



Picturesque America; or, the land we live in

a delineation by pen and pencil of the mountains, rivers, lakes, forests, water-falls, shores, cañons, valleys, cities, and other picturesque features of our country ; with illustrations on steel and wood, by eminent American artists

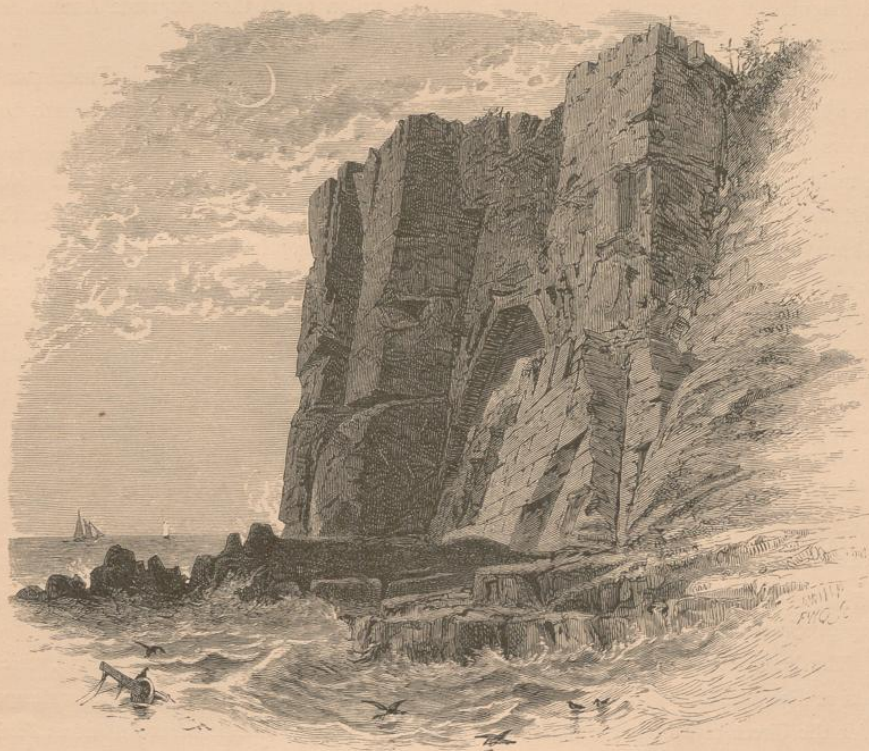
Bryant, William Cullen

New York, 1872

On The Coast Of Maine.

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PICTURESQUE AMERICA.



Castle Head, Mount Desert.

ON THE COAST OF MAINE.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY HARRY FENN.

THE island of Mount Desert, on the coast of Maine, unites a striking group of picturesque features. It is surrounded by seas, crowned with mountains, and embosomed with lakes. Its shores are bold and rocky cliffs, upon which the breakers for countless centuries have wrought their ceaseless attrition. It affords the only instance along our Atlantic coast where mountains stand in close neighborhood to the sea; here in one picture are

beetling cliffs with the roar of restless breakers, far stretches of bay dotted with green islands, placid mountain-lakes mirroring the mountain-precipices that tower above them, rugged gorges clothed with primitive forests, and sheltered coves where the sea-waves ripple on the shelly beach. Upon the shores are masses of cyclopean rocks heaped one upon another in titanic disorder, and strange caverns of marvellous beauty; on the mountains are frightful precipices, wonderful prospects of far-extending sea, and mazes of land and water, and magnificent forests of fir and spruce. It is a union of all these supreme fascinations of scenery, such as Nature, munificent as she is, rarely affords.

