A Living High School Geography: Eastern Asia, Oceania, and Antarctica

A high school geography course by Jill Papsdorf

based on excerpts from

Geographical Readers for Elementary Schools Book V
The Old and the New World

originally published in 1884
by
Charlotte M. Mason

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Introduction

Each day, before you read, you will use an atlas to find locations from the reading and label them on a blank map.

Charlotte Mason wrote her *Geographical Readers* in the 1880s. At that time, Britain ruled over a vast empire which (at its height) was the largest empire in history. The text you will read this year is excerpted from the *Reader* to exclude much of the Victorian-era commentary to allow us to focus on her geographical descriptions. As you read, however, keep in mind the world in which Miss Mason lived, a world of privileged English rulers (almost exclusively white) often living in colonies or territories surrounded by indigenous peoples.

Try to identify the Victorian attitudes of Miss Mason and her contemporaries towards non-Europeans. Consider both how those attitudes have changed and what future people might consider prejudices of our own.

How would the British leaders, political and military, feel about the native people in their territories? How would they justify their continued leadership? How would they ensure they continued in power?

India Beyond the Ganges

Further India, or sometimes Farther India, is an old term for Southeast Asia. This region included the countries now known as Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar (formerly Burma), Malaysia, Thailand (formerly Siam), Vietnam, Brunei, Indonesia, and Singapore. East Timor and the Philippines generally were not included in this group, though this is the section in which Miss Mason mentions them.

Recall what you know about the Vietnam War.

<u>Draw or label on a map of South and East Asia:</u>

- Indian Ocean
- Bay of Bengal
- South China Sea
- Indochina Peninsula
- Annam Cordillera
- Irrawaddy River
- Salween River
- Chao Phraya River (the river that flows through Krung Thep (Bangkok), Thailand into the Gulf of Thailand)
- Mekong River
- Myanmar
- Yangon, Myanmar
- Mandalay, Myanmar
- Thailand
- Malaysia
- Malay Peninsula
- Krung Thep, Thailand (Bangkok)
- Cambodia
- Laos
- Vietnam
- Strait of Malacca
- Sumatra
- Java
- Borneo
- Sulawesi (Celebes)
- Philippines
- Indonesia
- Taiwan
- Sunda Islands
- Molucca Islands

The illustration below is a picture of the *hti* of Kuthodaw Pagoda in Mandalay.[1]

Notice how many of these nations are made up of many large and small islands.

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> The peninsula of Further India, which lies between the Indian Ocean and the China Sea,[2] is about ten times as large as Great Britain. It is formed by long ranges stretching southward from the great central table-land of Asia; and between these are broad

[1] LBM1948, CC BY-SA 4.0 <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0>, via Wikimedia Commons
[2] South China Sea

valleys, watered by four great rivers, the Irawadi,[3] the Salwen,[4] the Menam,[5] and the Mekong. Almost the whole of it lies within the tropical zone, and in its hot, moist climate, vegetation flourishes with extraordinary luxuriance. Its peoples, excepting the Malays of the long southern peninsula, […] speak languages akin to those of China and Tibet. Buddhism is the prevailing religion.[6]

[…] [T]here are some foreign possessions, the chief amongst them being British Burmah—the long strip of western coast-land which reaches as far as the tenth parallel.[7]

The northern part of British Burmah is called Arakan; much of it is low country, covered with jungle, and very unhealthy; but the marshy lands produce wonderful rice crops, and rice is the chief articles of export.

Pegu,[8] the middle division, is, really, the vast delta of the Irawadi, a low-lying country which yields enormous quantities of rice; while, on the higher grounds which wall in the great river, are the finest teak forests in the world. Rangoon[9] is the largest town and trading port; so low does it lie, that the houses are raised upon piles to secure them from rain in times of flood. The town has a cheerful aspect, partly because the light-hearted people go about the streets adorned with flowers.

Tennaserim,[10] the southern division of British Burmah, is a rugged wilderness, amongst whose thickly wooded hills and long valleys are the wild animals of the jungle, the elephant, rhinoceros, and tiger. The chief trade is in timber.

The empire of Burmah includes the north of the peninsula, excepting the British strip of coast. Here, as all over Further India, rice is the chief crop, while the forests are rich in all kinds of timber; especially, in the strong and durable teak. […] The banks of the Irawadi are dotted with Burmese towns. At the great bend of the river, in the centre of the country, there is a cluster of cities, several of them in ruins, which have at various times been the capitals of the empire. Mandalay, which glitters with gilded pagodas, is the present

[3] Irrawaddy River
[4] Salween River
[5] Chao Phraya River
[6] Buddhism continues to be the prevailing religion, though there are different Buddhist practices in different areas.
[7] British Burmah (Burma) exited from about 1824-1948, with various fluctuations in boundaries. Much of the same territory is now the modern state of Myanmar.
[8] Bago Region
[9] Yangon
[10] Tanintharyi Region

capital, and here is the imperial residence with its many roofs, and the sacred *hti*, or umbrella, at the top of all. […]

The kingdom of Siam[11] lies to the south of Burmah; its richest district is the wide valley of the Menam, which has been called the "Nile of Siam," since it overflows its banks from June till November, fertilising the ground for the great rice crop. […] Here, as in Burmah, are dense forests which yield teak, and the perfumed eagle-wood. […] The metropolis and the centre of the trade is the city of Bangkok;[12] here are the royal palaces, with hundreds of pagodas, surrounded by bamboo houses built on piles; all the river is covered with floating boat-houses.

[…] [T]he east of the [Indochina] peninsula […] is famous for its fisheries; and here, fearful typhoons occasionally bring great destruction, especially to the fishing population. […]

The southern part of the Malay peninsula […] is a land of green forest and jungle, full of wild animals, such as elephants, tapirs, tigers, and large apes, crocodiles, and snakes. Its climate is one of excessive moisture, for the rains are carried over it by both the north-east and south-west monsoon winds. […]

We must not quit this part of the world without a short notice of the East India Islands. The islands which form the East Indian Archipelago stretch round in a wide curve enclosing the China Sea, from the Straits of Malacca to the Channel of Formosa.[13] Besides the larger Sunda Islands—Sumatra, Java, Borneo (itself nearly as large as Britain and France together), Celebes, and Luzon in the Philippine group—there are countless smaller islands grouped round these, all enclosing sheltered seas. As the sea penetrates everywhere, the people of most of the islands are born sailors; swift-sailing proas[14] dart about on the waters, and the estuaries of the rivers support towns of boats [...] Nowhere on the earth, excepting in the tropical forest lands of Brazil, is there such luxuriant vegetation, or such abundant animal life. Another characteristic of these islands is the immense number of volcanoes; most of the islands in the belt round Borneo have volcanoes, and earthquakes are very frequent. […] Here are the Moluccas, the famous spice islands, from which the nutmeg, mace, and clove are brought; as indeed they are from most of the islands, which yield, also, rice, maize, cocoa-nuts, sago-palms, sugar-cane, cotton, and tobacco, and all sorts of tropical fruits.

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[11] Thailand
[12] Krung Thep
[13] Miss Mason is probably referring to the Luzon Strait or the Taiwan Strait, as Formosa is a former name of Taiwan.
[14] Sailboats of Indonesian design

The Celestial Empire
and the
Corea and other Dependencies of China

Though Miss Mason describes Korea (Corea) as a part of the Chinese Empire, the people of Korea were under the Joseon dynasty at the time her book was published. Throughout the centuries, the peninsula endured many foreign invasions some of which were from China.

At the time Miss Mason was writing, Korea was isolationist, avoiding contact with Europeans. That ended in 1910 when Japan annexed Korea.

Recall what you know of the Korean War.

<u>Draw or label on a map of South and East Asia:</u>

- China
- Yellow Sea
- Sea of Japan
- North Korea
- South Korea
- Dongbei (Manchuria)
- Mongolia
- Altay Mountains
- Mongolian Plateau
- Gobi Desert
- Tarim Basin
- Tian Shan Mountains
- Karakorum Range
- Kunlun Mountains
- Hindu Kush Mountains
- Himalayas
- Taklimakan Desert
- Tibet (a region of China)
- Lhasa, China (in Tibet)

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The Celestial Empire

Perhaps China is, to us, the most interesting of Eastern countries. Our cup of tea is a cup of fellowship with the natives of the "Flowery Land"; and we feel kindly towards the people who produce the precious plant and who enjoy the infusion even more than we do. […]

Besides China Proper, the Chinese Empire includes certain large and little-known countries to the north and west. One of these is the Corea.[15]

The Corea and Other Great Dependencies of China

[15] The modern day states of North Korea and South Korea.

Few parts of the world are less known to Europeans than the Corea, a dependency of China Proper lying to the south of Manchuria […]

Corea is a land of mountain, flood, and forest. "Wherever you place the foot," writes a missionary,[16]

> "you see nothing but mountains, naked, or overgrown with pine woods, crowned by forests, or clothed with dense shrub. In every direction you gaze upon thousands of sharp-pointed peaks, immense rounded cones, and frightful precipices, and, further still, you see yet higher mountains, and thus it is throughout the land.
>
> "The only exception is the plain of Nai-po,[17] stretching towards the western shore (south of the capital), where the hills are lower and further apart than elsewhere in the peninsula; the valleys are wider and give more room for the cultivation of rice. The soil is more fertile, too; there are many canals, and Nai-po, from the plentifulness of its produce, is known as the granary of the capital."

The climate shows great extremes, both of heat and cold. During a great part of winter, the whole country is covered with snow, and most of the rivers are more or less frozen. The hills are covered with firs, laurels, oaks, elms, camellia, chestnut, and walnut trees, and with thickets of rhododendron. The mulberry and the cotton bush flourish in the centre and south; and most of the cereals and various vegetables and fruits are cultivated.

Corea is infested by savage carnivora. Tigers, leopards, bears, and wolves abound, and the tigers frequently carry off human victims.[18] The domestic animals of the Coreans are much like our own; but the flesh of the dog is esteemed a delicacy. […]

The most pleasing trait of Corean domestic life is the mutual affection of parents and children. Throughout life the son treats his father with the utmost respect; memorial columns and temples are sometimes raised in honour of filial self-sacrifice; and very long and solemn is the mourning which takes place on the death of a parent or near relative. […]

To the north of the Corea is Manchuria, whose people conquered China, and during the fifteenth century, placed a Manchu sovereign at the head of the Celestial Empire.

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[16] This long quote about Korea is taken from *The Quarterly Review* (Volume 155, page 175). The author quotes an unnamed missionary.

