

West Indies, was reached on March 16th. As the ship steamed in towards the harbour, Frigate birds soared high overhead with their long tail feathers stretched widely out. A number of brown pelicans (*Pelicanus fuscus*) were flying at a moderate height near the shore, and every now and then dashing down with closed wings into the water on their prey like gannets, their close allies. Often several of the birds dashed down together at the same instant.

The island of St. Thomas itself, as well as its outliers, is covered with a wild bush growth, which at first sight might perhaps be taken for original vegetation, but which is composed of plants which have overrun deserted sugar plantations. It is only in a few remote parts of the island that any original forest exists, and in small streaks of broken ground bordering the watercourses. The whole of the country in the island of St. Thomas and in all the immediately adjoining islands was cropped with sugar-cane until the emancipation of the slaves in 1848. Since that time the ground has been allowed to run wild. There was only one estate partly under cultivation at the time of the ship's visit, and the owner of it, Mr. Wyman, told me that he made no sugar, but found sufficient sale for his canes in the raw state to be cut up and sold for chewing. Mr. Wyman was nearly ruined by the emancipation, and said that the planters received only 50 dollars per head compensation for the loss of their slaves, and that after the lapse of three years' time.

All about the shores in every small bay were to be seen wrecks of vessels of all kinds, and in various stages of dilapidation, which had been wrecked by the hurricanes, for which St. Thomas is notorious, and close to our anchorage was a portion of a large iron dock which had been sunk before ever it could be used. Behind the town of St. Thomas are hills rising to a height of 1,400 feet at their highest point.

I landed at one of the many wooden jetties amongst numerous negroes of both sexes lolling about and chewing sugar-cane, their constant occupation. The shore is covered with corals bleached white by the sun, and amongst these lay quantities of calcareous seaweeds (*Halimeda opuntia* and *H. tridens*), branching masses composed of leaf-shaped joints of hard calcareous matter articulated together. These were all quite dry and bleached white, and hard and stiff, like corals. Seaweeds belonging to two very different groups of algæ thus secrete a calcareous skeleton, *Halimeda* and its allies belonging to the Siphonaceæ, green algæ, and *Lithothamnion* and allied genera belonging to the Corallinaceæ, which are red-coloured algæ. These lime-secreting algæ are of great importance from