forming its eastern extremity; westward there are the Samoan (5) and Gilbert (8) groups, and others intermediate; still northwestward there are the Radack and Ralick groups (9, 10), and in 20° N., on the same line, Wakes Island.

(a) The chain, as is seen, consists of a series of parallel ranges, succeeding and overlapping along the general course, in the manner illustrated on page 28, when speaking of mountains. (b) It varies its course gradually from west-northwest at the eastern extremity to north-northwest at the western. (c) Its mean trend is northwest-by-west (N. 56° W.), the mean trend of all the groups of the northwesterly system in the ocean. (d) The chain is a curving chain, convex to the southward, and marks the position of a great central elliptical basin of the Pacific having the same northwesterly trend. The Hawaiian is on the opposite side of it, slightly convex to the north.

The Marquesan range (12, Fig. 24) lies in the same line with the Fanning group (13) to the northwest, just north of the equator; and, if a connection exists, another great chain is indicated, — a Marquesan chain.

Australasian chain (Fig. 25). — New Hebrides (K) and New Caledonia (M) belong to the Australasian island chain. The line of New Hebrides is continued northwestward in the Solomon group (I) and New Ireland, though bending a little more to the westward, and terminates in Admiralty land (G), near 145° E., where it becomes very nearly east-and-west: the length of the range is about 2000 miles. Taking another range in the chain, New Caledonia (M), the course is continued in the Louisiade group (H); then the north side of New Guinea (E), which continues bending gradually till it becomes east-and-west, near 135° E. In the southeast, belonging to the same general line, there is the foot of the New Zealand boot (O). The coral islands between New Caledonia and Australia appear also to be other lines in the chain.

From New Guinea (E, F), the east-and-west course is taken up by Ceram (D), and again, more to the south, in the Java line of islands (A, B, C); and from Java (B) the chain again begins to rise northward, becoming northwest finally in Sumatra (A) and Malacca.

The several ranges make up one grand island chain, with a double curvature, the whole nearly 6000 miles long. In Fig. 25, a line stands for each group, and indicates its course; it shows the composite nature of the chain, and the curving course, in connection with a prevailing conformity to a northwesterly trend.

Blending of the Australasian and Polynesian island chains. — The two chains blend with one another in the region of the Carolines, Fig. 24 (11). This large archipelago properly includes the Ralick and Radack groups Fig. 24 (9, 10). At the Gilbert group, Fig. 24 (8), the Polynesian chain divides into two parts, — the Ralick and Radack ranges. But the main body of the Archipelago, Fig. 24 (11), trends off to the westward, and is a