[17] It's not clear exactly which plain the missionary means here as the name could not be found online. There are many plains in the southern and western parts of the peninsula. The capital at the time of Joseon dynasty is now a historic part of Seoul, which does have some level areas in the Han River plain.

[18] Tigers are extinct in South Korea. It is believed there remain some wild tigers in North Korea.

Forests cover the whole country in the north. In the west are great rolling prairies on which large herds of cattle are pastured; while the south is like Northern China in its endless fields of rice, and its cotton, hemp, and tobacco culture. […]

Mongolia[19] is an enormous country, which stretches westward as far as the Altai mountains.[20] Here the people dwell neither in towns nor villages; they have no houses, and they do not till the land, but live in *yurts*, or tents, and wander about with their herds over the grassy lands at the foot of the mountains which shut in this table-land of Mongolia. […] In religion, they are Buddhists[…] A great part of Mongolia is occupied by an enormous stony desert, called the Gobi or Shamo,[21] which is 2000 miles in length and 500 in width […]

Eastern Turkistan,[22] or Chinese Tartary, is perhaps the most interesting of the countries under the rule of China. It lies like a vast bay enclosed by the highest mountains of Asia—the Tian-shan range on the north, the Pamir plateau on the west,[23] and the Kuenlun mountains[24] on the south. Though, from its complete enclosure, the country is almost rainless, a crescent of fertile land extends round the base of the mountains, watered by the melting of the snows, and here are rich wheat-fields and orchards, cotton, flax, and other products. […] Beyond this fertile belt, a stony desert stretches out to join the Shamo.

Tibet is, like Mongolia, a vast table-land; but while Mongolia is between 3000 and 4000 feet above the level of the sea (that is, the whole country is about as high as the highest of the British mountains),[25] Tibet, which is about eight times as large as Great Britain, is raised on the average from 11,000 to 15,000 feet above the sea-level, that is, taken altogether, the whole region is as high as the highest peaks among the Alps. Here are bare grassy plains where herds of wild asses and antelopes feed, and the great long-legged wild sheep, whose horns are "so large that the fox is said to take up his abode in the hollows when detached and bleaching on the barren mountains of Tibet."[26] Great lakes, frequently salt, lie in these grassy plains; and, among the mountain snows, the famous rivers of India and China take their rise. The Tibetans are governed for the most part by their priests, who are called *lamas*, and live together in large monasteries which are often rich and splendid; so much is this the case, that the few towns of Tibet are simply great collections of temples and monasteries. The Dalai Lama, the spiritual

[19] Mongolia achieved independence from China in the 1920s.
[20] Altay Mountains
[21] The Shamo Desert is not the same as the Gobi Desert.
[22] This region is generally that of the Tarim Basin.
[23] The Pamir Mountains are where the Himalayas, Tian Shan, Karakoran, Kunlun, and Hindu Kush mountains meet in modern day Tajikistan. (Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pamir_Mountains)
[24] Kunlun Mountains
[25] Mongolia's average elevation is about 5180 feet above sea level.
[26] This is a quote from *Himalayan Journals*, *Volume 1* by Joseph Dalton Hooker, 1854.

sovereign, has his seat at Lassa,[27] in the centre of which is an immense temple, resplendent with gold and gems […]

[27] Lhasa

China Proper and Part II – The Celestial Empire

Draw or label on a map of China:

- Tian Shan Mountains
- Hindu Kush Mountains
- Karakoram Range
- Altay Mountains
- Pacific Ocean
- Yangtze (or Chang Jiang) River
- Yellow (or Huang) River
- Plateau of Tibet
- Beijing, China
- Nanjing, China
- Qin Lin Mountains
- Hongshui River
- Guangzhou, China
- Hong Kong
- Taiwan
- Yellow Sea
- East China Sea

Notice how the map of China shows great mountain ranges in the west, gradually decreasing in height to a large plain in the east.

Look closely at the atlas between Tianjin, at the delta of the Yellow River, and Hangzhou, near the delta of the Yangtze River. You may see the Grand Canal, which Miss Mason calls the Imperial Canal). In some maps it is marked as a blue line with tiny perpendicular marks.

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China Proper (Part I)

Having noticed the countries which form part of the great Chinese Empire, we return to China itself […]

China consists of one long slope of more than a thousand miles, reaching from the Yun-ling[28] or Snowy Mountains on the west, to the shores of the Pacific on the east. Mighty rivers drain this slope, the chief of them being the Yang-tse-kiang, 3000 miles in length,[29] and the Yellow Hoang-ho,[30] both of which take their rise in the mountains of Tibet. These rivers bring down much earth in their courses, and, when they overflow their banks, spread a rich coating of river mud over the low plains of the coast. In this way the Great Plain of China, which reaches from the city of Peking[31] to the city of Nanking,[32] has been made one of the most fertile regions in the world. Ranges of mountains and hills—spurs from the great central table-land of Asia—cross the country

[28] Also known as Yun Ling or Yun Range, these appear to be a range of mountains nearer the source of the Yangtze than the western boundary of China. The Tian Shan, Hindu Kush, and Karakoram Range are all along the western edge of China.
[29] Yangtze River, which is nearly 4,000 miles long.
[30] Yellow River or Huang River
[31] Beijing
[32] Ninjing

towards the sea, dividing the great river valleys. The best known of these are the Pe-ling mountains[33] in the north, between the basins of the Hoang-ho and the Yang-tse-kiang; and the Nan-ling mountains[34] in the south, between the Yang-tse-kiang and the Canton river.[35] […]

The mulberry, rice, and the tea-plant yield the crops upon which the Chinese bestow the most labour; rice is the most important of these, because upon this crop the people mainly depend for food. Rice requires a great deal of moisture, so it is grown chiefly round the lower courses of the great rivers, and under the hot sun of Southern China. The fields are first well flooded, and afterwards carefully ploughed. The seeds, after being soaked in liquid manure, are thickly sown in small patches. When the young shoots reach a height of five or six inches, they are transplanted in rows into the muddy fields prepared for them. The labourers are quick and clever about their work, which is exceedingly laborious; during the planting and ploughing season they have to wade all day under a burning sun in a deep clay soil covered with several inches of stagnant water.

The Chinese farmer is never at a loss for water to flood his *paddy* (or rice) fields, for canals are as common in the Great Plain of China as roads are in England; indeed, there are few good roads beyond the towns, and no railroads, as all the carrying and travelling are done by water. The Imperial Canal[36] is one of the most famous public works of China; it connects the rivers Hoang-ho and Yang-tse-kiang, and is 700 miles in length. By means of this canal it is possible to go in a junk from Canton,[37] the great southern port, to the royal city of Peking in the north, with only one interruption. […]

China Part II - The Celestial Empire

Her canals and junks are very important to China, as by these means food is borne to every corner of the country, and the rice, which flourishes in the south and centre only, is carried to the distant north. When the harvest is gathered, the junks are set in motion all over the land, and a curious sight is to be seen upon river and canal; every boat carries from twenty to thirty cormorants, greedy and ungainly birds, which the Chinese sailors teach to fish; they dive at the touch of a little rod, and each reappears almost instantly with a fish, which it is prevented from swallowing by the metal collar it wears.

The banks of canals and rivers are usually planted with mulberry trees, which are carefully tended for the sake of their leaves, the favourite food of the silkworm.

[33] Qun Lin Mountains
[34] Also known as the Wuling Mountains, this mountain range is between the watersheds for the Yangtze and the Pearl River system, formerly the Canton River. The Hongshui River is a part of this river system.
[35] The Canton River is now called the Pearl River system.
[36] Grand Canal
[37] Guangzhou

Immense quantities of silk are produced in China, and the richer people, both men and women, usually wear silken garments; much is also exported to Europe.

We must say a word about tea, which, after rice, is the crop to which the Chinese give most attention. It is said that between two and three hundred square miles of Chinese territory are devoted to the growth of tea for our own country alone; and yet, so much do they make use of themselves, that were our custom to be withdrawn, the Chinese would hardly miss it. Tea is drunk at all meals in China, and many times besides during the day; everybody drinks tea as everybody eats rice. A stranger, whether wandering in crowded cities or in the farming country, will find in every house and at all hours a fragrant cup of tea ready for his acceptance; and near the banks of the canals, he may often see wayside tea-houses wherein he or the weary *coolie* (labourer) may quench his thirst free of charge.

The tea-shrubs are planted in rows, about three or four feet apart, and yield their leaves four times a year; the women and children belonging to the farm generally do all the picking. The first gathering takes place in April, when the leaves are scarce and young, and produces the finest flavoured tea. The tea-farmer always prefers a gentle slope for his plants, and a great deal of tea is produced in the hilly country in the south-east.

China has been until quite lately closed against foreigners; the British were allowed to trade at the port of Canton;[38] and the little island of Hong-kong, hard by, belongs to Great Britain; but neither merchant nor missionary was allowed to penetrate further. A war, however, which terminated in 1842, opened the ports of Amoy,[39] Fu-chow,[40] Ning-po,[41] and Shanghai, to the British; and by more recent treaties, more than a dozen other ports have been opened to foreign commerce. […]

It is well known that, for centuries, the Chinese were skilful in various arts before these became known to Europeans. Thus, in the year 1000 A.D., great porcelain factories were founded by the reigning emperor, which to this day employ a million workmen, while Europe did not find out the secret of the manufacture until the beginning of the eighteenth century. […] Their rich silks and satins, lacquered ware, metal works, and carvings in ivory are well known in Europe. […]

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[38] Guangzhou
[39] Xiamen
[40] Fuzhou
[41] Ningbo

Japan

Draw or label on a map of Japan:

- Japan
- 5 main islands of Japan
  - Hokkaido
  - Honshu
  - Kyushu
  - Shikoku
  - Okinawa
- Ryukyu Islands
- Sea of Japan
- Pacific Ocean
- Mt. Fuji
- Tokyo, Japan
- Osaka, Japan
- Yokohama, Japan
- Nagasaki, Japan
- Hiroshima, Japan

Geographical Readers for Elementary Schools Book V pp. 103-108

Situated, with regard to Asia, as the British Isles are with regard to Europe—that is to say, islands separated from the continent by narrow seas; of about the same size as Britain; having about the same population;[42] with a landscape as verdant and as varied with mountain, vale, and woodland, with a climate of about the same average temperature, though more extreme, that is to say, colder in the winter and hotter in the summer,--the "land of the rising sun" may well be termed the Great Britain of the Eastern seas.

