

The Ellice Islands.
 The Gilbert Islands.
 The Marshall Islands.
 The Caroline Islands.
 The Solomon Islands.
 The Santa Cruz Islands.
 Rotumah.

New Guinea, to the east of the 143rd meridian of east longitude.

New Britain and New Ireland.

The Louisiade Archipelago.

And "all other islands in the Western Pacific Ocean not being within the limits of the Colonies of Fiji, Queensland, or New South Wales, and not being within the jurisdiction of any civilized Power."

17. No definition is given of the limits of the "Western Pacific Ocean" itself, and they may be open to some dispute. If the precedents of the Acts George III. and George IV., conferring jurisdiction on the Courts of New South Wales, be relied, on they include the Society Islands; and recent despatches from the Colonial Office would appear to imply that the Hervey Islands and Raratonga were supposed to be within the High Commissioner's jurisdiction. Taking into consideration the vast extent of such an area, and the utter impossibility of exercising supervision over it, it will be safer to assume for all practical purposes that the limits of the Western Pacific are nearly coterminous with those of the Australian naval station. If so, it may be roughly divided into two portions by a line running from north to south about the 180th meridian of longitude. The groups of islands to the west of this line are mountainous and volcanic; those to the east of it are for the most part—though by no means exclusively—low islands of coral formation.

18. The population of this region comprehends three great divisions—Papuan, Melanesian, and Polynesian; but there are other smaller well-defined distinctions, and innumerable shades and blendings of the whole. Commencing at the south-eastern extremity of the area through which the authority of the High Commissioner is supposed to extend, we find the Tongan group, chiefly composed of coral islands, among which, however, are scattered numerous volcanoes, active or extinct, including the great cone of Kao, which rises abruptly from the sea to a height of 7,000 feet.

19. The population of this group, who are among the handsomest and most intelligent of the South Seas, are all Christians, and have fair pretensions to be regarded as a civilized community. They have an orderly Government of a European pattern, and have entered into formal treaty relations with Great Britain and Germany. Though possessing a King and a nominally constitutional form of government, all power is practically vested in a Wesleyan clergyman named Baker, whose influence is paramount, and closely resembles, in the causes to which it is due and the mode in which it is exercised, that of some political churchman of the Middle Ages.

20. Passing northward, and leaving on the west the small islands of Fotuna and Wallis, where Roman Catholic missionaries exercise as absolute a sway as that of Mr. Baker in Tonga, and to the east Savage Island, where the population, who in Cook's time were savages of the fiercest description, are now an orderly Christian community, remarkable as one of the few places in the Pacific where the native population is decidedly on the increase, we come to the Navigators or Samoan group, entirely of volcanic formation, but the fires of which have been long extinct. The people of Samoa are of the same race as the Tongans, though even lighter and handsomer. Their political condition, is not, however, by any means as satisfactory. They have a nominal King, who exercises some shadowy authority, and has been recognized by foreign Powers, but whose influence on the political chaos by which he is surrounded is extremely small. By a Convention entered into in 1879 the administration of the town of Apia and a small district round it is virtually in the hands of the foreign Consuls; and, by a treaty with Great Britain, concluded in the same year, the exclusive jurisdiction of the High Commission Court over British subjects is fully recognized. There are several British residents, but German interests predominate.

21. Passing northward again, we come to the long chain of what are known as the Line Islands, the Ellice, Gilbert, and Marshall groups, comprising an almost countless multitude of comparatively small islands. All alike are of coral formation and uniform appearance. The inhabitants, who are mostly of Polynesian race, are in some places christianized, and in others not, and vary a good deal in their amount of civilization. All, however, have some political organization, and are, on the whole, creditable communities. Captain Bridge, H.M.S. "Espiegle," who has visited them in the month of June of the present year, says, of the natives of Peru Island, that they "are far from being a totally uncivilized people; they have a regular Government of a constitutional character, viz., that of a Federal Republic; they are skilled in several useful arts, especially in that of house-building, as displayed in their spacious Kau-puli houses; and, in their deliberative assemblies, exhibit an orderliness in procedure, and decorum of demeanour, which would very likely surprise any one acquainted only with the representative bodies of highly civilized countries."

22. A good many Europeans, chiefly English and German, are scattered through these groups; and at the Island of Jaluit, in the Bonham group, are established the head-quarters of the great German trading company, which conducts so large a part of the commerce of those seas.

23. The Caroline Islands, situated 10 degrees to the north of the equator, are partly coralline and partly volcanic. Here, as in the Line Islands, the population are partly Christian and partly heathen; and Captain Maxwell, H.M.S. "Emerald," who visited the islands in 1880, reports that, in addition to various traders and missionaries named by him, "there are various other white residents on the islands, apparently doing nothing."

24. The Phoenix Islands have not, we believe, been visited by any man-of-war since the establishment of the High Commission.

25. Turning now southwards again, and passing by the Admiralty Islands, of which little is known, we reach New Britain and New Ireland, very large volcanic islands, several hundred miles