

rapid gains the Japanese made until the battle of Midway Island on June 4, 1942, are now history. These were the last gains Japan made in almost half a century of expansion.

In her swift thrusts at the vital Pacific bases Japan was following a policy which had served her well in the past, a policy of carefully calculated aggression. In 1895 her first moves under this policy brought the defeat of the crumbling Chinese Empire, and with it Formosa, the Pescadores Islands, and Southern Manchuria; in 1905 the defeat of Russia brought the southern half of Sakhalin Island, Port Arthur, and Dairen. In 1910 Japan annexed Korea, whose independence from China had been recognized in 1895; in 1914 she seized the German possessions in the North-west Pacific; and in 1931 Northern Manchuria, where she set up the puppet State of Manchukuo. July of 1937 saw the beginning of the present war with China, in which Japan acquired large areas along the railways and around the Chinese coasts. In 1940 Japan virtually took over French Indo-China. And so, in December, 1941, she was ready to make the calculated thrusts which brought her for a time the Philippines, Burma, Malaya, the Dutch East Indies, and a foothold in the islands of Melanesia.

To prevent Japan from again attaining what the Japanese leaders called "such a favourable situation" will be the task of the victorious Allied Powers. And in their plans for this the disposition of the Japanese-held islands in the South Seas will have much importance. Already it has been suggested in Australia that in the hands of the United States they would form valuable bases for keeping the peace.

The term "South Seas" is usually applied to the islands scattered from New Guinea and the Carolines in the west to Hawaii, the French Establishments and Easter Island in the east. The area includes New Guinea and New Caledonia, but not the Dutch East Indies, the Philippines, or Borneo. The Dutch possessions form a great girdle 4,000 miles long, half a million square miles in area, and with nearly 60,000,000 people; the Philippines are 114,000 square miles in

area and have a population of 16,000,000; The Island of Borneo, most of which is also Dutch, has an area of 284,000 square miles and a population of 2,500,000. Even with these great island masses excluded the South Seas take in about one-eighth of the world's surface, and the islands within have a total area of about 391,000 square miles and a population of 2,500,000 people. The Archipelagos and islands of the South Seas may be likened to the exposed ridges and peaks of immense mountain ranges running along the floor of the Pacific Ocean from east to west.

These islands lie in three groups:

*Melanesia*, to the south-west, contains the main land areas. New Guinea alone covers 315,000 square miles, over three times the size of New Zealand; New Britain, next largest, contains 14,600 square miles; and other islands in this group are also large. Melanesia includes, in addition to New Guinea and New Britain, the Solomons, the New Hebrides, New Caledonia, and Fiji.

*Micronesia*, lying above Melanesia to the north-west of the South Seas group, contains only 1,200 square miles of land, and its islands are very small. It includes the Carolines, the Marianas, and the Palaus, all Japanese-held mandates seized from Germany during the last war, the United States island of Guam, and the Gilberts and Nauru Island.

*Polynesia* forms the whole of the eastern half of the South Seas. The land area of this far-flung group is but 10,000 square miles, and of this Hawaii accounts for over 6,000 square miles. Polynesia holds Hawaii, Niue, Tonga, Wallis, Ellice, Samoa, Pitcairn, Easter and Tokelau Islands, and the Cooks, Australs, Societies, Gambiers, Tuamotus, Marquesas, and Phoenixes.

All these islands were before the outbreak of this war controlled by eight nations—Australia, Chile, France, Great Britain, Holland, Japan, New Zealand and the United States. Various systems of government were in use, eighteen in all. Some islands were held as mandates, some where protectorates, some were Crown colonies, some had a certain share in their own Government. In the New Hebrides Britain shared control with