

high, with quite perpendicular sides. It was a little north of this where Sir James Ross's party landed. According to earlier reports, Dr Copeland states, the summit of this rock was clothed with tall green trees, but they have now disappeared. Tall trees would seem to be rather out of place in such a situation, and we may be excused for doubting the correctness of such a report.

As they sailed along the western side of the island the coast was carefully scanned through a telescope in order to find a landing-place, and a boat was sent exploring for the same purpose; but it was found to be almost impossible to land, and the anchorage was bad. Nevertheless, Dr Copeland and a companion succeeded in getting on some projecting rocks about a third of a mile south of West Point, and after some climbing on this extremely rugged volcanic cliff, they reached the mainland, where they met with innumerable small yellow land-crabs and a tufted sedge. They had hardly landed, however, before they were obliged to take to their boat and return to the ship. All along this side of the island not a single living tree was to be seen in the lower part, though the higher ridges of the hills were covered with a dense forest, which was inhabited by an enormous number of boobies. Many of the trees were palm-like, and probably tree-ferns; but although the "Challenger Instructions" had informed them of the presence of tree-ferns, they were by no means prepared to find them in such abundance and in such development as afterwards turned out to be the case.

The next day the ship rounded the north point, and the whole of the east coast appeared in view. Here naked cliffs overtop the broad green slopes, in striking contrast to the barren shores and wooded summits of the western side. The east coast is divided into three shallow bays, and at first sight looks very favourable for landing; but near, and parallel to, the shore there is a narrow reef, running apparently from end to end. At length a small opening was found in the second bay through which a boat could enter, and where there was no difficulty in landing and drawing the boat up.

The country did not gain on closer inspection, for the green slopes that seemed at a distance to be carpeted with a grassy turf, were completely overgrown by one species of bean, *Canavalia* sp. (probably *Canavalia gladiata*, DC.), whose entangled branches rendered walking very uncomfortable. Moreover, the ground was everywhere burrowed by innumerable land-crabs, the whole country literally swarming with them.

Accompanied by one sailor, Dr Copeland made for the high land of the interior, passing through on his way and examining the ruins of some huts built by a party of Portuguese, who attempted, previously to 1803, to form a settlement there. No traces of cultivated plants were found, but everything was overrun by the *Canavalia* mentioned above. Dr Copeland ascended a ravine formed by a rivulet that flows into the bay below. Large numbers of frigate-birds were found nesting in prostrate dead trees.

It is noteworthy that although most of the valleys on the eastern side of the island contained enormous numbers of dead trees, not a single living one was seen except near