

if not quite as great as any to be found in the other ocean basins, it may probably be taken as a fair example of ordinary conditions. It is open from pole to pole, and thus participates in all conditions of climate, and it communicates freely with the other seas. We have still but scanty information about the beds of the Indian, the Antarctic, and the Pacific oceans, but the few observations which have hitherto reached us seem to indicate that neither is the depth extreme in these seas, nor does the nature of the bottom differ greatly from what we find nearer home. The Mediterranean—a closed *cul-de-sac* almost cut off from the general ocean—is under most peculiar circumstances, which will be discussed hereafter. The general result to which we are led by the careful and systematic deep-sea soundings which have been undertaken of late years by our own Admiralty and by the American and Swedish Governments, is that the depth of the sea is not so great as was at one time supposed. I have already mentioned that in some of the earlier sounding expeditions enormous depths were registered from various parts of the Atlantic, and I have also mentioned the reasons, depending chiefly upon defective appliances, why many of these soundings are now considered untrustworthy. Lieutenant Berryman, of the U.S. brig ‘Dolphin,’ reported 4,580 fathoms (27,480 feet), equal to the height of Dwalagiri, in lat. $41^{\circ} 7' N.$, long. $49^{\circ} 23' W.$, half-way between New York and the Açores; ‘no bottom’ at 4,920 fathoms (29,520 feet), deeper than the height of Deodunga, the highest peak in the world, in lat. $38^{\circ} 3' N.$, long. $67^{\circ} 14' W.$; and ‘no bottom’ at 6,600 fathoms (39,600 feet),