

THE PALISADES, LOOKING SOUTH FROM COYTESVILLE AND SHOWING CARPENTER BROTHERS' QUARRY.

This photograph shows at a glance the destruction wrought by blasting and the scenic beauties which may still be preserved.

## SAVING THE PALISADES.

### THE WORK OF THE JOINT COMMISSIONS AT LAST SEEMS LIKELY TO SUCCEED.

By the efforts of the men who constitute the Palisades Commissions work has ceased at the quarries, which have been busy places for years; no new blasting operations will be begun, and unless the plans of the Commissions miscarry the imposing cliffs will be preserved. There are many spots along the line of the Palisades which have been sadly changed since men with the aid of high explosives first started to convert the towering walls that rise in majestic grandeur from the Hudson River into building material and paving blocks. Great caverns have been made, and where once the cliffs stood sheer like mighty walls, monuments to ages past, great fields of dust and sand now mar the imposing picture. Cliffs that extended out, beyond the imposing wall, where the Indians built their signal fires, and points sacred to Americans because of the deeds enacted there in the days of the Revolution crumbled away under the destroying hands of vandals; dynamite and the stone crusher reigned supreme, and men stood by helpless and unable to stop the destruction.

The first step taken toward the preservation of the Palisades was in the form of a law passed in this State in 1895 giving the Governor authority to appoint three Commissioners to secure action by the Government of the United States in acquiring and setting apart that part of the west shore of the Hudson River known as the Palisades for the purpose of fortification and reservation. A similar act was passed in New-Jersey and received the approval of the Governor. These joint Commissioners reported in favor of the acquisition of the cliffs, but an attempt to secure an appropriation by Congress to carry out the plan failed, and the scheme to make a camp ground for the troops of the two States on the bluffs had to be abandoned.

Then the Legislature of New-Jersey passed a bill in February, 1895, restraining the Riparian Commissioners from granting leases without the necessary qualifying conditions to protect the Palisades from blasting. But the quarrymen succeeded in securing the passage of an amendment which allowed blasting "for the purpose of preparing the ground for the construction of buildings or for commercial purposes."

This amendment practically nullified the law of 1895, and the blasting went merrily on. The Commission made efforts to interest the National Government without success. In 1899 a bill was introduced in the New-Jersey Legislature through the efforts of the Women's Federation for the appointment of a commission of five to take up the question of the preservation of the Palisades, and at the same time a similar bill was introduced in the Legislature of New-York. The New-Jersey bill became a law, but the New-York bill was lost. But Governor Roosevelt, who was in sympathy with the move-

ment, sent the following letter to Andrew H. Green, president of the Society for the Preservation of Scenic and Historic Places and Objects:

The Legislature at its last session having failed to pass the bill providing for the appointment of a commission to act on behalf of this State in conjunction with a like commission of New-Jersey for the preservation of the Palisades, if your society approves, I would respectfully suggest that you appoint a committee of five to co-operate with the New-Jersey Commission in devising some plan of action for the States looking to the end in view.

