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# SWITZERLAND

IN 1854-5:

A BOOK OF TRAVEL, MEN, & THINGS.

BY THE

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RECTOR OF ST. LAWRENCE, EXETER.

*Late British Chaplain at Interlaken.*

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## CONTENTS.

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### CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION—Blunders of travellers—No plans or knowledge of the country—Some ill-assorted—Various methods of travelling—Railways, posts, diligences, and voitures . . . Page 1

### CHAPTER II.

#### FRANCE AND CANTON NEUCHATEL.

A glance at France—Its soldiers—Hard labour of the women in field and other work—Napoleon the Third and his government—Versailles, Fontainebleau, Pontarlier—The La Cluse Pass to Neuchatel . . . . . 18

### CHAPTER III.

#### CANTON ZURICH.

The Albis and its road—The water-cure at Albis—The Brunnen—A place for retirement—Some of the pranks of the water-doctors—Splendid scenery—Distant view of the snowy Alps—Zuingle's grave—Graveyards and monuments . . . . . 34

### CHAPTER IV.

#### CANTON BERNE.

Interlaken—English church—Walks—Castle of Unspunnen—Trials of strength, and Swiss games—The Hohenbühl—Fatal accidents on the Harder . . . . . 48

### CHAPTER V.

#### CANTON BERNE.

Interlaken continued—Walks—The old convent—Lauterbrunn—Wengern Alp—The Jung Frau—Grinderwald . . . . . 64

## CHAPTER VI.

## CANTON BERNE.

Grinderwald—Its climate, productions, &c.—Swiss church and pastor—Church services—Congregation—Costumes—Schools—Unmasked—for advice . . . . . Page 76

## CHAPTER VII.

## CANTON BERNE.

The great Sheidach Pass—The course of the clouds up the mountains—Optical delusions—An adventurous lady—The glacier of Rosenlauri—Meyringen—The customs of the inhabitants 91

## CHAPTER VIII.

## CANTONS BERNE AND VAUD.

Means of providing for cows—Summer feeding on the mountains—Employment of herdsmen and dairymen—Cows and their bells—Process of making butter and cheese—Other customs peculiar to the Alpine Vacher . . . . . 108

## CHAPTER IX.

## CANTON BERNE.

The Faulhorn—Ascent of the Wetterhorn—An auberge in high regions—Carrying the inn to the mountains—Grand panorama—Appearance of the ice—Character and usefulness of guides . . . . . 130

## CHAPTER X.

## CANTONS VALLAIS AND BERNE.

The last ascent of the Jung Frau—The manner of approaching it—The Aletsch glacier—Further progress of the travellers—The terraces—Crossing crevasses with ladders—Fearful position on the last ridge—Crowning the summit—The descent . . . . . 144

## CHAPTER XI.

The chamois—Its habits, haunts, instinct, construction—Doe leaders—The bucks—Their enemies—The chamois hunter—His equipment, dangers, mode of hunting—Death of two chamois hunters . . . . . 165

## CHAPTER XII.

## CANTON VAUD.

From Interlaken to Aigle—The Simmenthal—Its beauty and fertility—Industry of the Vaudians—Chateau d'Oex—Valley of the Mause—Comballaz—Seppey—Aigle—Vevay . . . . . 186



## CHAPTER XIII.

Alpine forests—The Fir—Its growth, cutting, and means of transport—Self-acting sawing machines—Châlets—Covered wooden bridges . . . . . Page 200

## CHAPTER XIV.

## CANTONS GENEVA AND VALLAIS.

The lake of Geneva—Vevay—Villeneuve—Scenes on the lake—Climate favourable for invalids—St. Maurice—Martigny—The Drance—Col de Forclaz—Col de Balme—Chamounix—The Mer de Glace . . . . . 214

## CHAPTER XV.

## CANTON GENEVA AND PIEDMONT.

Chamounix—English Church—The present state of religion in Piedmont and Sardinia—Effects of their constitution—Spread of Waldensian principles—An intolerant bishop's pastoral . . . . . 231

## CHAPTER XVI.

## CANTON GENEVA.

Geneva—Its social and political statistics—Prisons—Ecclesiastical establishments—Doctrine and discipline—Apprehended dangers—Missions to the Waldenses . . . . . 244

## CHAPTER XVII.

## PIEDMONT AND CANTON VALLAIS.

The course of the Aarve—Pass of the Tête Noire—Guides and Mules—Val Orsine—Eau Noire—Bridges—Tête Noire—Trient—Martigny . . . . . 260

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## CANTON VALLAIS.

Viege—River and valley—Zermatt—The Riffleberg—Ascent to the Gornergratt—The panorama—Its effects—Road to Stalden—St. Nicholas—Randa—Dash, &c. . . . . 278

## CHAPTER XIX.

## CANTON VALLAIS AND SARDINIA.

From Brieg to Baveno—The Simplon—The ascent—Views—Galleries—Hospice—Descent—Isella—Domo d'Assolo—The Toccia—Baveno . . . . . 297

## CHAPTER XX.

## CANTON TESSINO AND THE GRISONS.

From Baveno to Coire—Bellinzona—The Bernadine Pass—Its grandeur and savage wildness—Mœsella—Bernadine—Source of the Rhine—Splügen—Via Mala . . . . . 312

## CHAPTER XXI.

## CANTON GRISONS.

From the Via Mala to Zurich—Thusis—Coire—The Grisons—Sargans—Lake Wallenstadt—The Linth Canal—Lake Zurich and the Zurichers . . . . . Page 328

## CHAPTER XXII.

## CANTON ZURICH.

Zurich—Its situation—Manufactories—Natural advantages—Its social and political state—Temperance of people contrasted with our industrial classes—Their contentment and happiness 340

## CHAPTER XXIII.

## CANTON SCHWYTZ.

From Zurich to Schwytz—Richtenschwyl—Accident—Voi-turiers and rickety carriages—Einsiedeln—Its church, monas-tery, and pilgrims—Lake Egeri and battlefield of Morgarten—Schwytz . . . . . 354

## CHAPTER XXIV.

## CANTONS SCHWYTZ, LUCERNE, AND UNTERWALDEN.

From Schwytz to Brienz—Goldau—The Fall of the Rossburg—The Righi—A storm—Lake Lucerne—Field of Grutli—Tell's chapel—Unterwalden and lakes Sarnen and Lungern—The Brunig Pass—Brienz and its lake . . . . . 372

## CHAPTER XXV.

## CANTONS FREYBURG, BERNE, AND BASLE.

From Thun to Basle—Thun—Freyburg and its bridge—The Jesuits—Berne: its civil and religious institutions—The church of Vaud—The Munsterthal, Basle, Manheim, Mayence, and the Rhine—Brussels—England . . . . . 391

## PREFACE.

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HAVING been compelled to relinquish his professional duties, the author of the following pages sought retirement and rest in the Alps, where he passed two summers. Whilst there, surrounded by the sublimities of nature, it occurred to him to make rough notes of the impressions which surrounding objects produced on his mind, as well as the inferences which he was led to deduce from the institutions and customs of the people with whom he was brought in contact. Some of the sceneries and incidents which he has attempted to describe were written out in their present form, at various intervals, in the midst of the scenes which they describe; of others the narrative has been completed and digested into order since his return. As it is probable that every traveller views through a perspective of his own the varying circumstances

into which he may be thrown, so it is presumed that each successive account possesses, to some extent, the interest of novelty, and portrays some features of a national peculiarity which have escaped the notice of its predecessors. It is thus with the hope of combining entertainment with instruction, that the writer of the present volume submits it to the consideration of its readers.

W. G. HEATHMAN.

EXETER, *May 1, 1855.*

# SWITZERLAND IN 1854-55.

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## CHAPTER I.

Introduction—Blunders of travellers—No plans or knowledge of the country—Some ill-assorted—Various methods of travelling in Switzerland—A word respecting Railways, Posts, Diligences, and Voitures.

HAVING visited Switzerland a short time since, when I committed sundry blunders, as most young travellers do, a thought struck me that I could not begin better than by pointing them out for the benefit of those who may follow in the same course.

In the first place, I went to Switzerland without having any very definite idea what Switzerland was. It is true, there floated in my brain visions of snowy mountains and lovely prospects, together with certain romantic ideas of its primitive and chivalrous inhabitants; but as for any idea what

parts were to be visited, what were practicable for wheels, or what for mules, or how I could best attain my object, by walking or riding, I was altogether ignorant. To rectify former errors I read during the winter all the books relating to the country I could lay hands on, especially Murray's Handbook, and being in possession of a veritable Keller,\* I was enabled to mark out as much work as was suitable to our circumstances of time and physical powers. My plan was formed with the idea of avoiding all great towns and inns, as well as those points which are chiefly resorted to by tourists, not from any affectation of novelty, but that I might be enabled to discover what sort of people the Swiss really were—wherein they differed from us, wherein they were behind or excelled us in their domestic, social, and political institutions; but, above all, that I might the better behold and appreciate their lovely country, which I found to exceed in beauty and grandeur all that had been said of it, or all that I could have imagined.

I had the misfortune to travel on a previous occasion with what might be not offensively termed an ill-assorted party. They were amiable and courteous, intelligent, and possessed with a spirit of

\* An excellent map of the Ordnance survey has lately been published at Berne, in six parts, which indicates not only every footpath, but also every mountain *chalet*. There is also another very useful one published by the Post Office authorities, which merely gives roads, towns, villages, &c., and their distances.

enterprise, but the evil was, when we came to our work, one could not walk and another could not sit the saddle, so that if we had not broken up, we should have seen no more of the country than those do who pass by the high roads or lakes from one town to another. My opinion, though it may be regarded unusual, is, that it is best to go alone. Next to that, for the members of a family or friends of like physical powers to go together—the husband may walk, and the wife ride, or the young people walk, while the seniors, if they please, may remain at those pensions or inns which are to be found all over Switzerland.

The most striking and the most wonderful parts can only be seen by those who can make good use of their legs, or who possess nerves to ride by a narrow path beside a yawning precipice, frequently of many hundred feet—who can ascend and descend ridges to which our mountains and ordinary staircases bear no comparison—who can brave both wind and weather—and last, though not least, who can put up with rough accommodation and plain fare. This is the price which all must be prepared to pay who really desire to see Switzerland in all its magnificence. To classify more generally, parties should consist of those who can only travel on wheels, or who will consent to be carried in a chair, which, by the bye, is a very expensive mode of conveyance; or of those who walk and ride, since

in the latter case there is very little which the one can do which the other cannot.

I have frequently met ladies travelling alone. In two instances they consisted of a mother and daughter, the one rode, while the other walked; and being acquainted with French and German, and protected by a trustworthy guide, they got on remarkably well, and saw more of the country than nine-tenths of the amateur tourists of the other sex. In another instance, I encountered two ladies who were brought together by an advertisement in the "Times," and from the circumstance of there being a disparity of some thirty years in their ages, they were remarkably ill-assorted. The younger, as was natural, had much more enterprise, and wished to move along much faster than the other; and the consequence was, they could by no means agree, and their derangement amounted to such a point that I was referred to in order to allay the troubled elements. My advice was to accommodate their differences and smooth down their rugged points, since it was clear that having entered upon the enterprise, they could not separate. This advice I have every reason to believe they followed, for I afterwards met with them at Geneva on finishing their tour, and found they had journeyed pleasantly, and seen very much of the country.

There is another point which although it may appear very insignificant, is really of great impor-



tance. Take but few clothes; and bring them into the smallest possible compass. Ladies, for the most part, are very tenacious on this point, and I have seen many who have taken with them enough luggage for a voyage to the East Indies. There is really no necessity for this, because all kinds of female attire, not excepting bonnets, may be purchased as well if not better abroad. If, after all, a trunk and a bag are to be taken, provide a valise, or a sort of saddle portmanteau, square at the bottom, with a carpet-bag at the top, suitable for the back of the saddle; this ought to contain all that two persons travelling with mules in the mountains can require. The large trunk may be left at the towns and forwarded easily by the post to any point to which that very useful vehicle runs. A good light Mackintosh cape, and if a lady, an additional hood for the head, stout nailed shoes, an umbrella, a telescope, an opera-glass, and havresack, are all the equipments any sensible person ought to provide. Luggage on the continent is always a great bore; independent of paying carriage, you are required to book it separately, and since each lot has to be weighed, the confusion, the worry and delay at some railway stations are immense. For my own part, from past experience, I have fully made up my mind that, travel with whom I may, a primary article in our agreement shall be, to carry nothing but what can be taken into the

railway carriage. This may be contained in a good-sized havresack with a broad leather belt. I prefer this to the knapsack, because it too much confines the shoulders, and makes you unpleasantly warm, exerting yourself, as you must, in ascending high mountains.

If you really desire to see the country you must give yourself time. In ordinary years, all obstacles to Alpine travelling are removed by the middle of June, and you may continue your tour to the end of September. It is too much always to expect fine weather, and therefore you should leave a margin for detentions. Young tourists, in general, hurry on too fast. The best plan is to seat yourself down in a locality of interest, and examine it well before you proceed to the next. You cannot, by any possibility, expect to see everything in one visit to Switzerland, and therefore it is far better to obtain an accurate knowledge of the part you visit, and inspect its wonders, than to hurry unsatisfactorily over a great deal of ground. I have known those who have pressed on from day to day, rain or shine, cloudy or clear, to the greatest elevation, without seeing anything, and, as it would seem, merely for the sake of saying they had been to a certain place, or visited a certain mountain; and the consequence has been, they have soon tired of their pleasure, and heartily wished themselves at home. To ascend high mountains for a prospect,

or to traverse mountain passes, requires fine unclouded weather, otherwise you make a sacrifice of your labour and money, and are rewarded with nothing but vexation and toil without obtaining your object. It is better, therefore, to rest quietly at your pension till the rain ceases and the clouds lift themselves from the mountains.

In visiting the Continent generally, or Switzerland in particular, I would advise you to leave on the other side of the Channel all extravagant notions of comfort, and the unreasonable demands which are too frequently made on the patience and prejudices of foreigners. To expect the cleanliness and order, as well as the delicacies, of a London club-house in a French inn or in an Alpine *chalet* beside the margin of the snow, is only to anticipate disappointment. Let me advise you therefore, if you desire not to part company with good temper, and it is a companion worth making great sacrifices to retain, to make up your mind to rough it for a season, and to conform as much as possible to the usages of the people among whom you sojourn. I have met those persons who would not take things as they found them, continually dissatisfied and grumbling with persons and things which, after all, they were compelled from day to day to endure. I have found others who have adopted a different course, acquiring marvellously soon the power of assimilation, and—such is the force of habit—in a very short

time bringing themselves to relish practices and things which at first appeared strange and even revolting to English ideas.

Again, since prejudice has neither eyes to see nor ears to hear, it will be well to dispense with a quality which, whether justly or unjustly, has been laid to our account by foreigners. For my own part, I have no patience with those who see nothing commendable in the constitutions, the objects, and practices of other nations. One object of foreign travel is improvement, and if you keep your eyes open and judge impartially of men and things, it requires no prophetic wisdom to foretell that you will come home benefited. Depend upon it, there are generally good reasons for the practices of foreigners in things wherein they differ from ourselves — often something which adapts them to their peculiar circumstances, or the difficulty which is felt everywhere of not being able, through poverty or want of means, to obtain what we wish, and which under other circumstances would be decidedly best.

There are many ways of visiting Switzerland. You may land either at Calais or Boulogne, Havre or Ostend, but the passage to the former two places being only about two hours, persons who are inconvenienced by the sea generally prefer either one or the other. The distance thence to Basle, the frontier town of Switzerland, is about six hundred miles,

and may be travelled by way of Paris and Strasburgh by the first-class railway carriage for £5, second, £3 10s. The most direct route, which is nearly 100 miles shorter, is by way of Dijon, Besançon, Pontarlier, to Neufchâtel. The railroad, however, not having yet reached Besançon, the distance from Dijon not less than 120 miles has to be performed by diligence, and consequently this route becomes longer in point of time. Of course, if the traveller is bound to Piedmont or the western parts of Switzerland, his best plan will be to cross the Jura by diligence, either from Dijon or Lyons to Geneva, a route which varies from twelve to fourteen hours. Although travelling by diligence is held in abhorrence by some, nevertheless there are yet some slow persons left in the world who if they can secure the outside, or the coupée, which is the front or bay window of the diligence, choose it, preferring even the delay with a pleasant view of landscapes, to being shot along over the country with the rapidity of a cannon ball.

Those who are proceeding to Switzerland, and have never sailed up the Rhine, are by all means recommended to leave a little earlier and to land at Ostend. After having viewed all the sights at Antwerp, Brussels, and other towns of Flanders, which are well worth a week, they may steam up the Rhine from Cologne as far as Mayence, sleeping the night, if it is thought necessary, at Coblenz, and then on

by Heidelberg, Baden-Baden, and Friburg to Basle. This is a far preferable plan to that of leaving Germany and the Rhine till their return. The Rhine and its mountain boundaries to those who have been doomed to live in a low country are no doubt extremely beautiful, but when once you have visited Switzerland, the eye has been so accustomed to grasp greater objects, and to scale loftier heights, that even the pretty scenery of the Rhine appears insignificant. I have taken both routes, and I could have formed no idea of the extent to which this remark is realised. The country appeared quite tame and uninteresting on my return, and the Rhine any other than the river I had previously traversed.

From Frankfort and Mayence you find your way to Basle by the railroad, where, excepting about a dozen miles in the vicinity of Zurich, you bid adieu to the commodious and expeditious modes of railway conveyance. While I am on the subject of railways, I cannot however avoid saying it is an event greatly to be desired that the Thunderer of Printing-house Square, or some other Thunderer, should make war upon our railway potentates. The manner in which they treat us is really too bad, particularly if economical considerations drive you to the second class. Not only do they not accommodate you like a gentleman, but they do not give you sufficient room or protect you against the disagreeables of travel, from persons or things.

Leaving as I did, a provincial town of the west not many miles from the fishing port of Brixham, I was directed to a carriage where the smell of fish was so intolerable that I was obliged to retreat as soon as I entered it. I did not however much mend my position, as, from sundry odours and divers traces of disagreeables, there was no doubt the second had been recently tenanted by a company of sailors. Whether it was that I had started on a day of ill omen, or that I was to experience the acme of nuisances to which we are exposed by this mode of travelling, I cannot tell; but not long after, there were admitted four drunken musicians who had been revelling the previous night at a county town, where the militia had been just dismissed. Surely, if our railway lords are permitted by the Imperial Parliament to consign their victims to a packing-box little better than the black hole of Calcutta, they should be compelled to protect them against such nuisances as these. On the Continent it is better managed; not only are their second-class carriages in Belgium, Germany, and France, padded at the back, sides, and seats, but they are as spacious and comfortable as those of the first-class on our side of the Channel. The one I had the curiosity to measure in France—and it was certainly not superior to those of other continental countries—I found to be nine feet long, four feet wide, and six feet high. The seats, which were, in some instances, stuffed with flock and hair, and in

others on springs, were two feet deep, with two feet space between them for the legs. This space of nine feet each side, *vis-à-vis*, was allotted to ten persons, five before and five behind, and gave to each the very reasonable seat of twenty-two inches, and presented a striking contrast to those inhuman boxes in which we had been so recently cooped up. There was, moreover, a regulation posted on the inside of the carriage to the following effect:—"Any one who presents himself at a railway station in a state of intoxication, or with loaded fire-arms, or having parcels or packages which, from their bulk or smell; are disagreeable to other travellers, shall not be permitted to take their place in the carriage, and if through inadvertency they have done so, they will be removed on a complaint being made at the next station.

Travellers on continental railways should remember that they are required to be at the station at least ten minutes before the train starts. In the first instance, they have to obtain their own ticket, and when this is presented at the baggage department they weigh your luggage, for which you pay on some lines, and then a ticket is given you to correspond with that pasted on each separate package of baggage. This is absolutely necessary to be attended to, because the booking-office closes five minutes before the train leaves, and no tickets are delivered afterwards. When you have booked



yourself and paid for your luggage you are ushered into an ante-room according to your fare, from which you issue to the platform at the interval of a few minutes between each class of passengers. Due notice is given of this as of every other move by the ringing of a bell. When the train stops at the end of the journey, all the passengers are again passed into a waiting-room till the baggage is assorted. When this is done the doors are opened, and each finds at one place and together all he had booked under the same number. These are regulations which prevent much confusion, and add considerably to the comfort of travelling, as well as effectually guarding against losses; indeed, you seldom or ever hear of such a thing on the Continent. The most careless and unceremonious of all our railways is the North-Western, where the luggage is turned out on the platform, and each has to scramble for his own; probably this is to save time and porter labour, but it adds greatly to discomfort.

There is another thing of which, I think, the public have just cause to complain, and that is the amount of fare of our railways. I do not for a moment imagine that travelling by them can be so cheap as by those of the Continent, because they cost more in constructing and working, and have heavier charges of taxes; but if the directors had not constructed lines which pay nothing, and for which passengers are

taxed, I feel assured we might travel much cheaper. The charges on lines where there is no competition, *e.g.* the Bristol and Exeter and Great Western, are enormous. The reason of things being so bad as they are is no doubt the want of competition, but the parliament which sanctions the monopoly should exercise a salutary control over it.

There is, however, a set-off on the other side. You cannot travel so fast on any of the continental lines as you can on our own, although they are approximating to it. And notwithstanding there are those who regard this as a misfortune, and desire to be shot along as swift as the ball from an eighteen pounder, there are those, and I confess myself among the number, who prefer going at the rate of from twenty to twenty-five miles an hour, the average rate of continental lines.\* It is true, you have not even then much opportunity for seeing the country, but you certainly have a greater probability of safety. For my own part, I am not afraid of being considered oldfashioned or singular when I confess that I much prefer the old method of horses to the new innovation of steam, especially when travelling for pleasure. I accordingly found my way into

\* I witnessed at Amiens (where the train stopped for the purpose of refreshment) the following instance of the free and easy proceedings of French railway authorities. A passenger having been left behind, shouted at the top of his voice, and was heard by the guard of the train which had just started; immediately they reversed the engines and took him in.

Switzerland by the diligence and the Swiss Post, which is a most excellent conveyance.

Before I conclude these prefatory remarks, I would observe, that the main roads in Switzerland have been greatly improved of late, and many new ones constructed. Swiss diligences or posts, which contain from four to a dozen persons, according to the amount of travelling in the locality, are established almost everywhere; by which means, at a trifling expense, travellers can resort even to out-of-the-way places, where much is to be seen, at a moderate charge. Pedestrians also may avail themselves of this mode of conveyance, and find themselves invigorated by the change, for their excursions. Independent of the saving of time, no one except a German student, who is compelled by necessity, would think of walking upon the hot dusty roads of Switzerland when he could procure wheels. It may sometimes happen that the diligence or post has started: in that case a voiture or a car can be procured; the former with two horses at the rate of eighteen francs per day with bonmain, and the latter with one horse at nine francs. The former, which may be thrown open, will contain four inside and one on the box with the coachman; the latter two, and one also on the box. It follows, therefore, that parties of three or four who cannot walk, by dividing the expense may travel very economically. Indeed the individual expense should not exceed ten shillings

per day. The amount, however, depends upon the rate at which you travel; for it must be evident, considerably more expense will be incurred by going on from day to day without respite, than by remaining at a pension or even at an inn to recruit. It is to be borne in mind that the voiturier considers about twenty English miles a good day's work, because that distance enables him to return to his home at night; for this he charges eighteen francs for two horses. But if he is hired to go a distance of a hundred miles outright, he will charge at least one hundred francs for six days, because he could not with the same horses perform the forward journey in less than three days, which would be fifty-four francs, and would require the same for his return. In the height of the season, when the demand is greater than the supply, they ask more. In the latter part of July and the beginning of August, it is difficult to procure them at all. At this season it is also difficult to obtain return carriages except at the full price. At other times, however, they may be had at most of the great places of resort at a more reasonable rate. The Post authorities also throughout the country, provide horses and something in the shape of a carriage, for it is hardly worthy of being called by that name, at a given tariff, which makes the expense less. These voitures are generally the vehicles termed supplements or dependences, which convey from post to

post the excess of passengers which the post or diligence will not contain. These said dependences which, from their ricketty shaky state, you imagine will scarcely reach the end of the journey, are nevertheless a great convenience, because by this means they book any number of persons at the post, even double what the diligence will contain and forward them sometimes by two or three supplements. They are always under the charge of the conductor who stows the luggage in the diligence and is answerable for its safe keeping. From the circumstance of always running immediately behind the principal vehicle, the passengers are exposed in fine weather to the intolerable nuisance of all the dust raised by the preceding carriages. It is, therefore, wise always to book as early as possible: precedence being given for vehicles and seats to those who come first.

## CHAPTER II.

A Glance at France—Its Soldiers—Women in the Agricultural Districts, and their hard labour—Napoleon the Third and his Government—Versailles—Fontainbleau—Besançon—Pontarlier—The La Cluse Pass to Neuchâtel.

THE object which attracted our attention before landing on the other side of the Channel, was the French camp at present formed in the neighbourhood of Boulogne. Having observed the ingenuity with which they constructed their huts, some of which were altogether of wood, and others of turf with a wooden frame to support it, I was induced to inspect more narrowly the habits of a soldiery which formerly we were taught to undervalue, if not to look upon with contempt. The result, according to what may be called an unprofessional opinion was, that I found them quite up to their work and thoroughly to understand their business. It is true they do not appear on parade as well set up as our troops of the line, or to march with the same precision and exactness, neither were they so stiff and starched, but as soon as they commenced their field

movements all thoughts of their inferiority vanished. It was then they were seen to advantage; they ran, they vaulted, and they marched with all the exactness and combination of the different parts of a machine, executing some ingenious work. They took up positions and occupied outposts with a celerity and precision which, if equalled, could not be surpassed by any troops in Europe. On the whole, they are moderate in stature, but the deficiency in height is gained by their activity, and the freedom and swiftness with which they perform their operations are amazing. They are not burdened with a strait-jacket and tight trousers as our soldiers are; the former is substituted by a short loose blue frock-coat, rather long in the waist, but not reaching below the hip. This, together with flowing red trousers, black cross-belts, and a light cap or shako, together with their arms bronzed and of the newest and most approved description, completed their equipment.

To be sure there was but little for them to carry and nothing to impede their movements, and consequently, they had to thank the authorities rather than themselves for putting them in the best possible condition for performing their allotted work; but certainly they possessed an equipment which, when compared with our own, contrasts immeasurably in their favour, and to the disadvantage of the slow blundering proceedings of our War Office.

I had also another opportunity of witnessing the movements of the troops at the funeral of a French admiral. As the various regiments—I think there were six—passed through the streets of Paris, one would have imagined, from the absence of line and order, their straggling and irregular marching, together with their slovenly gait, that they were the awkward squad of the militia, rather than troops of the line. But when they arrived at their destination and had a part to perform, the illusion vanished. They executed it with all the order and smartness of the best disciplined soldiers. The truth is, a great deal more liberty is granted to French soldiers than to our own; and this, from their habits of temperance is attended with no bad results. A question, however, might arise, whether it would answer with us when we take into account the known propensity of our soldiers to tipple. This licence when not under arms, combined with the strictest order and even rigour in the field, is said to have been one of the secrets of the success of our own Protector, who knew probably better than most men when to tighten and relax the rein of discipline, and the consequences it would produce on his soldiery.

The conscription for 1832 being required for the exigencies of the present war, we found at the railway stations, and every place besides, young soldiers in the shape of peasants, perfectly sober and orderly, on their way to join their respective corps. As a



whole, however, those from the south and the east, from the Basses Pyrénées, and the Jura, were much under the stature of a similar number taken promiscuously from agricultural parishes in our own country, and better calculated for the light than the heavy work of soldiering. As we passed through the various garrison towns we found them converting these peasants into soldiers.

There was one object continually presenting itself, which when contrasted with what we witness on our side of the Channel, lifts the beam considerably to our advantage. Women everywhere were doing the work of men, acting as porters at the custom-house, railway stations and coach offices, and as agricultural labourers hoeing the ground and mowing the grass, as grooms to clean horses; and lastly even as navvies to construct railways.\*

All this must be lamented and regarded as a great defect in their social system, and telling very much against the proper instruction of their children. They are consequently neglected, and allowed to vegetate much after the manner of colts; or if very young, are laid by the side of the hedge or, in the corner of a field. Their laborious employments tend to injure their features, and to make their women coarse and awkward in their gait, so that it

\* There were a great number of women employed in breaking stones and wheeling soil on the railway now constructing between Dijon and Besançon.

is rarely and only in particular districts, that you alight on comely features among the French peasantry.

Their industry is, doubtless, beyond all praise. Meet them where you will, in doors or out, they are always at work, knitting, spinning, crocheting, hoeing, digging, &c., to the neglect of their families, which is certainly too high a price to pay even for so valuable a commodity.

One would imagine in an agricultural country like France—containing as it does a population of 38,000,000, only one-fifth of whom, that is, about 8,000,000 live in towns, and after subtracting a regular army, amounting to more than 400,000—there could be found sufficient men for the toilsome work of the field without calling to their aid the weaker sex. Without doubt the acre-age of France is immense, and their crops very different from our own, much maize is grown, and many vineyards are cultivated; hence a good deal of the field labour is light and such as used formerly to be done by our women; and of the great number employed, it is to be hoped the weakest are put at least to some of those employments.

It has been said of Cromwell that, although many have stigmatized him as a knave, none have ever ventured to call him a fool. This cannot be said of the present emperor of the French. The newspaper press of England has certainly abused him

beyond all bounds of decency, and among other things, has laid incapacity to his charge. His conduct however, since he has assumed the reins of government, has afforded the most palpable proofs of the falsehood of such a charge. Every one who has watched the career of Louis Napoleon must be convinced that he has studied well the French character, their genius and their tastes, and knows how to please to flatter and cajole, while he governs them with great tact and much to their satisfaction. Doubtless he has called to his assistance many able men, but be it so, there is not the less merit due to him as the helmsman who has hitherto so adroitly, so ably and successfully steered the vessel of the State. If you contrast his government with that of the Assembly of the Republic which preceded it, it is immensely in his favour. It was in fact, their incapacity, their selfishness and their peculations which not only made them contemptible in the eyes of France, but which actually paved the way for his advancement. The next step, when the rulers of a nation are in contempt, is to depose them to make way for better men. This was the case in France at the time of the *coup d'état*.

Everything in this world is comparative, and if its present emperor be measured by his acts with some of the kings of the earth he becomes renowned even by the comparison. The Rue Rivoli now in construction, and which runs parallel with the Seine, when

finished will be a far more splendid monument to commemorate his reign than all the victories sealed with blood, and all the triumphal arches cemented with tears, that have been raised by his warlike predecessors; and I trust it is not too much to anticipate, that he will successfully teach a thoughtless, light-hearted people the secret, that the industrial and commercial pursuits of peace, not only bring greater riches, but far greater happiness and blessings to a nation than a career of ambition of rapine and wrong,—a course which, we are all aware, is pursued at the present moment by a potentate who prides himself on being the *beau idéal* and impersonation of order and good government.

