

the Almighty sometimes uses the most feeble and unlikely instruments to accomplish the greatest results.

These minute creatures, millions upon millions of them work down under the ocean twenty or twenty-five fathoms deep, building away year after year, age after age, in the warm waters of the tropical sea. There are many different species, but all seem to have the same power of forming around themselves this hard, lime-like substance which serves as a protection to their jelly-like bodies. Each species produces a variety of coral peculiar to itself. One generation dies and another takes its place each adding its small quota to the final result and so the work goes on and on.

These reefs which are thus formed become in many cases the foundation of Islands. Sub-marine forces throw them up, and various agencies combine to deposit enough soil on them to support animal and vegetable life. Then, perhaps, another upheaval throws them still higher and often the coral formation is found at quite an elevation. Such an Island would be said to be both of coralline and volcanic formation. There are many instances of Islands either volcanic or coralline in formation being wholly or in part protected by an encircling coral reef with openings here and there through which ships may pass to the smooth waters inside. The greatest encircling reef in the world is the Barrier reef, off the north-east coast of Australia. This is eleven hundred miles off the shore with deep water inside and out. The other class of Island is entirely volcanic, having been thrown up in an irruption in a state of fusion. Then the lava decomposes and forms very fertile soil. Several instances have been known of these volcanic Islands being thrown up in this way and gradually subsiding again until they have completely disappeared.

From the appearance of an Island as you approach you can tell largely what formation it is. The coralline ones being flat or of slight elevation, while the volcanic ones are in some instances thousands of feet high and often of such fantastic shape, blending grandeur and beauty of scenery with richness and fertility and general attractiveness.

These South Sea Islands produce abundantly all forms of tropical vegetation. Yams and Taro are cultivated very generally