

(p. 127). A large amount of subsidence is indicated by the extensive reefs in every portion of the group, but it was greatest beyond doubt in the north-eastern part. The subsidence, where least, could hardly have been less than 2,000 to 3,000 feet.

*Ladrones.*—The Ladrones appear to have undergone their greatest subsidence at the northern extremity of the range, the part nearest the centre of the coral area; for although the fires at the north have continued longest to burn, the islands are the smallest of the group, the whole having disappeared except the summits, which still eject cinders. The southern islands of the group have wide reefs, which show that they participated to some extent in the subsidence; and this is further indicated by the islands lying to the south-west, in the line of the Ladrones.

We have thus followed around the borders of the coral area; and, besides proving the reality of the limits, have ascertained some facts with reference to a gradual diminution of the subsidence toward, and beyond, these limits. A line through the Hawaiian Group would pass along the northern boundary line of the area; and taking the southern boundary as given on page 273, the oblong area narrows eastward. An axis nearly bisecting this space, drawn from the eastern Paumotus toward Japan, passes through the region of greatest subsidence, as above determined, and may be considered the *line of greatest depression* for the great area of subsidence.

It is worthy of special note, that this axial line, or line of greatest depression, coincides in direction with the mean trend of the great ranges of islands, it having the course N. 52° W.; and it also corresponds approximately with the axial line of the Pacific ocean.

The southern boundary line of the coral area, as we have laid it down, lies within the area of subsidence, although near its limits. This area has been prolonged south-eastward in some places beyond the boundary line. One of the regions of this prolongation lies between the Samoan or Navigator Group and the Feejees and Tonga Group; another is east of