

British Admiralty

PACIFIC ISLANDS, VOL. II.

(CENTRAL GROUPS.)

SAILING DIRECTIONS

FOR

KERMADEC, TONGA, SAMOA, UNION,
PHOENIX, ELLICE, GILBERT, AND MARSHALL
ISLANDS.

COMPILED FROM VARIOUS SOURCES.

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Price Two Shillings.

A reef awash is reported to have been seen off the north-west end of Oatafu island, and appearances of foul ground extending from the west and south-west sides of the island for 2 or 3 miles. The reef awash extended about 3 miles E.N.E. and W.S.W., curving towards the south-west extremity, from which the western end of Oatafu island bore S.E. by S., distant about 3 miles.*

A conspicuous clump of casuarina trees on the southernmost island was determined to be in lat. $8^{\circ} 39' 40''$ S., long. $172^{\circ} 28' 10''$ W.

PHENIX ISLANDS.†

This group is composed of eight scattered islands, lying about 250 miles north of the Union group.

They are all low coral islands surrounded by fringing reefs, which in most cases are steep to all around. But little vegetation exists on any of them, so that at night it is dangerous when navigating in the vicinity.

From some of the islands large quantities of guano have been exported, but the supply is now nearly worked out. There are no permanent inhabitants, as the agents and employes of the guano companies desert the islands as soon as the guano has been shipped.

Supplies are therefore not obtainable, and on most of the islands no water is procurable.

Winds prevail almost constantly from the eastward, but squalls accompanied by light rain occur all the year round in the neighbourhood; very little rain falls on Enderbury island. The wind is variable from January to May, during which period, bad weather is most common.

Captain Elias Hempstead, the Guano Company's superintendent, states that during three years on Enderbury island, the wind has blown steadily from E.N.E. to E.S.E. three fourths of the time, and during the remaining quarter from N.E. to S.E.; and he has never seen the wind from the westward.

Very little rain falls on the island, although it rains heavily in the immediate vicinity.

Current.—The current in the vicinity of this group sets almost constantly to the westward, at the rate of from one to $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles per hour.

GARDNER ISLAND, the south-western island of the group, in lat. $4^{\circ} 40'$ S., long. $174^{\circ} 43'$ W., is a low coral island with a shallow lagoon. The height, including the trees, is 40 feet, and it is visible at a distance of 15 miles.

The flood tide sets strongly to the northward; the rise and fall is about $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet.

* Mr. Ghent of P.M.S.S. *Zelandia*, 1877.

† See Admiralty charts, Pacific Ocean, general, No. 2,683; Pacific Ocean, S.W. sheet, No. 780.