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978-1-108-05283-2 - *Island Life: Or, The Phenomena and Causes of Insular Faunas and Floras, Including a Revision and Attempted Solution of the Problem of Geological Climates*

Alfred Russel Wallace

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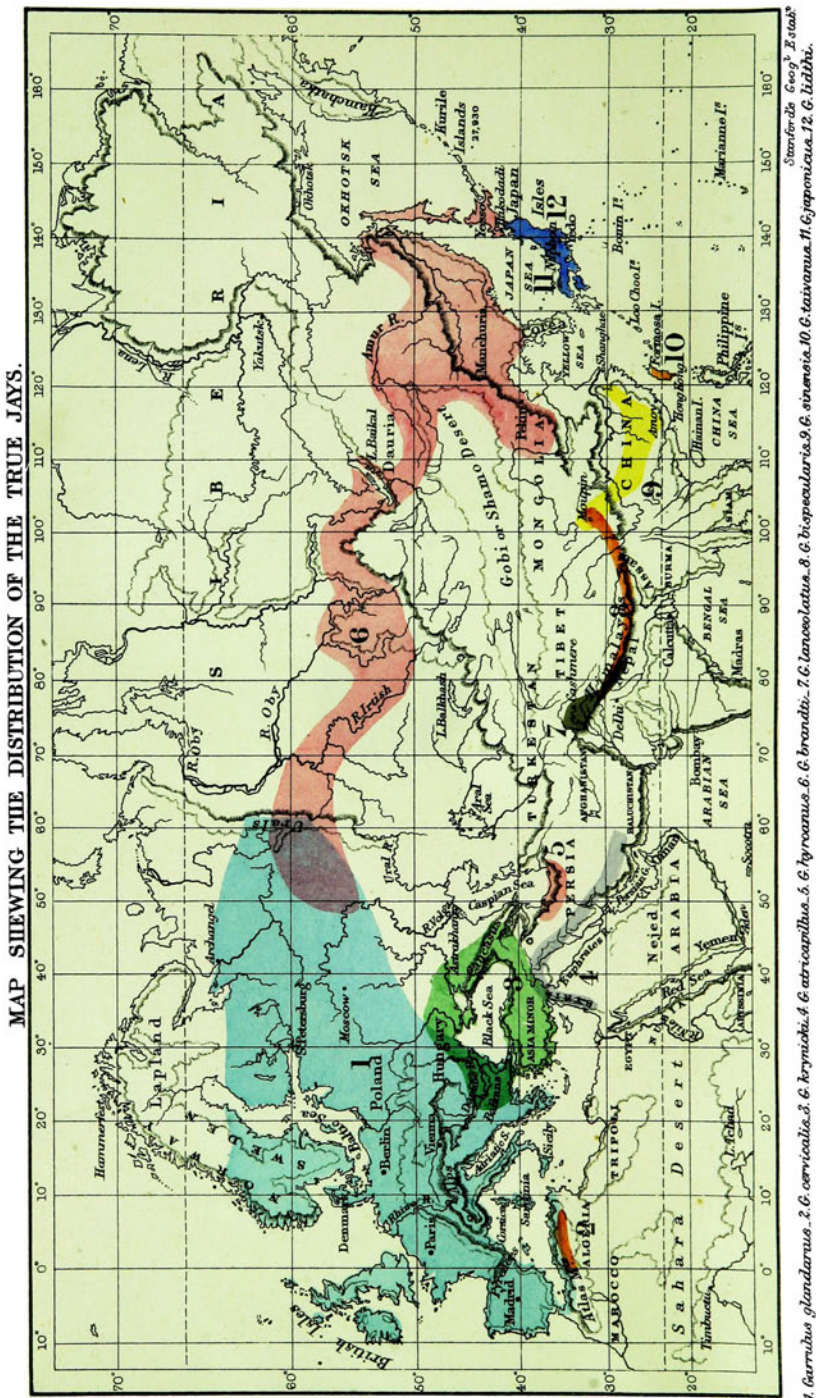
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BY

ALFRED RUSSEL WALLACE,

AUTHOR OF "THE MALAY ARCHIPELAGO," "TROPICAL NATURE," "THE GEOGRAPHICAL
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TO
SIR JOSEPH DALTON HOOKER,
K.C.S.I., C.B., F.R.S., &c., &c.,
WHO, MORE THAN ANY OTHER WRITER,
HAS ADVANCED OUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL
DISTRIBUTION OF PLANTS, AND ESPECIALLY
OF INSULAR FLORAS,
I Dedicate this Volume,
ON A KINDRED SUBJECT,
AS A TOKEN OF ADMIRATION AND REGARD.

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P R E F A C E.

THE present volume is the result of four years' additional thought and research on the lines laid down in my *Geographical Distribution of Animals*, and may be considered as a popular supplement to and completion of that work.

It is, however, at the same time a complete work in itself; and, from the mode of treatment adopted, it will, I hope, be well calculated to bring before the intelligent reader the wide scope and varied interest of this branch of natural history. Although some of the earlier chapters deal with the same questions as my former volumes, they are here treated from a different point of view; and as the discussion of them is more elementary and at the same time tolerably full, it is hoped that they will prove both instructive and interesting. The plan of my larger work required that *genera* only should be taken account of; in the present volume I often discuss the distribution of *species*, and this will help to render the work more intelligible to the unscientific reader.

The full statement of the scope and object of the present essay given in the "Introductory" chapter, together with the "Summary" of the whole work and the general view of the more important arguments given in the "Conclusion," render it unnecessary for me to offer any further remarks on these points. I may, however, state generally that, so far as I am able to

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judge, a real advance has here been made in the mode of treating problems in Geographical Distribution, owing to the firm establishment of a number of preliminary doctrines or "principles," which in many cases lead to a far simpler and yet more complete solution of such problems than have been hitherto possible. The most important of these doctrines are those which establish and define—(1) The former wide extension of all groups now discontinuous, as being a necessary result of "evolution"; (2) The permanence of the great features of the distribution of land and water on the earth's surface; and, (3) The nature and frequency of climatal changes throughout geological time.

I have now only to thank the many friends and correspondents who have given me information or advice. Besides those whose assistance is acknowledged in the body of the work, I am especially indebted to four gentlemen who have been kind enough to read over the proofs of chapters dealing with questions on which they have special knowledge, giving me the benefit of valuable emendations and suggestions. Mr. Edward R. Alston has looked over those parts of the earlier chapters which relate to the mammals of Europe and the North Temperate zone; Mr. S. B. J. Skertchley, of the Geological Survey, has read the chapters which discuss the glacial epoch and other geological questions; Professor A. Newton has looked over the passages referring to the birds of the Madagascar group; while Sir Joseph D. Hooker has given me the invaluable benefit of his remarks on my two chapters dealing with the New Zealand flora.

CROYDON, *August*, 1880.

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