Mount Desert is situated one hundred and ten miles east of Portland, in Frenchman's Bay, which stretches on the eastern and western sides of the island in a wide expanse, but narrows at the upper or northern end, where a bridge establishes permanent connection with the main-land. The greatest length of the island is fourteen miles, and its extreme width eight, the area being a hundred square miles. Nearly midway it is pierced by an inlet of the sea known as *Somes's Sound*, which is seven miles in length. It includes three townships, Tremont, Mount Desert, and Eden, and possesses several harbors, the best known of which are Southwest, Northeast, and Bar Harbor. The latter is on the eastern shore, opposite the Porcupine Islands, and derives its name from a sandy bar, visible only at low water, which connects Mount Desert with the largest and northernmost of the Porcupine group. The village at this harbor is known by the name of East Eden, and here tourists and summer visitors principally abide. The mountains are upon the southern half of the island, and lie in seven ridges, running nearly north and south. There are thirteen distinct peaks, the highest of which is known as *Green Mountain*; and the next, which is separated from *Green Mountain* by a deep, narrow gorge, is called *Newport*. The western sides of the range slope gradually upward to the summits, but on the east all of them descend by steep precipices, four of them into lakes and one into *Somes's Sound*.

The best view of the mountains is from the sea. The steamer from Portland, which lands at Bar Harbor twice a week, approaches the island at noonday, when the landscape, under the direct rays of the sun, possesses the least charm. But no other situation affords so fine a command of the range, although, from this view, the rocks and cliffs of the shore, lying under the shadows of the mountains, appear to have but little magnitude or picturesque value. If it so chance, as it did with the writer, that delays bring the steamer along the coast when the sun is sinking behind the hills, a picture of singular beauty is presented. The mountains then lift in gloomy grandeur against the light of the western sky, and, with the movement of the steamer, break every moment into new combinations of rare beauty. Now they lie massed, one against another, in long, undulating lines, now open into distinct groups; now *Green Mountain* fronts the sea with all its stern majesty, now *Newport* rises apparently from the very water's edge in one abrupt cliff a thousand feet in height. It is a dissolving view that for an hour or more presents a superb succession of scenic effects, which the spectator watches with entrancing interest, until he discovers the steamer gliding by green



The Porcupine Islands, Frenchman's Bay.

islands and amid fleets of gayly-bannered yachts on its approach to the shore. The village of East Eden, while possessing a charming lookout over the bay, is without one feature of beauty. It is built upon a treeless plain, and consists for the most part of a group of small white houses, rapidly extemporized for the accommodation of summer boarders. Every structure, with the exception of a few cottages erected by wealthy gentlemen of Boston, stands without trees, garden, or other pleasant surroundings. The place is as conspicuously inexact in its cognomen as the island itself is; one wonders whether the notion of naming places by their contraries is a legitimate Down-East institution. In regard to the name of the island, an attempt is made to escape the inconsistency of the appellation by shifting the accent from the first to the last syllable. The primary meaning of the designation, however, requires the accentuation on the first syllable. It was named by the French, who were the discoverers of this coast, "Mont Désert," as expressive of the wild and savage aspects of the mountains and cliffs that front the sea.

Two purposes of special interest fill the mind of the visitor as soon as he finds himself satisfactorily domiciled at East Eden. One is, to explore the long series of rocks and cliffs on the shore; the other, to ascend Green Mountain, and enjoy the superb view from its "thunder-smitten brow." These respects to the scenery of the island having been paid, his subsequent purpose is likely to be fishing and boating. He will be anxious to try his hand at the

splendid trout with which the lakes are said to abound, and to go far down the bay for catches of cod and haddock, which here are of large dimensions and in great abundance. The bays, inlets, and sounds of the coast of Maine afford superb resources for the yachtman. The coast seems to have crumbled off from the main-land in innumerable islands, large and small, so that there is a vast area of inland-sea navigation, which, with infinite variety of scene, gives ample space for boating. A yachting-party might spend a summer delightfully in threading the mazes of this "hundred-harbored Maine," as Whittier describes it. Abandoning the pleasant vision of such a summer, let us for the present remember that our special object is to visit and depict the scenery of Mount Desert.

The several points along the coast to which the visitor's attention is directed are the cliffs known as "The Ovens," which lie some six or seven miles up the bay; and "Schooner



View of Mount-Desert Mountains from Saulsbury-Cove Road.

Head," "Great Head," and "Otter-Creek Cliffs," lying on the seaward shores of the island. It will fall more duly in order to proceed first to "The Ovens," which may be reached by boat or by a pleasant drive of seven or eight miles.