Japan Proper consists of three[43] main islands separated by lovely enclosed channels like inland seas, which afford capital harbours, and are sprinkled with hundreds of beauteous islets. The islands are of volcanic origin, forming part of the volcanic chain which skirts the east cost of the continent. Many of the mountains are from 3000 to 8000 feet in height, but the most famous is the now extinct volcanic cone of Fusi Yama[44] (14,000 feet)—whose snowy peak rises to the west of the capital—said to be one of the youngest mountains of the world, having risen in the course of a few days about three centuries before the Christian era.

The islands are generally mountainous, green, and beautiful. As they are long and narrow, with the mountains running lengthwise, the short and rapid rivers only add to the beauty and fertility of the country, but are not of much use for commerce.

Nothing can exceed the beauty of the coast scenery. An American traveller[45] thus describes the Bay of Jeddo:

[42] In 2019, Japan had a population about twice that of Great Britain (Google search result).
[43] Japan has five main islands: Hokkaido, Honshu, Kyushu, Shikoku, and Okinawa.
[44] Mt. Fuji, which is 12,388 feet
[45] Miss Mason seems to be quoting Bayard Taylor's 1860 *A Visit to India, China & Japan*.

> "The western shore opened on the left, showing a broad, deep bay, embosomed by hills, covered with the greenest and most luxuriant foliage, and with several large villages at their base. We approached within three miles of the eastern shore, which is loftier and wilder than the western, rising into a chain of rugged mountains which showed no sign of habitation or cultivation. But the lower slopes, which undulated gently to the water, charmed me by the rich beauty of their scattered groves, and the green terraces into which centuries of patient cultivation have formed them. Out of England, there is nothing so green, so garden-like, so full of tranquil beauty. This is, in fact, one of the largest and finest bays in the world, and second to none in the varied and delightful scenery of its shores."

In former years there were two Emperors of Japan, the Mikado, or spiritual ruler, and the Tycoon, or actual ruler; while the Daimios, or great nobles and princes, were almost independent of the government. But of late a great revolution has taken place; a powerful party in Japan became possessed with the desire that their country should take its place amongst the civilised States of the world. To this end, it was necessary to curtail the power of the great nobles, who held their lands under a kind of feudal tenure. The Mikado is still an absolute monarch, but he is assisted by a great council, over which he presides.

> " […] The streets and houses are clean to a proverb. The people take great pride in cleanliness. The floors of their houses are carpeted with fine, clean, white matting of native manufacture, so clean that they put off their shoes before entering a room. […] As to their personal cleanliness, that is placed beyond all doubt (!) by the institution of public baths, wherein you may see the whole population of every afternoon washing by turns.[46]

> "The people are very polite to strangers. They […] salute you civilly and pass on. Their language is sweet and musical, and easily learnt. The Japanese are lively, intelligent, liberal-minded, and anxious to improve in their knowledge […] In their dress they are neat, and not gaudy […]"

> "A taste for flower-gardens prevails with all classes, and in the rear of every shop a small spot of ground is laid out in miniature shrubberies, with dwarf pine, cedar, and orange, small piles of rock-work, a miniature lake, and winding paths, adapted for Liliputians."

> "The Japanese consider corporal punishment so degrading, that mothers never strike their offspring. Children are made to bear hunger, thirst, cold, pain, excessive labour, and the rigour of the seasons; and they are incessantly told that they must endure with patience the evils and misfortunes of life. Horror of

[46] The source for this quote and those following could not be determined.

> falsehood and fraud, and love of justice and virtue are diligently inculcated. One of the results of this general education is to inspire the Japanese with a passion for books, which causes surprise to European visitors; everywhere, even in towns of small population, there are numerous bookshops, and the books have usually many pictures, engravings on wood or copper."[47] […]
>
> "Copper is exceedingly abundant in Japan; it is very much used in all its forms of pure copper, brass, and bronze, and working in copper is the chief industry of Jeddo,[48] the capital city. We saw brass or copper coverings to the roofs of their temples and shrines; their altars were loaded with copper, brass, and bronze castings; and the skill with which the Japanese work this metal so as to imitate gold in all the articles of taste and luxury exhibited in Jeddo, called for our constant admiration."

Jeddo is the capital of Japan, and its largest city; it is a wood-built town, spreading itself in the form of a crescent at the head of the Bay of Jeddo. […]

Osaka, […] on a land-locked bay, has been called the "Venice of Japan," from its many canals and bridges, and is the favourite resort of the fashionable, possessing sumptuous tea-houses, gardens, and theatres.

Yokohama and Nagasaki, like Jeddo itself, are amongst the ports which have been opened to foreign commerce; for, until recently, the Japanese were so jealous of any influence from abroad, that no foreigner was allowed up on their shores; and even at the present time a great number of the interior departments are closed to foreigners. The trade of Japan is now carried on chiefly with Great Britain and the United States; the great export to our country being silk; the chief imports from it, cotton and woollen goods.

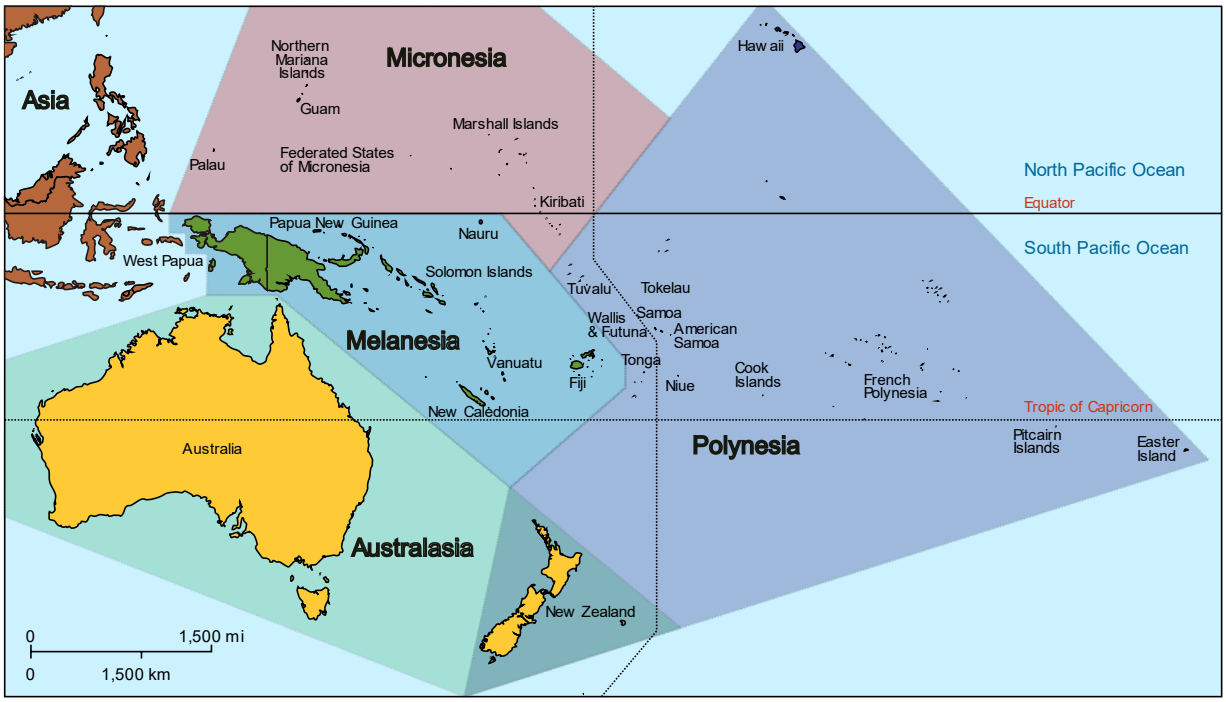
The town of Nagasaki has been gradually increasing in size and importance since it first gave admittance to foreigners, and it now ranks as one of the five imperial towns of the empire. The streets are rather crooked; some are parallel, and cross streets run up the hillsides, till they reach the country with its pleasant tea-gardens and retired hamlets. Most of the streets have gates at both ends, which are closed every night. Here are schools where the young Japanese may be heard roaring out their lessons; and shops for the sale of necessaries and luxuries, such as sweetmeats, fruits, wines, and tobacco; silk shops, too, and old curiosity shops with bronzes, porcelain, and lacquered ware.

[…] They are a nation of farmers, cultivating the group in the most careful and excellent way; rice, maize, wheat, barley, tea, cotton, and tobacco, as well as the mulberry tree, being the principal objects of culture. The islands have a very beautiful flora, to which

[47] This paragraph seems to again be from Bayard Taylor's 1860 *A Visit to India, China & Japan*.
[48] The English name for Edo, which was renamed Tokyo in 1868.

our European gardens owe many of their ornamental plants: the special beauty of Japan is, that here plants of tropical and of temperate regions flourish side by side: the banana, bamboo, tree-ferns, and palms, along with the pine, oak, beech, and chestnut. The camphor and lacquer trees, the vegetable wax tree, and the paper mulberry are characteristic of Japan. […]

Polynesia



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As you will learn, the Pacific Ocean is home to thousands of small islands, many of which are grouped together as a region or a modern state. Completing your map, therefore, will be a challenging exercise. As best as you are able, sketch the islands on the map as they appear relative to each other.

<u>Draw or label on a map of the Pacific Ocean:</u>

- Pacific Ocean
- Equator
- 180th Meridian
- Tropic of Cancer
- Tropic of Capricorn
- Hawai'i
- Caroline Islands
- Micronesia
- Palau
- Northern Mariana Islands
- Guam
- Tonga
- Samoa
- American Samoa
- Cook Islands
- Austral Islands
- French Polynesia
- Society Islands
- Tuamotu Archipelago
- Marquesas Islands
- Valparaíso, Chile
- Tahiti (in French Polynesia)

[49] source: Oceania_ISO_3166-1.svg: User:Tintazulderivative work: Cruickshanks, CC BY-SA 3.0 <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0>, via Wikimedia Commons

Definitions:

Atoll - a ring-shaped reef, island, or chain of islands formed of coral

Geographical Readers for Elementary Schools Book V pp. 268-271

The name Polynesia, or, the "many islands," is usually employed to include all the small islands and groups of islands in the wide Pacific, which are not included in the Australian and East Indian archipelagoes. By far the greater number of these lie to the south of the equator […]

The smaller islands of Polynesia fall, for the most part, within the ten following groups, three of which are to the north and seven to the south of the equator. The Sandwich,[50] Caroline,[51] and Ladrone Islands[52] in north latitude; and the Friendly Islands,[53] the Navigators Islands,[54] Cook's Islands,[55] the Austral Islands,[56] the Society Islands,[57] the Low Archipelago,[58] and the Marquesas,[59] all south of the equator. For about 3000 miles from Valparaiso the sea is almost free from islands; but thence to the East Indies, an immense belt of ocean, nearly 5000 miles in length, and 1500 in breadth, is so studded with them as to be almost one continuous archipelago. Very few of these gems of the ocean are more than a few miles in extent; Hawaii, indeed, is about the size of Yorkshire, and Tahiti and some others of the more western groups rank among the larger islands.

