

From Fiji I sailed for Queensland, Australia, passing *en route* New Caledonia, known as a French penal colony and for its large deposits of nickel.

In Australia, the land of sunshine and drought, of gold and sheep, of eucalypti and rabbits, of kangaroos and emu, of possibilities and development, of inverted nature, the astronomer finds a transparent sky. In the land of the Maori—New Zealand—across the ever-restless Tasman Sea, the element from the antarctic and tropics struggle with each other for supremacy to the detriment of the star-gazer.

Hitherto the basal longitude for both Australia and New Zealand had been brought eastward from Greenwich the international zero meridian, via Madras and Signapore, so that joining that circuit at Sydney to the one across the Pacific completed the first astronomic girdle of the world, and furthermore showed how well the astronomer could proceed step by step, ever determining his distance from Greenwich, until he met his fellow astronomer (at Sydney) coming from the opposite direction, and question his position on the earth. The supreme moment had arrived. Is the east longitude of the one the complement of the west longitude of the other? Does the girdle they have made fit, or is it too small or too large? Thousands and thousands of miles of cable and land lines had been used to transmit the pulsations of the clocks, many links had been forged to complete the chain, many hundreds of stars had been called from heaven to record their constancy, and skilfully the astronomer had welded the whole into one structure.

But no work of man is perfect, eternal vigilance is the price of precision. When the longitude brought from the west closed at Sydney with that from the east, the discrepancy was about a tenth of a second of time; the two astronomers had started in opposite directions around the earth to meet each other, travelling across seas and continents, and finally found their respective trysting places within the same area not larger than an ordinary town lot. May we say, this was a measure of the quality of their work? The world was girdled astronomically.