

Keeling's is another outlying atoll south-west of southern Sumatra and far out toward mid-ocean.

The probability is, therefore, that both the central Atlantic and Indian Oceans were regions of this subsidence, like the central Pacific; and that the absence of islands over a large part of their interiors may be a consequence of it. A rate of sinking exceeding five feet in a thousand years (if the estimate on page 215 is right) would have buried islands and reefs together in the ocean; while, with a slower rate, the reefs might have kept themselves at the water's surface. So small may have been the difference of rate in the great movement that covered the Pacific with coral islands, but left the Indian Ocean a region of comparatively barren waters, with some "half-drowned" atolls, and the central Atlantic almost wholly a blank.

While thus seeming to prove that all the great oceans have their buried lands, we are far from establishing that these lands were oceanic continents. For as the author has elsewhere shown, the profoundest facts in the earth's history prove that the oceans have always been oceans. These lands in all probability were, for the most part, volcanic islands or summits of volcanic ranges, for of this nature are all the islands over the interior of either ocean that are not of coral origin.

The course of argument leads us to the belief that a very large number of islands, more than has been supposed, lie buried in the ocean. Coral islands give us the location of many of these lands: but still we know little of the extent to which the earth's ranges of heights, or at least of volcanic peaks, have disappeared through oceanic subsidence. Recent dredgings and soundings have proved that the bottom of the oceanic basin has little of the diversity of mountain chains and valleys that prevails over the continents; and, through this observation (and also by the discovery that some ancient types of animal life, supposed to have been long extinct, are perpetuated there), they have afforded new demonstration of the proposition, above stated, that *the oceans have always been oceans*. But while the facts do not imply the existence deep