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The islands of the Pacific

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Appendix D.

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APPENDIX D.

*ISLANDS OF THE PACIFIC APPROPRIATED
BY EUROPEAN NATIONS.*

THE following statements are taken from an article on the "Future of the Pacific" published by Hon. Lorin Thurston in the April number of the "North American Review."

In the sixteenth century Spain took possession of the Philippine and Ladron Islands. About one hundred years ago England appropriated Australia, and in the early part of this century New Zealand. In 1842 France raised her flag over the Marquesas group, and in 1853 over New Caledonia and the Loyalty group. In 1874 England took possession of the 250 islands of the Fiji group. In 1880 France usurped dominion over the Paumotu and Society Islands, comprising thirty-six inhabited islands. In 1881 England annexed Rotumah. In 1885 Spain took possession of the Caroline Islands; and Germany took the Marshall, the Solomon, and the Admiralty groups; and England, Germany, and Holland partitioned New Guinea between themselves. This is 1,500 miles long, 400 wide, and contains over 300,000 square miles. In 1888 England took possession of the Gilbert, Ellice, Enderbury and Union groups, containing twenty-six inhabited islands, and the following single

islands : Kingman, Fanning, Washington, Christmas, Jarvis, Malden, Starbuck, Dudosa, and Nuie ; and in 1889, 1891 and 1892 Suwaroff, Coral, Gardner, and Danger Islands. Thus Hawaii and Samoa are the only unappropriated islands of the Pacific ; the latter hardly to be called unappropriated while under the tripartite sovereignty of England, Germany, and the United States.

Mr. Thurston remarks : " Propheying is dangerous and uncertain business ; but it seems altogether probable that within ten or fifteen years the railroad from St. Petersburg to Vladivostok will have been completed, and that steamships will radiate from the latter point to Vancouver, San Francisco, the Nicaragua Canal, and the southern nations. The railroad system of North America will have been extended to Alaska on the north, and to Chili on the south. The Nicaragua Canal will have been constructed, and a large proportion of the commerce which now pours through the Suez Canal will have been diverted to its American rival. Honolulu will be the centre of a cable system, radiating to Tahiti, Australia, Japan, Vancouver, and San Francisco ; while between all the main ports of the Pacific steamers of the size and speed of those now plying between New York and Europe will be in use. The Pacific has already made giant strides of progress ; but it is yet only upon the threshold of the destiny which looms before it."

1736, 633.