The islands of Polynesia are naturally divided into two classes,--the mountainous islands, which are mostly of volcanic formation; and the coral islands, low reefs, raised only a few feet above the level of the sea.

Imagine a belt of land in the wide ocean, not half a mile broad, but forming a sort of irregular circle, a ring of land, sometimes several miles in circumference: this ring of land is literally a bank of glowing flowers and rich tropical verdure, the feathery foliage of the cocoa-nut tree rising above the rest: within the bank is a narrow beach of glittering whiteness encircling the waters of a lagoon, still and clear, and of a beautiful green colour, in contrast with the deep blue of the outer ocean. These are the coral islands, *atolls* as they are called: they are all of the same shape—a bank of verdure encircling a still lagoon with a snowy beach. You may sail day after day, day after day, amongst

[50] Hawai'ian Island, which will be covered with North America
[51] The Caroline Islands are a disparate group of islands. They were once governed by Spain, but now some are part of Micronesia and some are part of Palau.
[52] Mariana Islands, divided into the Northern Mariana Islands and Guam, both territories of the United States.
[53] Tonga
[54] Samoa and American Samoa
[55] Cook's Islands or Cook Islands, dependency of New Zealand.
[56] The Austral Islands are part of French Polynesia, a dependency of France.
[57] The Society Islands are also a part of French Polynesia.
[58] Tuamotu Archipelago
[59] The Marquesas Islands are a dependency of France.

these fairy islets, and in the blue transparent waters you see forests of coral of every colour, studded with brilliant sea-flowers, among which shoals of the brightest and swiftest fish dart and flash to and fro; here are elegant shells, nimble crimson and yellow prawns, long, gliding green worms, and purple sea-urchins with enormous spines,--truly a strange world of enchantment.

The Sandwich Islands, the Ladrones, the Society Islands, and the Marquesas, together with some of the Friendly, Navigators, and Cook's Islands are of volcanic formation; the rest are chiefly coral islands, a class which includes the greater number of islands, though they are, for the most part, extremely small. […]

Polynesia Part II and Part III

Draw or label on a map of the Pacific Ocean:

- Pacific Ocean
- Equator
- 180th Meridian
- Tropic of Cancer
- Tropic of Capricorn
- New Caledonia
- Coral Sea
- Torres Strait
- Australia
- Fiji Islands
- Viti Levu (island of Fiji)
- Vanua Levu (island of Fiji)
- Society Islands
- Tahiti
- Pepeete, French Polynesia
- New Guinea (island)
- Indonesia
- Papua New Guinea (country)
- Solomon Islands

Definitions:

Torrid zone – the tropical zone, lying near the Equator

Geographical Readers for Elementary Schools Book V pp. 271-276

Polynesia Part II

[…] The South Sea Islanders are […] a seafaring race; and they show great skill and boldness in the construction and management of their canoes. They show skill, too, in making their weapons, and in weaving stuffs for their own clothing. […]

But the habits and institutions of the Polynesians have been greatly altered during the last forty years by the presence of the missionary: many of the islanders have been converted to Christianity. There are resident missionaries in nearly all the principal islands […]

Nothing can be more delightful than the perpetual spring which reigns in these sunny isles; heat and drought, storm and tempest, even the gradual changes of the seasons, are almost unknown here. Situated in the torrid zone, and supplied with abundant moisture by the ocean winds, every one of them is clad with the most luxuriant green vegetation. Almost every plant necessary for the food of man grows spontaneously, and some most valuable plants are peculiar to these isles. Among these is the bread-fruit tree, which affords the principal food of the natives; plantain, arrowroot, cocoa-nut, yam, and sweet potato, are native to all the islands. All edible fruits and vegetables are, however, found to flourish here,--the orange, lemon, lime, citron, pomegranate, fig, *&c. &c.*; and the sugar-cane, coffee, cotton, and tobacco are cultivated. Tree-ferns fill every

dell, and nothing can exceed the grace and beauty and glorious colours of the flowering plants.

Polynesia Part III

The most important group south of the equator is that of the Viti or Fiji Islands, consisting of nearly a hundred inhabited islands—all of them mountainous, fertile, and lovely: Viti[60] and Vanua[61] are the two largest islands, and Levuka[62] is the seaport of the group, exporting cocoa-nut oil and cotton. […]

The Society Islands, a volcanic group, mountainous, beautiful, and very fertile, out in the centre of the South Pacific, belong to France. The largest island, Tahiti, the "Gem of the Pacific," is celebrated for the extreme beauty of its mountain valleys and cascades.

Landing at Papiete,[63] the port of Tahiti, we are in the midst of a scene of extraordinary brightness and life. It is market-day, and women in red, blue, and green garments, and men in garb of every colour—both alike adorned with flower-wreaths on head or neck—are coming in from the country, by sea and by land, to sell their produce. The market buildings are partitioned across with great bunches of oranges, plantains, and many-coloured vegetables hung on strings. The gaily dressed, flower-decorated native crowd look more like people out for a holiday than working folk about their business.

Leaving the town, we go into the open country: imagine all the hot-houses you have ever seen thrown into one, and magnified immensely and laid out as a gentleman's park, and you will have some sort of idea of the beauty and colour, and rich luxuriance of this country, traversed by grassy roads fringed with cocoa-nut palms, leading through plantations of coffee and sugar-cane, cotton and maize, and every now and then giving a glimpse of the sea and the beach and the coral reefs: and by-and-by you enter a forest, and a footpath leads you to one of the magnificent waterfalls for which the island is famous. […]

> "New Guinea, or Papua, the largest island in all Polynesia, is about five times as large as England and Wales. Very little is at present known of the interior. A range of mountains appears to cross the island from north-west to south-east, reaching a height of 18,000 feet, the highest mountains in all Polynesia. The soil is exceedingly fertile, but the country is covered almost everywhere with dense virgin forests, in which are countless birds of the most gorgeous and beautiful

[60] Viti Levu, island of Fiji
[61] Vanua Levu, island of Fiji
[62] Levuka, Fiji, is on the island of Ovalau, east of Viti Levu
[63] Pepeete

plumage, but few or none of the larger animals; such as there are are marsupials. […] ”[64]

[64] Miss Mason is probably quoting from one of the many books and atlases Alexander Keith Johnston published. Her footnote, “Keith Johnston’s ‘Geography’” is not specific enough to identify the exact volume.

Australia

Draw or label on a map of Australia:

- Australia
- Coral Sea
- Indian Ocean
- Timor Sea
- Torres Strait
- Tasmania
- Cape Howe
- Cape York
- Botany Bay / Sydney, Australia
- Great Dividing Range
- Wilsons Promontory
- Mount Kosciuszko
- Australian Alps
- Liverpool Range
- Murray River
- Darling River
- Spencer Gulf
- New South Wales
- Victoria
- Melbourne, Australia
- Ballarat, Australia
- Great Barrier Reef

Geographical Readers for Elementary Schools Book V pp. 278-282

When rumours of its existence first came to be noised abroad, Australia was not like America; as far as its native products went, it was a barren land enough; and here were no rivers like inland seas, and no gigantic mountains, capped with snow, and yet emitting flame; none of the marvels of the Western continent. When, therefore, the "Great South Land" was discovered, after many conjectures and much patient search, the event made little stir in the world. One Torres, a Spaniard, who passed through the strait that bears his name in the year 1606, was the first to give any reliable account of the new land. Then, sundry Dutch seamen touched from time to time upon various points of the coast. Tasman discovered Tasmania, or Van Diemen's Land. In 1770, Captain Cook traced the whole of the eastern coast from Cape Howe to Cape York, taking formal possession of the whole in the name of his sovereign, King George III. of Great Britain and Ireland. Twenty years later, the colony of New South Wales[65] was established.

The map shows that the configuration of Australia is not unlike that of Africa—the other Great South Land: a mountain chain runs parallel with the east coast, that is, in a north and south direction; and, reaching out from these mountains to the sea, is a coast plain, varying in width from 30 to 100 miles. This narrow strip of coast plain is by far the most flourishing part of the vast continent of Australia.

[65] The first colony was at Botany Bay. Sydney is near-by.

The eastern mountains form one long range, reaching from Cape Wilson[66] to Cape York, and called the Dividing Range; but the southern portion of the chain is known as the Australian Alps, with Mount Kosciusko (6500 feet);[67] and further north, the beautiful purple-blue of the mountain haze has obtained for the range the name of the Blue Mountains.[68]

The Blue Mountains afford the most picturesque mountain scenery of Australia, though their highest point, Mount York, is not much more than half the height of Kosciusko. But here are chasms and precipices and rugged passes, and steep walls of naked rock, 2000 feet high. To the north of the Blue Mountains is the Liverpool range: the mountains which stretch away from these to the northern point are but imperfectly known.

No doubt the long ridge of the Dividing Range presented obstacles to the early settlers; but that is not the only reason why the strip of eastern coast-land is thickly settled, out of all proportion with the rest of the continent: it is a well-watered, undulating, pleasant country; many streams descend from the hills—the Brisbane, Richmond, Clarence, Hastings,[69] &c.; and as fresh water, whether in the form of lakes or rivers, in the great want of Australia, it is no wonder that this fertile country should have been the first to attract the settler.

The first English settlements were formed upon the east coast; but, in 1813, a pass was discovered across the Blue Mountains, and then the real wealth of Australia disclosed itself,--the vast green pastures, the “sheep runs,” which stretch away endlessly to the west.

The discovery that the whole of the inland slope of the Dividing Range yields gold, in greater or less abundance, drew diggers hither from every corner of the earth, thus spreading the population westward, beyond the mountains. The Australian Alps and the hilly country to the west afford the richest diggings. Australia possesses other mineral treasures which may outlast its gold; to the east of Spencer Gulf are the richest copper mines in the world; lead is found in the same district; while coal and iron, tin, marbles, and building-stones have been found in various parts of the continent.