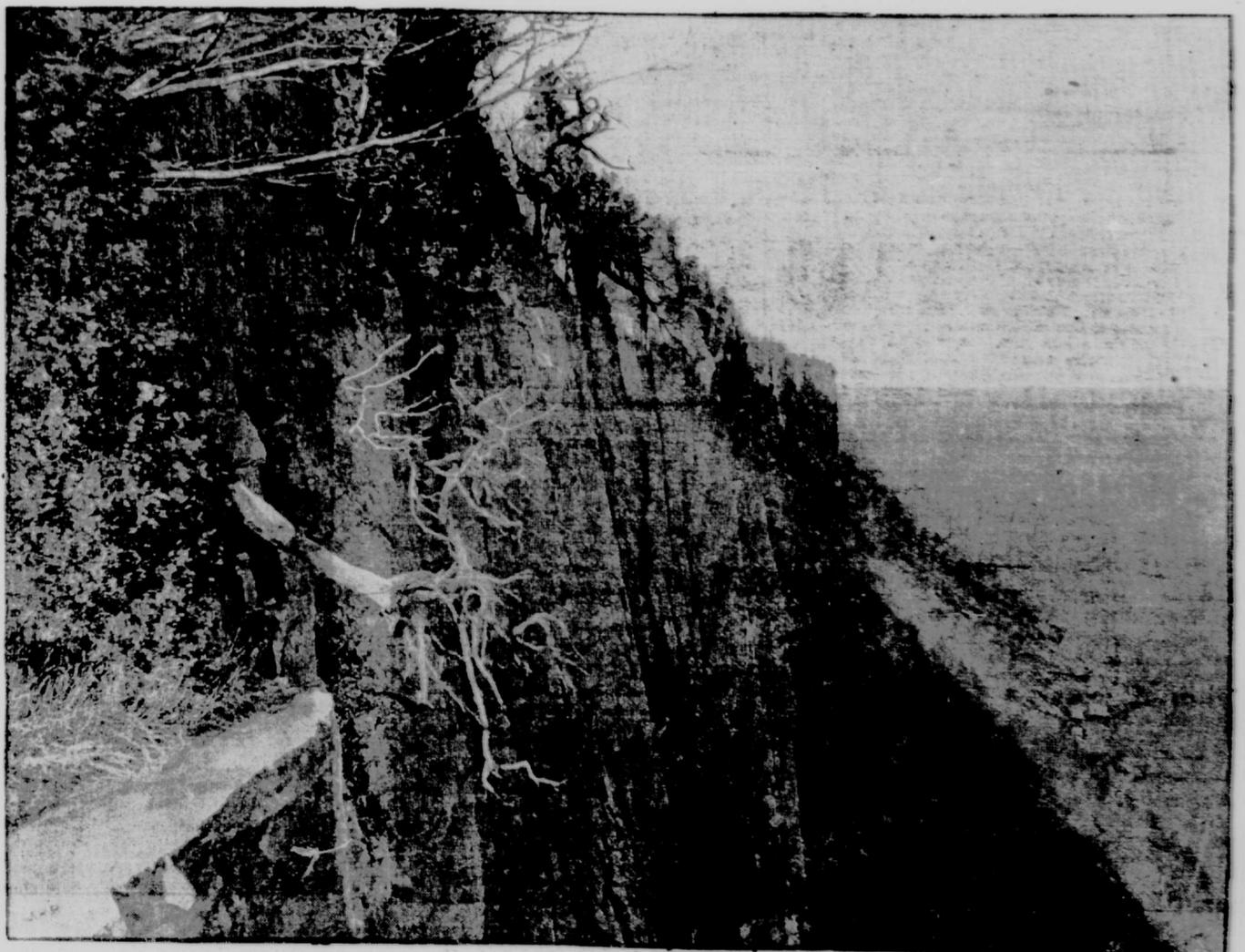
In response to this communication the following committee was appointed: Frederick W. Devoe, chairman; Frederick S. Lamb, secretary; George F. Kunz, treasurer; Edward Payson

Cone and Colonel A. G. Mills, with Andrew H. Green as an honorary member. Governor Voorhees then appointed a similar committee, consisting of Franklin Hopkins, chairman; Elizabeth B. Vermilye, secretary; Mrs. John Holland, S. Wood McClave and W. A. Linn.

After much discussion at joint and separate meetings a report was drawn up, and a hearing was arranged before the Governor. Frederick W. Devoe, Colonel Mills and Frederick S. Lamb represented the committee of the society before the Governor, and after the hearing Edward Hagan Hall requested Gherardi Davis to introduce in the Legislature the bill which was the outcome of the hearing. It then became known that the Commission of 1895 had antici-

pated the action of the later Board, and had framed and introduced a bill. This caused much friction and controversy, and resulted in the resignation of the Commission of 1895, and the question of the preservation of the Palisades was left in the hands of two commissions, appointed by the Governors of New-York and New-Jersey.

The bill evolved by this Commission provides for the appointment of a permanent Commission of ten members, five from each State, to take charge of an interstate park to be laid out between Fort Lee on the south, Piermont Creek on the north, the exterior bulkhead line on the east and the edge of the steep rocks of the Palisades on the west. The bill was amended and



CLIFF ABOUT ONE MILE NORTH OF ALPINE.