

Islands till the year 1874, although it is known that whaling vessels cruised occasionally in their vicinity, for Captain Abraham Bristow of the "Sir Andrew Hammond" was there in February, March, and April 1871, and specimens of Admiralty Island lances and gourds are to be seen in the Christy and British Museum collections, which had been obtained from Cape York, having doubtless been taken there by tortoiseshell and pearl shell traders, and by the whaling vessels. In 1874 H.M. Schooner "Alacrity," Lieutenant Commander Saunders, visited the south and east coasts of the main Admiralty Island and Jesu Maria Island, and found the inhabitants friendly and well disposed.

Since the visit of the Challenger in March 1875, the Admiralty Islands have been several times visited by the far famed Melanesian explorer Baron N. de Miklucho-Maclay, viz., in 1876, 1879, and January 1883.

The Admiralty group, which may be considered as confined between the parallels of  $1^{\circ} 40'$  and  $3^{\circ} 30'$  south latitude, and the meridians of  $145^{\circ} 30'$  and  $148^{\circ} 30'$  east longitude, consists of one large and numerous small islands, amongst which are interspersed many coral reefs.

The main Admiralty Island (named "Bosco" by Maurelle, but which is merely designated Admiralty on the Admiralty charts) is about 60 miles in length by 10 in width, and occupies an area of upwards of 500 square miles. The next largest island in the group is that of Jesu Maria, which is about 12 miles in length by 5 in breadth, with an area of 50 square miles. The remaining islets of the group are small.

Admiralty or Bosco Island consists for the most part of undulating land, which attains a considerable elevation, nearly 3000 feet, in its central parts. The coast is for the most part low, and here and there indented by deep bays and occasionally fringed with mangrove bushes. Off the coast, at varying distances, are a series of coral reefs forming natural breakwaters, and as the water is of a convenient depth between these reefs and the shore, well protected anchorage may be obtained at almost any part of the island. These off-lying reefs do not form a connected barrier such as may be seen off the north-eastern coast of Australia, but are detached from each other, in some cases, by considerable intervals; they are however, in all probability, elevations of the same submarine plateau the extent of which requires to be traced by the lead line.

Besides Admiralty or Bosco Island, four others of the group attain an elevation of from 600 to 800 feet, while the remaining islets are low and more like what in the West Indies are denominated "cays" than islands, and are situated on coral reefs.

The investigations of the Challenger were confined to the northwest corner of the main island, in the immediate neighbourhood of the anchorages.

*Nares Harbour*, at the western extremity of the north coast of Admiralty Island, is a well sheltered and convenient anchorage, easy of access, but destitute of supplies. It is nearly 8 miles in length from east to west, has an average breadth of 3 miles, and is protected by a reef which, joining