

The veil of mist which at first, he says, concealed its sombre magnificence having suddenly lifted, a long line of coast became visible—in reality, the roots of Mount Beerenberg, the island-peak, dyed of the darkest purple; at the same time, the clouds fell away from the summit, and left the mountain standing in all the grandeur of his 6870 feet, girdled by a single zone of pearly vapour, from underneath whose floating folds seven enormous glaciers rolled down into the sea.

Although, to Lord Dufferin, by reason of his having hit upon its side instead of its narrow end, the outline of Mount Beerenberg appeared more like a sugar-loaf than a spire—broader at the base and rounder at the top than he had imagined—in size, colour, and effect it far surpassed anything he had anticipated. The glaciers which load the flanks of this volcano were quite an unexpected element of beauty. Imagine a mighty river of as great a volume as the Thames, started down the side of a mountain, bursting over every impediment, whirled into a thousand eddies, trembling and raging on from ledge to ledge in quivering cataracts of foam, then suddenly struck rigid by a power so instantaneous in its action, that even the froth and fleeting wreaths of spray have stiffened to the immutability of sculpture. Unless you had seen it, reader, it would be almost impossible to conceive the strangeness of the contrast between the actual tranquillity of these silent crystal rivers and the violent descending energy impressed upon their exterior. Remember, too, that all this is upon a scale of such prodigious magnitude, that when our navigators subsequently succeeded in approaching the spot where, with a leap like that of Niagara, one of these glaciers plunges down into the sea, the eye, no longer able to take in its fluvial character, was content to rest in simple astonishment at what then appeared a lucent precipice of gray-green ice, rising to the height of several hundred feet above the ship's masts.

Jan Mayen is not at present an active volcano.

---