

Next day we sounded in 1350 fathoms, about twenty miles west of Fayal, in the depression which separates the western from the central group, and during the afternoon the fine bold island approached us, alternate cloud and bright sunshine bringing out the full effects of its contour and coloring. The south coast of Fayal is bounded by an abrupt cliff, perhaps from one to two hundred feet in height, intersected every here and there by deep valleys, and showing, where the cliff is too precipitous to support vegetation, sections of lava streams of various colors, and of beds of irregularly stratified scoriæ and ashes. The main road runs along the top of the cliff; and at intervals, usually at the point of intersection of a wooded gorge, a village of low white cottages clusters round a black-and-white church, surmounted by a large black cross. From the road the land slopes gradually upward, passing into wide valleys terminating in ravines in the side of the Caldeira, a peak upward of three thousand feet in height, with a fine crater at the top of it, not far from the centre of the island; or running up abruptly upon the many secondary cones and mounds of scoriæ which are scattered in all directions. On this side of the island wheat is chiefly cultivated, except in the valleys, where there are a few vineyards and fields of maize upon the slopes. The wheat was already yellowing for the harvest. The fields are small, separated by walls of dark lava, built, as we were afterward told, partly as shelter from the high winds, and partly as the easiest means of stowing the lava blocks, which have to be removed from the ground in the process of clearing. Another very effective addition to the fence serves also a double purpose: a hedge of the common reed (*Arundo donax*) is usually planted within the wall, and runs up to a height of twelve or fifteen feet, adding greatly to the shelter, and producing a long, straight, light cane, which is used in many ways; split up, it answers the purpose of laths for supporting plaster, and the round canes, bound together and often fitted in neat patterns, may