

HISTORY.

As regards the history of these interesting isles, we find that a certain Spanish vessel named the "La Garza" while on a passage from Spain to Cuba about the year 1515, laden with a cargo of hogs, was the first to discover them. Her captain, Juan Bermudez, intended to have landed, and, as was customary with vessels of his nation visiting uninhabited islands, to leave a few hogs to propagate their species, and thereby afford food to any future castaways. The treacherous elements, however, did not allow of his carrying his intention into effect, for a heavy gale coming on, he was obliged to sheer off.

It must ever be a source of regret to those who take an interest in scientific pursuits, that this vessel was not enabled to land one of her passengers, John Gonzales Oviedo, one of the earliest Spanish naturalists, who was on his way to examine the natural productions of the West Indian islands. Had he set foot upon the coral strand, and roamed through the dense woods of cedar, or the marshy tracts along the shore, we should doubtless have been made acquainted with the fauna the group then possessed. We have, however, the following particulars regarding the probable size of the islands, which he gives in his "History of the West Indies."

"In the year 1515 when I came to inform your Majesty of the state of things in India (West Indies), I observed that in my voyage when to the windward