A day at Versailles repaid us, not only in beholding a splendid monument of past magnificence, but by being pleasingly instructed by pictures in the civilization and the history of the French people. Louis Philippe at his own expense, has so arranged the works of the great masters, that you are led on and initiated from picture to picture, and from room to room, into a knowledge of the heroes—the kings—the battles, and in fact, the rise progress and consolidation of the French empire, even down to the surprise of Abdel Kader by Horace Vernet.

Another day at Fontainebleau proved equally interesting from another cause. The various styles of architecture of different centuries, are seen

blended or in combination in successive ranges and courts, this ancient residence of the French monarchs having only been completed at the interval of many ages.

Its interior retains the furniture of the distinguished personages who have resided there either by compulsion or otherwise, not excepting that of the Pope, who was a prisoner to Napoleon the First. It stands in the middle of a forest of about forty miles in circumference, and abounds with deer. The present emperor being fond of the chase, generally spends a month at Fontainebleau during the hunting season, and thus adopts it as one of his favourite residences. It is very quiet and retired, which may be an additional reason for his choice. Of course he has removed the table on which Murray's guide-book informs the traveller his uncle signed his abdication, and which till of late years he was permitted to see.

The climate of Fontainebleau, situated as it is on a silicious or sandy soil, is said to be exceedingly dry, and recommended by the faculty throughout Europe to invalids requiring that peculiar state of the atmosphere. In confirmation of this, I would add, that I met a large family in Switzerland who had resided there during a winter by the advice of their physician, and had realized all their anticipations. They pronounced it as being dry beyond conception in winter, but from the same cause unfit for a

summer's residence. In its neighbourhood are extensive vineyards, where some of the best grapes in France are grown, and which form the chief supply of the Paris market during the season.

The railroad from Dijon to Besançon not being finished, a day's ride on the outside of the diligence through a plain uninteresting country, similar to other parts of France, brought us to the latter place. This species of vehicle, which is an hermaphrodite—between a stage coach and a wagon—varies a good deal in accommodation. The coupée of the Swiss diligence which conveyed us from Pontarlier to Neuchâtel was as comfortable as any post-chaise: while our French vehicle was but a little improvement upon the accommodation and speed of Russel's wagon, or one of those vans which carry country people to a market-town. Besançon is prettily situated on the river Doubs, which divides it and flows round the old part of the town. The citadel which appears very strong, and from its having resisted more than once the attacks of the allied armies, is regarded as impregnable. As we gradually ascended by the river Doubs, the country assumed somewhat of the romantic, and hence we inferred we were approaching the land we sought. Pontarlier, the frontier town, however, is anything but picturesque, standing as it does, in the midst of the table land of the Jura. It is the highest town in France, being

3000 feet above the level of the sea. It was a piece of uncalled-for cruelty in Napoleon the Great, as he is sometimes designated, to shut up Toussaint L'Ouverture, the poor negro who had too successfully resisted his ambition in the Island of St. Domingo, in this elevated region. It might have been all very well to subject the young blood of Mirabeau, who was also confined in this town, to the cooling breezes of the Jura; but to imprison a poor African in a damp dark dungeon, from the roof of which water distilled in the summer and icicles hung in the winter, was a species of martyrdom unworthy a great monarch.

At length, from the top of the Jura, the longed-for land appeared, and we began to defile by the La Cluse Pass upon Neuchâtel. Although it may yield precedence to the other passes of the Jura in wild grandeur, it certainly surpasses them in beauty and luxuriance, accompanied by that peculiar feature in the landscape called romance. Forests of larch and pine of diversified hue adorn the hills to their summit, whilst ever and anon pretty white-washed cottages lie sprinkled by the mountain side. These reminded us of home, or rather from their resemblance to some of the mountainous districts of Wales.

Soon after we began to descend, we had to pass through an aperture, a gorge in the mountain only wide enough to admit one vehicle at a time, and from the circumstance of its having been originally

defended by a ponderous iron chain drawn across, it obtained the distinctive and significant appellation of La Chaîne. Tradition has handed down the story, that it was so fortified to withstand the attacks of Charles the Bold in the year 1476. It may be so, or as others suppose, it may even claim greater antiquity. But one thing is certain, in the wars which overspread Europe at the time of the French revolution, not only the chain if it had been used, but the arms of the allied Germans and Russians proved too feeble to resist the inroads of revolutionary troops, who, like the locusts of the East, were on their way to defile and destroy all that came within their touch.

Half an hour's brisk driving down a winding, whirling road brought us to the village of St. Sulpice, the first of two or three others which indent the mead-like vale of Travers. From the rocks in its vicinity, the Reuse takes its rise and follows its tortuous windings as far as La Clusette, where it turns at a right angle and empties itself into the lake Neuchâtel. Our horses were young and frisky, and this combined with the will of a young Swiss driver, was the cause of our being whisked along at a much swifter pace than we thought safe for our bones. This fast trotting down cork-screw roads, so common in all the passes of Switzerland, we afterwards became accustomed to; but not being as yet initiated, our heads began to wander, and woods,



houses, fields, and rocks were all mingled in a mighty maze.

Nor is it at all times unattended with danger. I recollect, on a previous occasion, passing this same Jura in one of the cumbrous French diligences, and in trotting down the winding road near Bellegarde, one of the shaft-horses fell, and such was the impetus that neither under and upper drags combined were sufficient to bring the carriage to a stand for some considerable time; and the consequence was, that we were very nearly hurled over a precipice of from two to three hundred feet into the Rhone. After having dragged the poor animal some distance the vehicle was stopped, but not before we were within six feet of those curb stones which are so thinly interspersed on the outer side of these roads.

The truth is, there is nothing like driving in either French or Swiss diligences. The driver, so called, merely takes his station on the box and cares for the horses—that is looks after them; when they have finished their journey, he also has performed his. The stage is just the same length as our own, and when it is finished both driver and horses are succeeded by others. As for directing them, he does no such thing; they direct themselves. When they are put in, and the whip is cracked—an operation at which they are most expert, and which serves the purpose of the horn

to call up lazy ostlers and sleeping landlords—off they go. If however they are required at any time to stop the vehicle, they cannot do it, because neither their fittings, nor the manner in which they are harnessed, enable them to effect it. The work of stopping the carriage belongs to those upper and side drags, which they bring to bear against the wheels. As for stopping it, if these fail, it is altogether out of the question. All control is lost—horses, carriage, and passengers are in danger of being dashed to pieces, or rolled over some frightful precipice.

At the end of the Val Travers, two chains of mountains, called Boudry and La Tourne, circumscribe, or rather form its outlet upon Neuchâtel. After a gradual ascent, the road passes a rocky bluff, or ridge, which, after turning a point rather abruptly, and at a very acute angle, continues its course midway up the mountain on a sort of ledge which overlooks the gulf-like valley below. At the distance it may be of two or three hundred feet flows the Reuse, which is now contracted and forced into a deep, narrow, winding channel. The scenery becomes romantic. The cliffs on the opposite side, which rise almost perpendicular, are rugged and spiral at their top, but lower down, from the crumbling of the rock, the base is clothed with wood. The view, however, is rather contracted, owing to the height of the cliff, and the narrowness of the gorge. Beyond appears the Creux de Vent,

one of the most remarkable rocks in the whole line of the Jura. It is something like the crater of a burnt-out volcano, whose lips reach an elevation of more than 3,000 feet, while the diameter of the basin is more than two miles, and its depth 600 feet.

A singular phenomenon presents itself on the approach of storms and bad weather. As the storm arises, this crater becomes filled with vapour, which is continually rising working and falling as if it ascended from a huge cauldron. There is one point however, a sort of ravine which intersects a part of the mountain where the vapour escapes in the shape of an ethereal cloud, like that which is caused by the booming of cannon. After descending to the valley below, it very speedily evaporates.

We now passed successively through the villages of La Clusette, Rochfort, and Peseux, and were charmed with the appearance of their large houses and pretty gardens, which indicated the wealth and prosperity of their possessors. Their thrift is astonishing, for during the last ten years they have raised these places from obscure roadside hamlets to flourishing villages. They are all of them employed in manufacturing the various parts of those cheap clocks which are sold in England for American. After finishing the various wheels, springs, &c., but roughly, for the price will not admit of much nicety, they export them to that country.

A turn in the winding road brought us suddenly

in sight of Neuchâtel and its beautiful and refreshing lake. It comes not however within the scope of my design to enter into lengthened descriptions of towns. Indeed, the short time I remained in them afforded but little opportunity of becoming acquainted with circumstances and objects which might otherwise prove interesting. I cannot however omit saying, that Neuchâtel is prettily, though not advantageously, situated on a lake of the same name, at the foot of the Jura. The lake may be about twenty-five miles long, with the average breadth of two-and-a-half. In stating it to be disadvantageously situated in contradistinction to pretty, assuredly some explanation, if I would not be considered altogether utilitarian, becomes necessary. The truth is, it is exceedingly pretty, because built on very rising ground and the mountains at its back begin to grow immediately you leave the town; and the trellises, on which the vine is very extensively cultivated (indeed, it is all vineyards), give it a very smiling appearance. But the same cause subjects its inhabitants and the peasantry to the labour of very hilly roads. Both east and west of the town is open and plain ground, and contains sites enough for a hundred towns of larger dimensions.

Although quiet, it appeared clean, and not uninteresting. The buildings, whether private or public, presented no particular object worthy of

notice. A great deal of the ground on which Neuchâtel at present stands is redeemed from the water, and obtained by a delta or deposit, made by the Seyon, a mountain stream which, descending from the Jura, passes through the middle of the town, and empties itself into the lake. From the circumstance of the arrival of the steam-boat from Yverdun, attracting a large portion both of the male and female inhabitants, and from its evidently being regarded as an event in the unbroken tenour of the day, I came to the conclusion that the good people of Neuchâtel were not overburdened with mercantile or other very engrossing transactions. From the quantity of grapes grown in its immediate vicinity, and the wine exported to various parts of the country, their vintage, however, must be a busy and a stirring time, and like the sugar-crops in the West Indies, brings with it joy and wealth, by the employment of all ages and sexes—men, women, and children.

## CHAPTER III.

## CANTON ZURICH.

The Albis—Its road—The water-cure at Albis—The Brunnen—  
 A place for retirement—Some pranks of the water-doctors—  
 Splendid scenery—Distant view of the snowy mountains—  
 Zuingle's grave—Grave-yards and monuments.

THERE is an exceeding pretty retirement on the southern glades of the Albis, at a water-cure establishment, kept by Dr. Brunner, whose pension without the cure may be obtained at any time. In order to approach it from Zurich you ascend the Albis, a range of mountains to the south-west of the town, about three thousand feet from the level of the sea, by an excellent zig-zag road. In many places, owing to the swampy nature of the mountain slopes, the road is raised above the soil, after the manner of our railroads. This is the character of many of the Swiss roads, which, though excellent in their bottom, yet having no rails or walls, except here and there a stone inserted in

the ground at their sides, are the cause of many accidents.

It so happened that a pleasure-party from Zurich had entrusted themselves to the guidance of an amateur whip, who much to the annoyance of our driver, passed us. He had no sooner done so, than either his horses took fright at some strange object or he badly managed them, and the consequence was, that the vehicle was turned over and rolled into the ditch, which was at least twenty feet below. It so happened that, by a sudden jerk, the body became detached from the wheels, or the consequences might have been fatal. As it was, they were rolled over and over like a ball down hill; but the ground being soft and boggy, they escaped without any further mishap than being well bespattered with mud.

In consequence of a thick fog we were disappointed when we arrived at the summit of the Albis, where we anticipated a good distant view of the snowy Alps.\* It was only, however, for a season, as a residence of three weeks at the water-cure establishment of Dr. Brunner, near the village of Hausen, pleasantly situated on one of the glades

\* It is, however, much inferior to the distant view from the plateau above Berne, or rather the hills a few miles out of that town. The expanse is there much broader; and the various Alps, occupying a longer range *vis-d-vis*, are clearly defined, and more distinctly recognised. Besides, they are far more numerous.

of the Albis, afforded us the opportunity of viewing these wonderful objects in all their grandeur.

Water establishments are generally situated in the most delightful spots; indeed, pleasant scenery and good walks form a part of the cure. Priessnitz carried his theory so far as to say, "No mountain, no water-cure." The brunnen of the Albis, or Albis brunnen as it is called, certainly possessed all the necessary qualifications, and I know not that I could recommend a tourist fatigued with travel to a more pleasant spot. The only hardship to which he would be subjected—and if it should prove a hardship, knowing it beforehand, he had better not go there—would be that the fare is of the most simple description, with nothing but water to drink. It would be wrong to suppose, from its designation, that you meet there only invalids; on the contrary, although the house was full when I visited it, there were but comparatively few patients. The party was of the most respectable order, made up of many parents, with their families from the great towns of Switzerland, who were seeking health and refreshment, or a little setting-up, as they expressed it, in this delightful retirement. The young people, and many of their seniors, amused themselves in the evenings with music, dancing, and the thousand little diversions and games which the Swiss, as well as the French, are famed for. The reputation of the



doctor is far spread, and there can be no doubt of his being a skilful physician. But his administration of water, or application of it to the cure of disease, was not so cleverly performed as at some of the large establishments in Germany.\* The baths were all of wood, and built on the lower or foundation story, which was the cause of no little inconvenience. Every one knows that packing in the wet sheet is one of the manipulations of the water-cure, and that, after remaining sufficiently long in the melting state, you are forthwith plunged, reeking with perspiration, into cold water. To facilitate this process in England, where they do not use the plunge, a shallow bath, as it is called—that is, one in which you can stretch at full length, with a couple of buckets of water in it—is placed by your bedside; and the instructions of Dr. Gully, of Malvern is for the patient to make all the exertion in his power to take a comfortable bath. In Germany they use the swimming or plunge bath. A chair is rolled to the bed of the patient, and he is lifted into it, with all his

\* Marianburg, near Boppard, on the Rhine, about two hours' sail above Coblenz, where I resided a month, is the prince of water-cure establishments. It is not only situated in the most enchanting country, but the baths are of a most luxurious description, having cost nearly £2,000 in their construction. The house itself was a convent for noble ladies, suppressed at the time of the French Revolution. The consequence is, the apartments are numerous and spacious. The company amounting to more than one hundred, consisted of the *élite* of eleven nations.

frappings of blankets, &c., and then rolled along a gallery to a tunnel, where he is shot, by balanced weights, as if by magic, into the bath-room below, where the blankets being thrown aside, he is allowed to cool in a swimming-bath of twenty-five feet by ten. Swiss cooling, however, at the doctor's of the Albis, was somewhat different. The patient was lifted out of his bed, and carried pick-a-back by one of the *frauteurs* or bathmen, over the stairs into the cellar below, where he was left to cool in a wooden tub some six feet deep. It was felt to be a great bore by the patients, not only to be so unceremoniously handled when they were so grotesquely dressed, but also to be exposed all mummy-like to the gaze of the visitors. But what was felt to be a far greater evil, was that being bound as they were, hand and foot, from their very helpless condition they were in no small peril, if the foot of the bathman slipped, to be launched over the stairs. Indeed, what must be the portion of the poor *miserable*—the mummy himself—if his human donkey slipped in the descent? There could be no help for him, but that he must be trundled somers-et downwards, and perhaps his neck broken into the bargain. Casualties, however, of this kind but seldom occur. Indeed, in justice to the kind doctor, I must add that I never heard of one.

The establishment is situated about two-thirds of the way down the southern side of the Albis, not

more than half a mile from the village of Hausen, the mountain range on which it stands, sloping gradually down to the river Sihl. Its ridge is exceedingly narrow, not many feet wide, and may be reached in about three-quarters of an hour from the Brunnen. From this point you command a fine view of Zürich and its lake on one side, and the Righi and the lake Zug on the other, with the Bernese chain in the distance. There is also another small lake and the rich scenery of the Canton Argovie to the right. On the left are the soft slopes of Canton Zug, with their flourishing orchards and verdant meadows. I have walked often and long in this delightful country, and I might travel a great way before I could find a spot surpassing it in all that constitutes a magnificent landscape. Many a day did I wander in the midst of these scenes and always found something new, something refreshing. But the object of objects, and that which most charmed me, was the distant view of the chain of the Alps from the Sentis, the loftiest mountain in Appenzell, in the east, to the Blumlis in Canton Berne, in the south-west. The Jungfrau, Monch, and Eiger, the Wetterhorn, Shreckhorn, Finster, Aahorn, Rothhorn, and Galenstock, lay between these extreme points.

Hitherto we had experienced nothing but rainy weather in Switzerland. At length it cleared up; the rain ceased, and the clouds dispersed. Rising

soon after day, and looking out of the window, I saw at once, and for the first time, the magnificent prospect—these snow-cap't mountains in all their glory. They were so white and so pure, so reposing and yet so towering—presenting every variety of form, from the spire, the turret, and the gable of the cathedral, to the bastion, minarets, and horn-work of a castle. Indeed, the *coup d'œil* formed such a combination of light, and beauty, of splendour and magnificence, as can be seen only in the presence of the snowy Alps. It must, moreover, be remembered that these objects become increasingly beautiful, seen as they are through the vista of lower mountains, which are crowned to the summit with firs and beech-trees of various hues. From this circumstance they were clearly defined, although many of them must have been seventy or even eighty miles distant. As your eye followed the range, they seemed to rest in such majestic repose, and to shoot so high into the bright blue sky above, that it was a long time before I could persuade myself they were not the inhabitants of earth intruding on brighter realms. In the presence of scenes such as these you become so excited, and your feelings so intense, that ice-bound mountains occupy your thoughts—accompanied, I must confess, with feelings of the most profound reverence for the majesty and the might, the wisdom and the power of that

glorious Being who made them all—something akin to that feeling which Job experienced in the presence of the Eternal:—"The heart trembleth and is moved out of his place. God thundereth marvellously with his voice. He casteth the garment of his clouds around the mountains, then the bright light is gone. The wind passeth over and cleanseth them. Fair weather cometh out of the north. With God is terrible majesty."

During my stay at the Brunnen which was three weeks, the weather continued fine; and living as I did, directly in front of these objects of surpassing grandeur, they became, if not my associates, the objects of my daily meditation, especially before the sun rose, and when it set. It was then they would appear in all their glory, lit up with Alpine fire. Day after day, and hour after hour, have I gazed upon them, never tired, never satisfied, and, I must confess, it was always with some degree of reluctance that I left them.

In the calm hour of the morning they were exquisitely beautiful. No intruding cloud dimmed their snow-white purity. Peak after peak glittered with a cold, snowy whiteness, which reminded me of winter in the middle of summer. But they would only thus appear for a moment; very soon they would be lit up with that fiery glare which no pen can describe, and no pencil depict. First they would appear as illuminated or irra-

diated with a bright rose-coloured hue, which would change to the deeper tints of dark red fire. This also was but momentary, for when the sun arose they would be all resolved back, not into their original colour before the sun arose, for that was white, very white, but to their ordinary every-day dress of whiteness, which is somewhat dimmed by the brightness of the sun.

Who is there can look on scenes such as these and not feel—ay, and be moved to think also? To think of the day when at the command of their Creator, they arose in all their vast proportions in a moment—to think of the day when He shall say to these mountains depart, and when the heavens shall be rolled together like a scroll. If ever I felt my own insignificance in the scale of creation: my utter helplessness, my transitory existence and want of everything like power, it was then, when the majesty, the eternity, and the mighty power of God was most apparent. The soul of the sweet Psalmist of Israel must have been inspired with sentiments similar to these when he exclaimed, “Lord, what is man that thou shouldest visit him, or the son of man that thou shouldest so regard him?”

In one of my numerous walks, when about a couple of miles from Hausen and near Kappel, I was passing through a wood, and stumbled upon an obelisk of granite, which, upon more minute inspection, turned out to have been erected to the

memory of Zuinglé, the Swiss reformer, who fell mortally wounded at this very place. He had gone forth, according to the custom of that age, to the battle, not merely in the capacity of a pastor, to administer ghostly advice and consolation to the dying, but as a brave soldier and a skilful captain (he was both), to encourage and lead on the troops. The best historians that I have been able to obtain represent him, halbert in hand, among the very foremost in the battle. This will, no doubt, shock the religious sentiments of many in the present day; but had they lived at the time of Zuinglé, they probably would have thought and acted as he did. These good persons ought to reflect that, as far as the mass of mankind is concerned, it is the age and its associations which makes the man, and that, under other circumstances, they would be differently moulded.

The popular belief is, that he was wounded upon the field of battle, and then run through with a halbert, because he would not invoke the Virgin and the saints. It may be so. The Romanists at that time were much exasperated against the adherents of the Reformation. The latter, it would appear, in their zeal to propagate the new opinions, wished, *nolens volens*, to impose them, *vi et armis*, upon the confederates of the four cantons, who were, and wished to remain, essentially Popish. When therefore, they found a change was about to

be attempted by force, they took up arms, marched unexpectedly on the Zurichers, came upon them before they were prepared, and effectually routed them with great slaughter.

There can be no doubt they were contending for Popery, and for the suppression of the Reformation. But who were the aggressors? Those decidedly who casting to the winds moral means, such as reason and suasion, sought to accomplish their object by force. Wrong begets wrong, and he who is first wrong is generally most wrong and least deserving sympathy. The confederates were contending against what would have proved, both temporally and spiritually, beneficial to themselves. But force had been used to bring about a moral object, and this begat violence on their part: and then they were contending for a principle, which was none other than that which the reformers themselves preached,—the perfect and inalienable right of civil and religious liberty. However much, therefore, we may deplore their ultimate appeal to arms, and lament the consequences, in the first instance, the Protestants were decidedly in the wrong.

The memorial was as follows:—Near this spot lies Ulric Zuingle, who, together with Martin Luther, was instrumental in freeing the Christian Church from bondage. He fell whilst bravely contending with his brethren for the cause of truth



and for his country. He died in hope of everlasting life on the 11th of October 1531.

At Kappel, which is the last parish in the Protestant canton of Zurich, I observed that not only was every house numbered, but the numbering system was also carried to the abodes of the dead. In the church-yard all the bodies of one year were interred in line, and the graves all numbered on an upright piece of wood. Those of the next year were buried and numbered in the same manner in a parallel line. After twelve years the body in this soil is decomposed, when the bones, after having been exposed to the sun some time, are consigned to the bone-house. Although nothing but the number was to be found in the church-yard, the parish register recorded against that number the name, age, &c., of the tenant of the grave.

In the Roman Catholic parish of Burr, which adjoins Kappel, it was somewhat different. The gaudy iron gilt trellises of every variety and form, with their armorial bearings (for even Swiss peasants possess the aristocratic distinction of a coat-of-arms), were glittering in the sun. At first sight, I could not imagine what all this gilt and tinsel meant. When I approached nearer, however, I found under the cross the name, age, and other particulars of the departed. In some instances this was painted in black and in others in gilt letters on a very small square tablet of iron. It appeared that the Roman

Catholics, as well as the Protestants of Kappel, after the lapse of twelve years, were accustomed to dig up the bones and bleach them, treating them in all respects like their neighbours, except that the skull, after being numbered and labelled, was placed on a shelf beside others in a house especially set apart for that purpose.

These skull-houses are common over all the Roman Catholic cantons, and I could never obtain from any one the rationale of so odd a custom. One man told me it was out of respect for the dead. If he had said it was for the purpose of studying craniology, it would have been a far more rational answer. In truth, they pay but little regard to the memory of their ancestors, otherwise they would not obliterate their record from the church-yard. Nor would they have treated it so unceremoniously afterwards, since I have seen the memory of a whole line of Swiss heroes in the Canton Switz consigned ignominiously to the corner of the stable.

No one who has taken up his quarters at the Brunnen should omit ascending the hill by the main road to Zurich before sunrise. He will there have a magnificent view of the snowy range from Mount Sentis to the Jura. Being at an elevation of more than 3000 feet, he is lifted above all the inferior mountains, and left as it were, to the companionship of the snowy Alps in all their solitude

and in all their grandeur. If they obtrude upon the landscape, it is only to make it more beautiful. The best view is not from the highest point of the road, but a little lower down from a wood, a quarter of a mile to the right, where the very solitariness of the place invests the scene with greater grandeur and romance.

## CHAPTER IV.

## CANTON BERNE.

Interlaken—Its Climate—The English Church and its Services—  
Walks in the Neighbourhood—Castle of Unspunnen—Its Legend  
—Swiss Wrestling Feats, &c.—The Hohenbühl—Jungfernblick—Fatal Accidents on the Harder.

THERE are two things which conspire to make Interlaken the resort of tourists—its beauty and its central position. There can be no question of its being one of the most lovely spots imaginable. It is situated between the lakes Thun and Brienz, as its name implies, and is skirted by the swift-flowing Aar, which is on its way through these lakes to join the Rhine. The village itself rather abuts on the lake Brienz, and the consequence is that its high shores or cliffs shut it in, and cause it, in the months of July and August, to become insufferably hot. Between the left of these shores and the Abendberg “the mountain of the evening,” which rises gracefully in the direction of Thun, and

is luxuriant with firs, opens the valley which leads to Grindelwald and Lauterbrun, themselves also valleys and villages of Alpine reputation. The Jung Frau, decidedly one of the most beautiful, if not the most beautiful of snowy mountains, is to be seen in fine weather filling up the highest part of this gap or gorge. In a line with it to the right the Blumlis Alp which always appears hung with snowy drapery extends its graceful form.

The pyramidal Niesen and the sharp-peaked Stockhorn, mountains of most remarkable and fantastic form, complete the *coup d'œil*. Situated as Interlaken is between lofty mountains and smiling lakes, with a flowing river in its midst, it has a European celebrity, and no doubt will continue to attract tourists of every nation; especially as it abounds with pleasant walks.

There is, however, a great mistake committed when invalids, with the exception of consumptive patients, resort hither for health. Its climate is moist, very moist, and the great quantity of rain which is continually falling on a spongy, marshy soil, in conjunction with the broiling sun of July and August, causes evaporation to such an extent, that the atmosphere resembles nothing to which I can liken it, so much as that of our orchideous hot-houses. I by no means desire to exaggerate or to mislead any one, but the rain which falls on the average of the best years is perfectly incredible.

And when we reflect upon the height and magnitude of the mountains in the vicinity of which it lies, and in which in fact it is embedded, we must expect it. They naturally attract and draw the clouds hither. *Hinc illæ lachrymæ.* It is however rather remarkable they have not half so much rain in the neighbourhood of the southern chain—I mean in the high Alps which border Italy. This superiority of climate may probably be attributed to their proximity to the sunny plains of that country. I have it in my power to place this beyond all doubt, having travelled for three weeks in this chain during which there was but one day's rain which prevented mountain work. When I returned to Interlaken at the end of a month, I compared notes with a friend who remained there all the time, and found rain had been the rule and fine weather the exception.

I made many inquiries during my stay in the neighbouring villages, and discovered intermittent fever by no means unfrequent, and moreover, I perceived daily, if not so much cretenism and goûté as presents itself in the Canton Vallais among a similar population, yet it did not fall much below it. Indeed, were it not for its refreshing walks after sundown, and the enchanting landscape which you behold whenever you walk abroad, the very circumstance of its being embedded and surrounded by mountains and lakes would have caused it long since to have been forsaken as a summer's residence. Some years ago English families were in the habit

of residing here during the four summer months. Now however when more healthful situations have been opened up, and more bracing atmospheres discovered, you but seldom find them remaining many days. The truth is, the climate has a most depressing effect—loss of appetite and drowsiness come over you quite unaccountably; you gradually lose your strength, and if you were not to set off, the consequences might be serious. I can scarcely describe the refreshment and the benefit of breaking away from Interlaken. I had not left it long before a visible and beneficial change succeeded a month's depression and hypochondria. Nor was I at all singular in these feelings, since many with whom I daily conversed experienced precisely the same effects. There are, notwithstanding, crowds of strangers continually flocking hither during July August and the early part of September, and their number may be imagined when I state there are no less than fifteen inns and pensions, although a few years since it was comparatively an insignificant village. Many of these hotels are very spacious. At the Alps alone not unfrequently 100 to 120 sit down daily to dinner. These constitute the stream which is constantly flowing on to visit the wonders of the Oberland. Or it may be they are weary travellers or foot-founded pedestrians who sojourn here for a while to recruit their exhausted strength and energies.

During the height of the season the congregation

at the English church frequently amounts to 300. Most of our countrymen who have the means of travelling to so remote a region, are of a genteel class, and generally value the privileges thus afforded of worshipping God in their own admirable liturgy. The church itself is part of a convent of the Augustinian Order, and dates as far back as the twelfth century. In its flourishing days there were not less than 350 religeuses in the nunnery alone, with a proportionate number of monks. The magnitude of their church may be imagined from the circumstance of its choir seating comfortably at the present time 300 or more persons. Its height is certainly a great inconvenience, producing as it does such an echo, that the minister unless he is gifted with a very clear enunciation, is but indistinctly heard. The Bernese government has granted a lease of this church to the Colonial Church and School Society of London.

During my sojourn I was much struck with the manner in which my countrymen observed the Sabbath. In most instances it was with due and becoming solemnity, and formed a marked contrast with the practice of other nations. The Protestants of Germany and of Switzerland also, pay little more regard to the sanctity of the Lord's Day than Romanists—at least those I have been in the habit of meeting. If they have any respect for religion at all and attend public worship, they consider the



Sabbath closes with the morning service. The remainder of the day is given to pleasure "and doing their own works."

The interests of religion are at a very low ebb in many of the Protestant cantons of Switzerland. This may arise from the circumstance of there being no vigilant and supreme ecclesiastical authority in the shape of overseer, whether executed by one or more persons. The ecclesiastical government is in the hands of a consistory at Berne, of which some of the members are laymen and others ecclesiastics. They interfere but little, so long as there is no complaint from the parishioners; and since all tests of orthodoxy have been abolished, at one time a Socinian, at another a Rationalist, may occupy the largest parishes. I do not wish to be understood that this universally prevails—far from it; there is an increased and increasing improvement; and the National Church in the various cantons numbers at the present moment some eminent and pious men whose ranks are continually augmenting. The negligence and the blame, however, lies with the State, which has made the Church subject to it, but does not provide clerical inspection. It may be some illustration when I mention that the church of Gsteig, in which Interlaken is situated with the neighbouring large villages, all comprised in this parish, contains a population of not less than 10,000 souls, while the church itself is not capable of containing above 800; moreover,

there is only one service on the Sabbath.\* In the midst of so much neglect, it certainly does redound to the honour of our countrymen, and to the reformed faith which we profess, that notwithstanding Romanist desecration and Protestant indifference, a temple has been raised to Jehovah in a strange land. The banner of the cross has been unmistakably unfurled, and around it the faithful week after week assemble, who by their example, their devotion, and their marked observance of the Sabbath, send forth a light and an influence which may remind these lukewarm sons and daughters of the Reformation of duties and obligations—of privileges and promises too long neglected.

There are many delightful walks in the neighbourhood of Interlaken, from which the most lovely views may be obtained of the chief objects of attraction. There are also many legends connected with them, which although partaking of the marvellous, may nevertheless have some foundation in fact in a chivalrous and adventurous age.