With a one-armed veteran for an escort, Mr. Fenn and the writer set forth for a scene where we were promised many charming characteristics for pen and pencil. It was necessary to time our visit to "The Ovens"—the nomenclature of Mount Desert is painfully out of harmony with the scenes it verbally libels—so as to reach the beach at low tide. The cliffs can be approached only by boat at high tide, and the picture at this juncture loses some of its pleasing features.

The Mount-Desert roads for the most part are in good condition, and have many attractions. The forests are crowded with evergreens, and the firs and the spruce-trees marshal in such array on the hill-sides that, with their slender, spear-like tops, they look like armies of lancers. The landscape borrows from these evergreens an Alpine tone, which



THE CLIFFS NEAR "THE OVENS."

groups of pedestrians for the mountains, armed with alpenstocks, notably enhance. The fir, spruce, pine, and arbor-vitæ, attain splendid proportions; the slender larch is in places also abundant, and a few sturdy hemlocks now and then vary the picture. The forest-scenes are, many of them, of singular beauty, and in our long drives about the island we discovered many a strongly-marked forest-group.

At one point on our drive to "The Ovens," the road, as it ascends a hill near Salsbury Cove, commands a fine, distant view of the mountains, which Mr. Fenn rapidly sketched. Clouds of fog were drifting along their tops, now obscuring and now revealing them, and adding often a vagueness and mystery to their forms which lent them an additional charm.

The cliffs at "The Ovens" contrast happily with the rocks on the sea-front of the island in possessing a delicious quiet and repose. The waters ripple calmly at their feet, and only when winds are high do the waves chafe and fret at the rocks. Here the perpendicular pile of rock is crowned by growths of trees that ascend in exact line with the wall, casting their shadows on the beach below. Grass and flowers overhang the edge; at points in the wall of rock, tufts of grass and nodding harebells grow, forming pleasant pictures in contrast with the many-tinted rocks, in the crevices of which their roots have found nourishment. The whole effect of the scene here is one of delicious charm. The wide and sunny bay, the boats that glide softly and swiftly upon its surface, the peaceful shores, the cliff crowned with its green forest, make up a picture of great sweetness and beauty. "The Ovens" are cavities worn by the tides in the rock. Some are only slight excavations, such as those shown in Mr. Fenn's drawing, but a little northward of the spot are caves of a magnitude sufficient to hold thirty or forty people. The rocks are mainly of pink feldspar, but within the caves the sea has painted them in various tints of rare beauty, such as would delight the eye and tax the skill and patience of a painter to reproduce. The shores here, indeed, supply almost exhaustless material for the sketch-book of the artist.

To this spot, at hours when the tide permits, pleasure-seekers come in great numbers. It is a favorite picnic-ground for the summer residents at East Eden, whose graceful pleasure-boats give animation to the picture. The visitors picnic in the caves, pass through the archway of a projecting cliff, which some designate as "Via Mala," wander through the forests that crown the cliffs, pluck the wild-roses and harebells that overhang the precipice, and roam up and down the beach in search of the strange creatures of the sea that on these rocky shores abound. Star-fishes, anemones, sea-urchins, and other strange and beautiful forms of marine life, make grand aquaria of the caves all along the coast, and add a marked relish to the enjoyment of the explorer.

From the quiet beauty of "The Ovens" to the turbulence of the seaward shore there is a notable change. Our next point visited was "Schooner Head," which lies four or five miles southward from East Eden, and looks out on the wide Atlantic. "Schooner Head" is so named from the fancy that a mass of white rock on its sea-face, viewed at the proper distance,

has the appearance of a small schooner. There is a tradition that, in the War of 1812, a British frigate sailing by ran in and fired upon it, under the impression that it was an American vessel hugging the shore. "Schooner Head" derives its principal interest from the "Spouting Horn," a wide chasm in the cliff, which extends down to the water and opens to the sea through a small archway below high-water mark. At low water the arch may be



Great Head.

