

the utmost confusion. The sudden termination of the strife averted, or at least diminished, the results of a more protracted and bloody conflict, but it necessarily left everything in an unsettled condition. Moreover, scarcely had the troops returned from the front until a scourge of small-pox swept over the country, claiming hundreds as its victims. Still later *la grippe* visited the republic with fatal effect in very many instances. Happily our missionaries were mercifully preserved in the midst of the excitement of the war and from the pestilence which walketh in darkness. Naturally enough, however, the mission-work suffered severely, so that the progress during the year has fallen short of what otherwise might have been realized."

WEST INDIES.

A name given by Columbus, and standing for what a world of tragedy, of depravity, and of shame! "From the second visit of Columbus until the present century these islands have been the scene of sorrow and oppression. Their waters have been dyed with human blood. . . . Piracy was rife, and the commerce of Europe suffered from the marauding buccaneers who smarted from the wrongs they suffered and retaliated on the innocent as well as the guilty. The slave-trade had its origin here, and the hardly less cruel importation of coolies has left its curse. For years these islands were England's penal colonies. Into this moral sewer was swept the refuse of Europe. Is it strange, then, that these lands should have been sunk in the lowest depths of sin and degradation?"

The total area of the West Indies is not far from 100,000 square miles, and the inhabitants number between 5,000,000 and 6,000,000. Various European nations have parcelled out the islands among themselves. Only Hayti is independent, with its 29,000 square miles and 1,150,000 inhabitants. Spain possesses Cuba and Porto Rico, with an area of 50,000 square miles and a population

of 2,276,000; Great Britain claims ownership in Jamaica, the Bahamas, Barbados, etc., with 12,000 square miles and 1,213,000 inhabitants; France is master of Guadeloupe, Martinique, etc., with 1100 square miles and 352,000 inhabitants; the Netherlands of four islands, with 431 square miles and 45,000 inhabitants, and Denmark of St. Thomas, Santa Cruz, etc., with 223 square miles and 34,000 inhabitants.

The original Indian inhabitants have entirely disappeared. For years they were enslaved and shipped over seas by their Spanish masters, and then, rising against the oppressors, were annihilated. In Hayti alone 2,000,000 aborigines were found, but in thirty years scarcely one was left alive. Then Negro slaves began to be imported in their place, the Portuguese setting the nefarious example, and then later every nation possessing colonies in the islands shared in the iniquity to the full. It is estimated that to Jamaica alone between 1700 and 1786 not less than 600,000 African bondmen were brought. The Negroes now far outnumber the whites. Hindoos and Chinese (coolies) also constitute no inconsiderable part of the population.

The Moravians were the first to carry the Gospel of light and hope to this most degraded and wretched people. And to the West Indies went, in 1732, the first heralds of the cross ever dispatched from Herrnhut. They set forth expecting and willing to be themselves sold into slavery as the price of their mission. In their churches are now found 16,547 communicants, and the number of adherents is almost 40,000. Among other denominations engaged in missionary work are the English Baptists, with about 40,000 church-members, the Wesleyan Methodists, the United Presbyterians of Scotland, and the Methodists and Episcopalians of this country. In all there are engaged about 120 ordained missionaries, with nearly 500 ordained natives, while the membership of the churches is not far from 75,000.