About a mile up the valley leading to Grindewald, and at the foot of the Abendberg, stands a castellated ruin which, having been formerly possessed by the barons of Unspunnen, still retains their name. You may approach it by the char

\* The afternoon is appropriated to the instruction of children in the schools, and the non-confirmed who attend to be catechized by the minister.

road, or if in your rambles you wander by the path on the left bank of the Aar which leads to the road to Thun, on arriving at a rent in the rocks—passing between it and through a forest of firs you come upon a ridge, where you will obtain a beautiful view of the whole valley, with the castle of Unspunnen at your feet. The Jung Frau, the Monch, and the Eigher appear in all their glory, and the mountain ranges which bound the valley are clothed to the top, and form the vista through which they are seen. The Wengern Alp with its chalets, is a depressed mountain immediately under them, and is the promontory at the point of which the valleys of Grindelwald and Lauterbrun diverge. A sketch of it, if it could possibly be made from this point—but it is far too extensive—would form one of the grandest landscape paintings that could be conceived by the imagination of man. There is rather a romantic history connected with this castle which well accords with the romance of the scenery. The barons of Unspunnen, who were Swiss, were deadly foes to the kings of Burgundy, and resisted their pretensions to territory on the Swiss side of the Jura. The last of this noble race of heroes was Bourcard, who possessed this castle, which from its position completely commanded the adjoining valleys. On many occasions, with his companions-in-arms—his hardy mountaineers—he had foiled the dukes of Zahringen, who were the lieutenants of the Bur-

gundian crown, and driven them as far as Berne, where they fortified themselves, and could not be dispossessed.

This Bourcard had an only daughter of surpassing beauty, who appears to have captivated the heart of Rudolphe de Wädismyl, the youngest, the bravest, and most amiable of the dukes of Zahringen, at some tournament. Despairing of overcoming the hatred of the baron to his race, and of obtaining the hand of Ida in a legitimate way, he formed the design of carrying her off by force. Soon after, in consequence of the absence of the father, a favourable opportunity presented itself. He eloped with the fair Ida, who it appears, was not unwilling to accompany him to his quarters at Berne.

This piece of violence only served to increase the baron's rage, and became the occasion of sanguinary wars which devastated the country between Berne and Interlaken. Rudolphe generous as he was brave, at length effected by stratagem what he could not accomplish by force of arms. Fatigued with glory and tired of battle-fields, he sought an interview with his enemy. He presented himself unarmed at the castle accompanied only by a page, and by bribes obtained an entrance. He bore in his arms the little boy which his Ida had lately given birth to, and addressed Bourcard—now grown sad and grey from the loss of his beloved daughter—in the most respectful and submissive terms. The

old man, who recognised at a glance the features of his long estranged child in the object now before him, burst into tears, grasped the helpless babe in his trembling arms, and freely forgave the past—yea more, he bequeathed by will and deed to the boy, Walter Rudolphe, named henceforth Bourcard, the whole of his large possessions and domains. It was this Walter who at his death left his heritage and lands to the convent of Interlaken. This romantic event took place somewhere about the middle of the thirteenth century.

The meadow at the foot of the castle is that in which those gymnastic feats and wrestlings of Swiss peasants formerly took place, though discontinued at the present time. Those in 1805 were rendered memorable by the presence of the King of Bavaria and Madame de Stael. The medal which was struck upon the occasion, now very rare, is in the possession of two or three individuals at Interlaken. It however but faintly expresses an idea of the sports it was intended to commemorate. One of the splendid rifles awarded by the government to the grandfather of the present possessor of the pension Ober, may be seen at that hotel. The origin of these games is traced to the reconciliation of the duke of Zahringen with the baron of Unspunnen—an event which caused universal joy because it united the Oberland to the then town and country of Berne. On that occasion Bourcard declared “this day shall

be celebrated by the peasantry every coming year with pleasure and festivity." And in consequence its anniversary is the season for those feats and Alpine sports which exist at the present time, but have not been continued in this particular rendezvous since the year 1808.

There are two points of view from which everything that is interesting about Interlaken may be seen to advantage. The first is from a plateau or pavilion on a slope of the Harder mountain, beyond a fir forest which is a little above the covered bridge across the Aar called Hohbühl, and the other from Jungfernblick, a similar plateau on the Kugen mountain on the opposite side of the valley. It is difficult to say which presents the most beautiful landscape, since they are of a distinct character, yet each possesses its peculiar beauty. The first, that is, the Hohbühl view, comprises Interlaken and its pretty scattered cottages; and beyond it, by the border of the lake Brienz, the pleasant village of Bonigen, almost concealed by fruit trees, and the sombre Bonigberg towering over its head. More to the right lies the Jung Frau, and the barren Sullek, which is frequently covered with snow even in summer. Then comes the Abendberg with the little Rubin at its foot all covered with firs. Lower down is the lake Thun with the sugar-loafed Niesen; and quite to the right the Beatenberg, which, with its verdant pastures, contrasts strangely with the

barren flank of the Harder. The other view from the Jungfernblick, which looks at these objects in a different point of view, altogether changes the character of the landscape.

I have been rather particular in describing these views, but as Interlaken is visited by hundreds and thousands of our countrymen, and including as it does almost every object of attraction, it may not be regarded as too minute.

I would, however, caution visitors not to ascend the Harder higher than this point, as its sides both in dry and wet seasons being particularly slippery on account of its steepness and the nature of the soil, they are in danger of being precipitated over its cliffs. In the church-yard of Gsteig two monuments are erected to the memory of two English ladies who sacrificed their lives in attempting so dangerous an undertaking. Having taken the trouble to copy them I insert the inscriptions as a beacon to future tourists.

“To the memory of Louisa Philadelphia Evelyn Rowley, aged fifteen years, the daughter of Colonel Rowley of the Guards, and grand-daughter of Admiral Sir Charles Rowley, who was killed by a fall from the Harder mountain on the eighth day of September, 1840.

“The circumstances under which she lost her life were as follows:—She had risen early for the purpose of ascending the mountain alone. In her pro-

gress she passed some foresters at work, who perceiving she was not accompanied by a guide, and was entering upon an intricate path, cautioned her of her danger. She then turned in a different direction and was not afterwards seen. Not returning however as was expected, the family became alarmed. With the help of the woodmen the rugged steps of the mountain were searched, when her mangled corpse was found in the ravine below."

The second is "to the memory of Elizabeth Corry, aged thirty, who was killed by falling over a precipice at the top of the Harder. She left the hotel alone on Saturday, and after much search her body was found on Sunday, and interred in this churchyard on the 16th day of July, 1850."

These are not the only monuments of travellers who have met with sudden deaths while seeking enjoyment in this country. There is one to the memory of Charles Stewart, aged eighteen, son of Major General Stewart, who was drowned on the 30th July, 1835, while bathing in the river Aar.

And another, to the memory of William Dutton, Esq. of Bilbury House Gloucestershire aged twenty-three. He was killed whilst hunting the chamois on the Blumlis glacier. His gun, which was carried by his guide, by the breaking of its sling fell, and as it rolled down the rocks, both barrels discharged and one of the balls passed through his body. After eleven hours of great suffering, he



was carried to the village of Klem, where he died on Saturday morning, twenty-four hours after the melancholy accident occurred, and was buried in Gsteig church-yard.

I had well nigh myself been involved in danger whilst residing in this place from wandering over wild mountain tracts without a good and sufficient guide, a thing that never should be attempted. There happened to reside at the pension in which we were domiciled an English clergyman, who pretended, at least, to possess an acquaintance with the topography of the place, and who volunteered, on more than one occasion, to be my guide. On the day in question, our object was to thoroughly explore the Giessbach, a splendid waterfall at the upper end of the lake Brienz. We started early, and after about two hours' pleasant walking through the pretty hamlets on the left side of the lake, we approached our object and commenced an ascent of the steeps out of which the cascade issued. This we were enabled to accomplish by a zig-zag sort of mountain path, and by making a considerable detour. What we desired to witness was, the effect of this seven-times-leaping fall from the heights above. Each of these leaps is a separate waterfall, and abuts further towards the lake than the one above it. By this means the fall becomes embedded between the rocks and trees around it.

After having obtained our object, we began to

descend by the side of the water. At first the path though intricate and slippery, was not at all dangerous, but as we proceeded it became so. At length we were brought to a dead stand at the top of a gorge some way down, which I believe verily neither the foot of man nor of goat had ever trod. At this juncture, my companion and amateur guide expressed an opinion that we must have taken the wrong path—a very modest way of concealing his want of knowledge and blundering in so perilous a position. A few moments sufficed for council. We at once rejected the idea of a retreat by the path we had come. On we went notwithstanding the peril. At every step we appeared to be surrounded by new dangers, from which we could only escape by the aid of friendly shrubs and trees which lay across our path. The way in which we descended was, by laying hold of a branch and slipping to the trunk of the next tree, though at times we were carried too far. Had not the trees been very thick, the slips we occasionally made must have hurried us over the precipices which ever and anon were beneath, and which we were compelled to skirt. At length, having consumed two hours in a descent which if we had gone the other side would have only occupied a quarter of an hour, besides perilling our necks into the bargain, we arrived at the chalet at the foot of the falls. As soon as opportunity allowed, I made the following entry:—"June 25.

Beware of travelling without a guide, or trusting to amateurs of that profession. Visited the Giessbach, a splendid waterfall, having seven distinct leaps. From its being embedded in the fir forest, and surrounded all the way down by brushwood, it had the appearance of a string of diamonds set around with emeralds of the deepest hue. The water where it was not apparently boiling came out like jets of quicksilver, which is sometimes made to flow from the mouth of a monster at the bottom of a time-piece, representing the progress of time. We certainly obtained a capital view of the fall from the highest point, but it was at the risk of our lives."

## CHAPTER V.

## CANTON BERNE.

Interlaken continued—Its walks and convent—Lauterbrun—  
The Wengern Alp—The Jung Frau—Grinderwald.

EVERY one who has been at Interlaken must remember those beautiful walnut trees which line both sides of the main road, called the Hüheweg. It is under these trees the idlers saunter in the day-time, and walk over their exploits in the mountains a second time. Here also, in the cool of the evening, may be seen the *haut ton* of tourists and visitors, seeing and being seen. There is scarcely a point in the valley which commands so fine a view of that splendid object—the Jung Frau—especially when the last rays of the setting sun irradiate the snowy mantle of this queen of mountains. There is not a more enjoyable walk, or one presenting greater charms, than to saunter in a clear moonlight night beneath these venerable trees, and gaze upon the mountains. If you have never witnessed such a

scene, you have yet a pleasure in store. The mountain appears, somehow or other, to grow in its proportions and to stand out more prominently; while the lesser hills, some of them three thousand feet high, the vista through which it is seen, shrink into insignificance. Besides the snow is invested with such purity, you fancy nothing in the world can be whiter. The *tout ensemble* is so magnificent so tranquil so solitary, that some features of the picture at least remain imprinted on the spectator's mind.

Let me not however in the midst of such scenes forget the noble walnut-trees; they are quite a picture in themselves, and their shade is so delicious and refreshing that you can stroll under them by the hour. If they are not the finest of the sort in the world, they will go far to match them. Then again, they are such monsters. I took it into my head to measure one, and found it just eighteen feet in circumference, large enough to make gunstocks for a regiment of soldiers.

By walking to the end of these trees, and crossing the covered bridge which spans the swift-flowing Aar, you come upon a new road which is intended to be carried over the Brunig Pass, and by this means to connect the Simmenthal and Thun with the Lake Lucerne and the St. Gothard Pass. When this will be accomplished no one can tell, the Swiss move so slow; but, judging by the progress which

they have made in the last three years, it will probably not be accomplished before the next century. To do them justice however, it is a most noble construction—so broad, so substantial, something like government works in our own country. This indeed is the character of all their great roads; whatever they undertake in this way they do well. At present it does not extend beyond half the distance to Brienz: the remaining part being only the old bridle-path, similar to that on the opposite side of the lake.

Interlaken once possessed a convent, the ruins of which still exist dating its foundation as far back as the twelfth century. It was then and for three hundred years after included in the diocese of Lausanne. Seilger d'Oberhofen founded and endowed it for fifty monks of the order of St. Augustine, and dedicated it to the Virgin.\* He also endowed near the same site a convent for forty nuns; two centuries after, when it was in its zenith, they exceeded three hundred. The establishment originally enjoyed a good reputation, and at one time possessed great wealth. The monks were proprietors of twenty-seven of the neighbouring parishes, and enacted the same thing the lay impropiators in our own country do in the present day. They took the sheaf, and gave only the straw and the

\* L'Oberland Bernois sous les Rapports Historiques, Scientifiques, et Topographiques. Publié par P. Ober. Bernc, 1854.

chaff to the spiritual labourer. Notwithstanding all their wealth: their luxury and their prodigality was such, that it did not suffice to meet their expenses. In the year 1447, it appears to have reached the climax of all that was impious and profane, and in the space of twelve years it twice became the prey of flames, occasioned it is said, by their revelries and drunken orgies. These scandals were not confined to the monks alone—the nuns were alike involved in the disgrace—so that the dissoluteness of both sexes became proverbial. At length the government of Berne, in 1484, made a representation of their immoral conduct to the Court of Rome, when the nunnery was suppressed. The monkery shared the same fate somewhat later; and their revenues being secularised by an ordinance of the Grand Council of Berne, on the 12th of April, 1534, (the Canton being now reformed,) they were applied to the foundation of an hospital, which exists at the present day, and is a part of the old convent, the other parts being appropriated to the offices of the Prefecture, the courts of justice, and a prison. The house of the prefect is a modern construction, and dates from 1750. The nave of the church, on whose walls some frescoes have been recently brought to light, is used as a storehouse for the municipality. The choir is the present English church; whilst the Roman Catholics enjoy the like privilege of a small chapel in the crypt.

Connected with the history of this religious establishment is rather a romantic incident, which proves the disorders and scandals into which it had fallen. In the commencement of the fifteenth century Elizabeth de Scharnachthal, a sister of the Lord of Unspunnen, was importuned by her aunt and other relations to take the veil. Being aware of the state of the convent, she refused to become a member of an association which was given over to the most culpable excesses, and which set at naught all moral and religious obligations. All those arts which are had recourse to, at the present day, to effect their purposes, were resorted to by the monks: and at length she was induced reluctantly to consent. The day arrived when the ceremony of taking the veil was to be performed. Already she appeared before the altar, and the abbot and abbess were ready to receive her vows—her agony became extreme—a vision of their worse than bacchanalian orgies passed before her. During these excited emotions she perceived among those who were assembled to witness the imposing spectacle, a young man, who seemed to take great interest in the proceedings;—his name was Thomas Guntschi, of Matten. On the impulse of the moment, she offered him her hand, and besought him to rescue her from the toils of the designing monks. Thomas by no means objected to the confidence which the gentle Elizabeth reposed in him. Their marriage



took place forthwith, notwithstanding the opposition of the ecclesiastics, who were enraged at the loss of so rich a prize. The chronicle goes on to say that, in virtue of this marriage, a portion of the estates of Unspunnen devolved on the favoured Thomas, who previously poor became now greatly enriched. His descendants, though reduced in their circumstances, are still to be found in the Oberland.

In the height of the season Interlaken is full of life and bustle. As early as five o'clock in the morning the voituriers and charmen are on the *qui vive*. Persons accustomed to luxury and ease, who would at home as soon think of breakfasting at midnight as to take that repast before nine or ten, lose all their late habits. With the excitement of a trip to the mountains, they rise with the sun; and from six to nine, on a fine day, you may see almost one continuous stream of tourists passing to and from the mountains, and to the lakes Brienz and Thun. The party with saddles behind the carriage are going to drive up to Lauterbrun, and to take the same horses over the Wengern Alp. They have left their luggage behind, and are bent upon a week's ramble. This gave us a desire to follow their example; for it is surprising how soon you become infected in Switzerland with the propensity to follow others, and to ramble also, especially to the mountains.

Having heard that every one who wished to have a near *vis-à-vis* view of the Jung Frau, must mount the Wengern Alp, we were up early, and by seven o'clock on our way to Lauterbrun. We were much interested in the scenery, so different to anything we had before seen. The mountains on either side of the valley, which were very lofty, were covered with firs of the most graceful forms, and of every variety. In some places they were growing on rocky ledges and crags, where the hand of man never could have planted them. A thought was suggested whether the birds of the air, or even the tempests, had not been the sowers. Every turn of the road disclosed new scenes; you lighted on them so abruptly—in an instant: and they became invested with additional grandeur and romance. And yet, like all other things in this world, this very additional charm was attended with its drawback, for by another turn they had vanished.

There was a bustling, boiling stream, called the Zwei Leutschin, whose waters were the colour of milk, or rather milk diluted with water. These were the streams which descend from the glaciers of Grinderwald, the Jung Frau, and other mountains. Our route lay by the side of this river, but the road was so narrow and so near the bank, and, in some places so steep, that unaccustomed as we were then to Swiss travelling, we felt rather nervous.

By degrees, however, we became more courageous, and could pass places much more frightful without a shudder.

All the roads through the lateral valleys, and sometimes through mountain passes, are by the side of the stream; because it follows, that by the same course and by the same level at which the water descends, there must be a path to ascend. The Swiss peasant therefore, has only to follow the course pointed out by nature, and, without taking levels, he becomes a good engineer.

We had not proceeded far when the Zwei Leutschin became divided, or forked by the projection or protrusion of the Wengern Alp. The stream on the right, descending from Lauterbrun, is called the White Leutschin, while that on the left, coming down from Grindewald, is called the Black Leutschin. Why black and white should be applied to waters of precisely the same colour, for they are both glacier streams, I could by no means divine. Our course lay by the former, and in about three hours from the time of leaving Interlaken we found ourselves at Lauterbrun.

The first thing we did was to take a walk to the Staubach. It is rather a graceful than a grand waterfall, since the body of water is not very considerable; and the great height of the cliff from which it is precipitated, more than 800 feet, causes it to be distributed into a sort of spray or drift,

similar to the tops of the ocean's waves when drifted by the storm. Further up in the valley, although it is but seldom visited, is a much grander cascade—the Schmadribach. It is, in fact a large body of water, which, issuing from the ice, is forthwith precipitated over a precipice of great height and in its descent makes two additional leaps before reaching the ground. There is also another wonder which will well repay the labours of a day, and that is, a real avalanche, which falls annually from the Jung Frau, and spreads desolation and barrenness over a large portion of the valley. Besides which, a number of waterfalls are continually bursting forth from rents in the cliffs, forming jets and chutes of every form and magnitude.

All things being prepared, we crossed the stream near the church, and commenced ascending the Wengern Alp by a very steep, serpentine bridle-path. In many parts it certainly had as much inclination as the roofs of the mountain châteaux by its sides, and I feel assured that the horse that could traverse the one could with equal facility pass over the other. After ascending about a thousand feet the road became more practicable, through a series of lawn-like slopes, on which the cows and goats with their ever-tinkling bells were grazing by hundreds.

At the Jung Frau inn, which is immediately opposite that mountain, and from which you com-

mand the best view of it, we proposed a halt for the double purpose of replenishing the powers of exhausted nature, and obtaining a sight of those avalanches which sometimes fall from it.\* The morning, however, was exceedingly brilliant, a clear Italian sky disclosing every mountain and rock. At such times the queen of mountains refuses to disrobe herself. But in rainy, stormy weather, she gratifies the tourist with her falling flakes, to compensate, perhaps, for his disappointment in not beholding her gigantic form, and the vast expanse of snow and glacier around her.

As we ascended she appeared to expand, and became more grand and majestic, whilst a totally different effect was produced in regard to the valley of Lauterbrun, which seemed merely a rent in the mountains,—a chasm deep and dark and fearful to look into. Notwithstanding this, a lady of our acquaintance, in descending its precipitous path, had been thrown over the head of her horse without receiving any material injury. The wonder was how either rider or horse escaped being rolled over the mountain. I was told however, that Alpine horses knew where to fall, and consequently no injury ensued. Startling as this at first appeared: a little reflection convinced me of its truth. The fact is, that

\* In the summer they are merely the accessions of recently fallen snow, which is easily detached, and frequently slips away in stormy weather.

in dangerous places their instinct or sense of self-preservation, which is very strong in the brute, leads them to be very careful. When, however, they come upon a good part of the road, they become careless and sometimes stumble and fall. I would, therefore, strongly recommend all travellers to walk down these paths, since after rains they become very slippery and there are always large stones and the *débris* of the mountain strewed over them, your horse therefore must be a very sure-footed animal indeed to keep upon his legs.

From the inn we had an astonishing view of the mountain,\* not only its top and peaks, but the whole mass above its granite base, which was on a parallel with the plateau on which we stood, was covered with snow. A little below, the mountain appeared to break off abruptly, and a deep chasm whose sides were quite perpendicular opened beneath. This separated us from the Jung Frau, and is the ravine into which the avalanches fall having first glided like a snow stream down the sides of the mountain. It seemed quite narrow, though it was said to be two miles across.

Half an hour brought us to the summit of the pass. The Monch now towered above our heads,

\* The comparative height of these mountains is as follows:—

Jung Frau	13,740.	Schreckhorn	13,470.
Monch	13,520.	Finster Aarhorn	14,070.
Eiger	13,050.	Wetterhorn	12,220.

whilst the Eigher and the Wetterhorn stretched their erect peaks towards the east in unclouded sublimity. The heat was intense, every now and then we heard something like the sound of a great gun overhead, and an insignificant stream of snow was shot over the side of the mountain, but it was scarcely worthy the name of an avalanche. These icy rills came down from the Eigher, whose sides are more perpendicular than either of the adjacent mountains. This civility of the giant in favouring us with a sight of his treasure, was however greatly surpassed in approaching the Wetterhorn, which sent over its sides an avalanche which might have been at least a mass weighing a hundred tons. The sun shone brightly on the snowy tops of the mountains and glaciers, which made them appear more brilliant and glittering than the finest polished silver. We had sauntered during the latter part of our journey, admiring the luxuriant pasture grounds on the opposite side of the valley of Grinderwald, over which multiplied châteaux were dispersed, and unnumbered herds were grazing. The shades of evening, however, found us comfortably located at the Black Eagle of Grinderwald, decidedly one of the best mountain inns in all Switzerland.

## CHAPTER VI.

## CANTON BERNE.

Grinderwald—Its Climate—Productions—Swiss Pastors—Their devotion to their work—Grinderwald Church—Congregation—Costume—Services—A Contrast—Unasked-for advice—School Economy.

THE village of Grinderwald is one of the prettiest in the Oberland. It stands nearly at the head of a valley of the same name about eight miles long and two broad. The upper part of it is surrounded by mountains of great height and enormous bulk, among which the Wetterhorn is chief, and with the Eigher send their glacier streams far into the valley. Standing as the village does at an elevation of more than 3000 feet the air is generally fresh and salubrious, forming in this respect a striking contrast for the better with Interlaken, from which it is distant about nine miles. Moreover, from its natural position at the head of the valley—at the bottom of a sort of basin of rocks—protected from the north winds and open to those of the south, which blow with extreme violence even in winter, it is said



to enjoy a temperature higher even than that of Berne. This wind is called the Fohn, no doubt from the Favonius of the ancients, and is the precursor of spring all over the Alps. It is supposed to come from the regions of Africa, and blows so hot that it will melt to the depth of two and even three feet of snow in one night. It is not an uncommon thing at great elevations to see a mountain covered with snow one day, and blooming with all the flowers of spring a few days after. This south wind is frequently very troublesome in spring, when it uproots the largest trees, and unroofs the strongest-built châlets, although they have been pressed down with many tons of stone. It also sometimes cuts off all the blossom of their fruit-trees, and moreover produces sensible effects on animal organization—afflicting delicate persons with great lassitude and weakness many days before it arrives. Its approach is marked by a sudden fall of the barometer—by the air becoming so transparent that the mountains appear unnaturally near, while the higher forests, by their change of colour to verdant green, manifest the influence of this African wind. By degrees it descends into the lower valleys with all the violence of a whirlwind whose force nothing can resist.

The inhabitants of Grinderwald, like those of other Alpine valleys, are a pastoral people, and like the patriarchs of old their wealth consists in their flocks and herds. It is calculated that this district alone,

depastured by not less than 1,500 cows, manufactures cheese in the season worth about £2,500.

We rested here on the Sabbath. I am, therefore, enabled to give some account of the Swiss Protestant Church as it exists in the mountains, where certainly it was seen to advantage. The model or type of worship is Presbyterian, much after the form of Calvin, and therefore opposed in some respects to that of Luther. The ministers are men of education, and many of them doubtless possessed of sterling piety and moral worth, but in a national church in which the chief power even in things ecclesiastical is vested in a mixed ecclesiastical and lay committee, which is altogether dependent on the government, which the government consults but does not always follow: it cannot but be expected that the pastors are very various in their attainments, and that their religious views are sometimes diametrically different. Generally they are a superior class of men, but their divinity ranges from high Calvinism down to nothingarianism, which I take to be another name for rationalism. Though not endowed with much of this world's wealth, the minister of Grinderwald, who might have been about forty years of age, was a man of some attainments secular and religious, and lived in the affections of his people, over whom by his consistency of conduct and his piety he exercised great influence.

The Protestant as well as the Roman Catholic

cantons of Switzerland are parcelled out into parishes much after the manner that our counties are—which they resemble. Many of them however are situated high up among almost inaccessible mountains, where neither pastor nor flock for many months in the year have any intercourse with the busy scenes below. In every parish there is a church, parsonage and schools which belong to the government. It sometimes happens in the very remote districts, that the pastor is the only man who has received a liberal education, and, consequently, to reside as he does, cut off from all communication with the world on the margin of perpetual snow, evidences a devotion and constancy to the cause of his Master which all must admire.

It has been *truly* said that many of these villages, having eight months' winter, and four months' cold sun in summer, from the accumulation of snow, are altogether cut off from communication with their fellow-men. The pastor resides with his people, doomed to behold the sunbeams shifting from peak to peak above his head, although it never enlivens his dwelling. He listens to the wintry tempest, and all the while the snow is settling deeper and deeper upon his *châlet*. Sometimes the even tenour of his way is broken in upon by the thunder of the avalanche, and the crash of a falling rock. Nevertheless, in his devotion he has given his heart and his ways to his Master, and therefore with a

martyr's determination he feeds and defends the flock committed to his care.

But to return to Grinderwald. Before the Sabbath-going bell had ceased to re-echo its sounds through the valley, at least six or seven hundred persons had congregated in the church. The men sat on forms having substantial backs, on the right hand, and the women on the left. Many of them had come from a considerable distance, even from the Foulhorn, which is in this parish and elevated more than 8000 feet, in the region of perpetual snows. Soon after the congregation were seated, the pastor, accompanied by the elders and some of the chief inhabitants, bore along the middle aisle on a cushion, a silver flagon cups and salvers for the administration of the Lord's Supper. As all eyes were fixed on the procession, and they appeared not a little gratified with their new communion plate, I was induced to make some inquiries, and learnt that it was a present from the government, in consequence of their loyalty and good feeling, which led them about six months before to march to Interlaken, in order to assist in putting down an *émeute* of the red republicans of that place.

After all due ceremony, the vessels of service were deposited on a table in front of the organ at the east end of the church. At the west was a gallery containing about 100 of their young men. They were all, both men and women, dressed so

uniformly, that it was impossible to discover from their exterior their disparity in rank or circumstances. While it betokened they were raised above poverty, there were no signs of affluence or luxury. They might rather be said to belong to that class which we denominate in our country respectable. The women were dressed in the costume of the Canton; a black silk skull-cap, open at the back for their tresses, if unmarried, was closely fitted to the head, and fringed with stiffened lace at right angles with the face, and falling over the forehead. Its appearance was so curious that I could compare it to no known object, except the hood or fangs of a cobra-capella. The young had their beautiful hair interwoven or intrressed with wide black ribbon, flowing behind in many instances below the knee. Their seniors and matrons, indeed all their married women, had their tresses coiled on the top of the head, and concealed by the coiffure. Their petticoat, which in effect was their outer garment, was made either of stuff or fine serge of a black or dark blue, while their aprons displayed the gaudy colours of yellow, green, and light blue. The first of these garments might doubtless be imitated in one particular by our belles in this country with considerable convenience, since it did not reach as low as the ankle. A corset of black velvet, peaked at the chest, and not more than five or six inches wide, was attached to the upper part of the petti-

coat. Silver chains connected this with another piece of velvet close round the throat, in shape of a collaret, while a stomacher of plaited thick muslin covered the whole region of the chest. Chains of the same metal extended also from the waist to the neck behind. Snow-white linen sleeves of shield-like form, broad at the top and narrow at the wrist, and stiffly starched, covered their arms. Black worsted stockings of home-spun yarn, and strong shoes well nailed, completed their attire.

The costume of the men was a sort of coatee of rusty drab cloth, which, from its appearance, was the product of their own looms. This, together with a waistcoat and trowsers of the same material, differed but little, and that chiefly in colour, from those of other nations. Their chief characteristics were their broad chests and shoulders,—their well-set, compact, and rather short frames, being admirably adapted to the work they had to perform. More comeliness appeared to have been lavished on the women than the men, some of whom might be regarded handsome.

The church, unlike Roman Catholic places of worship, was without ornament. A large, well-toned organ occupied the place of the communion-table in our churches. In front of this stood the baptismal font, and by the side of it a table on which the vessels for the administration of the Lord's Supper were placed.

The service commenced with baptisms, the formula for which was about the same length as that used in the Church of England. The actual baptism was by sprinkling in the name of the Trinity, without accompanying it with the planting of the cross on the forehead. The baptized presented on the occasion rather an odd appearance, being wrapped or bandaged after the Italian method, so that they could move neither hand nor foot. They for all the world looked like infant mummies imported from the Egyptian catacombs. The pastor received them from the hands of their godmothers, who were distinguished from the rest of the congregation by flowing hair, and a crown similar to an immortal of artificial flowers tastefully adjusted on the top of the head. They were returned to their fathers, whom the Swiss Church regards as their sponsors.

When the ceremony of baptism was concluded, the minister ascended the pulpit, and, after using a set form of prayer, consisting of a confession, petitions for all conditions of men, for the public authorities, the Swiss and the Universal Church, with a general thanksgiving, commenced his sermon, which lasted over the half-hour. His address was of the most affectionate and earnest description; so much so, that I could not perceive a turned head or a wandering eye. Having descended from the pulpit, he took his station at the south side of the font,

which having been covered with a board, contained a large pile of bread cut in slices eight or nine inches long. After giving out a psalm, in which they all joined, and made the house of God resound, for the Bernese sing prettily, the men began to pace in single file towards the pastor, still singing. The actual service of the sacrament was short, and, as the first communicants approached, he pronounced, once for all, with an audible voice:—The body of our Lord Jesus Christ which was given for you, &c., and likewise with the cup, the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c. After receiving the bread, they passed on to the elders, who administered the cup, of which each sipped three times in acknowledgment of the undivided Trinity. The singing was peculiarly Swiss—of that solemn, long measure which enabled them to pace and keep time with the notes of the organ; between every hymn a chapter from the New Testament was read by the organist, thus filling up the interval while the celebration was proceeding. After receiving the elements in both kinds, they returned by the opposite aisle to their seats, performing, in their whole circuit, the course of a parabola; rather depressed at the ends, on one side of which was the pastor administering the bread, and at the other the elders presenting the cup.

