

which almost constantly envelopes them. Towards mid-day the weather improved a little, and as we threaded among the islands towards the little harbour of Thorshavn we greatly enjoyed our first view of their fantastic outlines, partly shrouded in their veil of mist; their soft green and brown colouring rendered still softer by the subdued sub-arctic light, and the streams and cascades embroidering the gentle slopes of the hills and falling over the cliffs like silver threads and tassels.

The Færoe Islands are basaltic; terrace over terrace of soft easily decomposed anamesite probably of Miocene tertiary age. This uniform structure, and the absence of trees or any prominent form of vegetation, gives a singular sameness of effect. The scattered habitations are usually sad-coloured and roofed with growing turf, so that they are actually invisible at a little distance. We were greatly struck sometimes by the difficulty of estimating distance and height; from the total want of familiar objects for comparison it was sometimes difficult to tell, passing among the islands and looking at them through the moist transparent air, whether the ridge was 500 feet high, or double or four times that height. The intermediate height is usually nearest the truth.

Thorshavn, the capital of Færoe, is a strange little place. The land shelves down rather abruptly to a little bay, round the head of which the town is built; and the habitations are perched among the rocks on such flat spaces as may be found for their reception. The result is irregular and picturesque; and very peculiar, for something like a scramble is necessary