

AREAS AND BOUNDARIES.

THE Australasian Colonies comprise the continent of Australia, the adjacent island of Tasmania, and the islands of New Zealand. The group is politically subdivided into seven Colonies, which, with the area of each, are as follow :—

Colony.	Area.	
	In acres.	In square miles.
New South Wales.....	198,848,000	310,700
Victoria	56,245,760	87,884
Queensland.....	427,838,100	668,497
South Australia.....	578,361,600	903,690
Western Australia	678,400,000	1,060,000
Australia	1,939,693,460	3,030,771
Tasmania	16,778,000	26,216
New Zealand	66,861,440	104,471
Australasia...	2,023,332,900	3,161,458

Comparative
area of Australia.
lasia.

The British Empire, exclusive of territories under protectorates and spheres of influence, extends over an area of 9,114,700 square miles, so that more than one-third of its area is embraced within the limits of the seven colonies. Australasia is more than twenty-six times as large as the United Kingdom, more than fifteen times as large as France, more than half as large again as Russia in Europe, and almost equal in extent to the continent of Europe or to the United States of America.

AUSTRALIA.

The mainland of Australia lies between $10^{\circ} 39'$ and $39^{\circ} 11\frac{1}{2}'$ south latitude, and the meridians of $113^{\circ} 5'$ and $153^{\circ} 16'$ east

longitude. Its greatest length is 2,400 miles from east to west, and its greatest breadth, 1,971 miles from north to south. Its area may be approximately stated at 3,030,771 square miles, and its coast line 8,850 miles, equal to 1 mile to each 342 square miles of land, the smallest proportion of coast shown by any of the continents. Tasmania lies to the south of the main land; Bass' Straits, which separates the island from Victoria, is about 150 miles in width. New Zealand is opposite the south-eastern coast of Australia, the width of ocean intervening, known as the Tasman Sea, is about 1,100 miles.

New South Wales lies principally between the 29th and 36th parallels of south latitude, and between the 141st and 153rd meridians of east longitude. The length of the Colony, from Point Danger on the north to Cape Howe on the south, is 680 miles. From east to west, along the 29th parallel, the breadth is 760 miles; while diagonally, from the south-west corner—where the Murray passes into South Australia—to Point Danger, the length reaches 850 miles. The seaboard extends over 700 miles. No islands of importance belong to New South Wales. Lord Howe Island, which lies some 400 miles north-east of Sydney, is a dependency of the Colony, while Norfolk Island, though under the administration of the Governor, does not belong to the Colony.

Victoria is situated between the 34th and 39th parallels of south latitude, and the 141st and 150th meridians of east longitude. The dividing line between Victoria and South Australia was supposed to be fixed on the 141st meridian of east longitude, but through an error in survey the present recognised boundary falls about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles west of the 141st meridian. The error is against South Australia and the authorities of that Colony have been demanding for many years a re-adjustment of territory, but there seems little prospect of the present arrangement being disturbed. The extreme length of Victoria from east to west is 420 miles, and the breadth 250 miles. The coast line is about 600 miles.

QUEENSLAND.

Queensland lies between the 11th and 29th parallels of south latitude, and the 138th and 153rd meridians of east longitude. The boundary line separating Queensland from South Australia extends northwards along the 141st meridian of east longitude as far as the 26th parallel of south latitude and from thence along the 138th meridian of east longitude to the seaboard. This line also requires re-adjustment, the present reputed boundary being in all probability too far eastward. The greatest length from north to south is 1,300 miles, and the breadth, 800 miles. The coast line is about 2,550 miles. The coast of Queensland in some parts is studded with islands. The largest are Stradbroke and Moreton on the south-east coast, while Thursday Island on the far north coast is an important place of call, and is now being fortified as one of the lines of defence for the colonies of the eastern seaboard.

NEW GUINEA.