After all the men had partaken of the sacred elements, the women followed precisely in the same



manner. They all appeared impressed with a sense of the solemnity of the occasion, and to take a lively interest in it. Besides the hoar head and grey hairs, were the youths growing into manhood, as well as young women of a similar age, side by side with the matrons. One thing I particularly observed—the contrary of what I had witnessed in Roman Catholic places of worship, viz., that the men exceeded the women.

From the very large number of communicants, for certainly not a hundred had left the church, you may imagine it took some time to administer to each individual the elements, comprising as they did not less than five hundred persons. After the Swiss had all communicated, a couple of fellow-travellers, with our party, presented ourselves, and partook of the same rite; and, if an opinion might be formed by the expression of both pastor and people, they were gratified by what they might think our liberality, but what we felt to be simply the performance of a duty, in compliance with the command of the Saviour.

After the benediction had been pronounced, Alpen stock in hand, they soon dispersed for their homes in the Alps. It was cheering and refreshing to the Christian mind to witness such a large number of persons assembling on the Sabbath, from the recesses of the mountains, to worship God, and commemorate the dying Saviour's love. And if

this be a specimen of Swiss Protestant communions, and I found they celebrated them six times in the year at this church, it not only indicates the flourishing state of religion at Grinderwald, but argues well for the happiness and prosperity of the people. The influence which the pastor possessed over his flock illustrates also the efficiency and earnestness of his pastoral labours. I was curious enough to satisfy myself on this point, and heard he was a man of unaffected piety, diligent in his sacred calling, the father and friend of his parishioners, and consequently respected and beloved by them all.

On going out, we observed a slab of black marble on the wall, with an inscription to the memory of a Swiss pastor, who lost his life, in 1821, by falling into a *crevasse*, and whose body, after a successful search of twelve days by a guide, called Burgerner, was interred in this churchyard. The most tragical part of the story is, that he parted with his wife early in the morning on which he fell, and his mangled body was brought to the Black Eagle, the hotel where she was sojourning. If any satisfaction could be derived from the sight of so melancholy a spectacle, it must have been from the assurance that, every limb being crushed, his death must have been almost instantaneous.

“ Aimé Mouron, minister of the Gospel, endeared to the church by genuine abilities and sterling

piety, was born at Cheerdonne, in the Canton Vaud, 3rd of October, 1791.

“Whilst admiring the wonderful works of God in these mountains, fell into a *crevasse*, on the *mer de glace*, on the 21st of August, 1821.

“Beneath lies his body, which was drawn up from the abyss, after twelve days had elapsed, by Charles Burgerer, of Grinderwald.

“His parents and his friends, who lament his premature death, have erected this monument.

“Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth, yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.”

The government not only manifests its paternal relationship by appointing and salarizing a pastor to the various parishes, but provides a schoolmaster for the instruction of the children; and although in our country it might be considered trenching on the liberty of the subject, in some of the cantons—as, for instance, Zurich and Berne—education is not even a matter of choice. When nine years old the parent is obliged to send the child to the lower or infant establishment for two years; and after a stated period it is advanced to the higher, where it remains till it is fourteen. In secular knowledge, both sexes are taught writing and arithmetic, geography, natural and other history, the theory and practice of music.

Their religious instruction used formerly to be directed and attended to by the schoolmaster, under the superintendence of the pastor. Since their recent alterations in Church Government, sound religious views do not form the essential qualifications of the master; and the consequence is, that many of them profess very latitudinarian opinions, and are far inferior in every respect to the old ones. After fourteen their education ceases to be compulsory; but the pastor does not lose sight of them as we do when they have attained that age, but sets apart the afternoon of the Sabbath when they are expected to be present for catechetical examination.

The age of confirmation in the Swiss Protestant Church is sixteen; and the Swiss youths always manifest considerable anxiety to partake of it, because they are not admitted to their privileges as citizens till they have received the pastor's certificate of confirmation, and by this means introduced into the Church. This allows the minister to retain his hold upon them at a very unmanageable age.

And may not we, notwithstanding the present low condition of the Swiss Church generally, copy from them things so commendable? If, instead of the unprofitable dissensions in which the ministers of our church are involved, and the animosity and discord which they originate—were compelled to

unite in some good practical reform, they would far better fulfil their high mission than by their endless genealogies and questions which engender strife.

The disputes of the different orders of monks were not more rancorous and unseemly than the quarrels between the high and low church. Each in his turn anathematizes and is disposed to excommunicate the other as a diseased member of the body, because the one will not call down fire from heaven on all Dissenters; and the other because, in his mistaken zeal, his adversary can only lisp the word "Shibboleth."

The Church of England is established and possesses large revenues for the purpose of giving religious instruction to all the people—to young as well as old—throughout the length and breadth of our land. Public opinion requires that her revenues should be applied to the religious wants of the people, and if they are diverted into any other channel, the church fails in her duty, and will suffer for it. When large masses of the people remain ignorant and uncared for, unreached by her administrations, the conclusion to which men arrive is, that she has failed in her mission, while the utilitarian and the disaffected clamour for her downfall. What then is the remedy, but that our rulers in Church and State put their hand to the plough of ecclesiastical reform, and adapt her institutions to the

altered wants of the nation? We confessedly live in an age of progress, and when even the long lives of our forefathers are distanced in a few years. Every other institution in the kingdom has been reformed and remodelled to suit the changed circumstances of the times. The Church of England, however, remains pretty much where she was a hundred years since. Anomalies and abuses, nepotisms and sinecures, still exist which would deform the church of any land, and which, if she is to live in the affections of the people, must be swept away.

In my digression I had almost forgotten a little matter of school police, which prevails in some of the Cantons. To prevent the children playing the truant, and to ensure their regular attendance at school, the parent is made responsible for their absence by a pecuniary fine, which cuts up at the root all false pretences of absence; and hence it becomes the money interest of the parent that the child should be constantly at school. Moreover, if punishment is to be inflicted for desertion, it is transferred from the schoolmaster to the parent, who, if he spares the rod, not only ruins his child, but helps also to empty his own pockets.

## CHAPTER VII.

## CANTON BERNE.

The great Sheidach Pass—The Course of the Clouds—Optical Delusion—An Adventurous Lady—The Glacier of Rosenlauri—Meyringen—The Customs of the People—Their Superstitions, &c. &c.

WHEN we arrived at Grindelwald the weather was threatening. Rain fell in the night and a little in the morning, but it did not, as we have seen, prevent the good parishioners from assembling in goodly numbers in their neat parish church on the Sabbath. On Monday, the weather being still unfavourable, we determined to defer our visit to the Foulhorn till it was more settled. It would not affect us much were we to be overtaken by showers in our way to Meyringen, because we were sure of getting shelter in the numerous chalets in the mountains. But to encounter the fatigue of going to the top of the Foulhorn, and then to be enveloped in a fog so dense as not to be able to see the length

of one's arm, would be a disappointment and vexation we did not feel disposed to incur.

Although the day was but indifferent for Alpine travelling, it was not altogether destitute of interest. It gave us the opportunity of watching the flight of the clouds and the manner in which they ascend the mountains. At one time they would altogether conceal the Wetterhorn, the great perpendicular mass of limestone round which we were winding our way nearly the whole day. At another they would burst and separate—some forming a zone around it, while its summit and base remained clear.

The clouds were as white as the steam of a fire-engine booming along a dark valley, while they seemed to act in rather a tactician-like manner. First they would send forward a body of skirmishers to occupy the outposts, then would come the main body flying onward, expanding and covering the whole of the mountain. Besides this, there was, from the peculiar state of the atmosphere, an optical illusion, which appeared to increase the height and to magnify the bulk of the Wetterhorn. Then, again, it brought it apparently so near as to be frightful to look upon; shortly after, it would seemingly be inclining towards us as if ready to topple over. The fact is, the eye is altogether at fault in these elevated regions, and becomes the subject of all sorts of delusions.

We were joined at Rosenlauri by a party who had



taken the trouble to mount the Foulhorn without being compensated for their toil, although they remained there two days, by no means an uncommon disappointment to Alpine travellers. One of them a lady had performed an extraordinary feat considering she was the mother of a large family. They had experienced bad weather all the way up, and the last thousand feet, owing to a recent fall of snow, was so dangerous that her husband was on one side of her horse and the guide on the other to pick her up in the event of falling. Through all this her little horse had acquitted himself well. Although slipping he never fell. On arriving at the stone house on the summit, she thought she would put his trustworthy qualities to a further trial, for she not only rode him upstairs to see her bedroom, but actually down again. On venturing an opinion on the hazardous nature of her exploit, she replied, with a good deal of *naïveté*, "Not at all. The stairs were not half so bad as much of the way we passed over." To this I can also add my voucher, having gone over the same ground at a later period, when I was constantly slipping knee-deep into gullies and ravines in consequence of their being covered with snow.

The small inn at Rosenlauri, which is about the same in accommodation as that at the Jung Frau, is continually receiving the stream of visitors who are passing through the Oberland; and after par-

taking of refreshment, sending them on to the glacier, which is about an hour's walk up a steep hill. There can be no doubt but this is one of the most beautifully transparent glaciers in Switzerland, in consequence of the sides of the mountain being of so hard a nature as not to become detached by its course, and, therefore, leaving no morain on its surface. Additional beauty is imparted to it by the scenery which surrounds it. Indeed, the whole of the views throughout the pass are extremely picturesque. Bright waterfalls are continually leaping over the cliffs, verdant meadows are covered with cattle sloping up to the fir-capped ridges which bound the whole; whilst ever and anon the clustering cow chalets deceive, by raising the expectation that you are coming upon some romantic village in the Alps.

At one particular turn of the gorge, three huge mountains of snow presented themselves almost in line. Their position was in the hollow, and, as it were, at the end of the pass, where verdant groves of fir lined its rocky sides. It was in the midst of scenes such as these that the glacier of Rosenlauri opened upon us.

To enable you to form some just idea of this, and by consequence of all glaciers—for they are produced by the same causes, and are similar in their character—you must remember what has been often stated, that between 7000 and 8000 feet is

the level of perpetual snow. All above that, not rock and mountain, is as solid ice as can be found in the polar pack. In the Bernese chain the mountains are so numerous and so closely grouped, that an area of 100 square miles of solid ice is formed at their tops; and although the top or covering at the surface consists of rather roughly granulated snow, yet a very few feet below, through the action of the sun and the frost, it has become as fixed and compact as the most solid rock.

This is called the *mer de glace*, or "sea of ice," since its wavy appearance is similar to that element. It sends its streams into the plain by the sides of the mountain; so that the space between two of them is filled up with solid ice, which is called a glacier.

At Rosenlauri and at the two Grindelwald glaciers their expanse is at least 2000 feet below the level of perpetual snow. This is owing to the depth of the pack, for though the sun may waste it, nevertheless it cannot penetrate or destroy it. This stream of ice or glacier, as it is commonly called, is always in motion, strange and wonderful as it may appear. Mons. Hugi, a Swiss naturalist, a few years since erected a rude building on one of them—I do not know which—and by comparing it with a point of the mountain which he had marked, found three years after, it had travelled 1000 feet lower down. Measuring it again at the same given period, its motion had become more rapid, for it had tra-

velled 1,200 feet. This is always the case; the motion is accelerated as it approaches its end. Professor Forbes calls it a chronological chart, bearing along with it as it does granite boulders, stones, and trees—an endless stream of time, a stainless course upon whose surface is engraven a succession of events whose dates far transcend the memory of any living man. It is difficult to ascertain the depth of any particular glacier, since they vary according to the depth of the valley through which they are transmitted. They are variously computed at from 100 to 1000 feet. Being ever in motion they grind the bottom of the valley through which they pass far more than any stream does its bed. They moreover bear along on their surface stones of immense size, which assume the oddest possible appearance. I remember a friend with whom I had walked to the Arveron at Chamounix, watching by the hour a huge block of granite on the verge of the ice precipices which he thought would fall every instant, but which remained in the same position at least many days.

Some have imagined that by such means those huge blocks of granite, which are found all over Switzerland, sometimes a hundred miles from the mountain to which they assimilate, were brought in their present position by a glacier which no longer exists. It may be so in some instances, but not in all; for I have frequently seen them where from the

nature of the ground, it was impossible a glacier could have flowed. If the sides of the mountain along which the glacier passes be at all friable, it communicates a part of itself to the ice—hence you find the surface of most of them, as at Grindelwald, very dirty. It so happens, however, at Rosenlauri, that the rock is hard, and consequently the ice is as pure and white as at the mountain top. All these ice-streams have caverns at their extremity, out of which the water flows, and the *crevasses* transmit the waste caused by the action of the sun on the surface to the bottom or bed of the ravine. Few persons traverse them except the chamois hunter in pursuit of his game, and it is always dangerous for the tourist to venture on them unless accompanied by a guide possessing a knowledge of the locality. After snow—not an uncommon thing in these regions in the height of summer—the *crevasses* are covered, and travelling upon the ice becomes doubly dangerous. The best plan, therefore, if practicable, is to skirt or turn them rather than pass over them.

The celebrity of this particular glacier, as before stated, is owing to its transparency and to the dark blue of its *crevasses*, which reflect the light prism-like into a diversity of colour. The blue is so clear that if you connect it with the dark green shrubs and trees in which it appears to be embedded, it presents the appearance of some huge precious stone resting in its setting. It is rather contracted at

the bottom, but a thousand feet higher up it expands into a vast sea of ice.

Our guide gave us the helping hand to descend by steps cut in the ice to the cavern through which the water flows. For my own part however, from the slippery state of the steps, I felt it to be at the risk of tumbling into the boiling stream. Coming up he had amused us by throwing stones into a chasm of some hundred feet in the rocks, through which the stream finds its way, in order to produce a species of under-ground thunder.

Whilst we were winding round the almost vertical walls of the Wetterhorn, we had a striking instance of the almost instinctive sense of danger which the guides possess and which they generally anticipate. We had arrived at a contracted part of the pass. On our left the pastures were bounded by abrupt mountains, while between us and the Wetterhorn, which rose perpendicularly 7000 feet, there was a chasm of about half-a-mile. All of a sudden our guide came to a dead stand, in consequence of a crash which we just then heard overhead; when he immediately drew back shouted and pointed to a particular spot from whence the noise proceeded. He had no sooner fixed our attention than there was a second and a third discharge like the sound of distant thunder. At the same moment a huge mass, containing many tons of broken fragments of ice, poured forth from a gully or run in the upper part of the moun-

tain, which, after making several bounds, issued finally in what appeared more like a cascade of snow than broken ice. This was the largest avalanche we ever witnessed in this or any other part of Switzerland.

Our course lay by the side of the Reichenbach, which flowing out of the rocks on the opposite side of the glacier, after running six miles through the pass, discharges itself by three enormous leaps into the valley of Meyringen. These are the noted falls of the Reichenbach which, though not containing so large a body of water as the Handeck, yet, being exposed and open, produce a grander effect.

The descent into the valley is very steep, and, in consequence of the rain which had fallen the preceding night, the path strewed with the débris of the mountain and blue lias mud was very slippery. It lay moreover on the outside of the mountain and could not in many places have been more than two feet broad; several times, in turning abrupt corners, there was not more than three or four feet between us and the yawning precipices of from 300 or 400 feet, where a single slip or stumble of a mule must have proved fatal both to horse and rider. Indeed, how any person could ride down such steep, and at the same time enjoy the scenery, I scarcely know. In our own case, we found the only enjoyable way of descending was to trust to

our feet as we had previously done on similar excursions.

Meyringen is one of the largest communes and parishes of the Oberland. Its inhabitants derive their origin from certain Scandinavian immigrations, and there are not wanting several circumstances,\* in common between them and the inhabitants of Norway and Sweden, which go far to prove the identity of their origin. They are esteemed the finest race in Switzerland. In the features of both men and women, there is a marked superiority over the inhabitants of many of the adjoining cantons. Among the women especially, there are many who may lay claim to beauty of a certain order, since they are mostly brunettes with dark eyes and very black hair. They have many peculiar customs which seem to be the remains of a very primitive state of society, some of which also exist in other parts of the country. For instance the *Kiltgang* a singular mode of courtship is common throughout the Oberland. When a girl is arrived at a marriageable age, the young men of the village assemble by consent on a given night at the gallery of the chalet in which the fair one resides. This creates no manner of surprise in the mind of her parents, who

\* In another chapter there is a confirmation of this opinion from the similarity of their songs and mode of singing, as well as the use of the Alp horn or wooden tube with which they collect their cows.



not only wink at the practice, but are never better pleased than when the charms of their daughter attract the greatest number of admirers. Their arrival is soon announced by sundry taps at the different windows. After the family in the house has been roused and dressed, for the scene usually takes place at midnight when they have all retired to rest; the window of the room prepared for the occasion in which the girl is at first alone, is opened. Then a parley commences of a rather boisterous description; each young man in turn urges his suit with all the eloquence and art of which he is possessed. The fair one hesitates, doubts, asks questions, but comes to no decision. She then invites the party to partake of a repast of cakes and kirschwasser, which is prepared for them on the balcony. Indeed this entertainment with the strong water of the cherry, forms a prominent feature in the proceedings of the night.

After having regaled themselves for some time, during which and through the window she has made use of all the witchery of woman's art, she feigns a desire to get rid of them all, and will sometimes call her parents to accomplish this object. The youths, however, are not to be put off; for according to the custom of the country, they have come there for the express purpose of compelling her, on that night, there and then to make up her mind, and to declare the object of her choice.

At length, after a further parley, her heart is touched, or at least she pretends it is by the favoured swain. After certain preliminaries between the girl and her parents, her lover is admitted through the window, where the affiance is signed and sealed but not delivered, in the presence of both father and mother. By the consent of all parties, the ceremony is not to extend beyond a couple of hours, when, after a second jollification with the kirschwasser, they all retire—the happy man to bless his stars, but the rejected to console themselves with hope, that at the next tournament of love-making, they may succeed better. In general, the girl's decision is taken in good part by all, and is regarded as decisive. There are, however, exceptions. Some years ago, a stranger, who had received the preference of the girl of a village near Meyringen, fell by the hands of assassins, supposed to have been those who were keeping the *Kiltgang* with him. On a more recent occasion, a youth from a neighbouring village having presented himself at a *Kiltgang* was cruelly beaten and sent about his business. This occurred at Grinderwald. Other strangers, of whom, it would appear, they are particularly jealous, for they desire to keep all their own lasses to themselves, have been stripped, besmeared, and paraded barefoot through the village; and, what is still more barbarous and disreputable, they have been followed by the hooting

and pelting, not only of the youths themselves, but of the whole community, and afterwards ducked in a horse-pond.

To such an height have the disturbances caused by this singular practice sometimes risen, that the police have been obliged to be called in to end the fray. And happy indeed is the luckless wight who by such means is extricated from a scrimmage, of which unwittingly, he has been both the cause and the unhappy victim.

They have moreover throughout the Oberland a sort of domestic or village court for the maintenance of good morals. When scandals are abroad, or there are manifest symptoms that an offence has been committed against modesty, the parties offending are brought before a tribunal called *Sittengericht*, or as the word implies a tribunal of morals. It is generally composed of half-a-dozen of the seniors of the village in which the trespass takes place; but, as the Swiss do everything by the representative system, even the *Sittengericht* has, from time to time, to be chosen by the suffrages of the people, with this exception however, that the pastor, in virtue of his office, is the assessor and chairman of the court.

When all the parties are brought together, and those accused admit the truthfulness of the accusation which public or private scandal may have laid to their charge, they are compelled forthwith to

marry; and if the ceremony is performed without the scandal or the offence being apparent, the young person is allowed to appear at church with her flowing tresses, and to be adorned with the garland of flowers which is worn on that occasion. But if otherwise, she is compelled to conceal her tresses under her hat and to forego the nuptial crown, which is considered the greatest possible disgrace by a Bernese girl.

At Meyringen their courtships are carried on after church. The youths range themselves in the porch by which the girls go out. Those who are previously known to one another retire to the auberge, which in Switzerland appears to be the universal rendezvous for political meetings, parish associations, healing domestic brawls, and last, though not least, for courtships. The *Kiltgang* is also in fashion at this village, on which occasion, although given to dancing, for the most part they dance apart, the men in one room, while the young women are waltzing in the adjoining.

Many of the men of this as well as the neighbouring villages of Grinderwald and Lauterbrun, during the months of summer, are employed as guides, porters, and horse-drivers. Their earnings, however neither benefit themselves nor their families. They become accustomed to an idle, vagrant, dissipated sort of life, and soon spend in bad habits, which they acquire while following this mode of

life, what otherwise, with economy, might have lasted them and their families through the winter. A hundred francs is about the average earnings of a guide during the season. The nature of their government also tends very much to make the men contract habits of idleness. Everything, as in America, is done by election; every public officer, no matter how insignificant, must be subjected to the ballot and the poll; and the consequence is, that the community, from one end of the year to the other, is agitated by elections. These, and other occasions of agitation, go far to create a discontented, idle population; which breathes the atmosphere of the cabaret more than that of their healthful mountains, since by this means principles are imbibed which go far to deprive them of peace of mind and domestic happiness, and to substitute for things honest and of good report, a mere string of political notions, which do good to no one except the knaves who make them their dupes.

Year by year, as in other parts of the Oberland, poverty makes rapid strides among the population. The causes which contribute to so lamentable a result are too numerous to mention, but the fact is beyond all dispute. Among others, there can be no doubt but the stream of tourists have unconsciously introduced much poverty in their train, by inducing habits of idleness, and scattering their money without the least thought or judgment.

At Meyringen, as in all the other valleys of the Oberland, each inhabitant is allowed a small plot of land by the commune for growing potatoes, &c. Its cultivation, however, is frequently neglected, even where it has been once begun—the easy life of begging being preferred to honest industrial labour; or the exciting employment of guide is sought after to the neglect of everything else.

Like the people of other mountainous districts, they are exceedingly superstitious.\* When a cow is affected with a disease which they call the *épine*, and which consists in a difficulty of giving milk, they search for a raspberry twig, and, by drawing its two ends together, make a bow, and with it inscribe a circle on the ground; the cow is then brought within this magic circle three different times and milked. After that the twig is hung on the bushes where it was found, and when it becomes dry the cow also becomes sound. If a cow is diseased in her feet, they bring her on the grass, and mark the prints of her four hoofs with a sharp instrument. They then cut out these pieces of green sward, and put them in the hole turned upside down, or they hang them up in the chimney. This is pronounced to be a never-failing remedy. These superstitions are no doubt very ancient and prove that their forefathers were herdsmen even as they themselves are.

There are no less than from 4000 to 5000 cows

\* L'Oberland Bernois. Berne, 1854.

pastured every year in the valley of the Hassli. One mountain alone, the Engstlenalp, feeding 500, some others 300, and many more from 100 to 200—showing that rearing cattle and making of cheese constitute the principal financial resources of this little community. Their cows are much esteemed, and many of them are exported into Lombardy and other parts of Italy, which also receives annually no less than 300,000 pounds of cheese from this valley alone. This, at a moderate price, is worth about 114,000 francs.

## CHAPTER VIII.

Means of providing for the Cows—Summer feeding on the mountains—Employment of Herdsmen and Dairymen—Cows and their Bells—Process of making Butter and Cheese—Other usages peculiar to the Alpine Vacher—The Goats.

THE word Alp is used throughout Switzerland in a twofold sense; sometimes it means the mountain itself, and at others the lateral sweeps or hollow valleys in the mountains. It is on these slopes the Swiss feed their flocks during their short summer, and which generally are the common property of the nearest commune or village in the valley. There is a great similarity between Alpine mountains. In most cases the mountain does not rise from the valley to its summit abruptly, but by two and sometimes three distinct sweeps or curves—the first, beginning with the lower valley, is well irrigated, or in dry weather saturated with liquid manure, by which means, and through the stimu-



lating nature of their climate, they are enabled to mow it twice, and in some instances three times during the summer. This is absolutely necessary, for having little or no green crops, such as mangelwurtzel, or turnips, they are dependent for fodder for their cows during the eight months of a Swiss winter on the hay which is cut in the lower valleys, together with that which is cut and brought down in sledges from the higher ranges. The first curve, according to the elevation of the whole mountain, may rise from 500 to 2000 feet. When it approaches the top it becomes more abrupt and rocky, and the ridge is generally crested with a forest of fir. At this elevation you have frequently a slope of from fifty to a hundred feet, scattered it may be over a mile of valley. Afterwards the mountain begins again to grow on its curve-like parabolic form, till it reaches an elevation of from 3000 to 4000 feet, when it is again capped at its rugged summit by a second fir forest. A third curve ordinarily brings you to the region of perpetual snow, close on the margin of which you often find a forest of stunted pines, which has been rudely dealt with by the falling avalanche. It is chiefly in these pastures of the mountain that they feed their flocks in summer. As soon as the snow has disappeared, and the grass begins to grow, which in most years is not before the beginning of June, the cows liberated from their chalets are sent from the village or villages of the

valley to the middle Alp, that which we have before stated to be at an average elevation of 3000 to 4000 feet. Here they remain about a month, when they are moved up to the highest range, which may be 6000 or 7000 feet, and on the margin of the snow. It is however remarkable, that the higher the pastures on which the cattle feed, the more delicious the butter and the cheese made from it. Feeding with the milch cows there are also a number of calves and yearlings together with a few bulls; these carry bells of different sizes and weights, and keep up by no means an unpleasant jingle in the solitudes of the mountain. Along with the cows you sometimes find a few straggling goats which being dry have been turned off to roam upon the hills. They also are belled in a similar manner with the cows.

Both cows and goats, whether from the circumstance of being domestic, or because they are endowed with a spirit of curiosity, generally gather round the traveller as he passes along the mountains, and the goats in particular follow him to a considerable distance. The cows will sometimes gather round you to the number of a hundred, till driven off by the persons appointed to watch them, and this often while feeding in the most perilous situations—on the brinks of frightful precipices, or hard by the track of a fallen avalanche.

At this elevation they appear to have gained an additional appetite, and the herbage being increas-

ingly sweet it is more relished. By the beginning of August these upper pastures are consumed, when they descend to the lower range, which they have previously depastured; here they remain another month, and are again shifted higher up and lower down as grass is found. They are finally housed about the second week of October; the snow by this time having covered the higher, and sometimes the lower ranges.

Every Swiss peasant however poor ordinarily possesses from one to five cows, with a similar number of goats, which they are obliged to stall and feed in the winter. In the summer a confidential herdsman is entrusted by their owners to look after and convert the produce of from twenty to thirty of them into butter and cheese—his own being among the number—and for this they receive from twenty to five-and-twenty francs for the season per head, the owners being at the trouble to fetch and bring down the butter and the cheese. These carriers are frequently met in the mountains by tourists, and when they do so they generally treat them with a stave of the *Ranz des vaches*. Another method of grazing is, for a respectable dairyman to hire from twenty to fifty cows from the peasants, and for their produce to pay about one hundred francs rent, the owner running all risks of the loss of his animal. These cows may be, and sometimes are, owned by as many different individuals, though

more commonly they each possess from two to five of these useful animals. The dairyman and vacher having charge of these herds carry with them to the mountains all their dairy utensils, and occupy a number of chalets or wooden houses, in which they make their butter and that delicious cheese which is called Gruyère, although in reality there is but one valley of that name, which is situated in the Canton Vau in the Semmenthel. Abundance of this cheese finds its way into Germany and Italy. From the distance however but little reaches our country, where it is excessively dear.

The cheese is made much in the same manner that we make ours, with the exception that they put but little salt into it—indeed, they have a particular aversion to this condiment both in butter and cheese. A man or boy is employed all the day long to look after the quadruped family, and his labours are greatly assisted by the tinkling bell which at all times gives him notice in what part of the mountain the different members of this herd are feeding. It becomes particularly useful also in the case of a straggler, as it indicates the direction in which the lady has lost herself—no uncommon occurrence, feeding as they do on the most frightful grounds, in the midst of rugged rocks and yawning precipices.

As the evening approaches the cows, of their own accord, begin to move leisurely over the pasture

grounds from every corner of the Alp, towards the herdsman's chalet, where they patiently await the time of milking. In some parts the Alpine-horn—a rude, hollow tube made of wood—is used to call them together. This, however, is rather a work of supererogation, since their instinct informs them of the appointed time. It seldom happens, notwithstanding the dangerous nature of these Alpine pastures, that any of the flock are lost, because the herdsman has always a clue to their whereabouts by the bell, and can by this means generally rescue them from any scrape they may have got into. The slightest sound of the smallest bell being distinctly heard at a great distance in these lofty and peaceful regions.

Pastoral life in the Alps is not of that romantic character which poets imagine. It is a life of labour, difficulty, and sometimes danger and toil. Morning, noon, and night the herdsmen must be in attendance on their cows. They have to collect them for milking twice in the day, and to look out for stragglers: after this, they have to fetch wood and water, to make the butter and cheese, and then to keep all the utensils used in the process perfectly clean. This is by no means an easy task, considering that everything, even to the cream-pans and milking-pails, are made of wood. When this is accomplished, and the frugal meal is ended, with a keenness of appetite freshened

by the mountain air, they betake themselves to rest by eight or nine o'clock, to rise with the dawning day.

There is nothing more remarkable than the number and variety of their bells, and that the weight and the sound of each should be a mark of trustworthiness and good behaviour. To be deprived of it is considered by the animal itself as a mark of displeasure. How thoroughly republican soever the cow-herd may be in his canton or village, he is an absolute monarch over his cow community, among whom he dispenses salutary discipline by rewards and punishments. The cow of superior sagacity, or possessing the most trustworthy qualities, is appointed the leader, and ornamented with the largest bell and the most gaudy collar, and so on through all the gradations from good to bad, to the absence of all distinction, which marks the vicious. Being autocrat of the mountains, the vacher feels he has a perfect right to institute any form of government he pleases, and to enforce it with police regulations. If, therefore, any member of his community has played the truant, or been guilty of unruly behaviour, he does not testify his displeasure by blows, as our herdsmen generally do, but by the deprivation of the bell and the collar, which generally reduces my lady to order. The bulls are not similarly adorned. A question, therefore, may arise, whether the almost magical

effect produced by the bell on the cow may not be set down to the universal diffusion of that frailty of female nature called vanity, which it would appear, from what the cow-herds say, is diffused not only over the better-half of human, but also of animal creation—of biped as well as quadruped. An anecdote to the point is given in Latrobe, in his interesting book of Swiss travel. “It is well known, he says, when the Alpine cow-herds leave their winter quarters in the valley, and set out to conduct their herds to the higher pastures, it is considered a day of festivity and rejoicing. The master and his servants are dressed out in their holiday clothes, and, together with the women, are bedizened with ribbons and nosegays.\* The good wife and her children appear in their best bib and tucker; the cattle are all well cleaned, and the largest-sized bells, seldom used on any but the like occasions, on account of their weight, are distributed to the best behaved. The leading cows are decorated in addition with garlands, and others wear between their horns some utensil used in the dairy, while the family follow, bearing other implements on their heads or at their backs.

