

East, mentioned some time since in this magazine. It includes the six dioceses of China, the six of Japan, the Straits, Borneo, Siam, and the Diocese of Honolulu.

The Bishop said that the translation of the Book of Common Prayer into Corea is now nearly finished. It has necessarily been slow work.—*Spirit of Missions.*

THE VIRGIN ISLANDS.

REV. H. H. L. SEALE, TORTOLA, VIRGIN ISLANDS.



HE Virgin Islands, one of the groups forming the Leeward Islands, West Indies, were discovered by Columbus, in 1493. They consist of a group of about 100 islands, islets, and rocks, the most easterly belonging to England, and the central to Denmark, the westerly being claimed by Spain. The British possessions (area, 57 miles) were acquired in 1666 by the enterprise of settlers from Anguilla, the principal of these islands being Tortola, Virgin Gorda, and Anegada.

The story of the former inhabitants of these islands is a sad one; but one redeeming feature in the history of the West Indies is the efforts made by the Society on behalf of the slaves. In 1710 the Society became permanently connected with the West Indies by accepting the trusteeship of the Codrington Estates in Barbados. The exercise of this trust was quoted by the Bishop of Barbados in 1861 as "a noble exception" at a time, extending over a century, "when the African race" (in the West Indies) "were, even by members of the Church, almost entirely neglected." On the abolition of slavery the Society again took the lead, and from the negro education fund, which it opened, £171,777 were expended between 1835-50 on the erection of churches and schools, and the maintenance of clergymen, schoolmasters, and catechists. Of this sum, £20,262 were spent in the Leeward Islands. Few missionary efforts have produced such beneficial results in so short a time as were effected by this movement. The Society's help, which has been withdrawn or renewed as occasion required, is still the mainstay of the Church in many of the West Indian islands, as will be seen by the following paper written by the Rev. H. H. L. Seale, of Tortola:—

"Around me all day I see little children with black skins, generally with fat round faces, sparkling eyes, and a short woolly, knotty-looking hair on their heads. They all speak English, but often in a very broken way, and with a very disagreeable accent. They are natives of these islands, but their ancestors about two generations ago were all African savages. Their habits of life are simple in the

extreme. Some live in small wooden houses, while others can only afford huts made of thatch.

"A very natural question to ask is, How did the African ancestors of these people come to these islands, and what became of the original inhabitants of these islands? The story is a sad one. When Englishmen first visited the shores of these islands the inhabitants were quite a different people. They were known as Caribs; hence the name given to this sea that washes the shores of these islands—the Caribbean Sea. They are supposed to be the same race of men as the North American Indians, who came over to these islands in their canoes—when, we do not know.

"Generally speaking, they are of the average height, I believe, with well-defined features, pretty brown skins, and black straight hair, a quick, piercing jet black eye. On the whole, they are a pretty race of people. They had their own language, of which nothing is known beyond a few words preserved in the names of places. These Caribs lived in tribes, and often made war on each other. They knew no lord, and would own no master but the chieftain of their tribe, and in this respect they remind us of our own forefathers who came over from Sleswick and drove the British away into Cornwall and Wales. Their habits were very simple, and they lived by fishing, hunting, and on the wild fruits of the woods. They were brave and courageous in war, while no clever or more daring mariners ever manned a skiff. They were also very clever in making baskets and other articles of wicker work, and chisels out of hard stones, which they used for scooping out their canoes from the trunks of large trees. There are none in my island, but I have seen a few in Dominica.

"The first English settlers tried to force these Caribs into working on their plantations, but their former natural pursuits unfitted them for such toil; and so they bravely resented any such infringement on their liberty that in many instances war was the result, until gradually they were nearly exterminated.

"So much for the Carib inhabitants of these islands.

"Englishmen could not perform manual labor under a fierce tropical sun, so they looked to Africa for the means of cultivating the fertile lands of these islands. Much to the mother country's shame, she countenanced and encouraged that 'crime before which all others pale in enormity and wickedness'—the abominable slave trade. A brave Englishman, Capt. John Hawkins, afterwards knighted by Queen Elizabeth, sailing in 1562 in the ship bearing the sacred name of Jesus, was the first to lead the way in this great crime. What a contrast? Sir John Hawkins' ship bore the name of Jesus;