The richness of the gold deposits at the foot of the Australian Alps has changed the character of New South Wales from that of a thinly-peopled pastoral country to one of the most rising and flourishing colonies […] Specimens were occasionally brought to Sydney by shepherds and labouring men, and as soon as it was known that gold was to be found in large quantities, multitudes flocked to Australia from every quarter […]

[66] Miss Mason likely refers to Wilsons Promontory.
[67] Mount Kosciuszko is the highest point in Australia at 7,310 feet.
[68] The Blue Mountains are in an area west of Sydney. Note the Great Dividing Range continues much farther north, all the way to Cape York.
[69] These are among the many small rivers on the east coast of Australia. They may not appear in a world atlas.

Large masses, "nuggets," have frequently been found, but generally the gold is met with in grains.

Some of the principal gold fields in Victoria are in the Ballarat district, west of Melbourne.

> "The hills begin to slope gradually towards Ballarat. The forest trees are loftier and denser, but the surface soil is not so richly grassed. Within a mile and a half of Golden Point, the tents begin to peer through the trees.
>
> "The bank of the creek is lined with cradles, in which are rocked, not babies by any means, but masses of clay, rocked and shaken about in water until every grain of gold is worked out of them. The washers are in full operation. We descend, spring over a dam, and are among the workmen. 'Rock, rock rock! swish, swash, swish!' such is the universal sound. Higher up the hill's crest and along its sides are the tents, thickly clustered and pitched, and far beyond, the lofty white-barked trees from a background. This is Ballarat as it was in the days of the early diggers.
>
> "You meet men you have not seen for years. 'Ah, old friend! hardly knew you; how are you getting on? 'Did nothing for a week; tried six holes and found no gold. But now we have reached the blue clay. It is a capital hole; come and see it.'
>
> "Imagine a gigantic honeycomb, in which the cells are eight feet wide and twenty feet or so deep, with a very thin partition between them. To follow a friend, and to find a hole in the very midst is dangerous work. The miners move nimbly about, with barrow, pick, and bag, swarming along the narrow ledges, while, below, others are picking, shovelling, and heating the stove. 'No danger, sir. Our bank is supported by quartz, but there was a man killed yesterday, three holes off. We've got to the gold at last; made an ounce yesterday.'"[70]

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[70] Miss Mason is quoting *The Three Colonies of Australia; New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia; Their Pastures, Copper-mines, and Gold Fields* by Samuel Sidney, 1852.

Australia Part II

Draw or label on a map of Australia:

- Murray River
- Darling River
- Lachlan River
- Murrumbidgee River
- States of Australia
    - New South Wales
    - Victoria
    - Queensland
    - South Australia
    - Tasmania
    - Western Australia
- Internal Territories
    - Australian Capital Territory
    - Jervis Bay Territory
    - Northern Territory
- Spencer Gulf
- Sydney, Australia
- Gulf of Carpentaria
- Central Lowlands
- Cooper Creek
- Lake Eyre
- Lake Torrens
- Lake Gairdner
- Lake Amadeus
- Western Platte
- Sturt Stony Desert
- Tanami Desert
- Great Sandy Desert
- Great Victory Desert
- Great Australian Bight
- Pacific Ocean
- Great Barrier Reef

Geographical Readers for Elementary Schools Book V pp. 283-288

As we have said, the want of rivers is the great defect of Australian geography. There is but one *great* river in the whole of Australia—the Murray, with its tributaries the Darling, Lachlan, and Murrumbidgee; and even the Murray, in its course through the dry plains, fails altogether in some seasons, and becomes a chain of stagnant pools. Its large tributaries have, however, an unfailing flow.

Great pains have been taken to improve the navigation of the Murray, which now extends to the different gold-bearing districts and unites the traffic of the three greatest Australian colonies—New South Wales, Victoria, and Queensland. From Spencer Gulf which has three excellent harbours, one of which could contain the whole British navy, the Murray has been navigated for 2650 miles, and it is estimated that over 1000 more may be added by the improved navigation of three of its tributaries. In consequence of this increased water-carriage, many new towns have been built, some of them of considerable size. There is much grass land in this district.

As in all warm latitudes, the rivers in Australia are flooded in the winter, and dwindle in the summer. The smaller streams, called “creeks” in Australia, become wholly dried up during the heat, or else are converted into a chain of ponds. And a piteous sight is in to

see the great road over the mountains which leads from the interior to Sydney, strewed with the whitened bones of draught oxen that have perished of thirst by the way.

The coast rivers of Eastern Australia are many of them fine streams; but the only considerable rivers of the continent which carry water to the sea throughout the year are those which fall into the Gulf of Carpentaria. Many of the rivers never reach the sea, but flow inland, and are lost in salt marshes.

As the continent of Australia has so few large rivers, it was concluded that no very high land existed in the interior, even before these inland regions were explored. The eastern half is now pretty well known, and it has been found to consist of a vast shallow basin, the inland rivers, with the exception of the Murray and its tributaries, losing themselves in a chain of salt lakes. Cooper Creek, otherwise known as the Barcoo, or Victoria river, is the largest of these streams. Of the salt lakes, the most remarkable group lies to the north of Spencer Gulf,--lakes Eyre, Torrens, and Gairdner. Lake Amadeus, more recently discovered in the very heart of Australia, is a great salt marsh like these. The western half of Australia is supposed to be such another shallow basin as the eastern.

Such knowledge as we have of the interior of Australia has been obtained at the sacrifice of noble lives. The first of these brave and intelligent travellers was Captain Sturt, who explored the Murray, and its tributary the Darling; and, later, penetrated half-way across the continent until he came to the barren tract called the Great Stony Desert.[71] Dr. Leichhardt followed, and crossed the continent; and, three years later, he set out to cross it from east to west, but he never returned; and after another three years, a Mr. Gregory went in search of him; but all he found were the remains of one of his camps, and his initials carved on a tree. Later, Burke and his party succeeded in crossing the continent, but only one of the four returned to tell the tale.

The discoveries of these explorers prove that the interior of Australia is by no means so barren as is sometimes supposed. Burke says, in a letter written shortly before his death:--“We have discovered a practicable route to Carpentaria. There is some good country between this and the Stony Desert. From there to the tropic the country is dry and stony. Between the tropic and Carpentaria, a considerable portion is rangy, but it is well watered and richly grassed.” In later days, it has become a common feat enough to cross the continent, but the danger and glory of the undertaking belong to the early explorers.[72]

The climate of Australia, tropical and subtropical, is like that of Northern Africa; indeed, the situation of the continent across the southern tropic, is like that of Africa across the northern one. The slopes of the eastern mountain ranges face the winds from the

[71] Sturt Stony Desert

[72] Note that aboriginal people of Australia had probably crossed the interior of Australia many times before Europeans arrived.

Pacific, and condense the moisture they bring from the ocean and pour down in rivers upon the coast plains—by far the most fertile parts of the continent. The whole of the interior region may be said to be almost rainless. Thus, entering Australia from the Pacific side, we should pass from the cultivated fields and rich grass plains of the eastern hill slopes and plateaus into the dreary steppes of the interior, where the soil is bare, often incrusted with salt and covered with thickets and scrub, often quite impenetrable. In the Australian spring-time, the interior plains look fresh, but in summer they become dreary wastes; the "creeks" dry up, and men and animals scour the plains in search of pools of brackish water.

The trees and shrubs which are found in Australia are almost all evergreens, or rather, ever grays, so that the forests are dull and sombre enough, and there is little change of colouring throughout the year. The characteristic tree is the eucalyptus, or gum tree, which becomes a huge tree on the eastern plains, and of which there are a hundred different varieties. […]

The rains of Australia—where there are rains—are periodical, falling in the Australian winter, that is between June and September. Then the rain comes down in sheets, not in showers, making deep, strong rivers of the creeks, flooding the fields, and making rivers of the highways of the towns. But most distressing droughts sometimes occur in New South Wales, when not a drop of rain falls for months, and the cattle perish by hundreds.

Instances have even occurred of no rain falling for two or three years at a time, and these periodical droughts are most trying to the great sheep and cattle breeders, or *squatters*, of the interior. South Australia and Victoria are much better off in the matter of regular rains. The Australian season takes place at exactly the opposite periods of the year to our own, the Australian Christmas occurring in the intensest heat of summer, and being a gay, open-air festival of flowers and fruits.

We have spoken of the eucalyptus; that and the acacia are the characteristic trees of Australia. The Australian cedar yields a beautiful wood, not unlike Spanish mahogany. The sombre forests are strangely lighted up by birds of the most beautiful plumage,--parrots, parroquets, cockatoos, lovely little honey-suckers, lories, and many others. Ferns grow to an enormous size here, and there are stinging nettles forty feet high, and reeds nearly as tall. The native grasses are spread over boundless tracts of the interior. But Australian grass does not form a close turf covering the soil like that of an English meadow, but grows in separate tufts, showing the earth between: therefore, a space of five acres is required for the feed of a single sheep; and the sheep and cattle runs of the great squatters cover enormous tracts of country, sometimes as much as 70,000 acres.

With a few trifling exceptions, there are no native food plants in Australia—none that could be useful to any great extent in supporting life. […] they are extremely active and clever in hunting the kangaroo and opossum, the characteristic animals of Australia.

Almost all the mammals of the continent belong to the marsupial type, that is, they are furnished with a sort of natural pouch in which to carry their young. […]

If Australia has no native food plants, all those of Europe, and many belonging to the tropics, flourish here in wonderful abundance; every sort of corn plant, delicious fruits—the fig, orange, olive, mulberry, peach; the vine, the tea-plant, cotton, and tobacco, have been cultivated with much success.

New South Wales

Draw or label on a map of Australia:

- New South Wales
- Victoria
- Murray River
- Sydney, Australia
- Newcastle, Australia
- Port Macquarie, Australia
- Great Dividing Range
- Liverpool Range
- Riverina
- Source of the Murray River
- Murrumbidgee River
- New England Range
- Tasman Sea
- Bathurst, Australia
- Canberra, Australia
- Australian Central Territory
- Jervis Bay Territory
- Darling River
- Source of the Darling River

Remember that Miss Mason published this book in 1884, when Great Britain still governed Australia.

Geographical Readers for Elementary Schools Book V pp. 288-290

This colony, which is about five times the size of England and Wales, incudes the south-eastern region of Australia, the river Murray marking the boundary between it and Victoria.