“The preparations being completed, the leaders

\* Either Latrobe, in his *Alpen stock*, was misinformed, or the practice has changed. From observations during two seasons, I found that men alone were employed for the manipulation of cheese in the mountains.

set forward, ordinarily preceded by one of the cowherds. The "Ranz des Vaches" is then struck up, and mingles with the shouts and good wishes of the neighbours for a prosperous summer. As the whole body gets in motion the jarring sounds of the bells soon fill up all intervals, and the cavalcade, defiling through the valley, disappears among the inequalities of the ground at the foot of the mountain.

"On one of these occasions it was judged proper to omit the decorations of the great bell in the toilet of a fine cow—one of the leaders of a large herd, which was quitting a village at the foot of the Alps for the purpose just alluded to—because she had only calved a few days previously, and under the idea that probably she might be injured by the additional fatigue it might occasion. At the moment when the herd began their journey, she was, nevertheless, turned out of the stall to take her place, but after a few paces she began to show signs of great uneasiness, and at length replied to their attempts made to coax her forward by lying down on her side, as though taken in a swoon or fainting fit. A consultation was immediately held, and various were the opinions broached as to the cause of her sudden indisposition. They would have lodged her again in the stable if she would have moved. In this dilemma an old experienced cowherd came up, and seeing how the case stood,



coolly went into the house and brought out the bell and collar, which the animal no sooner felt about her neck than up she got, shook herself, raised and cocked her tail over her haunches in token of complete satisfaction, with every appearance of health and gaiety, and taking her place in front, from that moment was as well as ever."

The reader is no doubt at liberty to put what construction he pleases upon the conduct of the cow, but to the absence of the bell and the gaudy collar must be attributed her feigned indisposition. It may probably however involve a question, whether upon the principles of instinct and good fellowship, she refused to follow her mates until she could recognise herself as the leader of the troop, which was, as it appears, her natural position.

A number of chalets, besides that in which the vacher lives, is necessary to carry on the business of cheese-making; some are required for the manufacture of cheese, and others for the animals in stormy weather or snow, which is not uncommon, even in summer. Then again, there is generally a great deal of grass cut for hay, even in the higher regions; and since they never make ricks, all this is deposited in chalets, from whence it is transported by sledges as soon as the mountain is covered with frozen snow. The number of chalets, consequently, which you meet with in some of the fertile valleys

of the Alps is very numerous, and at a distance present the appearance of an inhabited village, although, in fact, they belong but to one proprietor, and are the necessary appendages to his vocation, forming what we should call his homestead. They have two methods of preserving butter; the first is by melting it over a slow fire in the large cauldron in which the milk is converted into curds, and then pouring it, after a couple of hours, in a liquid state into wooden tubs, containing not more than ten or a dozen pounds of the material; by this means it is preserved for winter use in very good condition: in fact, it is infinitely superior to the article which is imported from Ireland into our large towns under the appellation of salt butter, and I think the plan might be followed with advantage in the butter-making districts of our own country. Another method, by no means so good as the former, is to place vertical pegs on a shelf which is suspended from the roof of the cheese chalet; around these pegs they place the butter, each day's making being added to the former, in an upward direction, and this inverted cone, for it assumes this shape, grows in dimensions as it proceeds upwards. The outside soon becomes covered with a coat of mildew, which, to some extent, excludes the external air: it, however, but badly accomplishes this object, and the consequence is, that it partakes of a mouldy stale taste, and is very inferior to that

which is boiled. This plan is only pursued with butter for present use, which generally awaits the arrival of a peasant from the valley to bring it down.

In the process of manufacturing cheese they are very particular. As soon as the cows have recovered their journey and become accustomed to their pastures, they carefully measure the meal of each, and from time to time, as they think it may have increased or decreased, they do so again. The milk of the whole herd during twenty-four hours, that is the two meals, the morning and the evening, are thrown into a cauldron and placed over a slow wood fire. This, if the flock be large, is made into a cheese, measuring three or even three and a half feet in circumference, and would, if hard enough, serve for the fore-wheel of a carriage. The larger the cheese the more they are esteemed, and consequently meet with the readiest sale.\* Those weighing from one hundred and a-half to two hundred weight are much sought after by the Italians. There is an inferior quality also made called ziger, by depriving the milk in the first instance of the cream, which is made into butter. This is generally consumed in the country. Their method of actual manufacture is somewhat different from our

\* The value of the cheese produced by one cow, during the four months it remains in the mountains, is estimated at from eighty to a hundred francs—about £4 English.

own. They begin, as we do, by warming the milk to the same temperature as it came from the cow, when they put in the runnet. After the whey has been thrown off, the curds are put into a large wooden tub, where they press from them as much of the liquid as possible. When this operation is accomplished, they again place the curds upon the fire, taking care to regulate it so that it may attain the proper heat and no more—the right temperature being to allow the hand to remain without scalding. If not made sufficiently hot, they say it will not keep, if too hot it has a disagreeable taste, and will not sell. During the period it is on the fire this second time, the vacher vigorously stirs the mass, and although he uses no thermometer, his practised hand seldom fails to attain the right temperature. This operation is moreover continued, even after it is removed from the fire and until it is quite cool. It is then placed in a bag, made of rather open sail-cloth, and squeezed till the moisture is extracted, then put under the press, taken out and crumbled, then made up again and pressed much in the manner we do. It is probable that the particular wherein they differ from us is necessary, from mixing so little salt with it for preservation, when exported to a warm climate. I doubt not, however, if they could be induced to use more of this excellent condiment they might save themselves the extra trouble. After it has attained some con-

sistency they transport it to the store chalet, where it is turned every day for the space of six weeks, and hardened by being wiped also daily with a salted towel. At the end of the season the produce is divided *pro rata* between the different owners of the cows; if they are not, as in some instances they are, rented for the season. At the beginning of winter the same individuals meet at the village inn and pay the herdsman and the cheesemaker who, it must be remembered, though we have spoken of them indiscriminately, are two very different personages.

Those who have no right to depasture the mountain, being inhabitants of another parish, pay to the commune so much per head for a cow, a calf, a pig, or a horse, as the case may be.

As there is much salt consumed in the mountains by all the domestic animals of Switzerland, it is always provided in sufficient quantities by the owners of the animals themselves. It is this present of salt, morning and night, the herdsmen say, which bring them together at the chalet even before the required time. They reckon about 1800 lbs. necessary for 100 cows, or at the rate of or about 18 lbs. per head for the season of four months. From the extreme health and vigour of the Swiss cows, and being aware of the frequency of disease among these animals in our own country, I am disposed to think we should ensure the health of all species of

cattle if we were to give them far larger quantities of this useful medicine than we now do. There are but very few agriculturists who allow four pounds of salt monthly to his four-footed community, and yet these herdsmen of the mountain who, in most respects, follow the promptings of nature, consider it requires that quantity to keep the animal in a healthy condition.

In another respect these vachers resemble John Bull. They never wind up their accounts without a good repast; for this purpose they select one of their best cheeses and toast it. As soon as the first slice is toasted and placed hot upon the bread it is given to the master of the feast, and so on to the last. When they have thus made the tour of the company, they return to the first, and partaking of this luxury with a peculiar gusto, it is not difficult to say which is tired first, the hostess or the assembled guests. This savoury food, however, possesses this advantage to the landlord, that it requires such floods of wine to quench their thirst, that their supper frequently ends only with the morning.

The herdsman who gave this information might have been thirty years of age, with an herculean frame, although he lived on the most simple food during the four months he remained in the mountains. In fact, it consisted of nothing but milk in one shape or another, having neither tasted

bread or meat, or even potatoes, during that time. It may be, that the simplicity of their mode of living produces some effect upon their character. Be this as it may, thus much I can aver—in every instance when I have been brought in contact with them I have found them hospitable, generous, and kind, entertaining me with a simplicity, a readiness, and good feeling that was quite surprising. It is not wealth, but the gentle nature, the considerate feeling, the just and disinterested motive—in fact, all that is unselfish and generous, which constitutes a much misnamed character. Too frequently that character is not found in the busy haunts of men, though possessed of all the attributes of wealth, interest, and power, which mankind deem essential. I need scarce say, that very often it is not found in the mansions of the great, at the marts of the merchant, or in the haunts of fashionable life. But I have found these qualities combined, beside the glacier and the snow, surrounded by impenetrable rocks, inhabiting, it may be, a frail wooden chalet, and employed in what the world would regard the mean occupation of a herdsman. And when I have regarded their primitive manners, their mere requirements of food and raiment, their contentment, and their generosity, and I would hope, religion—then has it poured contempt on the pride, the pomp, and luxury, and all those baubles which too frequently delight

the inhabitants of our cities and towns. Well may they disdain luxury and magnificence, since they have found in their mountain fastnesses the secret of true contentment.

They have little or no idea of feeding their cattle for the market. The greater part of their male calves are killed young, and without being much fattened. Their beef is intolerably tough, being, in the dairy country, in general, the flesh of some old cow that has been half-fattened.

Stall feeding, except in the neighbourhood of cities, is a thing altogether unknown. Mutton is the only kind of animal food which can be called good. In some districts they have large flocks in the mountains of a breed suited to the elevations on which they live. They however pay but little regard to their condition when killed; hence even good mutton forms rather the exception than the rule. Their flock is kept together by a shepherd without any dog, since such an animal would prove rather injurious than otherwise, hurrying them over the awful steeps on which they feed. They become frequently docile and tractable, and will follow the shepherd for miles if they know he has any salt. Such indeed is *their propensity*, as well as every other domestic animal that I am acquainted with, for this useful and healthful condiment, that they will run miles to obtain it and devour it with the greatest avidity. I am, therefore, fully con-



vinced that it must perform some salutary functions in the animal economy.

When the cows are sent to the mountains the inhabitants of the villages obtain their supplies of butter and milk from the goats. Each family possesses one or more of these friends of the poor man. After they are milked in the morning, which is at break of day, for the Swiss rise early, they are turned out of their dormitories, which for cows as well as goats, in most cases, are under the roof of the dwelling-house, and behind it. I was told in some instances this was done for the purpose of economizing heat in winter.

At the sound of the Alpine horn the goats of their own accord, wend their way to the main street of the village. When gathered together, an invalid cow-herd, or one of their big boys, takes charge of them, and drives them beyond the meadows, as far or even beyond the first fir forest, where they watch them during the day. At night they return to the village; and the route of this little army, frequently amounting to a couple of hundred, of every description and colour with their tinkling bells as they wind down the mountain side at nightfall, is one of the most pleasing sights of a Swiss valley. But the fun is to watch their motions as they proceed. You see them hastening with the utmost impatience, and jostling their neighbours to gain the foremost rank. As they

draw near, they frisk and skirmish with those who have the impertinence to go before them. At the outskirts of the village they are generally met by a troop of little urchins, who sally forth to meet their bearded companions. Children not more than three or four years old will run into the midst of the group, and lay hold of their pets by the neck. Before they do so, however, they are often turned over by a friendly push of the horns. Some positively refuse to obey the summons, and, whether from the social feelings imbibed on the mountain, or from some other cause, they will break away from their retainer, and drag him after them. I have witnessed a child of ten years old fairly foiled by an old cunning dame. Poor boy, when he found he could not accomplish his purpose he sat and cried and it was not until two others came to his assistance that he was enabled to drag the reluctant truant to the required chalet.

In spite of all their opposition however, the little bipeds are generally too strong for their four-footed companions, and they return victorious with their arms round their necks to the place of milking. Those who are domiciled at the entrance of the village, if the door is not open for their admission, will stand bleating till it is; while others set off at a canter up the various lanes and by-ways to the chalet, where they are housed for the night. When

they arrive at the door of their owner they are generally rewarded by a handful of salt, for which the goat has an extraordinary *penchant*. This, together with the instinct which tells them that the time of milking is come, will probably account for their boisterous behaviour as they approach their homes.

The well-known propensity of these animals for salt, is reported to be the cause of many straying to the higher regions, where it is well known salt is found. There they herd with the chamois, and in process of time are assimilated to them. You will sometimes meet a stray one high up in the mountains, who has broken away from his owner, but who still manifests his predilections for the society of man, since they will come to you, rub your legs, and nibble your clothes. This may arise from the care that was formerly taken of them and from having been made pets of by the children. Certain it is, they will follow you for miles through the mountain pass, or stand and look with you on the magnificent prospect. You may attempt to drive them away, but it is to no purpose; on they will come with all the intrusion of another Paul Pry. Even blows are of no avail, and the best plan is to allow them to proceed, though for what purpose you cannot tell. When you do so, you will find their friendship to be of the closest description, leaving nothing undone to

attract attention. They will follow you wherever you go; when you stop they will stop, and when you advance they will advance also. From their behaviour you would imagine that a sense of the sublime had been imparted to them, since they will readily climb the most rocky eminence to which you may ascend for a prospect. It could not be that they were in search of pasture, because they had strayed from verdant meadows to the rocky mountains. It may be, however, that their extraordinary *penchant* for salt may account for all this unaccountable conduct—a luxury which experience has taught them is to be found in the society of man, and to gratify which they will incur any amount of toil. Probably instinct teaches them to take it medicinally, as no doubt the horse, the cow, and sheep do, although others assert they make use of it only as a saline dram.

It always delights me to reflect on the natural and feeling manner in which the Swiss treat their domestic animals. Instead of the brutal kick, or the stunning blow, they use nothing but kindness of which the animal is very susceptible. Besides, the gentle treatment of their domestic animals has an effect on the disposition of their children. The child who is permitted to torture a fly will not scruple as he grows older to torture larger things, and not even to regard the feelings of his fellow men. Whereas, if the child have

imbibed from his parents sentiments of humanity for the meanest part of creation, it is not too much to expect, as he grows older, that he will be merciful and compassionate to his fellow-man.

## CHAPTER IX.

## CANTON BERNE.

The Faulhorn—Ascent of the Wetterhorn—An Auberge in high Regions—Carrying the Inn to the Mountains—Grand Panorama—Appearance of the Ice—Guides, their Character and Usefulness.

THE best way of approaching the Faulhorn is from Grinderwald, or from the top of the Great Sheidach Pass. It may be reached from the former place in five and from the latter in three hours. The mountain is 8,740 feet above the level of the Mediterranean, and from its summit you have a magnificent view of the Alps, both far and near. Indeed, even the most distant mountains, from their gigantic proportions and the transparency of the air, appear quite near.

The Faulhorn is one of a chain of Alps terminating in the Rothhorn, which retains traces of former cultivation, since you find close by the side of the snow most excellent soil. Not fifty

years ago the trunks of large trees were found upon the mountain, and tradition says a village existed there also. At the present time there is not even a chalet, and only one small stone house, which in the season is used for an inn. The cause, however, of so strange an alteration in the temperature and former culture is not accounted for.

In the height of summer the Faulhorn is disencumbered of snow except certain patches which remain in the ravines and shady parts of the mountain. This is owing to its isolated position, for the line of perpetual snow in the great chain of the Alps is as low as 7,800 feet. The limit in the Pyrenees and Mount Etna is about 9000, and on the peak of Teneriffe it is more than 11,000. In Mexico, at the twentieth degree of latitude, it is 14,000, while at the equator it is 800 higher, which is about the altitude of Mont Blanc.

The morning of the third of July, when but few travellers had found their way to the Oberland, a fellow pedestrian and myself left Interlaken early in the morning, with the view of walking to the top of this mountain. For this purpose, at the village of Grindelwald, we engaged Christian Bleuar, one of the best guides of the place. He had just before, with an enterprising young countryman of our own, by the name of Blackwell, succeeded in reaching the highest peak of the Wetterhorn, a feat which had never been previously accomplished. It

is true, Murray's guide-book informs us it has been surmounted by a young Scotchman some years ago, but the guides all agreed that he never reached the highest peak.\* Blackwell's first ascent, when he failed to reach the highest point, was by the upper glacier of Grinderwald, and the path which was pointed out by Bleuar, as that by which he went, seemed not wide enough for a goat to traverse.

I may state that I afterwards met this enterprising traveller at Chamounix who was at the time about to ascend Mont Blanc. On referring to his ascent of the Wetterhorn, he stated that the last, which was by the Rosenloui glacier, was far more laborious and punishing than the former. At one time they were on the point of turning back, from the difficulty which a succession of perpendicular walls of ice presented to their ascent. These had to be scored and notched, and it was only with the greatest toil, and with the friendly help of their hatchets and the free use of their tomahawks, that they surmounted it. The weather favoured them, which it did not on the previous occasion, and they attained the summit, I think, in ten hours. After having left an Alpine stock on the summit as a token of their triumph, they began to descend,

\* There are three peaks on the summit of the Wetterhorn; the two lower have been more than once ascended, but the highest, which is by far the most difficult, had never till now been reached.



when no sooner had they done so, than the whole mass of ice round the peak began to crack and settle. It was a very hot day, and the sun shone with great fervour, which might have occasioned it. The moment was awful and perilous, even by the acknowledgment of this dauntless traveller, and the only thing that allayed his fears, was his previous acquaintance with similar scenes, and a knowledge that the ice frequently cracks and settles without giving way. Bleuar, one of the stoutest of his guides, wavered and trembled, his lips grew pale, and his hand shook; but as he came to a stand, he was encouraged by my countryman who did not, in all probability, so well know the extent of the danger, or he would have trembled too. It was however opportune, they proceeded and passed over the critical point without further alarm. Referring to the scene, he repeated it was "awful. Had it given way, we must have been precipitated over the perpendicular sides of the Wetterhorn into the valley of Grindewald, and shattered into 10,000 atoms."

Next day he ascended Mont Blanc, and did it in much less time, I think by two hours, than was ever previously known. The fact is, there was no guide a match for him. He was six feet three, rather bony, but carrying no weight; he had the eye of a hawk and the legs of a chamois, combined with the utmost enterprise, perseverance, and courage.

He made light of the ascent of Mont Blanc. As to its difficulties, he said they by no means equalled his previous feats, although the time required was longer. He was perfectly acquainted with every nook and corner of the Alps, having walked over them, in them, and among them, forward and backward, up and down, in every direction, for three years. On parting with him for his ascent, I wished him success, and all the pleasure which he anticipated, although, said I, I confess I do not know what that is. He replied he did not know either, except being an idle man he loved the excitement, and always felt a desire to accomplish what others had done before him.

But to return to Bleuar and the Faulhorn from which we have digressed. We found the ascent from Grinderwald by no means difficult, indeed not half so much so as the pass of the Great Sheidach or the Wengern Alp. I reckoned the distance to be about nine miles, and by slow walking, with a long rest halfway, we consumed five hours and a-half before we reached the friendly stone hut. It being early in the season, and much snow on the mountain; for the last hour we were obliged to find our way over rotten or melting ice. And with all our caution we got knee-deep into it more than once.

It was at this elevation I experienced that throbbing of the head which some persons feel on very great heights, and from which I only recovered by lying in a recumbent posture. The sensation of my

fellow traveller was different; feeling, as he expressed it, as if pistols had been fired beside his ears; after two or three reports however it was all over.

Unfortunately for us, the stone edifice or hospice, which is untenanted in winter, was not as yet inhabited. We, however, met some twenty porters and female servants about an hour from the summit, carrying at their back the commodities and requisites necessary to commence innkeeping. They had started as early as two o'clock in the morning from Grinderwald, and had consumed just fifteen hours in their labour. One of them we had previously passed asleep who had been fairly overcome—tired by his burden. Most of these Alpine porters, who carried everything at their backs, bore great weights, and upon the separate burdens being weighed, for they were paid in this manner by a fixed tariff, it was found that the load of one amounted to no less than 134 pounds. One old man leaped for joy on finding that his pack was just fifty pounds.

In the midst of the cavalcade was a miserable young calf, which we had previously made out, or thought we made out, by the help of a bad glass, to be a donkey. We could not for a moment divine the part it was to play in the drama. We were, however, soon after our arrival, enlightened by finding, all heated as it was by the uphill journey, that it was killed for our supper, although, for the

sake of humanity, I would say we did not partake of it.

The first thing after their arrival was to set to work and clear the habitation of the snow and ice with which the rooms were filled. After this operation they kindled a blazing fire, and cooked the provisions; but with all their thrift in catering for our external and internal comfort, it was but a sorry affair, and for my own part, my teeth chattered with the cold all night. This, probably was the less to be endured as we had been positively melting at Interlaken, and besides this they had only provided one blanket for each bed. It was, therefore, quite out of the question to divest ourselves of our clothing, and yet with this and the blanket also, with sundry cloaks and mackintoshes, we could obtain but little heat, and although fatigue came to our aid we sought for sleep in vain.

You must not for a moment imagine, notwithstanding all our toil and discomfort, that we at all regretted our labour. Far from it, we were most amply rewarded. In the evening and in the morning we enjoyed one of the most extensive and astonishing views of the Alps, near and far, which are to be found in this land of wonders. We were immediately opposite some of the highest mountains of the Bernese chain, viz., the Jung Frau, Monch, Eigher, Wetterhorn, Finster Aarhorn, &c., and not

further than ten miles from the most remote. Besides these, there were before us and around us, proximate and at a distance, not less than a hundred distinct peaks of other Alps, while glacier streams and mers were encircling them and flowing from them. At our feet were the lakes Thun and Brienz, as well as the lake Lucerne in the distance. Seven Alps as far off as Glarus were to be separately counted, while the chain extended along the high Alps of Mont Rosa and Mont Cerven, as far down as Mont Blanc.

The *vis-à-vis* view all around was very striking. The snowy peaks which were near, appeared so lofty and so pure, so cold and so tranquil, even in the midst of the shining sun; and those far off so numerous and diversified, assuming the most fantastic forms of battlements, of obelisks and ruined towers, that it was difficult to say to what regions we had been transported, or of which world we had become the inhabitants.

There was also another view which, if not so grand and imposing, possessed its peculiar charms. It was the bird's-eye view of the mountains and rocks which lay immediately around us. Here was all barrenness and sterility—the region of utter desolation. The rocks were some of a reddish bronze colour, others of a greyish hue, and had the appearance of having been scored by the tooth of time.

On looking to the mountain barriers, which are

clothed with forests, from the valley, I had often pictured to myself luxurious slopes behind them, at least where the Alp was known not to rise. I was, however, enabled on the present occasion to correct this illusion, since the tops of even the lower hills and table-land was all barrenness, and the prospect all around, except a few favoured spots, iron-bound rock.

There was also that species of delusion which is always practised upon the eye in the presence of such lofty objects as the Alps. The backs of the lower mountains appeared much broader than they actually were, and the rents and ravines between them deeper, so that we had a sort of realization of one of those papier maché charts which give you so good an idea of the country.

There was a curious phenomenon which presented itself in the little lake, which I had the curiosity to examine coming down, and which is 1000 feet below the summit. It was perfectly covered with that species of ice which resembles melting snow, and which appeared almost akin to water. Having carelessly struck my Alpine stock into it, I discovered that although it gave way, it was at least six inches thick, and broke up into little pentagons, octagons, and decagons, of not more than one-eighth of an inch in diameter, much after the fashion of the blocks of basalt which are to be seen at the Giant's Causeway. As it appeared a singularity I could

by no means account for, I have noted it down to be explained by the *savant*.

It is always well to look at all the bearings of a question before coming to a decision. In the morning we had been disposed to grumble because we had been charged quite as much, if not more for our discomfort, as we should have been for luxurious entertainment at the Trois Rois at Basle or the Couronne at Geneva, but we came to a different conclusion when we met a second division of porters bringing up wood and heavy cooking utensils, &c. In fact, they have nothing in this lone dwelling, which I believe to be the highest in the Alps, but what is brought from the village below, and to pay, no doubt, a great price for its carriage.

No one should think of going to out-of-the-way places, or upon the ice, without a guide. It is true, the mountain paths are indicated on the map, and, with a good glass and some experience in the mountains, you can generally trace the road. Yet when pursuing this species of navigation alone, I have frequently lost much time from the path sometimes, even in the veritable Kellar, being marked as a river, and a river substituted for a path, and very frequently the path has been placed on the wrong side of the river.

I met, in my rambles at Zurmat, an eccentric traveller who had spent many years in the Alps, and whose delight was to ramble through the most

difficult passes alone. At the time I refer to, he was laid up from a fall into a *crevasse*, from which he almost miraculously extricated himself, after divers scratches, bruises, and unparalleled exertions, from which he was not likely soon to recover. His first emotions, after he was again landed on *terra firma*, were to thank God for his deliverance, and then to vow to himself never again to be without a guide. I however thought an observation which he made, prompting him to adopt this resolution, rather odd. "It would by no means be comfortable, sir, to lose one's life in this way, and to have no one to tell the tale." What sensations of comfort he experienced in his late position, or what he could have experienced if he had fallen lower down, from whence he could even have extricated himself, I must leave to himself to say. This accident was occasioned by the snow of the previous night, which had fallen heavily, having covered the rents in the ice. This is not an uncommon circumstance, but one highly dangerous without a guide. With their assistance there is no fear, because they are so accustomed to the ice and snow, and know by observations they have before made, the bearings of the *crevasses*, that they are always prepared, and take the precaution to avoid them.

You are not only well piloted, but you sometimes get a good deal of amusing gossip from your guide. Our present one was quite a character in his way;



he was continually diverting our attention by a *voyez monsieur*. "I was on this mountain last summer, and a man from Lucerne, a sort of indescribable thing, half courier and half guide, brought a party of ladies and gentlemen here, and while I was standing near, one of them asked which of the mountains was the Wetterhorn; having satisfied the gentleman by telling him—for it was as impossible for him to mistake the Wetterhorn as it was to mistake himself—they naturally inquired, pointing to the first on the left, and what this? He replied, Wetterhorn also; then to the one on the right, which, in fact, was the Mettenberg; when, for fear of having more questions put, he hastily replied, '*tout cela est Wetterhorn.*' This, of course," said he, "was a fine blind for his ignorance, and acted as an extinguisher on the inquisitiveness of his party."

"You have been often on this mountain, Bleuar,\* with parties? How many thoroughly fine clear days have you had in proportion to bad ones?" "*Ma foi, monsieur.* Not one in a hundred. Very often we have fine weather in the evening, but

\* A trifling circumstance, which proves the civility of Bleuar, as well as the honesty of the host and his servants of the Faulhorn, I cannot help mentioning to their credit. When I had come nearly halfway down, I discovered I had inadvertently left my watch on the table of my bed-room. On being made acquainted with it, without saying a word, the guide set off like a racer, obtained and brought it in an incredibly short space of time. Most of their guides speak French.

snow or rain in the morning; and it but seldom occurs, if we have seen nothing in the evening, that we have any view in the morning.

“*Voyez monsieur*, that guide on the other side of the hill! You see him with that Austrian who is going as we are to the Grindelwald glaciers, but the man does not know his business, or he would have taken the short cut we do.” He had no sooner said the words than he vanished, much in the fashion harlequin does in our Christmas plays, into a rent in the rocks. I followed him, and found it was indeed a short cut, but a break-neck path. A sort of Gemini-like way to be trodden by none who have not a steady head, good nerves, and compact limbs.

True to his word, we were at the glacier nearly an hour before the other party, and found, to our surprise, that from some unaccountable cause it had advanced twenty feet from the place to which it reached only three years ago. The inference is, that glaciers not only travel at the rate of 500 feet per annum, but are subject to the casualties of sudden slips or surges. Both the higher and the lower glaciers of Grindelwald are formed around the sides of the Mettenberg—the mountain not covered with snow, which is between the Wetterhorn and the Eigher. They are, in fact, the ice fillings of the valleys between the former and the two latter mountains. Beyond the higher extremity of the

lower glacier the Viescherhorner rears its head, and is easily recognised by the purity of the perpetual snow which covers its sides.

There is abundant proof that the climate of the Alps, 200 or 300 years since, was not so rigorous as it is at present. The remains of the village on the Faulhorn, discovered a few years ago, to which we have alluded, is one confirmation of this fact, and another is the circumstance of their possessing documents in the archives of the church of Grindewald, which show that a marriage was celebrated at that village in the year 1561, between parties who had come across from the Canton Vallais. A baptism in the year 1578, and another marriage in 1605. A third confirmation is, the circumstance of a small bell which at present sounds to call together, every Sabbath, the faithful at Grindewald, bearing upon it the inscription—"O. S. Petronella ora pro nobis, 1044." This was the bell of the chapel of Petronella, which stood on the ground between the Mettenberg and the Eigher, or on the higher glacier of Grindewald. We know that the glaciers sometimes leave their ancient beds, for we are frequently meeting them in different parts of the country; and of course if they leave old paths or their original beds as our rivers sometimes do, they are also necessarily compelled to seek new ones.

## CHAPTER X.

## CANTON VALLAIS.

The Last Ascent of the Jung Frau—Way of approaching it—The Aletsch Glacier—Its Grandeur and Magnitude—Further Progress of the Travellers—Crossing the Crevasses with Ladder Bridges—Their Perilous Position—Vertical Ridges—Crowning the Summit—The Descent.

THE last ascent of the Jung Frau was accomplished by a party of scientific foreigners, among whom were Monsieur Agassiz of Neuchatel, and our own countryman Professor Forbes.\* From the almost perpendicular walls which the mountain presents on the side of Interlaken, it has always been ascended from its back—that is, from the Canton Vallais. The village of Morel, about a league from Naters, and close by a lake of the same name, has generally been the starting point. It was so on this

\* *Excursions et Séjours dans les Glaciers et les Hautes Régions des Alps.*—Genève. Par Monsieur Desor. Monsieur Desor was himself one of the party.

occasion. They passed the night in the mountain chalets far above Morel, in the vicinity of those vast fields of ice which come down from the Viescherhorner and the Aletsch, the king of all glaciers, which descends from Jung Frau.

They were somewhat delayed in consequence of not finding some ladders at the place where they had left them since the previous ascent of Mons. Hugi. On searching for them, it was discovered that a peasant of one of the neighbouring villages had taken possession of them, and, because he had repaired them, claimed them for his own; and it was only upon the whole body of guides going to him with threats that he delivered them up. This occasioned much delay.

It being now five o'clock, Bauman, the chief guide, addressed them in these words,—“Gentlemen and companions, we ought to have left this place at three o'clock at the latest. It is now five. It will therefore be necessary for us to regain the lost time in our approach to the distant part of the glacier. Let those who have not the inclination or the strength to follow me remain behind, for I can wait for no one.” Notwithstanding this rather discouraging appeal none were daunted and for the present all proceeded on their way.

The first part of the journey lay by the lake Morel, which empties itself under the Viege glacier. After passing this on the left, they began to ascend

the Aletsch glacier, from whence they had a splendid distant view of the Dent Blanc, Mont Cervin, Mont Rosa on the south-west, and a near one of the mountain they were about to ascend, together with the Monch and Eigher. These latter, resting their bases on the glacier on which they stood, rose majestically in a northern direction.

The Aletsch is not only the largest glacier in Switzerland, but being at the angle of  $2^{\circ} 58'$ , it has consequently less inclination than any other. It is seven miles long and two wide, and is shut in with mountains which are almost perpendicular. Six hours is the time generally allowed to traverse it; but our company, profiting by the exhortation of the *chef des guides*, accomplished it in five. Two hours were consumed in passing the compact and almost level ice at its lower end. But the next league being much broken with *crevasses*, took them three hours more, so that they did not arrive at the perpendicular walls of ice which feed the glacier till ten o'clock.

