

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.	Area in square miles.
New South Wales	198,848,000	310,700
Victoria	56,245,760	87,884
Queensland	427,838,080	668,497
South Australia	578,361,600	903,690
Western Australia	624,588,800	975,920
Australia	1,885,882,240	2,946,691
Tasmania	16,778,000	26,215
New Zealand	66,861,440	104,471
Australasia	1,969,521,680	3,077,377

The British Empire, exclusive of territories under protectorates and spheres of influence, extends over an area of 9,093,865 square miles, so that more than one-third of its area lies 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.

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 2,946,691 square miles, and its coast-line at 8,850 miles, equal to 1 mile to each 333 square miles of land—the smallest proportion of coast shown by any of the continents. Tasmania, to the south of the mainland, is separated from Victoria by Bass Straits, about 150 miles wide. New Zealand is opposite the south-eastern coast of Australia, the width of ocean intervening, known as the Tasman Sea, being 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. There are no islands of importance on the coast of New South Wales. Lord Howe Island, some 400 miles north-east of Sydney, forms a portion of the colony. The Imperial Government handed over the administration of Norfolk Island to New South Wales in 1897, and in that year a Resident Magistrate was appointed as representative of the New South Wales Government.

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 fixed as the 141st meridian of east longitude, but through an error in survey the present recognised boundary falls about $1\frac{1}{2}$ mile west of the 141st meridian. The mistake tells 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 extends from the 11th to the 29th parallel of south latitude, and from the 138th to the 153rd meridian of east longitude. The boundary line separating the colony from South Australia extends northwards along the 141st meridian of east longitude as far as the 26th parallel of south latitude, 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 greatest breadth is 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 has been strongly fortified as one of the lines of defence for the colonies of the eastern seaboard.

The island of New Guinea lies close to the northern extremity of Queensland, being separated from the mainland by Torres Straits. It is occupied by Dutch, English, and German colonists. The British colony of New Guinea embraces all that group of islands lying within the 141st and 155th meridians of east longitude, and the 5th and 12th parallels of south latitude. The government is vested in an Administrator and an Executive Council; and towards the expenses of government the three colonies on the eastern seaboard of Australia contribute each £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 native population at 350,000.

South Australia extends from the 11th to the 38th parallel of south latitude, and from the 129th to the 141st meridian 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 138th meridians of east longitude. The greatest length of the colony from north to south is 1,850 miles, and the greatest width is 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; Melville Island, off Port Darwin, on the northern coast; Bathurst Island, separated from the last-mentioned by Apsley Straits; and Groote Eyland, in the Gulf of Carpentaria. A stockade was erected by Captain Bremer on Melville Island in 1824, but was abandoned in 1829.

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

Tasmania is an island situated about 150 miles south of Victoria, from which it is separated by Bass Straits. It lies between $40^{\circ} 33'$ and $43^{\circ} 39'$ south latitude, and the meridians of $144^{\circ} 39'$ and $148^{\circ} 23'$ 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 which belong to the colony. Flinders' Island, in Bass Straits, 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 26,215 square miles.

New Zealand lies to the east of Australia, its nearest point to the mainland being Cape Maria van Diemen, which is about 1,100 miles from Sugarloaf Point, in New South Wales. New Zealand and its dependencies lie between the 33rd and 53rd parallels of south latitude, and between $166^{\circ} 30'$ east longitude and 173° west longitude. The waters known as the Tasman Sea separate the colony from the continent of Australia.

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. 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, 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.

In 1887 a proclamation was made declaring the Kermadec Islands, lying between the 29th and 32nd parallels of south latitude, 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 administration.

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.