OUR WEST INDIAN ISLANDS.

Something of Interest About Uncle Sam's New Possessions.

The demand of the United States upon Porto Rico for the cession to the United States and cession of Porto Rico out of all the other West Indian islands except Cuba. The reason was a case of but the two great Spanish islands Cuba and Porto Rico, but there are about a dozen others, or, if we include mainlands, for which regarded as quite valuable.

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These islands are off the coast of Cuba and Porto Rico. The greater number of them are near Cuba's shores, and it will be a question for decision whether they shall belong to the United States by the terms of the treaty or whether they shall be considered as a part of Cuba. For the most part the islands are the outposts of Florida and the Bahamas. Some are of extraordinary wealth, the wealth of the soil and of mines. But they are now thought to be transparent waters will at times of the marine life in the waters of the Gulf greatly in the Some of them are capable large enough to be dwelling with fresh water for the use of those who choose to make their dwelling place. The largest of those islands are in the Cayo Romano, with an estimated area of 10 square miles, and Cayo Tiro, larger than the latter island. The chief industry there, and indeed the only one that we have, is the island is filled with quantities of iron ore in the form of hematite, and the stamps and smelters ship the ore and water the depressions filled with water. When summer comes with its heat and sun the heat drive the water and a deposit of salt is left. It is believed that the Cuban government will take the salt produced for the use of all Cuba.

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Reefs and keys are now more numerous off the south coast of Cuba than in the north. Here they are numerous from the Isle of Pines to the Isle of Pines, which, indeed, is a group by itself, as all of the others put together. In the statements of Spanish commissioners made to official sources, it appears that a place in itself. The island, which the fifty miles off the southern coast of Cuba, is about twenty miles long, separated by a narrow passage, half-channel, half-marsh, which widens at a nearly equal width for about three miles from west to east. From east to west the Isle of Pines is about twelve in length, and nine miles in breadth to fifty-five miles, the area being 600 square miles. It is a beautiful island, with excellent harbors, well-watered, fertile plains and many rivers. In its center is a mountain known as the Sierra de Caballos, rising about 1,000 feet above the level of the sea, and with perhaps 10 feet in height. There are other mountains, one peak, 1,000 feet in height, the Sierra de la Catedral, 1,000 feet high, and several other smaller peaks. At the base of the mountains are extensive plains which beautiful pastoral may be so started, although they have been worked to half a eight years. Through the rivers are shallow, several are navigable for four or five miles from their mouths, being that they keep the island well watered. The principal products are cattle, tobacco, molasses, cedar and other woods, sulphur, pyrites and tar, that latter being from which silver, quicksilver and iron are extracted.

The climate of the island is mild and healthy all the year, and few prefer a better change for invalids and yet it has only a population of 2,000. The Isle of Pines has always been regarded as a dependency of Havana, and would probably be claimed by the Cuban government.

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Between Porto Rico and the Virgin Islands there is a group called the Passage island which will come into our possession. The island and about the portant of the group is Vieques or Crab Island, lying nine miles off Porto Rico, and which is 30 miles long by 4 broad. The soil is good, there being indeed but little dirt on the barren rocks. A ridge of small hills runs through the middle, rising to a good height at the southeast end of the island. Inlet Bagnada on the north side is the chief village and port of Esbeacon. The harbor is good, so there are numerous bays, and at one time Vieques was the resort of people who prayed upon the rich commerce of the West Indies.

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Fishermen and wreckmasters in the remains of about 80 make their home on Culebra, the island lying inland in the Passage group. It is about eight miles in the northwest of Vieques and about 30 miles to the southeast of Porto Rico. The island is 7 miles long by 4 broad. The soil is good, there being indeed but little dirt on the barren rocks. A ridge of small hills runs through the middle, rising to a good height at the southeast end of the island. Inlet Bagnada on the north side is the chief village and port of Esbeacon. The harbor is good, so there are numerous bays, and at one time Vieques was the resort of people who prayed upon the rich commerce of the West Indies.

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The other islands of this group are of less importance. Culebrita is a small island off the coast of Culebra, which is about 3 miles long. Culebrita is a lighthouse station, there being also a lighthouse on the island of Culebra. Culebra is the island