This point is called the Repose, from the circumstance of all previous expeditions having halted at it for refreshment. While they were discussing their provisions, a discussion of another character arose between Bauman and one of the Vallaisian guides, as to the identity of the Jüng Frau, the mountain they were about to ascend. The former asserted it was on their left, whilst the latter main-

tained it was upon their right. The guide-in-chief flew into a most violent passion when his knowledge of the mountain was brought in question, and declared he was quite willing to abandon his guidance of the undertaking to the superior knowledge of the Vallaisian. Words ran high, and if some of the party had not stood forward and expressed their determination to follow Bauman wherever he might lead, the consequence would have been the breaking up of the party. They had not proceeded, however, very far, before the Jung Frau of the Vallaisian turned out to be a part of the Viescherhorner which rises immediately behind Grinderwald, and to which they gave the appropriate name of the Trugberg.

The most magnificent glacier scene in the whole of the Alps is to be viewed from the Repose. Before you is a vast amphitheatre of ice. This is the Aletsch into which six large confluent mix their streams. The largest are those which descend by the flanks of the Jung Frau: the rest come down from the very centre of the Monch. The Eiger sends no confluent into the Aletsch. The Monch on the right and the Jung Frau on the left are the colossal columns or boundaries of this amphitheatre, and separate the Canton Berne from the Canton Vallais.

The ridge which connects these two mountains is more than 10,000 feet high. The guide Bauman traversed it some years since (1828) with a Monsieur

Rhodorf, who also made the ascent of the Jung Frau.\* Monsieur Hugi also passed over it in 1832. Although it is much longer, it has very much the appearance of the Wengern Alp, so much so, that if it were not covered with snow it might be taken for that mountain.

To the west of the Repose there is a bluff sort of mountain headland on which a number of terraces rise one above another. It was by these they were now to ascend.

Leaving at the Repose the greater part of their provisions, their meteorological instruments, and all their unnecessary gear for traversing the ice, they mounted on the first plateau or terrace above the rocks before eleven, in the expectation of reaching the summit in three hours. Some of the party were even more sanguine, and hoped to accomplish it in two.

The snow was in a very bad state. It was not sufficiently frozen to bear their weight, and the consequence was that they frequently sank up to their knees. Besides this, wherever the ascent became abrupt they had to cross *crevasses*, some of which were partially covered with snow.

\* It has been ascended five different times during the present century. The first in 1811 by two brothers of Arau, called Meyers. The second some years later by a gentleman whose name is unknown. The third by *Bauman* in 1828, who acted as guide on the present occasion. The fourth by Monsieur Hugi in 1832. The fifth by the present expedition. *Bauman* has therefore no claim to the priority, as is generally thought.



They encountered one of the enormous breadth of ninety feet. It was not, it is true, continued very far, for if it had been it would have altogether put an end to the expedition. Fortunately, they were enabled to overcome this yawning gulf by outflanking it. At this time the *crevasses* became so concealed with the snow of the previous night that it was only safe to proceed by sounding or probing with the Alpen stock every step they took.

After having surmounted these terraces, it brought them to a sort of plateau or table-land, from which they were able to obtain a view of the various mountains. The highest of all by the head and shoulders was the Jung Frau—the queen of the Bernese Oberland—while around her were clustered her court of monks and giants.

A second halt of about half-an-hour now took place for the double purpose of refreshing themselves and reconnoitring the path by which they were to proceed. To the right were almost vertical walls of ice. To the left huge overhanging blocks of the same substance, as if ready to fall and avenge their rashness. Before them yawned a *crevasse* which they could not pass at least for the present since they saw not how.

The guides appeared to hesitate and to be at a loss. They, however, committed themselves to their direction with the most implicit confidence—the only method, continues Mons. Desor, in all cases

of doubt and difficulty. The knowledge they possess of the ice amounts almost to instinct, arising as it does from similar effects and similar results always accompanying certain indications. They appear to falter, but in reality they do not. They walk first in this direction, and then in that, and soon they declare the road.

It was already noon, and the heat was excessive. Some of the guides applied large pieces of ice to the nape of their necks to cool and refresh themselves, which remedy, although regarded by some as dangerous, produced only the very best effects. The extreme rarity of the atmosphere at the elevation to which they had arrived not only inspired them with vigour but made them proof against the different changes of temperature which they had to pass through: the same result, in fact, which is attained by every traveller on the mountains of Switzerland.

It was certainly a strange method to refresh jaded nature, but not altogether an irrational one, for at this great elevation our creature organization, as well as our moral constitution, is affected by none of those pernicious influences which would prove injurious in the plain. When we shut ourselves up in hot rooms, or sleep in beds so hung with curtains as to exclude the greatest possible amount of air, we are affected by every blast. But when we live in the air day by day, at one time battered by the rain, and at another smiled upon by the sun, and,

moreover, sleep in chalets which are neither wind-tight nor water-tight, we suffer not the least inconvenience, we possess perfect immunity from rheumatics, although we pass several times in the day from broiling heat to piercing cold, and from piercing cold to broiling heat.

The reflection of the light from the snow was found to be intense, indeed almost insupportable. The blue and green veils which some of the party brought with them proved of the utmost service. Those who neglected bringing them were punished for their neglect with intense inflammation of the eyes.

After having mounted the last of the terraces they found themselves in front of one of the huge *crevasses* to which we have before referred. It was of great and unknown depth—yawning its open gulf before them. In no part was it less than ten feet across, and therefore could only be crossed by the ladder which they had brought with them for this contingency.

Having examined the débris of a huge avalanche which had fallen from a precipice of several thousand feet, and composed of compact blue ice, they prepared themselves to cross the formidable gulf. Their ladder was three-and-twenty feet in length, and consequently longer than was absolutely necessary to bridge the chasm. But the difficulty was the side on which they were, was lower by many feet

than the other. In fact, the ground on their side sloped for at least the distance of thirty feet to the angle of forty degrees. And to make the matter worse, the snow, which in other places was loose, was just here so hard and slippery that they could scarcely stand upon it, and it was only by cutting notches with their hatchets that they could at all adjust the end of their frail bridge, which, after all, sloped greatly upwards. When this was done two of the guides stepped courageously forward, after having been well roped, and crossed without any mishap. A second rope was then thrown across and fastened to serve as a sort of rail for the remainder of the party; and by means such as these, one by one, but all well roped, they arrived in safety to the east plateau or terrace.

This plateau, which was also intersected with minor *crevasses*, had now to be traversed, and after that to scramble up an acclivity steeper than the roof of any house, in order to obtain the summit of the Rothal. At the further extremity they came upon a *crevasse* which at first seemed without doubt to bar their onward progress. Its lip or top was much more slanting and oblique than the one they had just passed, and all felt their labours were at an end. The intrepid Jacob however at a little distance, found a place somewhat narrower, which, with some difficulty, he spanned with his thirty bar ladder.

As usual he took the lead, and, as he was in the act of assisting two of his comrades to cross, they heard a fearful crash, and the bank of snow on which one end of their bridge rested sank suddenly: so much so that one of them, who was nearly halfway across, retreated in the greatest consternation. All for the moment were struck dumb. At length the chief guide stepped forward, and inspired confidence into the rest of the party, who then proceeded.

The noise was occasioned by the layers of new snow which attach to the sides of the *crevasse* giving way. In the large ones they may be seen adhering to the sides of the *crevasse* like the section of a bridge. But the layers not being firmly cemented by the frost, yield to the smallest degree of pressure, and sometimes to the disturbance of the elements. The fall in question was no doubt occasioned by the fixing of the ladder, but its ends resting far in on the ice there was in reality no danger.

At two o'clock they reached the Rothal, a spot containing but a few feet of *terra firma*. Here they rested a few minutes before they made the last and by far the most hazardous ascent.

Thus far everything had gone on most auspiciously, and none of them were overcome with fatigue. One, nevertheless, had been compelled to return to the Repose, in consequence of being badly shod. The rest now proceeded to attempt the

900 feet which yet remained, and hoped to accomplish it in about an hour. They, however, soon discovered their enterprise was surrounded by difficulties upon which they had never calculated. Instead of snow, they now came upon compact slippery ice; and the consequence was, inclining as it did at the angle of  $50^{\circ}$ , they could only proceed by cutting steps in its surface. This rendered their progress very slow, for they consumed one hour without having made any sensible progress. Soon after they were enveloped in clouds so dense that the hindmost could not discern the foremost. This was an awful part of the ascent, since the ice-like roof of the mountain which they were climbing broke off perpendicularly, at a height of several thousand feet.

The ice was so hard that they could not proceed faster than about fifteen paces in a quarter of an hour; and, notwithstanding all of them were most vigorously employed with hatchets and tomahawks, such was the intensity of the cold that they were in danger of being frostbitten. Every moment their position became more critical; and new difficulties presenting at every step, they proclaimed a halt. One after another gave it as his opinion that it was better to abandon the enterprise. Not so Jacob, the life of the party, and the most enterprising of all the guides; for when several appealed to him, he gave it as his conviction that they were

fully able to accomplish their object. His calm composure and unflinching resolution, imparted fresh courage to his companions, and at the cry "Vorwärts," *en avant*, they renewed their exertions up the steep.

Here they were obliged to leave one of their guides, who from giddiness was not able to support himself erect in the sight of such awful precipices. In truth, the path they followed was enough to make the stoutest heart quail. The whole mountain was much in the shape of a cone, depressed at the top, and cut off perpendicular on one side. On the east were the vertical walls which rose from the Rothal, and on the west the expanse which they had just traversed.

Having no time to lose, instead of advancing by a zig-zag, which would have made the labour less, they proceeded straight forward, up a sort of ridge. This they also considered the safest method, for if one of them had unfortunately slipped in a zig-zag, he must have inevitably rolled down the mountain and perished; whereas, by keeping in line by the side or hollow of the ridge, if one fell the next would be able to assist him.

Jacob took the lead, walking up the bare ridge of the rock like a rope-dancer. On his left there was not more than a foot of solid ice between him and precipices of three thousand feet. The others followed, some scrambling up the rock, and others

crawling up by the hollow beneath the right hand ledge of it.

The bare remembrance of the scene or the recital of it was enough to make Mons. Desor tremble and become giddy after many years. Several times, in striking their stocks into the ground before them, they would sink several feet in the snow, whilst at others it would not be more than so many inches. Again the fog would become impenetrably dense, and their fear then was, lest from their inability to see ahead, they might plunge headlong by some run or hole into the unfathomable abyss beneath.

The guides, like the commanders of some assailing army, who head their troops when about to engage in a dreadful mêlée, were always in advance, cheering on and encouraging their little band of adventurous travellers. This, no doubt, was necessary to keep up their spirits, and to impart confidence equal to the attainment of their object.

The fog now became doubly thick around the summit, and the eastern view towards the Eiger and Monch was alone clear. All of a sudden, however, it cleared up very fine. The Jung Frau became affected at their intrepidity, and disclosed herself to their wondering eyes in all her glory. "This," said one, "is but a page from the history of human life—*Audaces fortuna juvat.*"

After proceeding some time in the same direction



they were enabled to deviate a little to the left, and by this means gained a position where the rock became bare. To effect this object they were obliged to traverse the inclined surface of a curved piece of ice about three hundred feet in length. Whilst they were accomplishing this, the top was also concealed, but no sooner had they attained the rocks which were bared of snow, than they saw, as if by enchantment, at a few yards from them, the culminating point of the Jung Frau, which but a little before had appeared so far distant.

Several of their company had fallen in the rear, and of the thirteen who left the chalets of Morel only eight reached the object of their desires—viz., Messrs. Forbes, Agassez, Deuchatelier, Desor, and four guides. Thus England and France, Switzerland and Germany, were represented on the summit of the Queen of Mountains.

It was now for the first time that the Swiss valleys burst upon them, and the prospect became altogether changed. Mountains which, at least to appearance, became smaller as they ascended, all at once appeared to become larger, notwithstanding the height to which they were now raised.

From the rocks on which they stood, to the summit, there was a curved ridge yet to be surmounted. Its edge was of bare rock, not more than ten inches broad, and its length was about twenty feet. Its sides were almost perpendicular, lined with solid

ice, which ran up to within an inch of the top of the bare rocky ridge.

When they saw it, they all exclaimed, "We must stop here." Jacob and Bauman, the latter having made the ascent before, were the only ones who thought differently. They insisted on the practicability of the pass, and declared their readiness to attempt it. Upon this Bauman stepped forward and crossed it, by vaulting, as it were, upon the rocky saddle, and with one hand before and another behind, drawing himself along. He assisted himself also by digging his iron-shod shoes into the sides of his icy steed on either side. Jacob accomplished it in a somewhat different way; he stretched himself along the whole ridge on all-fours, making use of his tomahawk and his hatchet, one in either hand, to detach as much ice as possible close to the rock, and thus to make the footing sure for those that were to follow.

After some labour employed in this way, and having made the path good to the end, he walked back in an erect posture over his own work. The perfect *sang froid* with which he accomplished this feat, inspired the whole party with the determination to follow him. His friendly hand was firmly grasped, and, one by one, they were all assembled on a few feet of rock at the extreme end of the ridge.\*

\* This ridge may be clearly distinguished from Interlaken with the aid of a good glass.

The top however was not yet gained, that was a small spot, two feet long by eighteen inches broad, a few feet higher still. Upon this they used their hatchets freely, in order to batter down the pointed rocks, and make the plateau larger. After all not more than one at a time could stand on so small a space. The services of Jacob were again in requisition; one by one he assisted each up and down with his friendly arm. But the abyss! The abyss below! Did any look over it? They all did; and doubtless various emotions possessed each in unison with his peculiar temperament and character. None, however, did so without a shudder. Finally, the brave Jacob inserted a stock into the centre of the peak, on which a small flag waved to the breeze, in token of victory. As the day was now waning, they remained but a few minutes on the field which they had so nobly won—long enough, however, to imprint on their minds a spectacle never to be obliterated.

When beholding scenery at a great elevation, the vast range which the eye takes in at once, is by no means the most pleasant, or the most satisfactory landscape. The human eye is either too limited to embrace so large a field, or there is a certain indistinctness in the various objects in combination, occasioned by the density or want of transparency of the air at such elevations. This was experienced by our travellers on the present occasion. They

were, notwithstanding, amply compensated by the distinct view which they obtained of the objects which were immediately below them. The appearance of the lower mountains seemed to increase the height and majesty of the higher Alps by which they were surrounded. The different valleys of the Oberland spreading in various directions, carpetted with verdant meadows, and ornamented with fir forests, charmed them very much.

On the right lay the valley of Grindervald; on the left, at the bottom of a deep chasm, the valleys of Lauterbrun and Leutschin. The Eiger and the Monch, however, were the principal objects of attraction, and, being so near, they were enabled to view them in all their vast proportions and various forms. On the west, at a considerable depth below, was another mountain, less colossal in its proportions, but not less graceful in its form, and entirely covered with virgin snow. This was the Silberhorn, and well merited its appellation. Immediately opposite was another peak somewhat resembling it, but inferior in beauty. The poetic imaginations of some travellers have described these peaks as the Virgin's breasts. The space between the two points is filled up with masses of snow, and are not less than twelve hundred feet in depth. The Jung Frau is, moreover, surrounded by other mountains, some near and some afar off, which form her

immediate *cortège*, and in the midst of which she reigns as queen.

To the east were the glaciers of the Finsteraar and the Lauteraar, and the extensive group, of which the Viesherhorn, the Oberaarhorn, Schreckhorn, the Wetterhorn, and the Finsteraarhorn, constitute the principal objects—the last, the Finsteraarhorn, reaching an elevation of 13,428 feet, being 548 feet higher than the Jung Frau. Towards the south, on the other side of the valley of the Rhone, the chain of which Mont Rosa and Mont Cervin form a part, were not such striking objects of attraction, from their great distance.

The clouds and the mists, which were continually sweeping over them, were exceedingly thick and heavy; and from the circumstance of the temperature being below the freezing point, little icicles formed on the rims of their hats, which reflected the rays of the sun like so many suspended prisms. A difficult part of their undertaking still remained; for whatever obstacles they might have encountered during their ascent, there were still many more to be overcome. The sides of the mountain were so steep that it was altogether out of the question to descend in the ordinary way, and therefore, having seated themselves on the face of the mountain, sometimes on the rock and sometimes on the snow, they were content to slide

down, at the expense of their outer garments. The inclination of many parts of their path was from  $40^{\circ}$  to  $45^{\circ}$ . But, notwithstanding this, they reached the Rothal in an hour, it being about five in the afternoon.

They passed without difficulty the two frightful *crevasses* which had so much obstructed them when ascending; and from their elation at having accomplished so great a feat, they walked with firmer tread and faster step; in fact, they came down at a rattling pace. Owing to the heat of the day having melted the snow, the sides of the *crevasses* were in a more dangerous state than in the morning, and could not be trusted to within a foot or two of their sides.

At six they rejoined their companions at the Repose, accomplishing in a descent of two hours what had cost them four times that time and labour in the ascent. There were still six leagues to be traversed before they reached the châteaux of Morel. When, therefore, they had refreshed themselves, and drunk the health of their brave captain, Jacob, they commenced passing the *crevasses* which are found so thick at the upper end of the Aletsch glacier.

The moon was at her full. She shone forth in all her glory, lighting both mountains and glacier to such a degree as to produce the grandest effect.

There is a peculiar charm in the snowy mountains when seen with the aid of her friendly light. Though not so glaring as when seen by that of the other luminary, they nevertheless possess a whiteness, a sobriety, a romance, and a repose, which more than compensate for the brighter light. Although they were overtaken by the night, such was the light of the moon that they found no manner of inconvenience, and by again roping themselves, as is the practice of all Alpine travelers on the snow, the difficulties and dangers which in their upward course seemed to multiply and abound, were now as readily dissipated and overpassed. They arrived safe at the châlet of Morel before midnight.

Though to some so minute a description of the ascent of a snowy mountain may be tedious, to others, doubtless, it will prove interesting. The object has been to give some idea of the difficulties and the toil which are necessarily involved in so perilous an undertaking. These having been deliberately considered, it remains each for himself to ask, where is the *cui bono*? In what does it consist? It may be such ascents may be justified when undertaken for scientific purposes, although it is difficult to see, even in that case, to what useful purposes or art in common life such discoveries can be applied. If it be for

the excitement of pleasure, or the traces it may leave on memory in after days, then it does appear that even that enjoyment is purchased at too great a price. It is too stimulating, too hazardous for ordinary mortals.



## CHAPTER XI.

The Chamois—Its Habits, Haunts, Instinct, Formation—Doe Leaders—The Buck—Their Enemies—The Chamois Hunter—His Qualities, Equipment, Dangers—Method of approaching their Game—Death of Two Hunters, &c. &c.

As every traveller in Switzerland has heard a great deal about the chamois and chamois hunters, some account of the habits of this animal derived from those who are accustomed to hunt them, and of the hunters themselves, may not be uninteresting.

Of all the wild animals frequenting the Alps, many of which are becoming rare, the chamois is the most remarkable. Its head, in some respects, resembles the goat's, with small black round horns, curved abruptly backward at the top, ears long and narrow, face and nose resembling the deer more than the goat, pupil of the eye depressed and rather oblong. It is without beard, coat shaggy

and similar to that of the goat, and varies in colour during the season. In spring it is grey, in summer a reddish brown, in autumn dark brown, and in winter black. The forehead, cheeks, and insides of the ears, as well as the under parts of the body, are always of a yellowish white. When the young are born they are of this colour with a black line along the back. The female is rather smaller than the male, and far more delicate in form; she has also smaller horns. When full grown they measure from three feet to three feet three inches in length, and do not stand higher than two feet three or four inches.\* They are found everywhere throughout the Alps of Savoy and Piedmont, the Tyrol and Switzerland.

During the summer they resort to the most elevated regions, and are to be found only in the most inaccessible spots on the margin of the snow, herding together in flocks varying from five to forty. Their extreme timidity induces them to seek the most retired places, not only for protection from the hunter, but also from birds and beasts of prey. Hence they feed mostly on those spots of very fine grass which are found near the margin of the snow. Very early in the morning they descend lower down, but they return to their haunts at break of

\* The animals cut in wood to represent the chamois are no more like them than they are like goats. Indeed the chamois resembles the goat in many respects, except the horns and face.

day to lie on the snow or in its immediate vicinity. At the approach of night they again search for fresh pastures, after which they retire to some cavern or hollow in the rock for the night. This applies to the summer, but as soon as the winter approaches, and when the higher pastures are covered with snow, which is generally in October, they descend to the fir forests. The intensity of the cold of the higher regions, as well as the absence of food induces them to remain here during the winter, where they are protected from the incursions of man. Their instinct also teaches them to resort to the thickest part of the forest, which is generally the part best defended against falling avalanches. Most commonly at this period they are found on the south side of the mountain. During unusually severe seasons, they are known to approach the highest inhabited valleys, but as soon as they can find pasture in the upper ranges they take themselves away. Abundant provision against the cold has been lavished upon them in the shape of thick shaggy hair and fur, which gives them the power of great endurance in the icy atmosphere to which they are exposed.

There is no animal which, at the same time, is more harmless and more timid than the chamois, and there are few endowed with more exquisite organs of sense. Their quickness of sight, of hearing, and of smell, and the rapidity with which sound

reaches them in these lofty regions, are almost marvellous. Their legs are endowed with such a power of contraction and elasticity that they can leap the most frightful gulfs as easily as the goat takes his ordinary bounds. Their ordinary leap is from twenty to three-and-twenty feet,\* and they run up the steepest and almost perpendicular rocks with the fleetness of the hare. Whatever the antelope accomplishes on the steeps of Tartary is equalled if not surpassed by the chamois of the Alps. At a single bound they will spring upwards ten feet, and if the cliff presents the most trifling projection, they will land upon it and bound yet higher still, by which means they ascend almost vertical walls. The very small spot of ground necessary for them to leap on, and from which they take the next bound, is almost fabulous. If they can only find room for their four feet, they will contract them and poise themselves as upon a pivot, and then leap upwards. Their sight as well as the acting of their instinct is as rapid as lightning. If they are closely pursued and come suddenly upon an abyss which must be crossed, or a cliff which must be scaled, one glance is sufficient for them to take their resolve. Sometimes they disappear suddenly by repeated leaps into the vortex below, or by sudden upward spasmodic bounds elude the vigilance of their pursuers. From the mechanical construction

\* L'Oberland Bernoise. Berne. 1854.

of their hinder legs, they can as easily descend into the abyss as they can climb up almost perpendicular rocks; and when they descend, it is wonderful with what caution they use their fore legs, lest they detach any stones from the mountain which would render their flight difficult if not impossible. On level ground their gait is awkward and their pace comparatively slow. The muscles of their legs are so constructed, and endowed with such extreme powers of tension, that they can only advance rapidly by bounds and leaps. They are far less graceful in their motions than is generally imagined. They stand so high upon their legs, and their body is so round and long, that they move with much less rapidity and much less gracefulness than the deer. You never see them to advantage when in motion in the plain; to do so, it is necessary to follow them to the mountains, which is, in fact, their natural element.

They are unweariedly watchful when feeding. One of their number is posted on a commanding situation to warn the rest of approaching danger. Her ear is open to the least noise, and her eye ranges over every object near and far off. When she perceives or hears the least stir, for the leader is always an old doe, she utters a sort of shriek. In fact, she is the guide and protector of the troop, and at all times manifests the utmost vigilance on their behalf. They, in their turn, are always ready to

submit to her direction. If by any casualty they are deprived of her, the troop is thrown into the greatest confusion, and becomes scattered without guidance over the mountains. Like the bees when they have lost their queen, the chamois roam in every direction in search of their faithful guide. They become the easy prey of the hunter, and having lost the guide of many a dreary season, they seem to court a voluntary death. When the loss takes place in the winter the whole flock frequently perish. Every hunter you meet with in the country, at least those I have conversed with, are agreed on the extreme vigilance unceasingly exercised by the leader for her flock, and their absolute dependence on her guidance.

These doe-leaders always keep some distance in advance, and but seldom eat while the rest are feeding, and while the others sleep they keep watch. When they first apprehend danger, they merely utter a faint shriek. After this they move about hither and thither, post themselves on some projecting rock or eminence, and if their suspicions are confirmed, they utter a second and more piercing cry, when the whole troop take to flight under the guidance of their leader. When once in motion they fly with the rapidity of lightning, and seek refuge among the recesses of the most inaccessible rocks.

Although the female chamois herd together, the

bucks prefer a solitary life, and are more frequently killed by the hunter. From November to December, however, they mix with the herd, when the most fierce conflicts take place, and not unfrequently the weakest are killed. At this period they are in their best condition and ought only to be shot.

Their time of gestation is twenty weeks, when the doe seldom gives birth to more than one kid. On these occasions they retire to some cavern or hole in the rocks where they nurse their young with great care. Like the colt, from the moment of its birth, the young chamois stands upon its legs, and is nourished by its dame six months. During this period she conducts it to the most solitary pastures, and teaches it to leap, in the manner before described, the steepest sides of the mountain. She does this by taking the first leap herself to inspire it with confidence, and to show the way in which it must also vault. If by any misfortune the mother is killed, the kid when young will remain by her side and suffer itself to be taken by the hunter, but if it has attained any age it will take flight and attach itself to some other doe of the same or another flock, who readily adopts and if she has milk nourishes it.

The chamois, if taken young, is easily tamed, but it never attains that vigour and activity which it does in the mountains. It prefers taking nourishment from its tame nurse, which is generally a goat

in a recumbent posture, like the dog,\* which animal it will play with, and butt with its tender horns. Those who are desirous of seeing them may always gratify their curiosity at the principal resorts for travellers. They never, however, attain any very great age.

Their ordinary food is grass and the tender shoots of young trees, but when they are hard driven as they are in winter they will eat leaves, not excepting those of the pine, coarse grass, the succers of trees, and various kinds of lichens, with which the mountains abound. In severe seasons they penetrate the snow with their nose and feet for the purpose of obtaining food; and frequently the tempests which prevail in the Alps greatly assist them, laying bare whole tracts of snow, and discovering fresh and green pastures. It is by such wonderful contrivances of the Creator that the Alpine tribes of animals, of birds, and insects are nourished. And those conflicts of the elements which to others bring destruction and death, to them become the fruitful source of maintaining life.

In early spring the high slopes and the declivities are soon cleared of snow by the avalanche hurling it over the precipice; thus extensive pastures are found as early as March in the higher regions; and the after grass of the previous summer becomes the

\* L'Oberland Bernoise. Berne. 1854.



food of the chamois. When driven to extremities they will support life on the least possible amount of food, licking salt from some of the rocks, or devouring crumbling shell and clay, which is sometimes found in their entrails.

In their wild state they are exposed to many enemies. Their very haunts and their abodes not unfrequently prove the engines of their destruction. The fall of crumbling rocks and slipping avalanches frequently converts their most joyous season into the season of death, since it is not uncommon to find a whole flock of chamois destroyed by the falls of ice and snow in the early spring. Their instinct, indeed, leads them to avoid dangerous places, but there are always tracts where the avalanche descends by a new course, not before indicated by any grinding of the mountain. It is here that not only the chamois but also man is frequently overwhelmed with sudden destruction.

They are, moreover, exposed to the attack of the wolf, the lynx, and the bear, which animals appear still to linger in some of the high Alps. The eagle and the vulture often clutch their young in their talons, and thrust with their pinions even the full-grown animal, if on a ledge or projecting crag of the rock, into the abyss below.

Their most formidable foe, however, is man; and the thirst which the mountaineers of the Alps manifest for the chase of the chamois is extreme, not-

withstanding the dangers which beset his path. Schiller has well described it when he says :

“ On airy heights tempestuous thunder shakes  
 The echoing sky ; the path affrighted quakes.  
 The fearless hunter tracks the bounding flocks  
 O'er dazzling plains and icy vaulted rocks,  
 Where smiling spring, unblest with flowery birth,  
 Ne'er wakes the verdant glories of the earth.  
 Beneath his feet a hanging sea of clouds  
 In wavy folds the unpeopled waste enshrouds.”

#### THE CHAMOIS HUNTERS.

The hardy hunters of the Alps recount many of their marvellous exploits, the least of which are sufficiently appalling to strike terror into less adventurous sportsmen. A good hunter should possess a degree of physical power and mental qualities with which few persons are gifted; a good constitution to resist the inclemencies of the seasons, the cold, and the tempests of snow. Sometimes he is obliged to pass the night under a rock with little or no nourishment. His temperament should be cool, his judgment good, and his decision prompt; his head steady, his eye penetrating, his limbs compact and trusty. Courage and presence of mind are absolutely necessary to enable him to escape the dangers to which he is continually exposed. Above all he should be possessed with rare patience and perseverance combined with a perfect knowledge of the mountains. His strength is tested by a cumbrous rifle, his food, hatchet, grappling

iron, powder and ball, all of which he carries at his back.

The qualities with which he should be endowed may be illustrated by a struggle which a young hunter of Grindervald had to encounter not long since with an eagle. In the pursuit of his game he happened to alight on the top of an incline, which was caused by stones which had fallen from the sides of a steep mountain—a very common place of danger. He had leaped a chasm before reaching the top of this narrow ledge, for it was scarcely a foot broad at the top, which joined the mountain. At every step he found the stones slipping from under him, and he could only secure himself by lying on it on all-fours, and bringing the weight and breadth of his body to bear upon the falling stones. On his right rose an almost vertical wall of rock. On his left at the bottom of the incline, which might have been 100 feet, there yawned a deep gulf, where he would have been shot over hundreds of feet. Not being able to leap back to the rock from which he sprang, he looked about to see the manner in which he could save himself in the position to which his false step had brought him. With his hatchet he began to detach the topmost stones, so as to make the base broader on which he lay. As soon as he made his ground good he drew himself along, but his undertaking became so laborious, that he was obliged, every now and then, to rest, to

recruit his strength. At times large fragments would crumble from under him, which compelled him to dig deeper and make his foundation more sure. Having by these means traversed the ridge for an hour and a-half, he perceived a shadow passing over him. With difficulty he turned his head, and to his surprise saw a large eagle hovering above and poising himself to make a sudden descent. It is well known that this bird of prey will attack with indomitable courage in the high region of the Alps, everything instinct with life, not excepting man. Their method of attack is peculiar. After poising themselves for a while, they descend upon their victim with the rapidity of lightning, and with a vigorous thrust with their wings precipitate their prey into the abyss, where they devour it at their leisure. And it is not at all improbable, if our hunter had been wanting in presence of mind or failed in courage, that he would have shared this fate. As soon as he perceived his enemy he worked the more vigorously with his hatchet, and when he had made a bed sufficiently broad, he turned upon his back to await the attack. His left shoulder rested against the upright part of the mountain, and his hands being disengaged he raised his rifle already cocked to his shoulder, determined, in the event of an attack, to give a good account of himself to his foe. For near a quarter of an hour he kept himself in this position

in breathless suspense, when from some cause or other, either the feared impossibility of attaining his object, or attention being diverted by some other object, it flew away,—to the great disappointment of our hunter, who was panting to inflict upon him summary punishment for his contemplated homicide.

