

about the heights of a single subsiding land of large size. Such facts show additional error in the above estimate, evincing that the scattered atolls and reefs tell but a small part of the story. Why is it, also, that the Pacific Islands are confined to the tropics, if not that beyond thirty degrees the zoöphyte could not plant its growing registers?

The island of Ponape, in the Caroline Archipelago, affords evidence of *a subsidence in progress*, as Mr. Horatio Hale, the Philologist of the Wilkes Expedition, gathered from a foreigner who had been for a while a resident on this island. Mr. Hale remarks, after explaining the character of certain sacred structures of stone: "It seems evident that the constructions at Ualan and Ponape are of the same kind, and were built for the same purpose. It is also clear, that when the latter were raised, the islet on which they stand was in a different condition from what it now is. For at present they are actually in the water; what were once paths are now passages for canoes, and as O'Connell [his informant] says, 'when the walls are broken down, the water enters the inclosures.'" Mr. Hale hence infers "that the land, or the whole group of Ponape, and perhaps all the neighbouring groups, have undergone a slight depression." He also states respecting a small islet near Ualan: "From the description given of Leilei, a change of level of one or two feet would render it uninhabitable, and reduce it, in a short time, to the same state as the isle of ruins at Ponape."

In some of the northern Carolines, the Pescadores, and perhaps some of the Marshall Islands, the proportion of dry land is so very small compared with the great extent of the atoll, that there is reason to suspect a slow sinking even at the present time; and it is a fact of special interest in connection with it, that this region is near the axial line of greatest depression, where, if in any part, the action should be longest continued.

Among the Kingsmills and Paumotus, there is no reason whatever for supposing that a general subsidence is still in progress; the changes indicated are of a contrary character.