reached over the slippery, weed-covered rocks, and the chasm within ascended by means of uncertain footholds in the sides of the rocky wall. A few adventurous tourists have accomplished this feat, but it is a very dangerous one. If the foot should slip on the smooth, briny rock, and the adventurer glide into the water, escape would be almost impossible. The waves would suck him down into their depths—now toss him upon rocks, whose slippery surface would resist every attempt to grasp, then drag him back into their foaming embrace. When

the tide comes in, the breakers dash with great violence through the archway described, and hurl themselves with resounding thunder against the wall beyond, sending their spray far up the sides of the chasm. But, when a storm prevails, then the scene is one of extreme grandeur. The breakers hurl themselves with such wild fury through the cavernous opening against the walls of rock, that their spray is hurled a hundred feet above the opening at the top of the cliff, as if a vast geyser were extemporized on the shore. The scene is inspiring and terrible. Visitors to Mount Desert but half understand or appreciate its wonders if they do not visit the cliffs in a storm. On the softest summer day the angry but subdued roar with which the breakers ceaselessly assault the rocks gives a vague intimation of what their fury is when the gale lashes them into tumult. At such times they hurl themselves against the cliffs with a violence that threatens to beat down the rocky barriers and submerge the land; their spray deluges the abutments to their very tops, and the thunder of their angry crash against the rock may be heard for miles. But at other times the ceaseless war they make upon the shore seems to be one of defeat. The waves come in full, sweeping charge upon the rocks, but hastily fall back, broken and discomfited, giving place to fresh and hopeful levies, who repeat the first assault, and, like their predecessors, are hurled back defeated. The war is endless, and yet by slow degrees the sea gains upon its grim and silent enemy. It undermines, it makes channels, it gnaws caverns, it eats out chasms, it wears away little by little the surface of the stone, it summons the aid of frost and of heat to dislodge and pull down great fragments of the masonry, it grinds into sand, it gashes with scars, and it will never rest until it has dragged down the opposing walls into its depths.

"Great Head," two miles southward of "Schooner Head," is considered the highest headland on the island. It is a bold, projecting mass, with at its base deep gashes worn by the waves. A view of its grim, massive front is obtained by descending a broken mass of cyclopean rocks a little below the cliff, where at low tide, on the sea-washed boulders, the cliff towers above you in a majestic mass.

People in search of the picturesque should understand the importance of selecting suitable points of view. The beauty or impressiveness of a picture sometimes greatly depends on this. It is often a matter of search to discover the point from which an object has its best expression; and probably only those of intuitive artistic tastes are enabled to see all the beauties of a landscape, which others lose in ignorance of how to select the most advantageous standing-place. To the cold and indifferent, Nature has no charms; she reveals herself only to those who surrender their hearts to her influence, and who patiently study her aspects. The beauty of any object lies partly in the capacity of the spectator to see it, and partly in his ability to put himself where the form and color impress the senses most effectively. Not one man in ten discerns half the beauty of a tree or of a pile of rocks, and hence those who fail to discover in a landscape the charm others describe in it, should question their own power of appreciation rather than the accuracy of the delineation. The shores of Mount Desert must be studied with this appreciation and taste, if their beauties



THE "SPOUTING HORN" IN A STORM.

are to be understood. No indifferent half glance will suffice. Go to the edge of the cliffs and look down; go below, where they lift in tall escarpments above you; sit in the shadows of their massive presence; study the infinite variety of form, texture, and color, and learn to read all the different phases of sentiment their scarred fronts have to express. When all this is done, be assured you will discover that "sermons in stones" was not a mere fancy of the poet.

One of the characteristics of Mount Desert is the abundance of fog. In July and August especially it seriously interferes with the pleasure of the tourist. It often happens that, for several days in succession, mountain, headland, and sea, are wrapped in an impenetrable mist, and all the charms of the landscape obscured. But the fog has frequently a grace and charm of its own. There are days when it lies in impenetrable banks far out at sea, with occasional incursions upon the shore that are full of interest. At one hour the sun is shining, when all at once the mist may be discerned creeping in over the surface of the water, ascending in rapid drifts the sides of the mountains, enveloping one by one the islands of the bay, until the whole landscape is blotted from view. In another hour it is broken; the mountains pierce the shadowy veil, the islands reappear in the bay, and the landscape glows once more in the sunshine. It is a rare pleasure to sit on the rocky headlands, on the seaward side of the island, on a day when the fog and sun contend for supremacy, and watch the pictures that the fog makes and unmakes. Sometimes the fog skirts along the base of the islands in the bay, leaving a long, slender line of tree-tops painted against the blue ether, looking like forests hung in the sky. Then a vessel may be seen sailing through a fog-bank, now looking like a shadowy ghost floating through the mist, when suddenly its topsails flash in the light, like the white wings of a huge bird. In another moment the fog shifts, and the under edge of the mainsail may be traced in a line of silver, while all the rest of the vessel is in the deepest shadow. Now one sail glitters a brilliant white, and the fog envelops all the rest of the vessel. The pictures thus formed vary like a succession of dissolving views, and often produce the most striking and unique effects. Sometimes there is the marvellous exhibition of a mirage, when fleets appear sailing through the air, and, as described by Whittier—

