

toes to this day testify to its awful immoralities. One year, according to the sworn testimony of the planters themselves, sixty thousand punishments were inflicted upon these helpless wretches in four colonies alone, and those the best ordered. One planter caused the death of sixty slaves.

Marriage was forbidden among them, and any attendance upon the means of grace was on the majority of the estates punished by the lash. The imported negroes were kept in their original heathenism, and to its miseries, "having no hope and without God in the world," were added all the horrors of such barbarous slavery. The blacks, of course, far outnumbered the whites—even a few years ago the whites formed only 17 per cent of the population; and yet no one of these "Christian" whites cared for the souls of these poor heathen hordes; and thus it went on for centuries.

Finally, far across the waters, in a little colony of refugees for conscience' sake from Bohemia and Moravia gathered with some earnest souls from various provinces of Germany upon the estate of Count Zinzendorf in Saxony, "the eye of pity" began to gaze upon these man-persecuted and apparently God-forsaken blacks. When the little colony of Bohemian, Moravian, and German Brethren which constituted the but just renewed Brethren's Unity (Moravian Church) in Herrnhut numbered only six hundred souls all told, the first mission of this Church was begun, and this mission was to the West Indies—just sixty years before Carey sounded his call for a mission to the East Indies.

Touched by the tale of a negro slave brought to Europe by a Danish nobleman, two Brethren, Leonhard Dober (afterward the Chief Elder of the Church) and David Netchmann (afterward the first bishop of the Renewed Brethren's Church), were dispatched without funds and without any prospect of financial support to found a mission on the island of St. Thomas.

Thus began the first mission of the

Moravian Church and the first mission to the West Indies on August 21st, 1732.

The missionaries labored at their trades by day to support themselves, and at night preached the Gospel to the poor blacks. Truly apostolic indeed! The negroes heard the message gladly. Hitherto their principal knowledge of the name of God was derived from the brutal oaths of their overseers, and if they had heard of the Saviour, they thought He was only the white man's God and Saviour. Now that they heard He was for them, too, these weary and heavy-laden ones eagerly came unto Him to find rest for their souls.

But the masters and overseers at once raised a storm of opposition. They did not want their slaves to become "better Christians than they were," and they feared the missionaries would interfere with their lustful practices. The slaves were flogged unmercifully for going to the missionaries, and the latter were finally thrown into prison; but they prayed and sang aloud, and crowds gathered outside the prison windows to listen to them, and many were converted. At this juncture, which was some six years after the inception of the undertaking, and also after various changes had taken place in the force of the missionaries, Zinzendorf, without knowing anything of the deplorable state of the workers, moved by an irresistible impulse came himself with reinforcements to St. Thomas. When about landing he said to the accompanying brethren: "What will we do if we find the brethren no longer there?" "Then we are here," was the prompt reply. Whereupon Zinzendorf uttered the historic exclamation: "*Gens eterna*—these Moravians!" He secured the prisoners' release, but the opposition continued.

Not only did they have to contend with evil men, but also with dire fevers. The first fifty years of the mission on St. Thomas alone cost the lives of one hundred and sixty missionaries, or an average of over three a year on just that one island; but the gaps were always