

less than 500 fathoms in the Pacific being about 5 million square miles, as compared with 2 million square miles for the area between 500 and 1000 fathoms.

The Pacific Ocean differs from the Atlantic in having much more steeply sloping shores both on the east and west sides, greater depths, and very many small islands, chiefly of volcanic and coral formation. This gives a very irregular appearance to the depth-map of the Pacific, and shows sharper contrasts in rises and depressions of the ocean-floor than are found in either of the other great ocean basins. Along the west coasts of both North and South America the steep slopes are most remarkable, the land descending from the great heights of the Rocky Mountains and the Andes to depths of 2000 fathoms and more in a comparatively very short horizontal distance. This is particularly striking off the coast of South America between the latitudes of 10° and 35° S., where depths of over 3000 fathoms (in three cases over 4000 fathoms) are found within a very short distance from the shore-line. It is noteworthy that all the soundings recorded in depths of over 4000 fathoms are taken comparatively near land, viz. off South America (as just mentioned), off the Aleutian Islands, the Kurile Islands and Japan, the Philippines, the Ladrone Islands, the Pelew Islands, between the Solomon Islands and New Pommerania, and to the north of New Zealand, east of the Kermadec and Friendly Islands.

Shore-slopes  
of the Pacific.

Very deep  
soundings  
comparatively  
near land.

The greater part of the area with depths less than 1000 fathoms lies in the western Pacific, in the fringe of partially enclosed seas which lie between the continents of Asia and Australia and the islands fringing their eastern shores, such as the Behring Sea, the Sea of Japan, the Yellow Sea, China Sea, Java and Arafura Seas, and around the New Zealand plateau.

The area covered by depths between 1000 and 2000 fathoms lies mostly south of the equator, that part north of the equator consisting of detached areas in the Behring Sea, Sea of Okotsk, Sea of Japan, and China Sea, narrow bands round the various island groups and along the western shores of North America, widening greatly off the coast of Central America, and nine small areas where the floor of the ocean rises from surrounding depths of over 2000 fathoms. The area in the South Pacific with depths between 1000 and 2000 fathoms was formerly supposed to extend from the Southern Ocean between Auckland Islands and the Antarctic continent in a wide band north-eastwards towards the coasts of Central America without a break, but recent investiga-

Pacific area  
with depths  
between 1000  
and 2000  
fathoms.