

an *Atoll*, or true coral-island, would be formed (A" A", Fig. 185, and Figs. 182 and 183). Should any more rapid or sudden downward movement take place, it might carry the atoll down beneath the surface, like the Great Chagos bank in the Indian Ocean, which is a submarine atoll.

This simple and luminous explanation of the history of

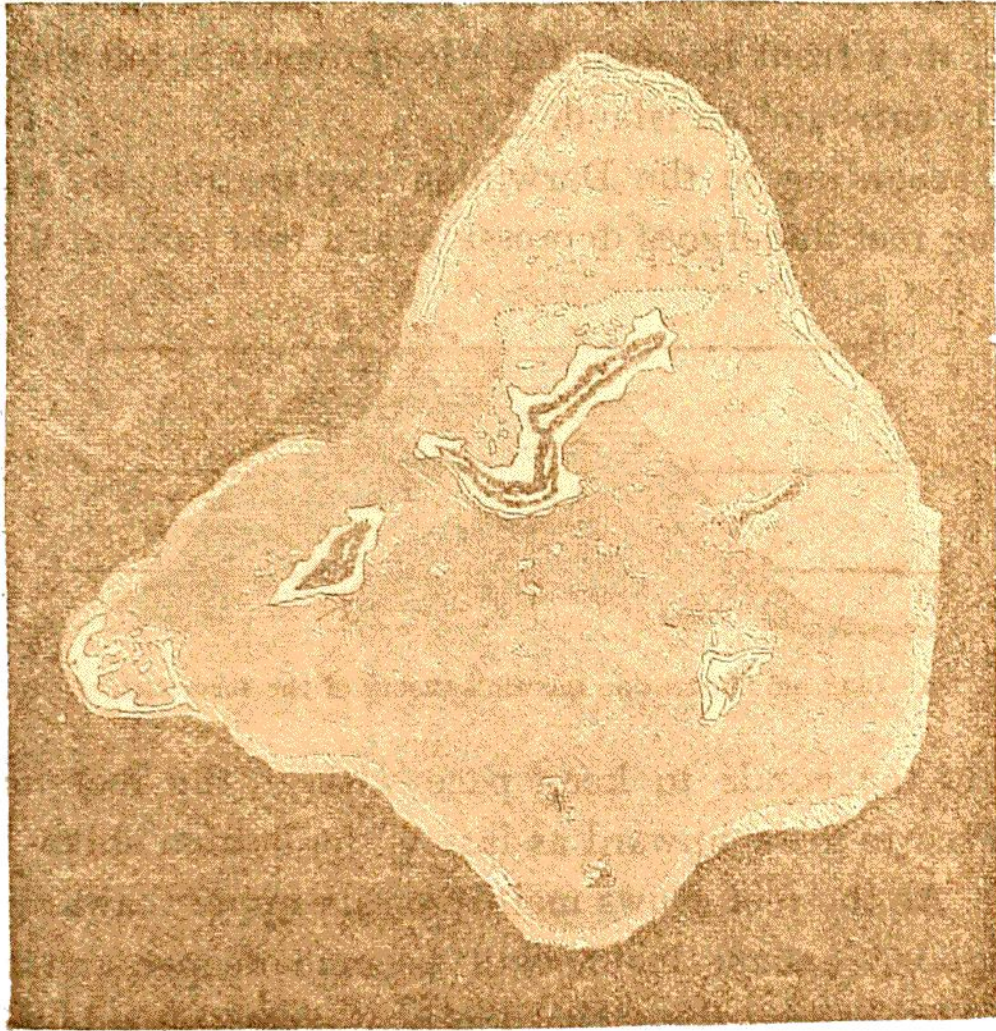


Fig. 186.—Chart of Gambier Islands, Pacific Ocean (after Beechy).

coral-reefs accorded well with all the known facts, and led up to the impressive conclusion that a vast area of the Pacific Ocean, fully 6000 geographical miles from east to west, has undergone a recent subsidence, and may be slowly sinking still.

Mr. Darwin's views having been universally accepted by geologists, coral-islands have been regarded with special in-