After this adventure he again fell upon his face, and pursued his course, first digging his way, and then drawing along his body after a serpentine fashion. And it was only after three hours of the greatest effort and the most laborious toil that he was enabled to reach the end of the incline, where it joined the mountain; with his clothes, his hands, and his legs, perfectly scarified. When he arrived upon the friendly plateau, his first emotion was gratitude for his deliverance from the impending death which had so long hung over him.

When the chamois is pursued, two or more hunters leave their homes in the evening to pass the night in some *châlet* near the hunting-ground. Next morning they rise early, in order to be close to their haunts before the break of day. On their arrival they place themselves in some commanding position, or conceal themselves behind some rock. If no such place is to be found, they erect a stone wall, with an opening in the middle, through which they obtain a view of the surrounding country; then one of their number, laying aside his rifle and

snow-gear, endeavours to reach this look-out without being observed, and in order to effect it, he will frequently crawl on all-fours, with nothing but his spy-glass. His companions stop behind in breathless anxiety. As soon as he perceives the chamois, he indicates their number by signs, and the direction in which they are to be found. Having rejoined them, they hold a council of war as to the best method of ensuring their game, and in this they seldom fail, since a good hunter knows beforehand the course they will run, and takes his precautions accordingly. They notice especially the way in which the wind blows, and always commence their operations in a contrary direction: by which means they approach the chamois as near as possible without being seen.

The most clever among them commences the campaign. He climbs rock after rock with the greatest caution. At one time he will crouch behind a crag; at another, he will throw himself upon all-fours, and crawl after his prey. Not unfrequently he puts a shirt over his other clothes, in order to assimilate himself to the colour of the snow. Then, again, on some emergencies he has to support himself in the most painful positions; still, however, he continues the pursuit till able to distinguish their horns without a glass, and this he can do at the distance of two hundred or two hundred

and fifty paces. Then, lo! just as he is seeking the cover of a friendly rock from which to take aim, away runs all the flock.

Such mishaps, however, do not discourage the persevering hunter. He begins his operations anew with greater caution, and will esteem himself well rewarded if he succeeds in his second or third attempt. When by the aid of some friendly cover, they approach within range, each of the party takes aim, and generally secures their game; since, from the constant use of the rifle, there are no better marksmen in the world. Those mortally wounded fall, while those but slightly injured follow the herd, though they do so sometimes upon three legs. Their animal organization is endowed with such a rapidly reproductive power, that their wounds heal marvellously quick, and they are soon enabled to exercise their accustomed powers of leaping and climbing.

Although killed, the hunter cannot always obtain his prize. If, for instance, it has been struck on the top of a cleft, or on the ledge of a rock, it sometimes falls into the abyss below, from whence he can never recover it, or only with extreme danger. Not unfrequently he will spend the half of the day to convince himself that his game, though killed, must be abandoned. If by any chance he can recover it, after the greatest exer-

tions and hair-breadth escapes, the event forms the ground of an exciting tale when the labour of the chase is past.

Some of the superstitious among them, if they can approach their prize before death, let its blood, and drink it, in order to preserve them from giddiness. After they have cleaned it, they tie its legs together, and fling it over their shoulders, when they retrace their steps home. In summer they generally sell the carcass to some neighbouring inn-keeper for about twenty francs,\* and if they cannot dispose of it in this way, they salt and smoke it; saving the fat from which they prepare an ointment, said to produce most extraordinary powers of healing. An ordinary chamois weighs from fifty to sixty pounds, and, if killed in season, will have eight or ten pounds of fat. From the skin they make gloves and inexpressibles, which are said to unite the softness of velvet with the elasticity and strength of the best prepared buckskins.

The following are the qualifications of a good hunter, taken down from one who had at the time discontinued the sport†:—"He should possess a head free from giddiness; have strong limbs, and

\* At some of the inns, as at the Jung Frau on the Wengern Alp and at Rosenlauri, they treat their customers every day with chamois. This is, in reality, nothing but goat dressed up with savoury sauce.

† L'Oberland Bernoise. Berne. 1851.



be able to use them dexterously; to bring his hands, elbows, shoulders, and even his teeth and chin, to bear for his rescue, if required: since not unfrequently he finds himself in situations from which he could not extricate himself except by the combination of the various members of his body. Moreover, in order to traverse the mountains, he must be well shod—*i.e.*, he must have very stiff shoes, pointed and nailed. The sole must not be at all flexible, for if so, he would have to sustain the weight of his body on a point, whereas, if it be like a board, he then rests on a broad surface—that is, on the whole length and breadth of the sole, and hence preserves himself from danger; for there are times when he is compelled to walk along the ledge of a rock not half the breadth of his shoe, and, if well shod, he will be able to maintain his position without risking his head or straining the muscles of his foot—a fate which often awaits a badly-appointed mountaineer.”

These hunters seldom follow their vocation after thirty, and it is remarkable that comparatively speaking there are but few mountaineers who pursue the sport at all, since they are destitute either of the enterprise or the necessary qualifications. In other vocations ten or even twenty years after that age it is generally found a man is most capable to follow his calling: not so the chamois hunter, who will tell you he has neither sufficient courage nor

steadiness; and the explanation appears to be this: that although the muscular system acquires strength by exercise, yet when too much is taken, the human frame, like any other machine, becomes deranged, through the abuse of its own powers. This is precisely what takes place with the chamois hunter. He is obliged to make the most strenuous exertions, and to stretch his muscles to their extreme tension; after he has done this for some time a kind of relaxation succeeds his excessive efforts: his limbs are, as it were, unstrung: this re-acts upon his head and nerves, and destroys his wonted self-confidence.

This may suggest that in all mountain excursions, and wherever the tourist goes upon the ice, he will do well to procure a young guide, such generally travelling with the greatest confidence and safety.

Chamois are to be found throughout the Alps, although they are much more plentiful in some parts than in others. In the Grisons, in the Tyrol, and in the southern chain of which Mont Rosa is the chief, they abound. In the Bernese Oberland they are very scarce, and fast becoming extinct.

Their haunts are generally the rocks which are near the snow; and the great object of the hunter is to place himself in some nook from which he may fire upon the herd when it is set in motion, or rather single out his victim; and in this he is but seldom disappointed. Sometimes the manner in which they are pursued is for one of the party to put

them in motion, in order that those who are secreted may fire upon them as they pass. Those not mortally wounded will in that case frequently turn back, and are received in the same manner by their pursuer. When they are thus placed between two fires they will take frightful leaps, and even sometimes rush upon their foes; and the hunter can then do nothing better than to lie down and let the troop pass over him; if not, the danger is extreme, for they have been known to thrust an unfortunate pursuer, who had lost his presence of mind, into the abyss below. Hunting at all times on narrow ridges is very dangerous, and is only undertaken by the most experienced and daring mountaineers.

In some parts of the country they hunt them with dogs, but this is not in the vicinity of the snow, where they are but of little use. Such is the fear of the chamois for the dog that they have been known to forsake certain mountains, where they have been in the habit of hunting them with that animal for more solitary and desolate regions.

All manner of stratagems are made use of to entrap this harmless wild animal, whose only safety consists in flight. An experienced hunter who was known to be more than usually successful in the capture of chamois, on being pressed as to the means of securing so many victims, admitted that he was accustomed to lay salt near certain situations, from whence he could command them without being

perceived; their propensity for this condiment soon led them to discover it, and to surround the spot where, unsuspectingly, they became his easy victims.

The chase of the chamois being very arduous, as well as extremely dangerous, it is no wonder that amateur chamois hunters should soon grow weary of it. One trial is generally found to be sufficient. I, however, once knew a professor of Heidelberg who was accustomed to repair every year to the Alps for the purpose of pursuing them.

Those who are accustomed to hunt them become venturesome and rash beyond measure. During the past winter a hunter of Lauterbrun was precipitated from a height of 500 feet from the sides of the Jung Frau. His companion, who told his fate, said they came suddenly upon a buck in a very dangerous part of the mountain, when he exclaimed, "Ah! buck, either you or I shall this day fall." He had not uttered these words many seconds before his foot slipped, and he was precipitated into the vortex below. Another also lost his life during the last season at the back of the Wetterhorn, near the Rosenlauri glacier.

The government requires that every one who follows the hunt of the chamois shall obtain a licence, for which he pays the sum of thirty francs, while it punishes all poachers. There are nevertheless hunters to be found who are willing, for the sum

of ten francs, to treat tourists with a sight of these animals on the mountains. In most cases, however, it is a sight and nothing more, for although it is easy for them to direct you to places where they may be seen, it is difficult to approach them near enough to fire with any possibility of the balls taking effect.

## CHAPTER XII.

## CANTON VAUD.

From Interlaken to Aigle—The Simmenthal—Its beauty and fertility—Industry of the Vaudians—Chateau D'Oex—Valley of the Mauss—Comballaz—Seppey and its excellent Road.

HAVING been fairly driven from Interlaken by the hot weather of July, we resolved to seek shelter in the retreats of the high Alps. It may be well in this place to state that every one may see in a moment, by looking into Keller, in whose excellent map the snow mountains are painted azure blue, that the snowy Alps for the most part consist of two great chains, running nearly east and west, on either side of the valley of the Rhone. The north-easternmost from Mont Sanetch to the Galenstock, which latter mountain is the most eastern of the range, being upwards of two degrees of longitude,

or more than 120 miles from the former, and contains such monster mountains as the Jung Frau, Wetterhorn, Finster Aarhorn, &c., at the elevation of 13,000 and 14,000 feet above the sea. These constitute what is called the Bernese chain. The southernmost, extending from Mont Blanc to the Gries, containing Mont Blanc, Mont Rosa, and Mont Cervin—the two former being 2000 feet higher than those of the Bernese Alps, are sometimes denominated, by way of distinction, High Alps, or the Piedmontese or Sardinian chain: because they separate that kingdom from the Canton Vallais in the Rhone valley: that valley at its widest point, which is from the Gemmi Pass to Mont Rosa, being not more than fifty miles in breadth.

Our intention being to visit these mountains we found there were two ways of accomplishing our object. First, by crossing the Bernese Alps either by the passes of the Grimsal or the Gemmi, and by this means descending into the valley of the Rhone, or by following the Simmenthal, or the valley of the Simmen, as far as Chateau D'Oex, where a mountain barrier terminates the valley; and then by the pass of Camballah and Seppey, descending upon the valley of the Ormonds and the upper part of the Lake of Geneva at Aigle.

Having, during a month's sojourn in the Bernese chain, had an opportunity of beholding the wonderful wild mountain scenery which abounds there, and

considering that our tour would become increasingly enjoyable if we were to change the scene, we came to the determination of pursuing the latter course, since it would afford us the gratification of visiting the soft and luxuriant scenery of the valleys of the Simmen and the Ormonds. Accordingly, having reduced our baggage to a change of linen, all which was compressed into a saddle haversack, we set out upon a month's peregrination on the mountains. Following the course of the Aar as it proceeds from the lake Brienz by the left bank, we skirted the lake Thun as far as Spiez, by the main road to the town of that name. At this point we turned off, and by an excellent new made road came direct upon Wimmiss, having crossed the Kander, a furious stream, which causes much trouble to those who live within its influence. At Wimmiss two very eccentric mountains which rise from the middle of the plain, stand sentinels as it were over the entrance of the valley of the Simmen. The gorge where these two roads meet is just wide enough to admit the river and a good carriage road and no more, and is so well defended by nature that if Wimmiss and the adjoining heights were crowned, the passage could be disputed against all the troops of the world.

We now fairly entered the valley of the Simmen or Simmenthal. This river serves to carry off the glacier waters of the westernmost part of the Bernese Alps, and the mountain streams in the Canton Vaud.



In fact, it receives all the tributary streams which descend from at least thirty miles of mountains; and after receiving the accession of the Kander, which drains an eastern and south-eastern valley, it empties itself into the lake Thun. Our course lay through a most fertile and luxuriant valley, forty miles in length, and the average of one in breadth; which is divided into two parts, the Ober and the Nieder Simmenthal. It is enclosed on both sides by mountains of considerable height, whose tops are for the most part covered with fir trees of every variety and hue. The pasture slopes from the river to the forest constitute the riches of the inhabitants of more than twenty villages or hamlets which are scattered throughout the valley. The scenery from various points of view, when the hill is ascended on either side, is of the softest and most luxuriant character—a study for the artist, a theme for the poet. Every here and there châteaux of every size and form are dotted along the sides of the hill, and form those simple habitations in which the herdsmen live, and the dairyman performs his manipulations of butter and cheese—that delicious cas-seene which passes by the general name of Gruyere is chiefly manufactured here and exported from hence to all parts of Europe. Some of them weigh from 140 to 160lbs., and are three feet in diameter.

The inhabitants are moreover famed for their superior breed of cattle, particularly cows, which in

this commune and the Gessonay surpass those of the Oberland. They are much sought after in all parts of Switzerland. Some idea of the luxuriance of the valley may be formed from the fact that in the statistical returns of the government it is stated that not less than 120,000 cows are depastured, and not less than 50,000 calves reared every year. Their sheep amount to 110,000, their goats to 63,000, their swine to 50,000, and their horses to 25,000.

Besides a considerable quantity of fruit, particularly cherries, which they convert into Kirschwasser, they grow, though not in great abundance,\* wheat, rye, barley, oats, hemp, and flax. The peasants are a hardy, industrious race, and manufacture their own cloth and linen; which being home-spun or hand-spun, is reckoned particularly strong, and called Oberlanderzeug, "cloth of the Oberland," though in reality it is the cloth of Vaud, and is exported to various parts of the country.

They live upon rye-bread and a second and inferior make of cheese, from which the butter has been extracted. Their drink is milk and whey. Happy in their mountains and valleys, and content with the abundance which nature has so richly bestowed upon them, they have few acquired tastes,

\* Switzerland is by no means a corn-growing country, and it is indebted to France and Germany for at least one-third of its consumption of wheat alone. *Statistique de la Suisse*, par S. Franchini, Membre du Conseil Fédéral. Berne. J. Dalp, 1853.

and know little of the luxuries of other countries; they, in truth, possess no desire for anything beyond that simple food which best promotes health, and invigorates their frame.

In passing through the Simmenthal and the valleys of the Ormonds, the tourist cannot fail being struck with the thrift, the comforts, and even the wealth of some of their proprietors. It forces itself upon you by the appearance of their cattle, their fields, and their crops; by the neatness and spaciousness of their dwellings, surrounded as they are by large gardens of flowers and vegetables. In conversing with the peasantry you find them a sprightly intelligent race, who, although they have never travelled beyond their mountain homes, are nevertheless informed in all that is necessary and useful in the pursuits and employments of life. The women are particularly thrifty—never idle, for if they are not employed in the labours of the field, they are either weaving, spinning, or knitting; indeed you frequently see them on the way to market with a heavy load nicely balanced on their heads, while their fingers are exercised in knitting their coarse but strong hose.

Their religion is Protestant, but of this and the present condition and constitution of their Church I purpose speaking more fully hereafter. It is, however, proper to add that the scale of crime is at the lowest possible ratio to the population, and with

the exception of two or three executions for political offences and rebellion, which took place a few years since at Lausanne, the extreme penalty of the law is seldom inflicted. At that time revolutions were rife, and constitutions were sown broadcast over all Europe, to be recalled the first favourable opportunity, the Swiss, therefore, thought they would try their hand at constitution-making also.

At Chateau D'Oex the valley terminates. It is shut up in a sort of *cul de sac* by the mountains which rise abruptly between it and the lake of Geneva. Travellers desirous of visiting Vevay and Geneva are hence compelled to make a detour and go round by Buhl, which is at least fifty miles out of the way. There is, however, no help for it until the splendid road which already reaches Seppey is carried over the mountain, and brought on to this place. But when the pass by Seppey is traversed by a high-road, and that from Interlaken, which nearly reaches Brienz, is carried over the Brunig, which they intend doing, there will be a direct carriage and carrier communication not only from one end of Switzerland to another and thence into Germany, but also by the St. Gothard into Italy. In fact, the two great passes over the Alps, the Simplon and the St. Gothard, will be united at their ends by a main road passing through the heart of Switzerland. A piece of cunning or *finesse* was attempted to be practised upon us at Chateau D'Oex by the only

proprietor of the horses which traverse the mountain pass. The want of competition in our own country frequently subjects us to inconvenience. It, however, does so much oftener in Switzerland. We had dismissed the voiturier who brought us down the Simmenthal, with the view of some of the party riding as far across the mountains as Seppey. For this purpose four horses were required, and no less a sum than sixty francs was demanded, *i. e.*, fifteen francs for each horse—demanded, no doubt, because their proprietor thought we had no alternative. The journey was but four or five hours at most, and the same back—a day's work; we therefore thought such imposition was to be resisted. Fortunately we were able to retain the services of our voiturier of the previous day, who conveyed those of our party to Vevay who could not walk, while the rest rose early and traversed the mountain. The horses, I was glad to find, were left in the stable without any employment.

At Chateau D'Oex, at Comballaz, and at Seppey, there are several very commodious pensions, where those who are wearied by travel, or those who are not equal to its excitement or fatigue, may sit quietly down and be at rest, while their hardier and more adventurous fellow-travellers are absent in the mountains. Similar establishments are also to be found lower down at the head of the lake at Bex, Aigle, Montreux, Clarens, and Villeneuve, and last, though

not least, at the magnificent hotel Byron, not far from the latter place. Their charge varies from three to six francs per diem for board and lodging. At Comballaz, where we stopped to breakfast, it was four francs, and the inmates told us they were most comfortably provided for in every respect—To this I would add that throughout Switzerland, both in cities and villages and in the country, there are pensions to be obtained, or if not, there is scarcely an inn where they will not board or lodge sojourners on the same terms. They are, notwithstanding, creeping on in their demands, the last season being the first in which they have asked what in Switzerland is regarded the high price of six francs, besides tacking on to it half a franc for *service*. These hints, however, though useful to some, may be little regarded by others; they have made up their minds to bleed freely in their scene of travel, and are indifferent to charges. For our part my fellow-traveller and myself partook of none of these feelings, and could not help telling our host at Chateau D'Oex that, although my countrymen were prepared to be bled, we would not consent to have so much extracted at one time. The proper charge for a day's work for a horse or mule is nine francs, provided it can return to the place from which it was hired.

The pass to Seppey resembled those we had already gone over—indeed, when you have seen three or four you will be struck with their identity. First,

there are the meadows of the valley to be traversed, the path of which is generally very muddy, from the quantity of water let in upon them for the purpose of irrigation. Then comes a wood, which, in our case, was particularly grateful, as it shaded us from the morning sun. Having ascended about an hour, we continued our upward course by the valley of the Mause, and by the side of a mountain stream. As we progressed it appeared to be but an insignificant body of water, but meeting as it did with a barrier of rocks, and hence being forced into a very narrow gorge, it boiled and foamed, and sent its spray in all directions, similar to those blow-holes on the sea-coast, in which the waves of the ocean are converted very speedily into rain and dew. The trees for several hundred yards were dropping, as if there had been heavy rain.

Having been shut in by the wide-spreading beeches which run through the valley, we obtained no prospect till we crossed the stream and ascended through another range of meadows, when we reached the summit of the pass, which is 3,400 feet high. The scene was imposing, though somewhat singular, as the lofty mountains or snowy Alps in this part of Switzerland appeared not to be connected with each other, but to rise abruptly, as if from the midst of the plain and verdant pastures.

On one side the Moleson and the Dent de Jaman reared their snowy crests ; and on the other, the Dent

de Midi, Diablerets, and the Vallaisian Alps. Although at a great elevation, the pasture-sweeps leading down to Comballaz were inhabited by dairymen, who were busily employed in saving their hay. Both men and women appeared to be a hardy race—better proportioned, more active and vigorous, than the inhabitants of the Oberland. The very circumstance of their living at such an elevation, and always breathing pure mountain air, must naturally produce such results. I do not remember having seen a single instance of goître or cretinism either in this or the surrounding valleys of the Ormonds, which confirms the theory of those who attribute to the depressing and unwholesome atmosphere of the Vallais the originating and perpetuating of those frightful diseases.

There was a goodly company of invalids at the comfortable pension of Comballaz, who appeared greatly to enjoy the invigorating air of its mountains; a few of them were English, but the greater part were Swiss. Some were pastors of that nation who sought repose during the summer from the towns bordering on the lake Geneva, and it would appear, from the crowded state of the pension, that this remote retreat was much in request. It was the intention of the party with whom we travelled for the last few days to have spent a quiet week among them; but, from the cause before stated, they were compelled to go on. We were further



informed that, unless previous and timely notice was given, at all times during the season, there would be a difficulty of accommodation.

The descent upon Seppey is very steep; the best road lies through a wood, where the path is at such a declivity that it requires to be paved to prevent its being washed away. It was bad enough to descend on foot, but, doubtless, far more difficult to ascend on horses, the usual mode of conveyance to the mountain.

The village of Seppey, with its scattered châteaux, is built on the declivity of two hills, at the point where a road from the upper valley of the Ormonds meets that which we were pursuing. The valley at this place altogether changes its character; for, instead of pasture-sweeps of many miles, dotted with pretty châteaux, and occupied with human industry, it now becomes a deep ravine, through which the Grand Eau, a mountain stream, was foaming and bounding. The steep, rocky declivities on either side were clothed with coppice and wood, behind which the Dent de Midi and the Dent de la Chamossaire reared their heads; the former at an elevation of 10,000, and the latter 6,500 feet.

It is along the right side of this picturesque valley that a carriage-road has been constructed over its rocky slopes, which, but for the skill of the engineer, would have remained a mere path for goats to the present day. In many parts it literally

overhangs the most frightful precipices, which have only become a way by building buttresses on the foundation of some projecting rock. The descent to the bottom of the valley is effected by three tiers of masonry constructed one above another, by each of which the road traverses the sides of the mountain. It is called the *Contour Bleu*. The effect produced is, that you appear to be going backward and forward till you find yourself at the bottom. The view as you proceed is grand and picturesque, enlivened by a winding stream of the brightest water. In our descent we unexpectedly came upon two English boys from Villeneuve, who were busily and interestingly employed in catching butterflies, a splendid collection of which they had ingeniously arranged in a cardboard box.

This excellent road, which was intended to connect the upper part of the lake Geneva with the Simmenthal, was commenced eighteen years since ; but, in consequence of engineering difficulties and the great expense which the portion already constructed entails, from the frequent fall of rocks and snow during the winter, it has not been carried beyond Seppey, which is 3,000 feet higher than Aigle. The engineer was a native of the Canton Vaud—a Mr. Pichard—a bold and enterprising man ; for he has carried the road through enormous rocks, over deep indented ravines, and along the side of almost perpendicular slopes. It does in-

deed seem a great pity, having already expended so much, that they do not complete it. There appears to be a considerable carriage of cheese and other articles from the Ormonds, which you see always on the transit.

Aigle is one of those old towns that have seen better days. The inn was cheerless, and destitute not only of comforts, but of the common fare which hungry travellers are always disposed to put up with. While we were deliberating what was best to be done under existing circumstances, the diligence from St. Maurice happened to come in, when we decided on going by it to Vevay, where, after our long but pleasant trip over the mountain, we rejoined our friends whom we had left at Chateau D'Ex in the morning.

## CHAPTER XIII.

Alpine Forests—The Fir—Its Growth—Cutting and Means of Transport—Self-acting Sawing Machines—Châlets and Wooden Houses—Covered and other Bridges.

THE villages of the Alps are most generally situated at the head, or on the side of some fertile valley. They are various in size according to the fertility or sterility of the pastures in the district. The lower valley in which the village stands, and sometimes the land higher up, being the property of different individuals, is neatly fenced. That situated higher still, as well as the fir forest above it, is the common property of the commune or parish, consequently all the inhabitants have an equal right to it. The prefect, however, regulates the manner in which the mountain slopes are to be depastured, as well as the quantity of timber to be cut annually for building and for fuel. This operation is generally performed during the summer ;

and is attended with much hazard and difficulty, growing as the pines do on the brink of the most awful precipices. Some splendid trees are at once sawn into short lengths for fuel where they are felled, from the impossibility of getting them down in any other way. Those designed for boards and plank, as well as those for firewood, remain frequently where they are cut till the frost and snow set in, when they are launched down the gullies formed by the mountain torrent, which has then become an ice stream. In other places the situation allows of their being bundled over the cliff at once, and it is not unusual to see a whole lake covered with a flotilla of trees or firewood on their way to the nearest market. The timber and the plank is made into a small raft, and navigated with the greatest ease. No account, however, is taken of the firewood; it sails on and steers itself till it finds its way into some bay of the lake or bend of the river, where it is taken up and piled for sale. From the difficulty, and indeed impossibility, of conveyance by land or any other carriage, wood of all kinds in some parts is dear even in this land of forests.

The huge timber rafts which you occasionally meet floating down the Rhine are constructed of trees cut in the black forest and in Switzerland. They are often of immense proportions, and frequently contain masses of plank to the value of £10,000, and even £15,000.

The navigation of these unwieldy rafts is difficult and often dangerous in certain rocky parts, and sometimes they are altogether stranded and separated, when the river is strewn with their contents for miles. Accidents such as these do not frequently occur, because in the vortices and where rocks abound additional navigators are employed. They are very expert, using their long sweeps with dexterity and force, sufficient to turn suddenly the unwieldy mass in any direction. To increase their comfort huts are constructed on them for cooking, sleeping, &c.; and to make them more domestic, as they are weeks together on the river, they take on board a few goats, pigs, sheep, fowls, &c. Some of these rafts are destined for ports in Holland, to be there shipped to our own country, though we generally prefer the Norway fir. As they proceed they deliver certain portions of their cargo to villages and towns upon the Rhine.

There are three different species of fir found in the Alps—the larch, the spruce, and the silver. Those growing on the loftiest mountains produce the best timber, which in some situations is as hard and as red as cedar. Both climate and soil appear admirably adapted to their growth. They often present themselves to you in places and soils where you wonder not only how they grow, but however they could have found their way there in the first instance. At one time you find them on the very

edge of a rocky projection, and at another on the bare ridge of the highest mountains. This mystery was in some measure afterwards solved. One day walking up a slope most luxuriant with firs I observed about half-a-dozen small ones growing upon a stone of four or five tons' weight some feet above the ground. Wondering by what possibility they could grow in such a situation, I was led more closely to examine them, and found they were only rooted in moss, and derived their nourishment like orchideous plants, from the moisture of the atmosphere and from rain. Passing on, I noticed others of larger growth in similar situations, and on inspecting them also, I discovered their roots had spread over the surface of the rock, and found their way into crevices where they had become firmly rooted. This process is no doubt accelerated by the rocks in question being of a crumbling, rotten description, yielding to the force of nature, which in the most gradual, and yet the most certain manner, introduces the root, splits the rock, and promotes the growth of the tree. Indeed, the decayed leaves of the fir alone, in the course of years, will be sufficient for its support, and when the trees are come to maturity and have been cut, the soil which previously was nothing but rock has been found to produce the very best crops.

This will account for the phenomenon which you everywhere find in Switzerland, viz., firs growing

on the ledge of the loftiest cliffs and barren mountain tops, some of them 3,000 or 4,000 feet above the level of the sea. No doubt the seed has been conveyed thither in the first instance by the tourmentes, then vegetated in the manner I have before described, and afterwards taken such firm root in the very rocks themselves that they were enabled to withstand the blasts of the fiercest tempests.

The only surprise is, how any one can be found hazardous enough to cut them, since you would imagine they could never be approached; nevertheless, there are hardy mountaineers ready every season, who are roped and let down the precipice to effect this object. After the firs reach their first landing-place they are sawn into lengths of four or five feet, and then launched into the lake or valley below, when their ends and sides are so battered by this rough but only practicable treatment that they are only fit for firewood.

The place in which I made this inspection of the process of rooting was in one of the fertile valleys of the Bernese Oberland, where, in the months of July and August, the temperature is much like that of the tropics, and from the great quantity of moisture, is extremely favourable to the growth of all kinds of plants and trees. In proof of which I may state that I measured a walnut tree in this valley which had attained the colossal dimensions of eighteen feet in circumference, and six feet diameter.



At the outskirts of every Swiss village, and near the foot of the mountain beside some stream, there is generally to be seen a self-acting sawing machine worked by water-power. By this ingenious contrivance their large trees are converted into plank. From the extent of their forests, and the immense number of trees that are annually felled, there is frequently as much timber stored as would rebuild the village, although the houses are entirely constructed of wood,\* and some of them very large. This, which may at first sight appear unnecessary thrift, is essential as a provision against the numerous fires that are constantly occurring. In the generality of places wood is plentiful, and the proprietors do not content themselves with less than several *châlets*, in one of which the winter store of fuel is kept. Sometimes these establishments are so numerous that when two or three are joined together they have the appearance of a good-sized hamlet. Everything is made of wood. There is not an article in domestic use, which is not absolutely required to be of iron, which is not made of the fine larch which grows on the mountains. Milk-pails, bowls, dishes, plates, in fact everything is of this material, and it follows, upon its universal applica-

\* This is carried to such an extent that in the mountains you find even the hinges and fastenings of their doors and windows all made of wood. Iron would not only be too expensive in itself, but its carriage would double its price.

tion, that almost every man among them is either a carpenter or cooper.

The term *châlet* is generally applied by tourists to every wood building in Switzerland; although, properly speaking, it belongs only to those wood huts which the mountain dairyman uses for the purpose of carrying on his manipulations of milk during the brief period of summer. In some of the cantons, of Berne and Vaud, for instance, their *châlets* are constructed of firs which have been only roughly squared with an adze, and even sometimes of firs quite in their natural state. They are bound together at their ends, not with spikes or nails, for that would be too costly, but by being notched and dove-tailed into one another. The roof of these buildings is constructed at rather an obtuse angle for greater security, and the shingles or wooden tiles which cover it are as large and as thick as our largest slates. They are kept in their places by wooden rods which run along the whole length of the roof, and are pressed down with stones which weigh many hundred pounds. When you approach these hovels in the mountains, for they deserve no better name, not being frequently either wind or water-tight, they present a most odd appearance, and for all the world look as if a shower of stones had been rained upon their roofs from the adjacent hills. Notwithstanding all their precautions very often not only their roofs but their rafters and sides

are broken up, and dispersed to the four winds by the tourmentes or hurricanes which prevail in these elevated regions.

We generally observe throughout nature the principle of compensation or adaptation—a sort of equitable adjustment between the burden and the animal that has to bear it. It is so here—the Swiss herdsman is of a robust frame and strong constitution, and it is well that it is so, otherwise from the sudden changes of climate to which he is exposed he would prematurely become the prey of disease. Probably there is no race so free from complaints which abridge the term of human life as the inhabitants of the Alps.