" Sometimes, in calms of closing day,
They watched the spectral mirage play;
Saw low, far islands, looming tall and high,
And ships, with upturned keels, sail like a sea the sky."

The fog-pictures at Mount Desert are by no means the least interesting feature of this strange shore.

Near a small stream, known as "Otter Creek," deriving its name from the otter which once abounded there, are a succession of cliffs, which possess characteristics quite distinct from those already described. They are more remote from the village than "Schooner

Head" or "Great Head," but the drive to them derives great interest from the wild and narrow notch between Green and Newport Mountains, through which the road lies for a mile or two. The sides of the mountains are high, precipitous, and savagely rugged. The lower base of each is covered with a thick and tangled forest-growth; half-way up, a few gnarled and fantastic growths struggle for place amid the scarred and frowning rocks,



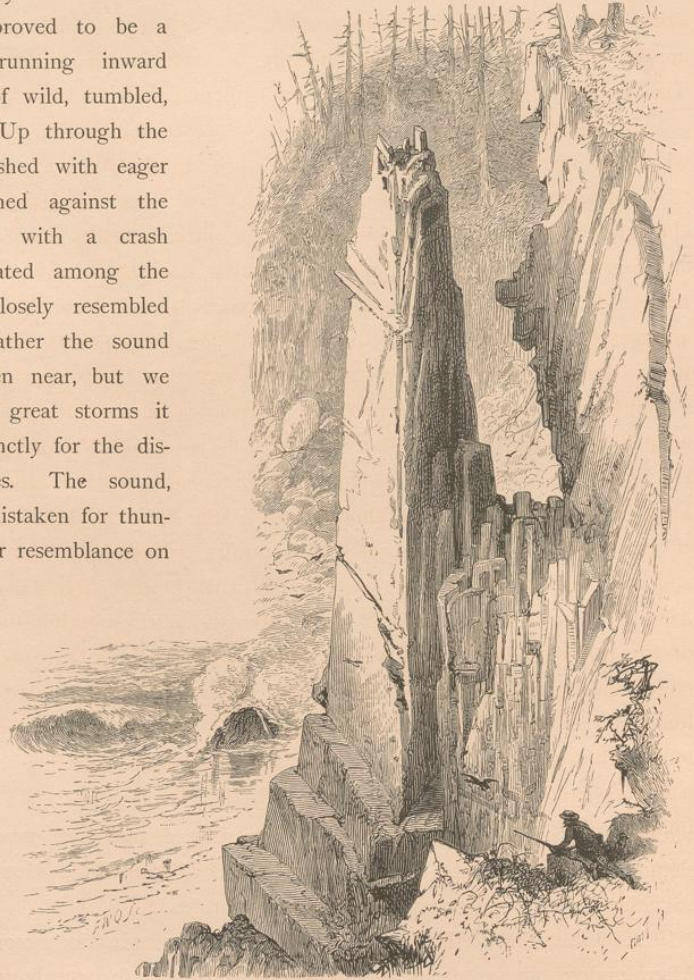
Thunder Cave.

while the upper heights show only the bare, seamed, and riven escarpments. It is a wild picture, inferior, no doubt, to the famous Notch of the White Mountains, but possessing, notwithstanding, very strong and impressive features.