The island of New Guinea lies close to the northern extremity of Queensland, being separated from the mainland by Torres' Straits. It is jointly occupied by the Dutch, English, and German Governments. The British colony of New Guinea, embraces all that group of islands lying within the 141st and 155th meridian of east longitude and the 5th and 12th parallels of south latitude. The Government is vested in an administrator and an Executive Council; toward the expenses of Government the three colonies on the eastern seaboard of Australia each contribute £5,000 annually. By an Act passed in 1887, Queensland engaged for ten years to hold itself primarily responsible for the whole amount of this subsidy. The area of British New Guinea is estimated to be 90,000 square miles and the population 350,000. Information relating to this island and also the British colony of Fiji will be found in the appendices.

SOUTH
AUSTRALIA.

South Australia extends from the 11th to the 38th parallels of south latitude, and from the 129th to the 141st meridians of east longitude. The province of South Australia, properly so called, lies between the 38th and 26th parallels of south latitude,

and the 141st and 129th meridians of east longitude ; the northern territory is bounded by the 26th and 11th parallels of south latitude, and the 129th and the 138th meridians of east longitude. The greatest length of the Colony from north to south is 1,850 miles, and the width, 650 miles, with a seaboard of 2,000 miles, of which about 900 miles are washed by the Indian Ocean, the Arafura Sea, and the waters of the Gulf of Carpentaria. The most important islands belonging to the Colony are Kangaroo Island on the south coast, 85 miles long and 30 broad, and Melville Island, off Port Darwin, on the northern coast. The island last named was settled under Government expedition from Sydney as far back as 1824.

Western Australia consists of the country between the 14th and 35th parallels of south latitude, and the 113th and 129th meridian of east longitude. The greatest length north and south is 1,450 miles, and the width from east to west 850 miles. The coast line is about 3,000 miles.

WESTERN
AUSTRALIA.

Tasmania is an island situated about 150 miles south of Victoria, from which it is separated by Bass' Strait. It lies between 40° 33' and 43° 39' south latitude, and the meridians of 144° 39' and 148° 23' east longitude. Its greatest length from north to south is 210 miles, and its greatest breadth from east to west is 200 miles. There are several small islands belonging to Tasmania. Flinders' Island, in Bass' Strait, has an area of 513,000 acres, and King's Island, the chief of the north-west group contains 272,000 acres. Including the adjacent islands, the area of Tasmania is 26,216 square miles.

TASMANIA.

New Zealand is to the east of Australia ; its nearest point to the mainland being Cape Maria van Diemen, which is about 1,100 miles from Sugar-Loaf Point, in New South Wales. New Zealand and its dependencies lie between the 33rd and 53rd parallels of south latitude, and between 166° 30' east longitude and 173° west longitude. The waters known as the Tasman Sea

NEW ZEALAND.

separate the Colony of New Zealand from the continent of Australia.

North Island. The North Island, or New Ulster, has a length of about 515 miles, by a breadth of about 250 miles ; its area is estimated at 44,467 square miles, and its coast line at 2,200 miles. Wellington, the seat of Government, is at the southern extremity of this island.

South Island. The South, or as it is officially called the Middle Island, or New Munster, has a length of about 525 miles by a breadth of about 180 miles. Its area is 58,525 square miles, and its coast-line measures 2,000 miles.

Stewart Island. Stewart Island, or New Leinster, lies off the southern extremity of South Island and has an area of 665 square miles ; its greatest length is 30 miles by a breadth of 25 miles.

Kermadic Islands. In 1887 a proclamation was made declaring the Kermadic Islands, lying between 29th and 32nd parallel, and the 177th and 180th meridians of west longitude, part of the Colony of New Zealand. A protectorate is exercised by the Imperial Government over the Cook Islands or Hervey Group. The British resident is appointed on the recommendation of the New Zealand Government which also defrays the cost of the administration.

Area of New Zealand.

Including the Chatham Islands, the Auckland Islands, the Campbell Islands, the Bounty Islands, and many others which are dependent, the total area of the Colony of New Zealand is estimated at 104,471 square miles.