

distinct from an island? It is a body of land so large as to have the typical basin-like form, — that is, independent mountain chains on either side of a low interior. The mountain borders of the continents vary from 500 to 1500 miles in breadth at the base. Hence a continent cannot be less than a thousand miles (twice five hundred) in width.

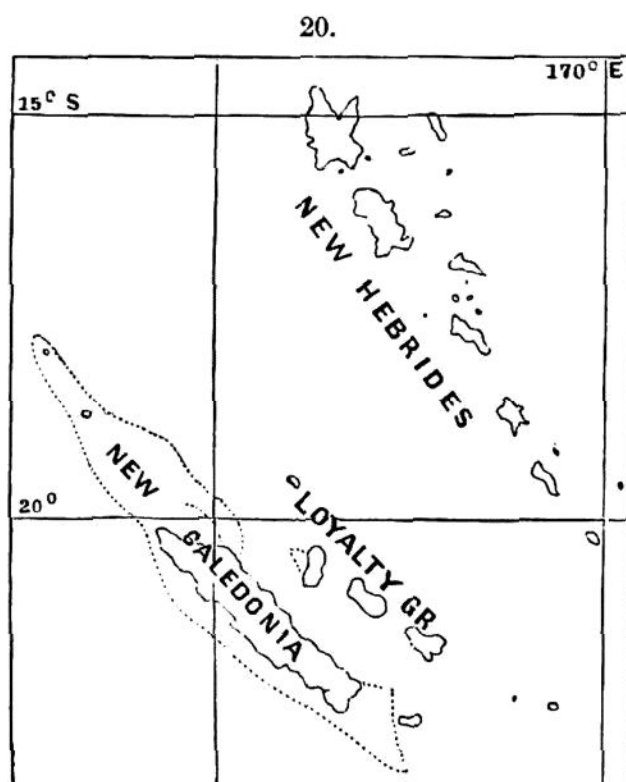
III. SYSTEM IN THE COURSES OF THE EARTH'S FEATURE LINES.

The system in the courses of the earth's outlines is exhibited alike over the oceans and continents, and all parts of the earth are thus drawn together into even a closer relation than appears in the principle already explained.

The principles to which the facts point are as follows: (1) that two great systems of courses or trends prevail over the world, a *northwestern* and a *northeastern, transverse to one another*; (2) that the islands of the oceans, the outlines and reliefs of the continents, and the oceanic basins themselves, alike exemplify these systems; (3) that the mean or average directions of the two systems of trends are northwest-by-west and northeast-by-north; (4) that there are wide variations from these courses, but according to principle, and that these variations are often along curving lines; (5) that, whatever the variations, when the lines of the two systems meet, they meet nearly at right angles or transversely to one another.

(1) **Islands of the Pacific Ocean.** — The lines or ranges of islands over the ocean are as regular and as long as the mountain ranges of the land. To judge correctly of the seeming irregularities, it is necessary to consider that, in chains like the Rocky Mountains, or Andes, or Appalachians, the ridges vary their course many degrees as they continue on, sometimes sweeping around into some new direction, and then returning again more or less nearly to their former course, and that the peaks of a ridge are very far from being in an exact line even over a short course; again, that several approximately parallel courses make up a chain.

A. NORTHWESTERLY SYSTEM OF TRENDS. — In the southwestern Pacific the *New Hebrides* (Fig. 20) show well this linear arrangement; and even each island is elongated in the same direction with the group. This direction is nearly northwest (N. 40° W.), and the length



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