

The walls of the buildings are from four to six feet thick. The reason for this mode of building is the frequent occurrence of earthquakes. The streets are well paved. The Plaza has not much to recommend it. The Government House is an inferior building. Great improvements are now making, and many buildings putting up.

They are about bringing water from one of the neighbouring springs on the hill, which, if the supply is sufficient, will give the town many comforts. On the hills are many neat and comfortable dwellings, surrounded by flower-gardens. These are chiefly occupied by the families of American and English merchants. This is the most pleasant part of the town, and enjoys a beautiful view of the harbour. The ascent to it is made quite easy by a well-constructed road through a ravine. The height is two hundred and ten feet above the sea. The east end of the Almendral is also occupied by the wealthy citizens. The lower classes live in the ravines. Many of their habitations are scarcely sufficient to keep them dry during the rainy season. They are built of reeds, plastered with mud, and thatched with straw. They seldom contain more than one apartment.

The well-known hills to the south of the port, called the "Main and Fore Top," are the principal localities of the grog-shops and their customers. These two hills, and the gorge (*quebrada*) between them, seem to contain a large proportion of the worthless population of both sexes. The females, remarkable for their black eyes and red "bayettas," are an annoyance to the authorities, the trade, and commanders of vessels, and equally so to the poor sailors, who seldom leave this port without empty pockets and injured health.

It was difficult to realize the improvement and change that had taken place in the habits of the people, and the advancement in civil order and civilization. On my former visit, there was no sort of order, regulation, or good government. Robbery, murder, and vices of all kinds, were openly committed. The exercise of arbitrary military power alone existed. Not only with the natives, but among foreigners, gambling and knavery of the lowest order, and all the demoralizing effects that accompany them, prevailed. Every body engaged in trade was found more or less to recognise the system of fraud and deceit that had become the order of the day. The demoralizing influence of smuggling, and bribery in open day, without disguise, with the knowledge and connivance of the higher authorities, whose duty it was to apply the corrective, naturally brought about this state of things; and the inference was drawn, true or false, that they participated in the profits accruing from such transactions.

I myself saw on my former visit several dead bodies exposed in the