At "Otter-Creek Cliffs" we set out in search of what is known as "Thunder Cave." After leaving our vehicle, we had a long but superb forest-walk to reach it. There are numerous fine birches on Mount Desert, and more than once we saw groups of these trees

that would have filled any artist with delight, and especially the painter Whittredge, whose birch-forests are so famous. Near Great Head are numerous splendid specimens of this tree, whose bark, of yellow, Indian red, and gray, afforded delicious contrasts of color. On the path to Thunder Cave we noted one forest-picture that comes vividly back to memory. The trees were mostly evergreen, and the surface of the ground covered with out-cropping rocks and tangled roots, all richly covered with mosses. The broken light through the dark branches, the tint of the fallen pine-leaves, the many-colored mosses which painted every rock in infinite variety of hue, the low, green branches of the fir and the spruce, all made up a picture of ripe and singular beauty.

Thunder Cave proved to be a long, low gallery, running inward amid a great mass of wild, tumbled, and distorted rocks. Up through the gallery the waves rushed with eager impetuosity, and dashed against the hollow cavity within with a crash which, as it reverberated among the overhanging rocks, closely resembled thunder. In fair weather the sound is apparent only when near, but we were assured that in great storms it had been heard distinctly for the distance of seven miles. The sound, which might well be mistaken for thunder, has all the greater resemblance on account of a peculiarity which Mr. Fenn detected while making his sketch. Piled up within the cave at the end of the gallery are a great number of large stones, varying from one to probably three feet in length,



The Obelisk.

and of corresponding thickness. Every time the waves dash into the cave, they dislodge some of these stones, sometimes dragging them back, sometimes lifting them up and tossing them against the sides of the cavity, and, as these boulders thus roll and grind together, they produce in the hollow of the cavern almost the exact mutterings and reverberations of thunder. The crash of the breakers against the wall is the clap of thunder; the rolling stones carry off the sound in its successive reverberations, making the resemblance complete.

Near Thunder Cave we discovered a natural obelisk. The woodland path at one point reaches the edge of a wide, precipitous break in the cliff. Forcing our way through tangled wood-growth to obtain a view of the cliff, we saw, situated directly under the bank, where the tourist ordinarily would not detect it, a tall, pointed column, with an apparently artificial base of steps, bearing a close semblance to a monument of stone. This singular freak of Nature the reader will find illustrated by Mr. Fenn's pencil.

Returning to our point of departure, we proceeded westward in search of other cliffs, where we made another discovery. The path lay along the top of the cliff, but, coming to a dislodgement of the perpendicular wall, where some convulsion had thrown down the cliff into a wild mass of rocks, we with no little difficulty clambered down the broken and jagged pile, with the purpose of getting from below a view of the cliffs. Fortunately, the tide was low; and this, the tourist should remember, is necessary, when he arranges his visits to the shores of Mount Desert. There is more animation when the tide is coming in, but high water cuts off access to many interesting points. Reaching a wet, barnacle-covered, projecting line of rocks, a picture presented itself that filled both artist and penman with surprise. "Why, this is an old Norman castle!" was our exclamation. The cliff, a little distant from our point of view, stood up in perpendicular lines of rock that assumed almost exactly the form of battlements. The upper line closely resembled the parapet of a castle-wall; there were in the sides deep embrasures; and the whole front had the aspect of a dark, broken, time-stained wall reared by the hand of man. It stood in grim and gloomy grandeur, fronting the sea in stern defiance of the world beyond. The waves chafed at its feet; wild sea-birds hovered about its crest; there was an air of neglect and desolation, as if it were an old ruin, and we found it impossible to dissociate the grim and frowning walls from the historic piles that look darkly down upon so many European landscapes. Finding afterward that the cliff was known by no name, we called it "Castle Head." The path followed by the customary visitor extends along the cliff above this strange pile, and hence its peculiarities escape the notice of all except those who boldly clamber down the broken wall just before it is reached, and survey it from the water's edge. The illustration of this striking scene is at the beginning of our article.