It is an exceedingly flourishing and prosperous colony, and promises, one day, to be a great country: promises, we say, because its resources are far from fully developed, and its population is less on the average than three persons to the square mile.

The climate is remarkably healthy; hot, as compared with England; but the atmosphere is so pure and dry, that the settler becomes accustomed to the heat, and finds that, instead of producing lassitude, it fits him for the most vigorous enjoyment of life.

A long sea-board with many excellent harbours—as, Botany Bay,[73] Port Jackson,[74] Port Stephen,[75] Port Marquarie—gives every facility for commerce; and so rich and abundant is the produce of the country, that, already, the commerce of Sydney extends to all parts of the world; wool, gold, coal, tallow, copper, and grain, are sent out in great quantities.

[73] Botany Bay is 8 miles (13 km) south of Sydney's central business district, but the suburbs of the metropolitan area now encompass the bay.
[74] Port Jackson is the natural harbor of Sydney and the site of the famous Sydney Opera House.
[75] Port Stephen is just north of the modern city of Newcastle.

The Liverpool range and the Blue Mountains divide the colony into two parts. On the one side is the coast-plain, watered by abundant streams, and extremely fertile. This is the agricultural region, where European grains and fruits are cultivated in abundance. Besides the finest wheat—two crops in a year in certain districts—almost every vegetable raised at home for Covent Garden Market grows here with great luxuriance, besides many others foreign to our English soil. And then the orchards and orangeries! In the neighbourhood of Port Jackson—the magnificent natural harbour on which Sydney is built—you may see the very shores lined with groves of orange trees laden with the delicious fruit. A single settler may have a yield of twenty thousand dozen of oranges from his plantation in one season. The orange trees are planted in long double rows, with an avenue between; and all the way down, you may see the great golden fruit gleaming amongst the dark green leaves. Peaches, too, are so abundant, that "you can't eat them, and can't sell them, and can't give them away," and they are carried off in bucketfuls to feed the pigs; and figs and plums, apricots and nectarines, and a dozen other delicious fruits grow in the same lavish abundance.

The grass plains of the inland slope, called the "Riverina," are divided off into the vast sheep runs of New South Wales: and here are grown the "Botany wools," which the British manufacturer chooses in preference to most other kinds, for their fineness and silky softness. Sheep-farming is the principal employment of the people; the periodical droughts, occurring at intervals of ten or twelve years, being less unfavourable to sheep-rearing than to agriculture. An enormous quantity of wool is exported to England every year.

Between the source of the rivers Murray and Murrumbidgee and between the New England and the Liverpool ranges, are the most productive gold mines, but the precious metal is found throughout the region traversed by the mountains. Silver, copper, lead, and iron are also widely distributed in the mountain region; the chief coal-fields are in the valley of the river Hunter,[76] one of the finest districts of the colony.

Sydney, the Australian metropolis, is one of the most English towns in the world: good broad streets, fine shops, handsome public buildings, and the sights and sounds of London or Liverpool make the emigrant doubt whether he is not still in his native country, until "an occasional orange tree in full bloom or fruit, in the back yard of some of the older cottages, or a flock of little green parrots, whistling as they alight for a moment on a house-top,"[77] remind him that the wide ocean is between him and England. George Street, the principal thoroughfare of Sydney, is a very fine street indeed […] Sydney has its university, and is, in all respects, a fine English town.

[76] The Hunter River enters the Tasman Sea at Newcastle.
[77] Miss Mason is quoting from *Our Antipodes; or*, *Residence and rambles in the Australasian colonies. With a glimpse of the gold fields* by Godfrey Charles Mundy (second edition in 1857).

Bathurst, the spot where gold was first found in Australia, Paramatta,[78] Newcastle, the great coal port at the mouth of the Hunter, Goulburn, the chief place in the southern gold-mining district,[79] and Deniliquin, the centre of the pastoral district of the "Riverina," are the other most important towns.

[78] Paramatta is now a part of the Sydney metropolis.
[79] One of the first inland cities of Australia (European), Goulburn is now too small for most world atlases. It is about 50 miles northwest of Canberra

Victoria and Tasmania

Draw or label on a map of Australia:

- Victoria
- Tasmania
- Murray River
- Castlemaine, Australia
- Ballarat, Australia
- Port Phillip Bay
- Geelong, Australia
- Melbourne, Australia
- Murray River Basin
- Discovery Bay
- Waranga Basin
- Wilsons Promontory
- Tasman Sea
- Bass Strait
- Great Western Tiers
- South West Cape
- Tasman Peninsula
- Hobart, Australia

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Victoria

Victoria, which may be compared to Great Britain in size, occupies the south-eastern corner of the continent. The colony takes the first place as a gold-bearing region, the principal gold fields lying along the ridge which forms the water-parting between the rivers flowing into the Murray and those flowing into the ocean. The richest district is at the base of Mount Alexander;[80] and Ballarat, a little further to the south, is also a rich gold-bearing region.

No part of Australia is so pleasantly diversified as Victoria. A hilly, undulating, well-watered country fills up nearly the whole province,--a park-like and lovely succession of hill and dale, woodland and prairie. Wheat, maize, and potatoes, fruits and table vegetables, are largely grown, and flourish on a fertile soil, and in a climate mild, on the whole, as that of the Mediterranean coasts, though subject to sudden changes from heat to cold.

But sheep-farming is the great industry of Victoria; everywhere are pastures of the richest grass, and the wealthy squatters have occupied more than three-fourths of the province in great sheep and cattle runs. Indeed, Port Phillip exports more wool annually than the older and larger colony of New South Wales.

The southern coast of Victoria is fringed with inlets and salt lagoons; and, of these, Port Phillip is the most important and the most beautiful opening. You enter through a narrow passage between two “heads” into what looks like an immense lake, surrounded by the loveliest landscape,--wooded hills, and soft, undulating plains. An arm of the bay

[80] Castlemaine is in the shire of Mount Alexander.

forms the harbour of Geelong with the seaport town of the same name which rivals Melbourne itself in its foreign trade.

Melbourne, which has become the largest city of Australia, stands near the head of Port Phillip. It is a handsome town, with straight, wide streets, and noble public buildings. Ballarat, in the midst of one of the first discovered gold-fields, is the largest interior town.

Tasmania

Tasmania, or Van Dieman's Land, is an island somewhat smaller than Ireland, lying off the south-east point of Australia.

Its climate is something like that of England, except that the summer heat is sometimes greater; and where the island is cultivated, its hedges, fields, and orchards beside the villages remind one of England. Tasmania is a land of hill and dale, stern and mountainous towards the centre: much of it is under forest, the myrtle wood and blue gum tree covering vast tracts, while elegant tree ferns fill the glens.

The inhabitants are nearly all of British origin, and are chiefly engaged in agriculture, the two most important trading towns exporting wool, timber, hops, wheat, oil, and fruit. Tasmania abounds in valuable minerals, iron, tin, and coal.

Queensland

Draw or label on a map of Australia:

- Queensland
- Coral Sea Islands Territory
- Great Barrier Reef
- Great Dividing Range
- Great Artesian Basin
- Brisbane, Australia
- Moreton Island
- Fraser Island
- Hervey Bay
- Cape Manifold
- Princess Charlotte Bay
- Cape York
- Torres Strait
- Cape York Peninsula
- Gulf of Carpentaria
- Mornington Island
- Warrego River
- Diamantina River
- Mitchell River
- Gilbert River
- Flinders/Norman Rivers

Geographical Readers for Elementary Schools Book V pp. 292-293

This colony, which is about eight times the size of Great Britain, occupies the whole of the north-east of the continent.

Here, as in New South Wales, the "Dividing Range" breaks the country into a short slope towards the coast, and a long inland slope. The climate, as we might expect, is tropical. It is hot and moist on the shores of the Pacific, and the swampy ground produces cotton, finer than the sea-island cotton of America, sugar, indigo, and the fruits of the tropics. The higher grounds of the seawards slope yield two crops of the finest wheat in the year. Up in the hill region are wide "downs," upon which innumerable sheep are fed; and here, on the highlands, the climate is more temperate. The highlands of the interior are well suited for sheep-farming, but the long inland slope passes by degrees into the dry, barren steppes of Central Australia, where the rivers dry up in the summer heats, leaving only stagnant pools, and rain is hardly known. The grasses are here completely destroyed and swept away by the hot summer winds.

The mineral wealth of Queensland is very great. There are valuable gold-fiends in the north, and copper, tin, and iron are widely distributed. The capital of the colony is the flourishing town of Brisbane, on the river of the same name, close to the fine inlet of Moreton Bay.[81] It has a large trade in tinned meats, as well as its more important trades in wool, cotton, and timber. The Moreton Bay pine affords valuable timber.

[81] Moreton Bay is the body of water between Moreton Island and Brisbane.

South Australia

Draw or label on a map of Australia:

- South Australia
- Northern Territory
- Great Australian Bight
- Kangaroo Island
- Gulf of Carpentaria
- Flinders Range
- Spencer Gulf
- Eyre Peninsula
- Lake Torrens
- Adelaide, Australia
- Darwin, Australia
- Great Victoria Desert
- Western Plateau
- Lake Eyre Basin
- Sturt Stony Desert
- Encounter Bay
- Amadeus Depression
- Macdonnell Ranges
- Tanami Desert
- Uluru (formerly Ayers Rock)
- Daly River
- Victoria River
- Van Diemen Gulf
- Joseph Bonaparte Gulf
- Timor Sea
- Melville Island
- Bathurst Island

At the time Miss Mason was writing, South Australia included both the modern state of South Australia and the Northern Territory

Geographical Readers for Elementary Schools Book V pp. 293-294

> This colony has a somewhat misleading name, for, at the present time, it embraces the middle division of the continent, from the great Australian Bight in the south, to the Gulf of Carpentaria on the north. A good deal of this vast region remains unexplored, and there is little hope that, when fully known, the unexplored districts will yield habitable lands for the settler. There are wide tracts of scrub, or brushwood, and stony and sandy desert tracts, without any vegetation at all; but, allowing for all this waste, there are still wide districts of rich grass lands, and plains well suited for agriculture.
>
> The most valuable part of the colony lies along the Flinders range of mountains, which extend from the Spencer Gulf towards Lake Torrens. Along the slopes of these hills, capital crops of wheat are raised, and fruits of all European sorts, especially the vine, grow very freely. Beyond the hills, sheep runs stretch far into the interior, and sheep and cattle rearing is one of the chief employments of the settlers. The Flinders range is rich in copper, which is the principal export of the colony, the Burra Burra mines being the richest: gold, silver, iron, tin, quicksilver, and various kinds of precious stones are among the minerals of this region.[82]

[82] The Burra Burra Mine is no longer an active mine, but it is a tourist town visited for its historic role.

