

CHAPTER IX

GREENLAND

VIEWING Australia as a continent, Greenland is the largest island in the world, having an area of 830,000 square miles, of which less than ten per cent. is habitable. While Cape Farewell is seven degrees south of the arctic circle, Cape Jesup is within six degrees of the North Pole. In its widest part capes Alexander and Bismarck are separated by nine hundred miles.

Greenland is an elevated plateau as a whole, ranging from two thousand to nine thousand feet above the ocean. Its precipitous, rocky coasts are broken by numerous intersecting fiords, former beds of the extensive glaciers, which debouch from the inland ice. The permanent ice sheet covers nine tenths of the country, and attains an unknown thickness, possibly three thousand feet.

DISCOVERY AND EXPLORATIONS

Discovered by Erik the Red in the tenth century, the southwestern coasts were explored and settled by the Norsemen in succeeding years. It was the first European settlement in the western world. Extensive research by Danish scientists has