strong deep soil to bring it to perfection, perhaps indeed no soil can be too rich for this purpose. The soil which experience has found to be most favourable to the cultiva­tion of it in the West Indies, is the dark-gray loam of St Christopher’s, which is so light and porous as to be pene­trable by the slightest application of the hoe. The under stratum is gravel from eight to twelve inches deep. Canes planted in particular spots in this island have been known to yield 8000 pounds of Muscovado sugar from a single acre. The average produce of the island for a series of years was 16,000 hogsheads of sixteen hundredweight, which is one half only of the whole cane-land, or 8500 acres. When annually cut, it gives nearly two hogsheads of six­teen hundredweight per acre for the whole of the land in ripe canes.

Next to the ashy loam of St Christopher’s is the soil which in Jamaica is called *brick-mould ;* not as resembling a brick in colour, but as containing such a due mixture of clay and sand as is supposed to render it well adapted for the use of the kiln. It is a deep, warm, and mellow, hazel earth, easily worked ; and though its surface soon grows dry after rain, the under stratum retains a considerable de­gree of moisture in the driest weather; with this advantage, too, that even in the wettest season it seldom requires trenching. Plant-canes, by which are meant canes of the first growth, have been known in very fine seasons to yield two tons and a half of sugar per acre. After this may be reckoned the black mould of several varieties. The best is the deep black earth of Barbadoes, Antigua, and some other of the windward islands ; but there is a species of this mould in Jamaica that is but little, if any thing, inferior to it, which abounds with limestone and flint on a substratum of soapy marle.@@1 Black mould on clay is more common ; but as the mould is generally shallow, and the clay stiff and retentive of water, this last sort of land requires great la­bour, both in ploughing and trenching, to render it profit­able. When manured and properly pulverized, it becomes very productive. It is unnecessary to attempt a minute description of all the other soils which are found in these islands. There is, however, a peculiar sort of land on the north side of Jamaica, chiefly in the parish of Trelawney, that cannot be passed over unnoticed, not only on account of its scarcity, but its value; few soils producing finer sugars, or such *as answer so well in the pan ;* an expression signi­fying a greater return of refined sugar than common. The land alluded to is generally of a red colour; the shades of which, however, vary considerably from a deep chocolate to a rich scarlet ; in some places it approaches to a bright yel­low, but it is everywhere remarkable, when first turned up, for a glossy or shining surface, and if wetted stains the fingers like paint.

As in every climate there is a season more favourable for vegetation than others, it is of great importance that plants for seed be committed to the ground at the commence­ment of this season. As the cane requires a great deal of moisture to bring it to maturity, the properest season for planting it is in the months of September and October, when the autumnal rains commence, that it may be suffici­ently luxuriant to shade the ground before the dry weather sets in. Thus the root is kept moist, and the crop is ripe for the mill in the beginning of the ensuing year. Canes planted in the month of November, or later in the season, lose the advantage of the autumnal rains ; and it often hap­pens that dry weather in the beginning of the ensuing year retards their vegetation until the vernal or May rains set in, when they sprout both at the roots and the joints; so that by the time they are cut the field is loaded with unripe suckers instead of sugar-canes. A January plant, however,

commonly turns out well ; but canes planted very late in the spring, though they have the benefit of the May rains, seldom answer expectation ; for they generally come in un seasonably, and throw the ensuing crops out of regular ro­tation. They are therefore frequently cut before they are ripe ; or, if the autumnal season sets in early, are cut in wet weather, which has probably occasioned them to spring afresh. In either case the effect is the same : the juice is unconcocted, and all the sap being in motion, the root is deprived of its natural nourishment, to the great injury of the ratoon. The chief objection to a fall plant is this, that the canes become rank and top-heavy at a period when violent rains and high winds are expected, and are there­fore frequently lodged before they are fit to be cut.

The sugar-cane is propagated by the top-shoots, which are cut from the tops of the old canes. The usual method of planting in the West Indies is this. The quantity of land intended to be planted, being cleared of weeds and other encumbrances, is first divided into several plats of certain dimensions, commonly from fifteen to twenty acres each ; the spaces between each plat or division are left wide enough for roads, for the conveniency of carting, and are called *intervals.* Each plat is then subdivided, by means of a line and wooden pegs, into small squares of about three feet and a half. Sometimes, indeed, the squares are a foot larger, but this circumstance makes but little dif­ference. The negroes are then placed in a row in the first line, one to a square, and directed to dig out with their hoes the several squares, commonly to the depth of five or six inches. The mould which is dug up being formed into a bank at the lower side, the excavation or cane-hole sel­dom exceeds fifteen inches in width at the bottom, and two feet and a half at the top. The negroes then fall back to the next line, and proceed as before. Thus the several squares between each line are formed into a trench of much the same dimensions with that which is made by the plough. An able negro will dig from 100 to 120 of these holes for his day’s work of ten hours ; but if the land has been pre­viously ploughed and lain fallow, the same negro will dig nearly double the number in the same time.

The cane-holes or trench being now completed, whether by the plough or by the hoe, and the cuttings selected for planting, which are commonly the tops of the canes that have been ground for sugar (each cutting containing five or six gems), two of them are sufficient for a cane-hole of the dimensions described. These, being placed longitudi­nally in the bottom of the hole, are covered with mould about two inches deep, the rest of the bank being intend­ed for future use. In twelve or fourteen days the young sprouts begin to appear, and as soon as they rise a few inches above the ground, they are, or ought to be, care­fully cleared of weeds, and furnished with an addition of mould from the banks. This is usually performed by the hand. At the end of four or five months the banks are wholly levelled, and the spaces between the rows carefully hoe-ploughed. Frequent cleanings, while the canes are young, are indeed so essentially necessary, that no other merit in an overseer can compensate for the want of atten­tion in this particular. A careful manager will remove at the same time all the lateral shoots or suckers that spring up after the canes begin to joint, as they seldom come to maturity, and draw nourishment from the original plants.

“ In the cultivation of other lands, in Jamaica especially,” says Mr Edwards, the elegant historian of the West Indies, whose superior excellence has induced us frequently to re­fer to him in the course of this article, “ the plough has been introduced of late years, and in some few cases to great advantage ; but it is not every soil or situation that

@@@, Edward's History of the West Indies, vol. ii.