> "The long line of telegraph which has been carried all across South Australia leads through interchanging grass land, brush, salt lagoons, and sandy desert, over the Macdonnel range of hills, in the centre of the continent, to the northern territory of the colony, a region which is yet quite undeveloped, but which seems fit for the cultivation of all tropical products."[83]

South Australia is the driest and the dustiest of the colonies, owing to the want of running water; but in many parts of the country there is enough rain for the needs of the farmers, and this is the most agricultural of the Australian colonies. A great deal of excellent wheat is grown and exported.

Adelaide, the capital, is a handsome city, well laid out, with straight, wide streets and fine public buildings.

---

[83] The source for this quote is unknown.

Western Australia

Draw or label on a map of Australia:

- Western Australia
- Perth, Australia
- Joseph Bonaparte Gulf
- Ord River
- Lake Argyle
- Collier Bay
- King Sound
- Fitzroy River
- Kimberly Plateau
- Great Sandy Desert
- Western Plateau
- Eighty Mile Beach
- DeGrey River
- Exmouth Gulf
- North West Basin
- Shark Bay
- Murchison River
- Darling Range
- Great Victoria Desert
- Nullarbor Plain
- Great Australian Bight

Geographical Readers for Elementary Schools Book V pp. 294-295

This is the poorest and least important of the Australian colonies. As in the east, hill ranges extend in a north and south direction at some distance from the coast: but the soil of this coast plain is generally poor and barren, and the rivers, which are flooded during the heavy rains, become dry water-courses during the summer heats.

This is a vast region, including the whole of Australia west of the 129th meridian, an area eleven times as great as that of Britain. Little, however, is yet known of this region beyond its coast-line, and along one or two tracks of explorers who have crossed the barren wastes which fill most of the interior.

The most important districts occupied by colonists lies along the outer slope of the hills to the southwest. But the colony is not prosperous, partly on account of its natural disadvantages, partly because it was made a settlement for convicts from Britain after the other colonies ceased to receive them.

The chief town is Perth.

New Zealand

Draw or label on a map of New Zealand:

- North Island
- South Island
- Stewart Island / Rakiura
- Lake Taupo (If the atlas shows one lake on the North Island, it is Lake Taupo.)
- Cook Strait
- Southern Alps (a mountain range on South Island that extends the length of the island)
- Auckland, New Zealand
- Wellington, New Zealand
- Tasman Sea
- Pacific Ocean
- Bay of Plenty
- Foveaux Strait
- East Cape
- North Cape
- Cape Farewell
- Puysegur Point

Geographical Readers for Elementary Schools Book V pp. 298-300

A line drawn from England through the centre of the globe would come out near the islands of New Zealand, which are, therefore, nearly at the antipodes of our islands of Britain. They lie at a distance of about 1200 miles south-east of the mainland of Australia. The group consists of two large islands, a northern and a southern, and of several smaller ones, of which Stewart Island, to the south, is the most important. The extent of the islands together is somewhat less than that of the United Kingdom.

The North Island is less compact than the southern, and runs out in long peninsulas. Nor is it so elevated as South Island, though it contains high summits. In the centre of the island rises a volcanic group, the highest summits of which are near 1000 feet high, and amongst these are many hot-water lakes and geysers, far surpassing those of Iceland in size. It has a large central lake, Taupo, 36 miles long.

The South Island, separated from the northern by Cook Strait, is almost covered by the high range called the Southern Alps, which rises to its greatest height on the western side of the island, forming high-walled fiords on the western coast. The highest point among the many peaks of this magnificent glacier and snow-clad range is Mount Cook, 13,200 feet high, near the centre of the chain. The Tasman glacier, depending from Mount Cook, is larger than any of those found in the Swiss Alps.

Almost the only level district in the South Island is the Plain of Canterbury, which reaches along the eastern coast for about 100 miles, and is so well stocked with sheep that wool has become one of the chief exports of the colony. The northern and eastern districts of the South Island are those best adapted for agriculture, the cultivation of wheat, oats, and barley.

The South Island has a number of fine rivers, and many deep alpine lakes amongst its mountains.

In general the climate of New Zealand resembles that of the British Isles. The North Island has a warmer and more equable, the South a cooler and more variable, climate, rough and bracing. Forests of lofty pines and other evergreen trees, tree ferns, and vegetation matted together by the rope-like “smilax,” occupy a large share of both islands.

New Zealand is very rich in minerals; gold-mining has become a settled industry: and iron and coal are found in the South Island.

When Captain Cook first explored these islands, they were peopled by the Maories[84] [...] During the long and frequent wars to which the British occupation of the islands has given rise, they have always shown themselves brave and skilful: but they have suffered greatly. […]

Auckland is now the largest town in the colony; and Wellington, Dunedin, and Christchurch are considerable and busy towns.

---

[84] The Māori People

Maps

You will need:

2 copies of the map of South and East Asia, plus 1 additional copy for exams

1 copy of the map of China

1 copy of the map of Japan

2 copies of the map of the Pacific Ocean, plus 1 additional copy for exams

7 copies of the map of Australia, plus 1 additional copy for exams

1 copy of the map of New Zealand

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South and East Asia

South and East Asia, hydrography, states
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China

China, boundaries, hydrography
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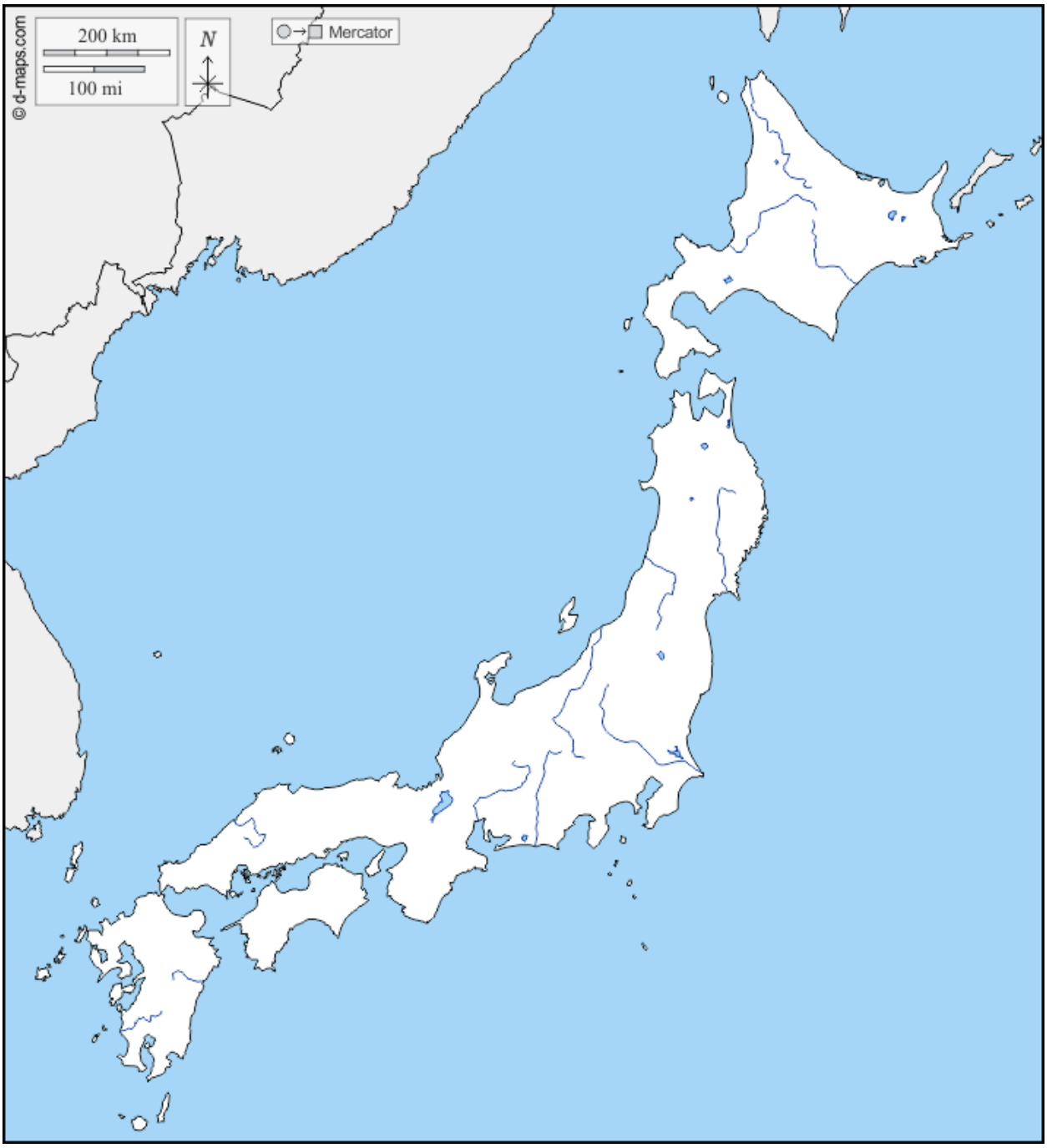
Japan