The interest of Mount Desert, as we have already said, is divided between its sea-cliffs and its mountain-views. It is customary for pedestrian parties to form at East

Eden and walk to the mountain-top, and there remain overnight, in order to view the sunrise from this altitude. A cottage, originally built by the United States Coast Survey, stands on the extreme top of the mountain, and affords satisfactory accommodation for the tourists. A rude mountain-road, constructed by the Survey, enables vehicles to ascend to the cottage; but pleasure-parties commonly prefer the ascent on foot. The distance from the village is four miles. The height of the mountain is seventeen hundred and sixty-two feet.

The sunrise is a magnificent picture, but the prevalence of fogs is a continual cause of disappointment to people, who travel far and rise early often only to behold a sea of impenetrable mist. The prospect, however, whenever the fog permits it, is a splendid one at all hours, and possesses a variety and character quite distinct from the views usually obtained from mountain-heights. Here there is not only a superb panorama of



Eagle Lake.

hills and vales, but a grand stretch of sea, and intricate net-works of bay and islands which make up a picture marvellously varied both in form and color.

One of the most delightful features of the scene thus presented are the mountain-lakes that hang like superb mirrors midway in the scene. "Eagle Lake," so named by Church the artist, is visible at intervals during the entire ascent of the mountain, and at every point of view is beautiful. Half-way up, a short *détour* from the road will bring the tourist to its pebbly shore, where he may spend an hour or more watching its clear, mountain-encircled waters, or devote his entire day in pursuit of the trout with which it abounds. The largest lake in the island is on the western side of Some's Sound, and is about four miles in length. There is a group of three lakes on each side of this sound, although to some of them the more prosaic designation of pond is applied.

Some's Sound, which divides the lower portion of the island into two distinct portions, possesses many attractions for those who admire bold headlands. It bears a resem-

blance both to the shores of the Hudson and the Delaware Water-Gap. It is usual to ascend the sound in boats from Southwest Harbor; but explorers from East Eden sometimes drive to Somesville, at the head of the sound, a distance of nine miles, and there take boats for a sail down the stream. The sound cuts through the centre of the mountain-range at right angles, between Dog Mountain and an elevation on the eastern side, to which the appellation of "Mount Mansell" has been given, in honor of Sir Robert



Eagle Cliff, Somes's Sound.

Mansell, after whom the island was at one time named by the English. Dog Mountain rises abruptly from the water's edge, and one of its cliffs, which is some eight hundred or a thousand feet in height, is called "Eagle Cliff." At the moment Mr. Fenn was sketching, a splendid bald-headed eagle was sailing in wide circles around the head of the cliff, thus giving, to the imagination of the artist, ample justification for the title.

We have now enumerated the principal features of this beautiful island. But there are hundreds of places that almost equally as well deserve the attention of pen and pen-

cil. The shore varies in character and form at nearly every step, affording almost innumerable delightful pictures; while the lakes, the mountains, the forests, are endless in their long catalogue of rare and beautiful scenes. And in addition to scenes upon the island itself are the picturesque and rocky Porcupine Islands, the rugged shores of Iron-bound Island, on the Eastern side of Frenchman's Bay, and Mount-Desert Rock, fifteen miles down at sea, upon whose narrow base stands a light-house. Artist and writer have been limited to giving mere indications of a locality that is almost exhaustless in its variety of scenery.

Mount Desert was discovered by the French, under Champlain, in the early part of the seventeenth century, who gave it the name by which it is now known. In 1619, the French formed a settlement, which was named "Saint-Sauveur," but in a few years it came to a cruel end. The Virginian settlers were accustomed to fish upon the New-England coast, and the captain of an armed vessel, hearing from the Indians of the settlement, sailed down upon it, and with a single broadside made himself its master. Some of the settlers were killed, and others carried away into captivity. The first permanent settlement was made by Abraham Somes, who in 1761 built a house at the head of the sound which now bears his name.



View from Via Mala, at The Ovens.

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Engraved according to a drawing by J. M. Smith, published in the Atlas of the Library of Congress, Washington.

On the Coast of Florida

New York, D. Appleton & Co.

NEWSPERS, FLORIDA

The newspaper industry in Florida is one of the most important and rapidly growing in the South. It has a long history, dating back to the early days of settlement. The first newspaper was published in 1822, and since that time the press has played a vital role in the development of the state. Today, Florida has one of the highest newspaper circulations in the country, and the industry continues to expand and improve.

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