

In general, for one to five hundred yards from the margin of the shore reef, the water slowly deepens, and then there is an abrupt descent at an angle of 40 or 50 degrees. The results of earlier voyagers correspond with this statement. At considerable depths, as would appear from the above facts, the sides of the coral structure may be vertical or even may overhang the bottom below.

Beechey, whose observations on soundings are the fullest hitherto published, states many facts of great interest. At Carysfort Island, he found the depth, 60 yards from the surf line, 5 fathoms; 80 yards, 13 fathoms; 120 yards, 18 fathoms; 200 yards, 24 fathoms; and immediately beyond, no bottom with 35 fathoms. At Henderson's Island, soundings continued out 250 yards, where the depth was 25 fathoms, and then terminated abruptly. Off Whitsunday, 500 feet out, there was no bottom at 1,500 feet.

Darwin states other facts bearing upon this subject, of which we may cite the following:—At Heawandoo Pholo (one of the Maldives), Lieutenant Powell found 50 or 60 fathoms close to the edge of the reef. One hundred fathoms from the mouth of the lagoon of Diego Garcia, Captain Moresby found no bottom with 150 fathoms. At Egmont Island, 50 fathoms from the reef, soundings were struck in 150 fathoms. At Cardoo Atoll, only 60 yards from the reef, no bottom was obtained with a line of 200 fathoms. Off Keeling Island, 2,200 yards from the breakers, Captain Fitzroy found no bottom at 1,200 fathoms. Mr. Darwin also states that, at a depth between five and six hundred fathoms, the line was partly cut as if it had rubbed against a projecting ledge of rock; and deduces from the fact "the probable existence of submarine cliffs."

Prof. Agassiz states that the Bahamas and the reefs north-east of Cuba have very great depth close alongside.

There are examples also of less abrupt slopes. North-west of the Hawaiian group, Captain Lisiansky, who commanded the Russian ship *Neva* in a voyage round the world in the years 1860--61, at the island bearing his name, found