

THE  
Straits of Magellan and Eastern Shores of the  
Pacific Ocean.

BY  
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CHAPTER I.

*Organization of Enterprise.*

In the early part of the sixteenth century the Pacific, or South Sea as it was then called, although fairly well known in the immediate vicinity of Panama and Central America to the Spaniards, who were at that time in possession of the greater part of the Central American States, was but little known to the outside world, and indeed was only known to the Spaniards as a vast sea supposed to be entirely surrounded by land, except about the East Indies, where they knew there was an inlet.

Now at this time the passage by the East Indies was held by the Portuguese, who were extremely jealous of any interference on the part of the Spaniards and imposed very heavy dues on the few, I may say the very few, ships that attempted to come that way into the Pacific. The Moluccas and Philippine Islands, however, belonged to the Spaniards and they had to pass through the East Indies to get there.

Magellan, who was Portuguese by birth, and had already been out to the East Indies on a voyage of discovery, volunteered the information to the King of Spain that there was,