesterday showing a decrease for April of nearly 90,000,000 pounds in the value of imports and more than 160,000,000 pounds in the value of exports. The Board of Trade announced that the govt. has made arrangements for the importation of coal from abroad to insure as long as the stoppage continues the maintenance of the services essential to the life of the community. Measures will be taken, it is said, to have the imported coal to meet the vital needs of the people but privately imported coal for nonessential purposes will be used to diversion in the national interest.

New York May 9th.—The suffering up of the raw market on sales at an advanced rate on Friday was the subject of much speculative comment in the trade on Saturday morning, the attitude most generally assumed being one of scepticism as to the substantiality of the improvements. It was held that there was no change in fundamental conditions such as would warrant an advance at this time. On the contrary, the depression previously and for long existing in the market for raws having been largely if not wholly caused by the weakness and dullness of refined. A decline in the former would have been a natural comitant of the additional cuts made on Friday in their basis price by some of the refiners. However the raws market opened steady on Saturday and was further strengthened by the confirmation in an official cable from Havana of additional sales by the sugar finance committee of some 80,000 bags approximately 10,000 tons of Cuba's to the United States at 3.975 C. and F. and of 50,000 tons for Europe, understood for France, at a price equivalent to 3.675 C. F. O. B. In the absence of an official statement as to the ultimate disposition of the sugars sold to come here, it was the consensus of opinion in the trade that they are to be refined on toll for export. Holders of Porto Rico's were sellers at 4.77 C. C. I. F. and full duty sugars were offered at 3.50c. C. I. F., refiners showed no interest in them at the prices named. Developments in the coming week awaited with keen interest.

Cadiz, May 11th.—Preparations for a combined attack against Moroccan tribesmen in the Tetuan and Larache sectors are being made by Spanish military officials in Morocco, General Berenguer, the Spanish High Commissioner, declared today upon his arrival from Tetuan.

Dominica, 12th.—Sharp shock of earthquake experienced at 9.10 last night.

VIRGIN ISLANDS IN THE DOL- DRUMS

By KARL K. KITCHEN

(The World Magazine, April 24th.)

My first impulse, when I got a good look at St. Thomas, was to cable my Congressman to try to get back part of the \$25,000,000 we had paid for the Virgin Islands. For even at a glance it is apparent that these islands are not worth twenty-five millions of anything—except, perhaps Russian Rubles.

However, I restrained myself—with an effort. Perhaps there might be hidden charms. So I decided to investigate first and act afterward.

It has been said that to know all is to forgive all. But although I now know why the Danes tried for fifty years to sell us these islands, I cannot forgive the American officials who bought them. There is nothing to recommend them—not even a direct line of steamships to New York.

"Cruel words," you say. But the truth has got to come out. I not only gave St. Thomas, the best looking island of the lot (and a job lot these islands are, I'll tell the world), the once over, but I asked a score of people here how much they thought the islands were really worth. I got almost as many estimates—ranging from 30 cents to \$14 American money.

Ah (I can hear you saying), you forget that St. Thomas has a fine harbor, that it is an important coaling station and that it is an important naval base to guard the Panama Canal.

In answer I reply: Twenty-five million dollars is a lot of money. Also, the American naval officers who are stationed at Charlotte Amalie, the capital of St. Thomas, don't think much of the islands as a naval base.

As one of them said to me: "If we didn't have Porto Rico, and if Germany had won the war, St. Thomas might be valuable as a naval base." From which it will be seen that if there was once something rotten in Denmark, there must have been something worse in Washington.

However, as Denmark has the twenty-five million iron men there is no use indulging in vain regrets—which, after all, means only a lively appreciation of neglected opportunities. Suffice it to say that if St. Thomas isn't valuable for anything else. Certain it is that no one in

his right mind would come to Charlotte Amalie on purpose. And I know that any one who finds himself here by accident, as I did, makes every effort to leave at the earliest possible moment.

Now, it must be admitted that the landlocked harbor at Charlotte Amalie is attractive enough, and the town itself doesn't look half bad from one's ship. For instance, there is a crumbling old ruin on one of the nearby hills which is said to have been a pirate's stronghold. A very prominent pirate of earlier days is reported to have hanged himself here—a report which I can readily believe, if he had to spend any great length of time in the vicinity. And there is an old Danish fort near the landing stage which looks like a piece of Danish pastry. But unless the prestige of the past means a great deal in one's young life, the little island is certain to be a terrible disappointment.

Charlotte Amalie is simply an African village, peopled by a lot of blacks who were much happier under Danish rule than they are under the American flag. For while we have done wonders as far as improving the health of the natives is concerned, we have not made them happier by forcing them to drink bay rum instead of the good old sugar-cane variety.

It must not be gathered from this that St. Thomas is dry, despite the fact that Prohibition has been in force for many months. In fact, I found Charlotte Amalie, where liquor selling is supposed to be prohibited, wetter than most places in the West Indies where its sale is legally encouraged. But although there is plenty of whiskey on sale at \$5 a bottle, that price is too steep for most of the natives. I was assured that our marines and sailors patronize the bootleggers—they don't seem to have been converted to temperance by the passage of an amendment or even by the brave words of Daniels. The blacks have to stick to home brews and bay rum.

Bay rum is one of the principal products of St. Thomas. It has a high percentage of alcohol, but it smells better than it tastes. However, it possesses a real kick, and a little grenadine makes it palatable if nothing more. I sampled a swig of it myself, so I can testify to the fact that it is not necessarily fatal.

Our naval force, being paid regularly in the best money in the world, does not have to use bay rum, except after shaving. A big consignment of Scotch was recently seized by the authorities, and for some mysterious reason it is being disposed of at prices ridiculously low from a New Yorker's standpoint. I bought a bottle of five star Haig & Haig for five bones, and I was told the only draw back to its sale was that the bootleggers didn't have enough badges to go around to prevent them from soliciting each other.

(To be concluded.)