Morne Lorrain, take their names from adjacent vegetation and hill. Pointe Ronde, Pointe Crabier, Pointe C’raibe, and Pointe Mulâtre take theirs, the first from its shape, the second from the crabier or Gaulin bird (a large heron), and the last two from some early inhabitants of the place.

As might be expected, both villages called Soufrière are situated near volcanic sulphur springs; Grand Fond lies in a deep hollow, and Grande Anse on a landlocked harbour; Dos d’Âne bestrides a ridge, and La Plaine straggles along a comparatively flat coastal stretch. Mahaut (Maho) is the name of a village, and of several species of trees whose bark serves as rope; Massacre commemorates the one-time destruction of a native-Indian settlement by the English. Vieille Case is situated upon or near one of the oldest known Carib settlements in the island; but whether or not the name refers to this fact I cannot say. Marigot is a French word employed, in Africa and America, to designate low-lying ground subject to inundation, or a river mouth which loses itself underground. The Gueule du Lion is a large cave half way up a cliff, and La Sorcière a rocky pinnacle from which, tradition has it, the Caribs used to cast faithless wives into the sea. Such names as La Rivière de l’Or and La Rivière Belle Fille may refer to one-time fact or fancy, while “Perdu Temps” and recently named Fan Cu (Creole, from French fendre cu) refer humoristically to past mis-haps. The name Cavalier is all that remains to mark the spot where once a drunken horseman and his mount ended their days by falling over the precipice; it would at least seem logical to suppose that Rasade, a hamlet lower down on the same hillside, was the place of their undoing. Perhaps only one who has climbed it can fully appreciate the aptness of the name of Morne Paix-Bouche (Mount Hush-Mouth).

Names bestowed upon their plantations by English and other recent settlers are, for the most part, nostaligic or pretentious: Bath, Belfast, Blenheim, Castle Bruce, Castle Comfort, Clark Hall, Copt Hall, Geneva, Hampstead, Londonderry, Melville Hall, Moore Park, Ryegate, Trafalgar. Robert is known in English as South Chiltern, Fantaisie as Lisdara, Perrot — the older form of French Pierrot — has recently been re-baptized New Florida, and Dieu Morne Lorrain — “Norway”!

The above gives but a small sampling of names still current on the island of Dominica — udi-WAufcM/t ‘tall her-body’, as the Island-Carib called it. Many of them — and among the most interesting — are known only to those who have spent their lives in the immediate neighbourhood of the features they designate, and have never been recorded. These will soon be forgotten, for the general world unrest has now reached even this tiny and secluded island.

Dominica, B. W. I.