

The island where Columbus had thus, for the first time, set his foot upon the New World, is one of the Bahama Islands; it still retains the name of San Salvador which he gave it, though called by the English, Cat Island.

WASHINGTON IRVING.

THE NATURAL DIVISIONS OF AMERICA.

THE story of the sudden emergence of the New World out of the dark mysteries of the western ocean, and its consequent rapid development as a home for the surplus population of the Old World, provides some of the most romantic pages in the history of mankind. The tales that were brought back by the early explorers, painting in vivid colours the unlimited fertility of its soil and the abundance of its mineral wealth, fired the maritime people of Western Europe with an enthusiasm for travel and discovery, that gave to Spain her golden period of prosperity, and laid the foundations of the British dominions beyond the seas.

The invading nations, actuated in the first place perhaps by greed and avarice, that begot the cruel oppression of the native population, bred pirates and buccaneers, gave birth to sanguinary wars, and resulted in the horrible traffic of the Slave Trade, at last settled down to a policy of colonization and development of the natural resources of the new lands, that has made America to-day a centre of