Japan, boundaries, hydrography
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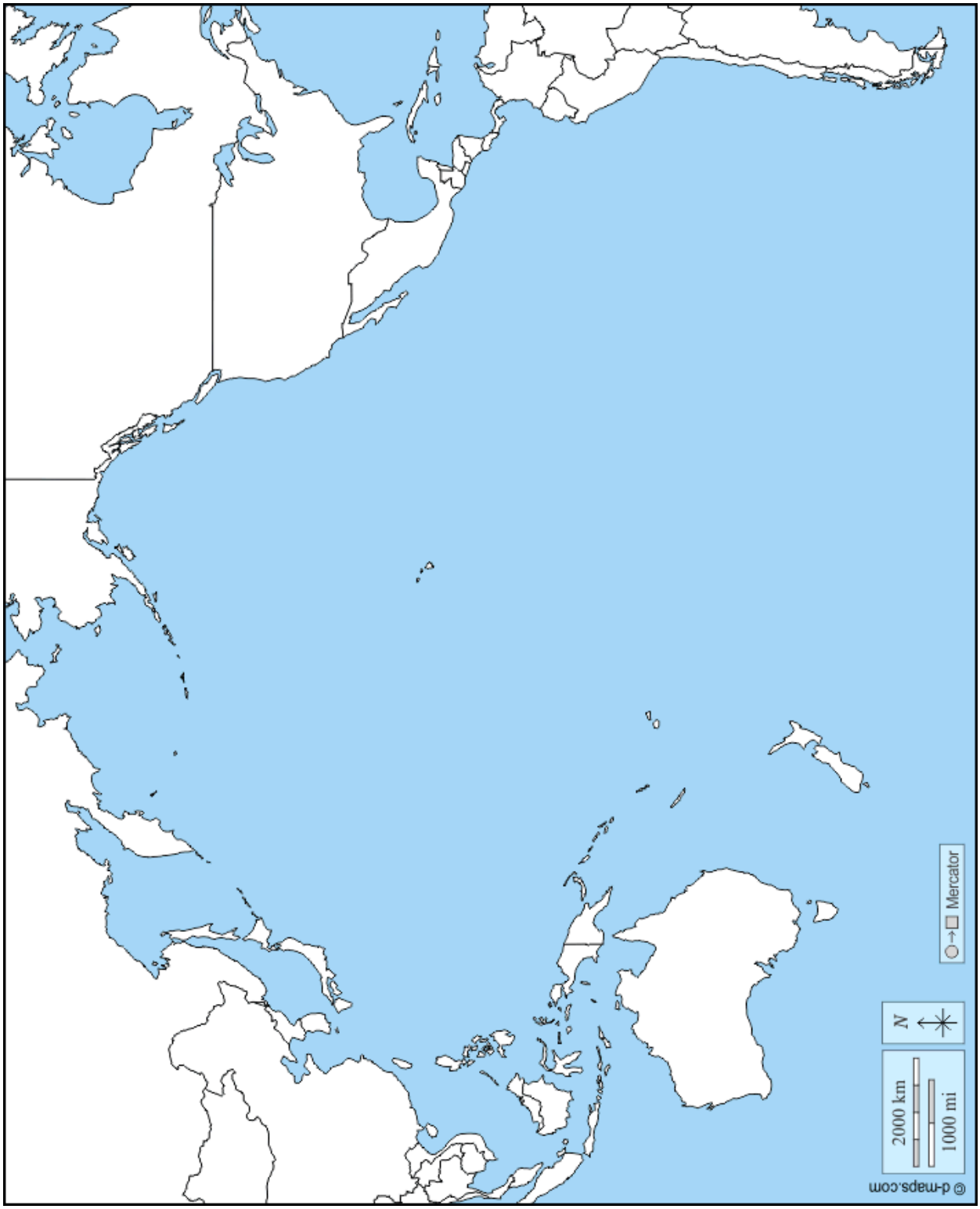
Pacific Ocean



Pacific Ocean, coasts, states
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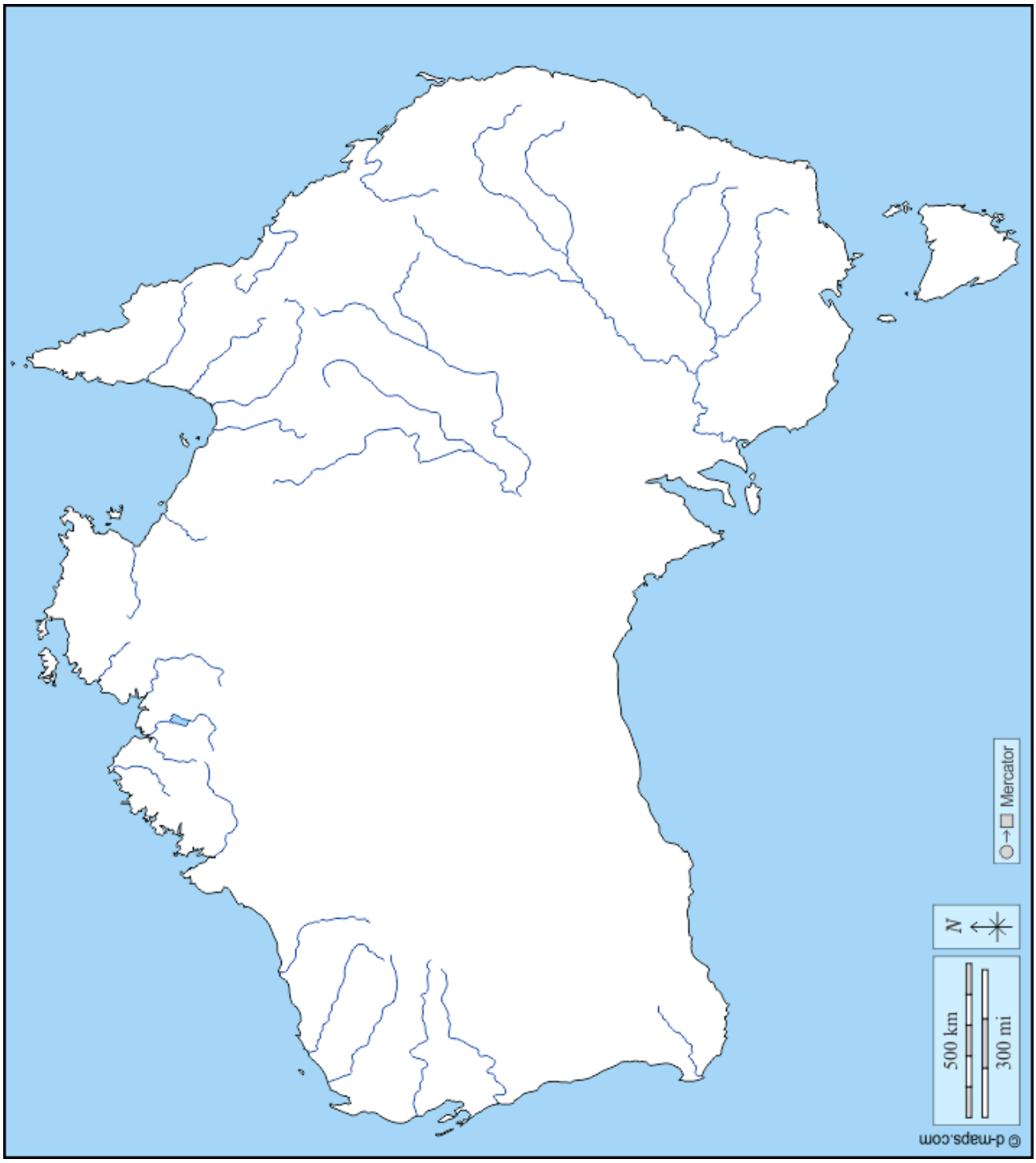
Australia



Australia, boundaries, hydrography
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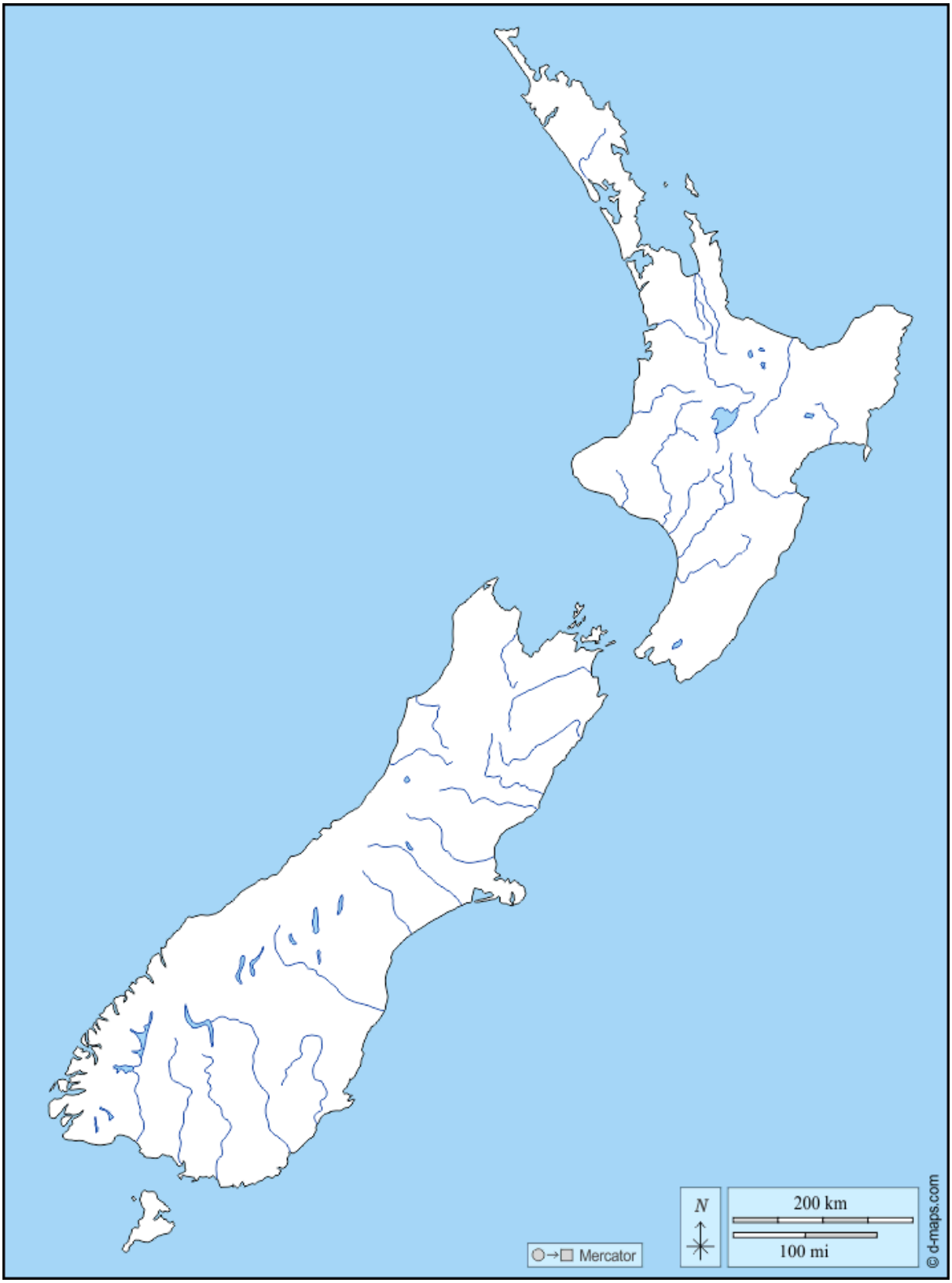
New Zealand



New Zealand, boundaries, hydrography
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