flora, is probably not indigenous. The forests of the granitic land, of which typical patches remain, had the characteristics of a tropical moist region, palms, shrubs, climbing and tree ferns growing luxuriantly, the trees on the mountain sides, such as the *Pandanus sechel­larum* sending down roots over the rocks and boulders from 70 to 100 ft. Of timber trees the bois gayac has disappeared, but bois de fer *(Stadimannia sideroxylon)* and bois de natte *(Maba sechellarum)* still flourish on Silhouette Island. Besides the cutting down for building purposes of the timber trees the jungle was largely cleared for the plantation of vanilla; while a multitude of other tropical plants have been introduced tending to the extermination of the indigenous flora. The most important of the trees introduced since 1900 are various kinds of rubber, including Para *(Hevea Brasiliensis},* which grows well. For other introduced plants see below, *Industries.*

The indigenous fauna, so far as its limited range affords comparison, resembles that of Madagascar. It is deficient in mammals, of which the only varieties are the rat and bat. The dugong, which formerly frequented the waters of the islands, does so no longer. The reptiles include certain lizards and snakes; the crocodile, once common, has been exterminated. Land tortoises also disappeared,@@1 but one freshwater species *(Sternothaerus sinuatus)* is still found; and the adjacent seas contain many turtles. Three coecilians, three batrachians (including a mountain-frequenting frog) and three fresh-water crustaceans are also indigenous, and about twenty-six species of land shells. The islands are the home of a large number of birds, including terns, gannets and white egrets, though most of the in­digenous species are extinct. The neighbouring seas abound in fish. Among the domestic animals introduced are the ass and pig.

*Inhabitants.—*Like Mauritius, Réunion and Rodriguez the Seychelles were uninhabited when first visited by Europeans; though fragments of ruins found on Praslin and Frigate islands may indicate the presence of man in earlier centuries. The islands were colonized by Mauritian and Bourbon creoles; the white element, still prevailingly French, has been strengthened by the settlement of several British families. The first planters introduced slaves from Mauritius, and the negro element has been increased by the introduction of freed slaves from East Africa. There has been also an immigration of Chinese and, in larger numbers, of Indians (mainly from the Malabar coast). An official report issued in 1910 stated that the greater part of the valuable town property had passed into the hands of Indians, and that Indians and Chinese had the bulk of the retail trade. Of the coloured population those born in the Seychelles of negro, or negro-Indian blood arc known as “ *enfants des îles."* They speak a rude creole patois, based on French but with a large admixture of Indian, Bantu and English words. The Seychellois are of fine physique, and are excellent and fearless sailors.

At the census of 1881 the inhabitants numbered 14,081, in 1891 the figure was 16,603 and in 1901 the population numbered 19,237, of whom 9805 were males and 9432 females. The popula­tion on December 31st, 1909, was officially estimated at 22,409, or 149∙59 persons per sq. m. The pure white population is about 600. About two-thirds of the inhabitants are Roman Catholics.

*Agriculture and Industries.—*Apart from fisheries the wealth of the islands depends upon agriculture, and the industries connected there­with. These are fostered by the government, which in 1901 created an agricultural board and established a botanic station at Victoria. Spices (cloves, cinnamon, nutmegs) were the chief articles of trade in the 18tn century, and these with cotton, coffee, tobacco, sugar, maize and rice were the main crops grown until about 1850. Bananas, yams, &c., were also largely cultivated, and there was considerable trade in coconut oil, timber, fish and fish oil and tortoise-shell, whaling being carried on, chiefly by Americans and French, in the neighbouring seas. Subsequently cocoa was cultivated extensively, and from about 1890 vanilla largely superseded the other crops; in 1899 the vanilla exported was valued at over ₤100,000 out of a total export of £140,000, and from 1896 to 1903 the crop represented more than half the total value of the exports. Owing to increased competition, and in some degree to careless harvesting, there was a great fall in prices after 1900, and the Seychellois, though still producing vanilla in large quantities, paid greater attention to the products of the coco­nut palm—copra, soap, coco-nut oil and coco-nuts—to the develop­ment of the mangrove bark industry, the collection of guano, the cultivation of rubber trees, the preparation of banana flour, the growing of sugar canes, and the distillation of rum and essential oils. The tortoise-shell and calipee fisheries and the export of salt fish are important industries. Minor exports are cocoa, coco-de-mer and bêche-de-mer. From the leaves of the coco-de-mer are made baskets and hats.

