

TOBAGO.

Tobago, one of the West India islands belonging to Great Britain, is about thirty-five miles in length, and twelve in breadth. In 1622, two hundred men, from Flushing, landed there to lay the foundation of a Dutch colony; upon which the neighbouring Indians joined with the Spaniards to oppose an establishment that gave umbrage to both. Whoever attempted to stop their fury, were murdered or taken prisoners; and the few who escaped into the woods soon deserted the island.

In 1654, the Dutch sent a fresh colony to Tobago, which was driven out, in 1666, by the English. The English were soon deprived of this conquest by the French; but Louis XIV., satisfied with having conquered it, restored it to the Dutch. In the month of February, 1677, a French fleet, destined to seize upon Tobago, fell in with the Dutch fleet sent out to oppose this expedition. They engaged in the road of the island; and the courage displayed on both sides was such, that every ship was dismasted, nor did the engagement cease till twelve vessels were burnt. The French lost the fewest men; but the Dutch kept possession of the island.

D'Estrees was determined to take it, and landed there the same year, in the month of December, at a time when there was no fleet to obstruct his progress. A bomb, thrown from his camp, blew up their powder magazine, which proved a decisive stroke; and the Dutch, unable to resist, surrendered at discretion. The conquerors availed themselves to the utmost of the rights of war; not contented with razing the fortifications, they burnt the plantations, seized upon all the ships in the harbour, and transported the inhabitants. This conquest was secured to France by the peace that soon followed.

The French, however, neglected this important island; not a single man was sent

thither for many years, and it fell into a very low condition. The English claimed a right to Tobago; their arms confirmed their pretensions; and it was ceded to England by the peace of 1763. It was taken by the French in 1781, and ceded to them by the peace of 1783. The English again took it in the French republican war, (1793), and it now remains with them.

THE BAHAMAS.

THE islands, the first which Columbus discovered in America, are about five hundred in number, and belong to Great Britain. St. Salvador, one of them, was the first land discovered by Columbus, on the 12th of October, 1492. They are, in general, little more than rocks just above water. When first discovered, some were densely inhabited, and their natives were sent, by the Spaniards, to perish in the mines of St. Domingo. Not one of them had a single inhabitant in 1672, when the English landed a few men on that called New Providence, who were all destroyed by the Spaniards seven or eight years after. This disaster did not deter other Englishmen from settling there in 1690. They had built about 150 houses, when the French and Spaniards jointly attacked them in 1703, destroyed their plantations, and carried off their negroes. The pirates next got possession, and insulted every flag, till 1719, when England fitted out a sufficient force to subdue them. The greater part of them accepted the pardon held out upon submission, and served to increase the colony; which Woods Rogers brought with him from Britain.

There are other islands in the West Indies, belonging to the English, Danes, Swedes, and Dutch, but of so little consideration, that to give details of them would afford but little interest or real information to our readers.

THE HISTORY

OF

AUSTRALIA AND POLYNESIA.

UNTIL the last century it was believed that a great continent existed in the Southern Ocean, to which the name of *Terra Australis* was given; it being inferred that the different points of land discovered to the south of the islands of Java and Celebes, and of the Cape of Good Hope, afforded ample proof of such a theory. The discoveries of modern geographers, however, go to invalidate the hypothesis that there is any continent south of America.

Under the names of Australia (or Aus-

tralasia) and Polynesia is comprehended a maritime division of the globe, in contradistinction to the older terrene divisions of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America; being altogether a classification of islands, including no one continent under a general name, like the other divisions of the world, in which various kingdoms are circumscribed by one shore; and so far it is an anomaly in geographical classification. We shall first speak of the more important division, now known as

THE BRITISH POSSESSIONS IN AMERICA ARE GENERALLY COLD AND STERILE.

THE REMUDA ISLANDS ARE ABOUT 200 MILES FROM AMERICA, AND AT NEARLY EQUAL DISTANCES FROM NEW SCOTIA AND THE WEST INDIES.

IN THE INLAND PARTS OF THAT LARGE DISTRICT CALLED LABRADOR THERE ARE AMERICAN INDIANS, AND ON THE COASTS ESQUIMAUX.

IN AUSTRALIA AND POLYNESIA EVERY THING SEEMS TO RUN COUNTER TO THE ORDINARY COURSE OF NATURE IN OTHER COUNTRIES.