The imports consist chiefly of cotton goods and hardware from Great Britain; rice, flour and cotton from India, sugar and rum from Mauritius, coffee from Aden, wines and spirits and clothing from France. The value of the imports and exports (exclusive of specie) for the six years 1901-1906 was: imports, £360,520; exports, £377,613. The increase of trade is indicated by the figures for 1907 (a record year) to 1909. In the three years the value of imports was £233,863, that of exports £355,306. Over 75% of the total trade is with Great Britain or British possessions. The medium of exchange is the Indian rupee (=16d.),with the subsidiary coinage of Mauritius.

*Towns and Communications.—*The only town of any size is the capital, Port Victoria (or Mahé), picturesquely situated at the head of an excellent harbour. Many of the houses are built of massive coral, *Porites gaimardi,* hewn into square building blocks which at a distance glisten like white marble. The port is a coaling station of the British navy and is connected by telegraphic cables with Zanzibar and Mauritius. There is no inland telegraph system. All the islands are well provided with metalled roads. Regular monthly communication with Marseilles is maintained by the Messageries Maritimes steamers. German and British lines serve the South African and Indian ports. The government employ steam vessels for passenger and mail services between the islands, and there are large numbers of sailing craft belonging to the islanders.

*Government, Revenue, &c.—*Seychelles is a crown colony administered by a governor, assisted by nominated executive and legislative councils. Revenue is derived chiefly from customs, licences, court fees and the post office, while among the principal heads of expenditure figure telegraph and steamer subsidies and the education, medical, legal and police depart­ments. For the ten years 1899-1908 the average yearly revenue was £28,726; the average yearly expenditure £27,304. A public debt of *£20,000,* repayable in thirty annual instalments, was contracted in 1899. The law in force is based on the Code Napoleon, considerably modified, however, by local ordinances. The simplification and codification of the laws was carried out during 1899-1904 (see the Colonial Office annual reports, especially that for 1903, § 37). Education is under the control, of a government board and, besides primary schools, there are institutions for higher education and a Carnegie Library. Grants are made to schools of all denominations. The creole patois is unsuited to be a medium of instruction, and English is used as far as possible, though its acquisition by the peasantry is that of a foreign language. The same difficulty, to an almost equal degree, would apply to the use of French as a medium.

*History.*—The Seychelles are marked on Portuguese charts dated 1502. The first recorded visit to the islands was made in 1609 by an English ship; then for 133 years there is no docu­mentary evidence of any further visit. The second recorded visit, in 1742, was made by Captain Lazare Picault, who, returning two years later, formally annexed the islands to France. Though then uninhabited there is a strong tradition, probably well founded, that the Seychelles had been from Arab times a rendez­vous of the pirates and corsairs who infested the high seas between South Africa and India. Picault, who acted as agent of the celebrated Mahé de la Bourdonnais, governor of the Île de France (Mauritius), named the principal island Mahé and the group ÎIes de la Bourdonnais, a style changed in 1756, when the islands were renamed after Moreau de Séchelles, at that time contrôleur des finances under Louis XV. The first permanent settlement was made about 1768, when the town of Mahé was founded. Soon afterwards Pierre Poivre, intendant of Île de France, seeing the freedom of the Seychelles archipelago from hurricanes, caused spice plantations to be made there, with the object of wresting from the Dutch the monopoly they then enjoyed of the spice trade. The existence of these plantations was kept secret, and it was with that object that they were destroyed by fire by the French on the appearance in the harbour in 1778 of a vessel flying the British flag. The ship, however, proved to be a French slaver who had hoisted the Union Jack fearing to find the British in possession. Mahé proved very useful to French ships during the wars of the Revolution, and this led to its capture by the British in 1794, but no troops were left to garrison the place, and the administration went on as before. In 1806 the island capitulated to the captain of another British ship, but again no garrison was Ieft, and it was not until after the capture of Mauritius in 1810 that the Seychelles were

@@@1 The gigantic land tortoise *(Testudo elephantina)* is found only in the Aldabra Islands.