It is by no accident or fortuitous circumstance that their châteaux are not wind-tight; a space is purposely left between the trees forming the sides to admit the light and let out the smoke, since in these temporary residences they have neither windows nor chimneys. In some there is a partition, one-half serving for manufacturing cheese, and the other for sick or lame cattle requiring attention, though generally they have enough of them to house all their flock, in the event of sudden snow-storms, not uncommon even in summer. Should it be your lot to traverse these regions where the delicious atmosphere imparts an elasticity truly wonderful, and your exertion enables you without inconvenience to bear the sudden changes from extreme heat to

extreme cold, and *vice versâ*, I would advise you so to manage as not to be benighted in the mountains, or to put one of these establishments under tribute for a meal. Milk, cream, strawberries, and cheese, they can at all times give you, and sometimes hard sour rye bread, but that is the extent of their larder. All that I have ever entered were extremely dirty, and by no means equalled the description of poets either inside or out. Their interior, like the wigwam of an American Indian, is blackened with smoke, since it is always circulating in the dwelling. The unpaved floor oftentimes is bepuddled with the penetrating rain. Their only furniture, besides dairy utensils, consists of a few cooking materials, such as an iron pot and pan, a hatchet to cleave wood, a table and a couple of stools; while a truss of hay in the loft above does duty for a bed. Yet, notwithstanding this total want of comfort, I have found the mountain *châlet* a welcome refuge from the storm, and meeting, as I have always, with a hearty welcome, and the best the place afforded, it compensated for all the inconvenience and disagreeables of such a sorry habitation.

These temporary habitations in the mountains called *châlets* are not to be confounded with the comfortable wooden houses of the Alpine villages, which are as convenient and commodious as they are elegant in their construction. Those of Unterwalden, Schwytz, and the other lake cantons, are

some of them models of architectural beauty. Their projecting gables and overhanging eaves, their outside staircases, and the galleries so convenient for drying clothes in wet weather, and stowing away many necessary utensils, give them a very picturesque appearance. To make them warm in winter curiously cut small shingles encase the outside in the same manner that our houses are protected by upright slating, and when this is done they contrive to ornament them with elephants, dolphins, and other sea and land monsters, which look very fantastic. Under the eaves you generally find a great number of hives well stocked with bees. These are frequently constructed from a piece of large fir which has been hollowed out for the purpose. This kind of dwelling the bees are particularly fond of, and seldom or ever forsake it, probably because it is more natural, and resembles their wild homes in the woods. Some of their specially good honey is to be seen daily on the table of every inn throughout the country.

The houses which belong to the peasant class are generally spacious, much more so than in other lands. In some districts they are as large as our respectable dwellings. This is no doubt to be accounted for by the comparatively little value of timber, and the abundance in which it is found in this land of forests. They are not built on a large scale merely for carrying on the necessary pursuits of domestic life, since the lower rooms are generally occupied with looms,

in which they weave all manner of cloth and linen for the family, while in some there are quantities of silk manufactured for the German and Italian market.

Every traveller in Switzerland must have been struck with the peculiarity of their bridges. At first one does not see why they should be roofed over, but upon reflection it soon appears that it must be for the preservation of the fabric which, being costly and not painted, requires to be protected from the weather. Besides this they would be altogether impassable in winter from the accumulation of snow if not thus guarded. There are several curious specimens of these roofed bridges in the antiquated town of Lucerne, at the end of one of the most picturesque lakes in the world. They are thrown across the river Reuss which, although it enters the lake at Altorff, a turbid stream, issues from it at Lucerne, a beautiful sea-green, with all the rapidity of a mountain torrent. I cannot tell how it is that swift-flowing rivers should irresistibly attract and rivet attention, but so it is. Both at this place and Geneva I have stood by the hour to look upon them. Is it that it awakens reflections on the ever-flowing nature of time, and the character of human life? Or that you are led back to the source of these glacier streams, and to the period when they first issued from them? Or to that wonderful economy by which treasured ice and snow become available for the welfare and prosperity of man?

Against the panels which support the roof of one of these bridges, I think it is called the Mill Bridge, there is a rude imitation after Holbein's "Dance of Death." On the sides of another, which runs in a slanting direction across the Reuss, and is consequently very long, there are upwards of seventy delineations of the exploits of the patron saint of Lucerne, who, among other wonderful acts, it is said could make a boat of his cloak and traverse the lake. This must be a feat common to Romish saints, for I remember being told that St. Beatus was accustomed to cross the lake Thun in a similar manner. Opposite to these fables, which reflect on the good sense of the nineteenth century, but not on Romish incredulity, there are the same number of pictures, which describe the most striking events in Swiss history, such as the men of Grutli meeting by night, and by oath vowing vengeance on their enemies and fidelity to each other; the battle of Morgarten, &c. In a third bridge you have Scripture lessons from the Fall to the Birth of Christ, and which, though possessing no merit in an artistic point of view, have been immortalized by Wordsworth:

“ One after one are tablets that unfold  
The whole design of Scripture history,  
From the first tasting of the fatal tree  
Till the bright star appeared in Eastern skies,  
Announcing One was born mankind to free ;  
His acts—His wrongs—His final sacrifice.  
Lessons for every heart—a Bible for all eyes.

Long may these homely works devised of old,  
These simple efforts of Helvetian skill,  
Aid, with congenial influence, to uphold  
The State ; the country's destiny to mould.  
Turning for them who pass, the common dust  
Of servile opportunity to gold ;  
Filling the soul with sentiments august—  
The beautiful, the brave, the holy, and the just."

There are some of the Swiss bridges uncovered and particularly loose in their construction ; for instance, in the valley of Chamounix they consist merely of three or four trees which span the river, crossed by stout planks which are not nailed, and consequently cause a very unpleasant sensation when riding or even walking over them. The streams come boiling down like lava, bringing with them stones of great weight, and these dashing against others cause a rumbling noise like distant thunder, which adds to the savageness ; but the peasantry appear exceedingly indifferent about sounds. There is no rail or balustrade to any of them. I recollect the first time I visited Basle, nearly one-half of its bridge across the Rhine was without protection, and that while there a young man lost his life by drowning in stepping backwards to get out of the way of a carriage. I found, however, in passing this place a few weeks since, that the evil had been rectified. Not so the dangerous bridge of Rapperschwyl, which still remains unprotected. It traverses the lake of Zurich, and being nearly a mile in length, is one of the longest fixed bridges in Europe, and con-



structed in the same loose and insecure manner. Its base or way is formed of loose planks, which rest on piles driven into the lake without the least protection. If iron is too expensive the least they could do would be to secure its rickety planks with thong or rope, and protect it with a wood rail.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## CHAMOUNIX.

From Vevay to Chamounix—Vevay—Montreaux—Villeneuve—Lake Lemane; its Climate, Views, &c.—St. Maurice and Martigny—The furious Drance—The Col de Forclaz—Col de Balme.

THE lake of Geneva loses by comparison with that of Lucerne. Any one who has traversed the latter must consider the former tame and uninteresting by the contrast. Its great length, upwards of fifty miles, together with its breadth, gives it the appearance of a great sea rather than a lake in the midst of mountains. It is quite true that it possesses a degree of beauty, but it is peculiarly its own. At its lower extremity, towards Geneva, its shores are flat; at Lausanne, however, it becomes interesting; and at Vevay, and indeed all along its upper part, the lofty mountains which rise immediately and abruptly give the scenery an increasing degree of grandeur and even beauty. All along the north shore, from Lausanne to Chillon and

Villeneuve, the slopes are covered with vines; while the hills above are wooded to their tops, which affords a bright contrast with the barren mountains of Savoy on the opposite side.

The lake, so to speak, lies in one unbroken line, so that, when sailing on its waters, the horizon is as watery and as blue as the great Atlantic; you scarcely see Geneva and its vicinity till you are actually upon it. There are no beautiful reaches and deep-indented bays, from which the mountains begin to grow. No pasture-sweeps, dotted with châteaux, on which the cattle, with their tinkling bells, are feeding and frolicking. No vertical cliffs, capped with snow like those in the bay of Uri, where you steam along, as through some subterranean cavern, to regions of desolation and despair.

The north-east extremity, or what may be called the top of the lake, has the reputation of being mild and very pleasant in the winter. It is resorted to by invalids of all countries, and even consumptive patients are sent thither from the north of Germany. At all the towns, beginning with Lausanne, Lutry, Cully, Glerolles, Vevay, Clarens, Montreaux, Chillon, and Villeneuve, there are comfortable boarding-houses and pensions, which are occupied in the winter.

The very appearance of the country bespeaks its climate. The high mountains which rise immediately above the shores of the lake, from below

Vevay and beyond Villeneuve, effectually defend it from the piercing east winds, which in the Alps not only penetrate the human frame, but invade also the vegetable world, and shut up all nature in an iron-bound ice prison. The bay of the lake between Vevay and Villeneuve concentrates all the rays of the winter's sun, and reflects them, as through a glass, upon its shores. On this account, these places become insufferably hot in summer, even to melting. I remember feeling the heat so oppressive in the end of July at Vevay that, if I had not forthwith removed to Chamounix, I should have been grilled outright. I had once before, in my early life, experienced a similar oven-like heat. It was at the port of Muscat, in Arabia Deserta, and it arose from the same cause—the bare rocks towered or swept in a sort of curve, as around the sides of a bowl, to a considerable height, and, by consequence, reflected the sun upon the lower land; nay, more, for they retained their heat, as some rocks do, for hours after the sun had set. It was generally at this part of the day the natives spread their washed linen upon them, and in about half an hour it would become dry and stiff. Both at Muscat and around the cliffs above Vevay, the rock was of that porous, crumbling nature which retains both moisture and heat—the soil in which the vine thrives.

Nothing can be more uninteresting than the road

from Villeneuve to St. Maurice; it is a long alluvial flat, cultivated with all the industry of the Vaudians, well-wooded towards the mountains, and studded with hamlets and villages. It is wholly or partially reclaimed, through the course of ages, from the lake, by the deposit brought down by the Rhone and its turbulent tributary—the muddy Drance.

The great road to the Simplon passes through the middle of the plain till you approach St. Maurice, where the mountains on either side hem in the valley and the river to its smallest possible limit. There is the Dent de Midi on one side, and the Dent de Morcles on the other, on whose bases the bridge rests connecting the road out of the Canton Vaud into the Canton Vallais. The stone arch which spans the two shores is seventy feet broad, and into this narrow bed it may be said the river is thrust by the intrusion of these monster mountains.

After crossing the bridge we entered the antiquated town of St. Maurice, a specimen of those dingy, dirty stone-built villages and hamlets which occupy the lower part of the valley of the Rhone. This is by no means confined to the houses of the Vallaisians. Their persons and their clothes would be considerably benefited by the streams which, though brought to their dwellings, impart, through their indolence, none of their cleansing properties.

One meets with all descriptions of character in the course of travel. Some are so strangely constituted, or rather destitute of all constitution whatever, that the wonder is, what induced them to leave their homes. There was one of this description at Interlaken, who had no soul for the beautiful or the wonderful; and from the circumstance of his continual regret that he could obtain no London porter, one was brought to the conclusion that he must have been an inhabitant of the great metropolis. It so happened that a fellow-traveller was going up the valley of Lauterbrun for a drive, and offered him a vacant seat in the voiture. He accepted it with a degree of *nonchalance* characteristic of his state of mind. "He thought he might as well go, having nothing else to do." As they passed up the valley, by a sudden turn in the road, the Jung Frau appeared in the distance in all her vast proportions, clothed in her mantling robe of spotless white, which is seen to so much advantage in a summer's evening. A lady of the party exclaimed, "How beautiful, how delightful!" probably with the expectation of rousing her apathetic acquaintance. He took no notice, but still vacantly gazed in another direction. Being, however, determined he should see the object of her admiration, and desirous of extracting from him some opinion or sentiment if possible, she continued, "Don't you see that beautiful mountain of snow?" He

asked very deliberately, "Where?" and on being shown, added, "I did not think it was there. What is it?" "Why, don't you know it is the lovely Jung Frau?" "Oh! yes; but I thought the young crow was altogether in another place far off." A similar character, but of rather more mature age, for he must have been bordering on fifty, took his seat beside us in the coupée of the diligence. To a friendly inquiry how far we were going, I told him the route I had marked out for our month's ramble, at the same time giving him some account of the wonders I expected to behold. "Well, sir," he replied, "if you have any regard for yourself, I would advise you to give up so dangerous an expedition. For my own part, I am determined not to go off the main road, and to travel only where a carriage can convey me." I could not help expressing an opinion that, having come already so far, it was a pity he did not go on to Chamounix, and see Mont Blanc. "Sir," he replied, "I have already had more than enough of sight-seeing. I was roused but two nights ago from a comfortable bed at eleven o'clock to see the sun rise on one of the snow mountains near Villeneuve. When we came to a certain rent in the mountains, it was so dark that we were obliged to find our way by torchlight, and being mounted upon a horse which made many sudden jerks to ascend a sort of stone staircase, it was with difficulty I could keep

my seat. They, however, held me fast till we reached the point of attraction, when we were rewarded for all our toil and danger by seeing nothing: a misty cloud rested upon the hills, which seemed in no wise willing to depart. I will therefore leave it for you to say whether I have not had enough to eschew the mountain, and to find my way to the sunny plains of Italy."

These, no doubt, are a fair representation of a class of persons who come to Switzerland, thinking it a romantic sort of country, where, without the least exertion, they have only to open their eyes and be gratified. What sort of gratification they are to derive they have no defined idea, except that they are to travel on and see sights. But even this they will not consent to do if it is to be accompanied with toil, or at the sacrifice of their everyday comforts. Some, again, travel through fair weather and foul; they pass along at a railway pace—ascend high mountains, and go through difficult passes—they assent to all they hear—attempt to see all that the rain and the clouds will not permit them to see, merely that when they arrive home and are questioned by their friends, they may say they have visited this place and that. The only rational way of proceeding, if they wish to behold nature in her wildest, grandest, and most magnificent impressions, if wet weather interpose, and



interpose it will in this land of mountains and hills, is to wait patiently till it clears. To ascend lofty mountains and to go through mountain passes without seeing anything, is a worthless expenditure of money, strength, and time: and, after their vexation and disappointment, such travellers generally return home to give an evil report of the country.

The valley of the Rhone at Martigny is much wider than it is higher up. It is bounded by high mountains, among which the Dent de Morcles rises nearly 3,000 feet above the valley. Some of them are well-wooded, and contrast strikingly with the bare rocks to the left, forming in combination a pretty, but rather wild landscape.

It so happened when we arrived at Martigny that the rain of the previous day and night had considerably swollen the Drance—a troublesome rapid stream, which runs through the Bourg de Martigny, and passes at the back of the town to join the Rhone. Owing to the quantity of *lias mud* which was mingled with its waters, it presented the appearance of a river of ink or blacking, and so swollen and rapid was the stream that at one time it was expected it would have swept away the bridge, fortunately it only dashed over it, and did no injury; it very speedily subsided, even faster than it rose. This is the river which, in 1818, was

blocked up by an avalanche of ice and snow from the glaciers of Getroz. It formed a wall across the valley at Mount Pleureurs, where the obstruction occurred, which was 3,000 feet in width, the ice being 400 feet high and 600 feet thick. The result was that an immense lake was quickly formed behind this barrier, which threatened desolation and death to the whole of the lower valley. The inhabitants set to work immediately, and dug a channel sixty feet wide through the ice embankment. Although the lake was rising two feet per diem, and had attained the depth of sixty-two feet in thirty-two days, and they were momentarily in danger of being overwhelmed, nevertheless they continued their labour in gangs of fifty, working manfully by night and day. They commenced their arduous undertaking on the 10th of May, and by the 4th of June had reached within ten feet of the surface of the lake. On the evening of the 13th the water began to flow; at first it scarcely carried off the surplus which the lake received, and it rose two feet above the mouth of the tunnel, but from the action of the water against the bottom and sides of the aperture it became larger, and the water rushed through. In two days the lake sank fifteen feet, and in the two following it was lowered twenty feet more. It would in a few days have been gradually emptied by this means, but on the 5th it burst, and in half an hour the water wholly disappeared. In the last half

hour not less than 530,000,000 cubic feet of water passed through the tunnel. It must, therefore, have flowed at the rate of 300,000 feet per second, by five times a greater body of water than the Rhine discharges at Basle. In an hour and a-half the water reached Martigny, which is a distance of eight leagues, carrying along with it rocks, trees, cattle, houses, and dead bodies. In this melancholy catastrophe thirty-four lives were lost, and property destroyed amounting to a million of our money. It swept away bridges, though some of them were ninety feet above the ordinary level of the river. Since that period precautions have been taken to prevent a recurrence of a similar disaster.

Having crossed this memorable river, and passed through the Bourg de Martigny, we began to ascend the steep sides of the Col de Forclaz, which in many parts of the road is paved with large stones, to prevent the soil being washed away. During the first part of our journey we were shaded by the walnut trees which overhung the road, but as we advanced the sun was intensely hot; this, together with the acclivity of the path, compelled us frequently to halt, so that, on looking at our watch, we found we were two hours and a-half in reaching the châlet at the top of the hill, which divides the Canton Vallais from the Piedmontese territory. We here had, at an elevation of five thou-

sand feet, a splendid prospect of the valley of the Rhone, which river, winding its course along the low lands above Martigny, becomes very erratic and serpentine in its meanderings.

The descent upon Trient was very sudden, and by a very bad road—a sure indication that we had entered the King of Sardinia's dominions, who, we were informed, both here and on the Italian side of the Semplon, was too poor to mend his ways. The road divides at Trient, one branch passing by the Tête Noir, and the other by the Col de Balme, each possessing charms of its own; that by the Col de Balme presents a good perspective of Mont Blanc, with its endless variety of spires and needles; but, to obtain this, you must cross the stream of the Trient near the glacier, and wind by a zig-zag path up an exceedingly steep mountain. After more than two hours' toil, for it is even more difficult to ride than to walk, from the numerous roots in the fir forest through which you have to pass, you enter upon a mountain path, which affords but little pasture to the flocks in its dips or hollows. The ascent to the summit now becomes more gradual when there bursts upon you the glorious object of your search, with its endless variety of peaks and its multiplied silver-white glaciers. This view is certainly superior in magnificence and grandeur to that from the Col de la Seigne, which

is at the other end of the mountain, as the needles are more numerous at its eastern than at its western boundary.

Nothing can be more brilliant than the appearance of the glaciers of La Tour and Argentière as you descend the mountain, and the only things in nature which they at all resemble are those bright and molten streams which sometimes appear in elaborate workings of silver and lead mines.

At the bottom of the hill, near the village of La Tour, where the road falls in with that of the Tête Noir, your passports are examined by the officials of the King of Sardinia; yet, to his credit be it spoken, poor though he be, no demand was made for a franc, which the authorities of Canton Vallais required for their necessities. This is surely a farce, which the powers that be should dispense with. I certainly entertained some doubts whether it was not a mere trick of the sergeant, without order from his superiors; nevertheless he entered it in a sort of official book.

The rain began to fall with a witness; this accelerated our pace, so that a little more than an hour brought us to the Hotel Royal at Chamonix, which, for accommodation and civility of the landlord, and good fare, may compete with any establishment in Switzerland. The proprietor is particularly obliging, and is daily bustling and catering for the comfort of his guests, as

well as providing mules and guides for their convenience.

After allowing ourselves a day to recruit, the first object which attracted our attention was the Mer de Glace. The road up to Mont Envers, which is the height above the Mer, is steep and stony. Although not quite so long, it is certainly as steep as the ascent of the Wengern Alp. The mule path, having crossed the meadows, winds its way through a wood, and after we had ascended for an hour and a-half, an opening between the trees afforded us a fine view of the end of the glacier: its stream originally flowed from an ice cavern, level with the valley, but about three years since another aperture was forced higher up, and at present it is shot over the upper part of the glacier some 200 feet. It therefore constitutes a boiling milk-white waterfall, the first and only exception of a stream issuing from the top of a glacier which I met with in Switzerland.

We took three hours to reach the Pavilion, the small inn which commands a good view of the ice for many miles. How deep the ice may be, or how much of the valley it fills up at this particular spot, it is impossible to say, since the estimate of its depth in the centre varies from 300 to 500 feet. The stream at its surface is deeply imbedded in the mountains, and flows on slowly and silently, though not the less certainly, at the rate of 500 feet per

annum. Ever and anon it is ornamented by obelisks or spires, which peer their heads from behind the barrier of mountains. Among these are those astonishing blocks of granite—the Aiguille de Dru, the Aiguille de Moine, and the Aiguille Vert—which are 7,000 feet in height, and add grandeur and wildness to this desolate scene.

In order to cross this mer, you descend from the Pavilion by a zig-zag path for a quarter of an hour. In the first place, you encounter what may be called a side stream of the glacier, which, by the pressure from the centre, is thrown up and split into huge blocks somewhat difficult to traverse. After having overcome this impediment, we began to cross the main glacier, and found it by no means so smooth as it appeared at a distance, being warped into ridges and upraised hammocks, while the *crevasses* at intervals yawned deep and wide below. To a novice they appeared rather formidable, but after having crossed three or four, like all other things, they become easy by practice. The surface for miles was thickly covered with rocks and stones, some of considerable weight—the *débris* of the mountain.

As I stood upon this sea of desolation, my thoughts were irresistibly carried to the regions in which Sir J. Franklin and Captain Crozier—may we not at this distant period say—perished; and,

from the manner in which these huge blocks of ice were abruptly upturned, I could easily imagine the effect which infinitely greater masses, lashed by the waves and driven by the tempest, would produce on one another, or any object causing obstruction. The facility and the short space of time in which we crush a walnut would be, in all probability, sufficient to seal the fate of the strongest ship, and none be left to tell the melancholy tale.

Where we were, the ice was comparatively smooth, but higher up and lower down it was thrown up into pinnacles thirty or even fifty feet high. This peculiarity is better seen in the glacier of the Bossons, five miles lower down, where ice of the purest white alabaster assumes the most fantastic forms. Among other things which fancy may conceive, are obelisks, columns, and pyramids, at least 200 feet high. This is the more remarkable because a little further up it is quite smooth, and may be traversed with little difficulty. These upheaved portions of ice are sent into the air by the inequalities or rocks at the bottom of the glacier, and arise in this way:—The stream of ice, always in motion, at length reaches some rocky barrier which runs across the bottom of the valley, or bed of the glacier; and, as this obstruction does not allow it to proceed, the moving masses behind break, and heave up the ice just as I have described it.



The ice stream, which at the Pavilion is a mile and a-half across, may be traced two leagues higher up, where it is divided, and runs to the south-west and the north-east, by the glaciers of the Geant and the Talèfre. Taking it as a whole, it is certainly a most marvellous scene—a sea of eternal ice, in which its waves, during some terrific storm, have been seized by the giant hand of winter, and immutably fixed in those fantastic forms in which they are now seen.

The same reasons which prevented me ascending Mont Blanc—the fatigue and insufficient recompence of being merely able to say I had been there—prevented me also going on to the Jardin. There was the less reason for doing so, as the glaciers to be seen there may be met with in greater perfection elsewhere.

We always do injustice to the works of our Creator when we regard them only as objects formed to delight the eye and fascinate the senses. This is particularly applicable to the scene before us. Even these masses of ice have their part to perform, and a most useful one, in that wonderful economy of our Maker, which is sometimes thoughtlessly called Nature. The mountain is where it is, to attract the clouds and rain; its great height causes that rain to be converted into snow and ice, and those caverns and glacier beds were groved out in order to receive and treasure their icy deposits. The frosts

of winter locked those caverns when their contents were not required; but when the bright sun of summer arose, and penetrated their icy barrier, they gave out their waters, and brought health, food, and wealth to the habitations of man.

## CHAPTER XV.

## PIEDMONT.

Chamounix—English Church and Worship—The present state of Religion in Piedmont and Sardinia—Their Constitution and its consequences on the Roman Catholic Faith—Spread of Waldensian Principles—Opposition—A bishop's fulminating pastoral.

THE sixth day of August being Sunday we had the gratification to find that a large room at the Hotel Royal had been fitted up as an English chapel. We were also further pleased at hearing that efforts were being made to build a more commodious and suitable place of worship, to be occupied every year during the four summer months; by a clergyman to be sent hither by the Colonial Church and School Society of London. It is much to be deplored that some tourists forget they are the representatives of English Christians, and that on the ground of the consistency of their Church and her reformed faith, they are honoured by the wise and the good among foreigners. By not sanctifying and observing the

Sabbath-day to keep it holy, they not only violate Divine command, and falsify England's observance of it, but take the direct means to defeat their own object.

I recollect having this very forcibly illustrated in the case of a company of Cornish miners who had gone to improve their fortunes in the silver mines of South America, although from their early education they might have known better. A principle of avarice it appears induced some of them to continue their employment throughout the week; they, however, had not persisted in it many months before they came to the resolution to alter their previous determination, since they found they had overtasked their powers, and were not in reality able to accomplish so much as those whose physical energies were renewed by the rest of the Sabbath.

It is precisely the same in the labour of sight-seeing, for let no one imagine it is not accompanied with great toil. Those who see most, and to most purpose, find it absolutely necessary to recruit not only their bodily powers, but also their organs of enjoyment. Doubtless there is a wisdom in all the requirements of our Maker, and if He calls us to self-denial, and to the performance of any particular duty, it is not because He would abridge our real happiness, but because He would induce us to do that which is most beneficial for ourselves, even in the present time.

The Colonial Church and School Society occupy no less than six chaplaincies in Switzerland. In the first and second week of June they nominate clergymen to Basle, Chamounix, Thun, Interlaken, Zurich, Berne, &c.—those of Lucerne and Geneva being in private patronage. All of them are supported by the voluntary contributions of tourists, for which purpose books are opened at the various hotels, and to the honour of the class of travellers who visit Switzerland it may be generally said, they appreciate the means of grace thus so considerately provided for them, by giving its ministers their liberal support. The society appear to exercise a sound discretion in their appointments in not sending men who are at all tainted with the novelties and fantasies of some modern churchmen, but who preach the doctrines of the Reformation as expounded by Cranmer, Ridley, and Latimer.

This is a happy circumstance, for if ministers of the new school were to be sent to Switzerland, they would be recognised as Romanists, and probably not without reason. I remember conversing one day with one of the old oligarchs of Berne when a well-known Anglican became the subject of conversation. He was thoroughly acquainted with his writings, and consequently all I could say was not sufficient to convince him that he was not a real scarlet Roman Catholic.

However, there could be no mistake as to the

particular class of religionists among whom we now were, for a walk in the early morning brought us to a shrine where I obtained the following, I may say astounding, information, that “Monseigneur notre évêque Jean Pierre Biord accord cent jours d’indulgences à tous ceux qui diront un Pater et un Avé Maria devant cet oratoire. Donné à Annency, le 25 Janvier, 1767.” Who my Lord Jean Pierre Biord was, or by what authority he took upon him such impossible duties, it was left to the reader to determine.\* The little sentence given at Annency, however, gave the clue since the power was claimed in virtue of his being a successor of the apostles, which I was told invested him with Divine rights.

As I was making a memorandum of this in my note-book, a very intelligent man, who I found afterwards had been a mariner in the service of the King of Sardinia, passing, I asked him what it meant, he replied, “Whoever follows the bishop’s advice will have one hundred days less in purgatory.” “But tell me where it is? I find nothing said about such a place in this book”—pointing to a pocket Bible. “It may be so,” he replied, “but since it is *an affair of the Church*, all her good sons and daughters are bound to believe Monseigneur Jeane Pierre Biord.” Of course this put an end at once to all controversy.

\* Our Lord Bishop John Peter Biord grants a hundred days of indulgence to all persons who shall say the Lord’s Prayer and the Creed once before this Oratory.—Given at Annency, 25th January, 1767.

It is cheering, however, to know that light is breaking in upon a kingdom which in ages past has been more bigoted and intolerant, more priest-ridden and superstitious, than almost any other state in Italy. We cannot but sympathize with their intelligent king, who in the midst of overwhelming difficulties has wisely and prudently, through the representatives of the nation, governed well his little kingdom, and made headway against the influence, the wealth, and the powers of those bishops and ecclesiastics who are misnamed the Church.

When in the year 1848 the King of Naples and other rulers of the Italian States gave their subjects a constitution similar to that of Sardinia, they gave it in bad faith, and the very first opportunity they revoked it. Not so the King of Sardinia. It mattered not whether his political horizon was overcast and lowering, or whether the tumultuous waves of disaffection and sedition assailed the vessel of the State, still he maintained the even tenour of his way. And for a Roman Catholic population, bating the bigotry and persecution of the priesthood, the Piedmontese enjoy more rational liberty than any other part of Italy.

Can it be that some rays of that light which has ever lingered among the mountains of the Waldenses, have been reflected upon the valleys below? Has it done something in giving them their constitution, and some degree of religious and civil liberty?—I

know not; but this much is clear, that some beams of that light, as far as regards things spiritual, have been illuminating the land. Within the last three years in Turin, in Genoa, and in other towns of Savoy and Piedmont, large buildings for Protestant worship have been erected. Those persecuted men who were hunted by the Church of Rome like partridges on the mountains, and driven into the caves and dens of the rocks, have emerged from their fastnesses, and by the despised instrument of preaching, are dissipating that darkness which has so long enveloped the land. Thanks to their constitution, a great number of Bibles and Testaments have been dispersed among them by those excellent men the colporteurs, who state that their desire to obtain them is so intense that it was with difficulty they could meet the demand. They found the greater part of the people in the grossest ignorance, scarcely any among them could read! What a disgrace to a priesthood more numerous than anywhere else in the world, and to their shame be it spoken, their policy has riveted all this ignorance and superstition together with abject poverty upon them.

Brighter days are dawning on the kingdom of Sardinia. Civil and ecclesiastical emancipation are going hand in hand. The Church, and by that term are meant the ecclesiastics, if they have not had notice to quit, have been called upon to set their house in order; for a commission, having the sanction



of their representatives in parliament, is at present making an examination and a report of the state of their religious houses—those receptacles of evil which, under the plea of religion, have brought disgrace upon its very name—houses which still exist in very great numbers in Italy, but which every free state has found necessary or expedient to abolish.

It is too much, perhaps, to expect that all this is to be effected without opposition. We consequently find that the priesthood are in arms to resist, if possible, the efforts of their invaders. But it is by no means difficult to divine, without any pretensions to the gift of prophecy, on which side the victory will ultimately lie. The ecclesiastics are not backed up by an absolute despot; they are not supported by an arbitrary tyrannical king or by the arm of power, and therefore they must fall.

What is it that supports the papacy and the papal religion at this time in all the States of Italy? It is simply the underprops of Austrian and French bayonets. If they were removed we should not at any moment be surprised to learn that the system had fallen. The Sardinian monasteries fell in January, 1855.

We know all is to fall one day, as suddenly as the mill-stone which is dropped into the ocean. This also is the opinion of many thoughtful Italians who have, on account of their religious opinions, been compelled to take refuge in Geneva. One of them

told me the state of Italy at the present time was like a train of gunpowder which only needed the application of the match to destroy the whole fortress.

Some idea of the difficulties and prejudices against reformation may be imagined from a circumstance which was told me by an English clergyman long resident in that country:—A certain bishop near the place in which he lived, who was in advance of his fellows, thought it would be for the edification of his people to give them prayers in their own language, and accordingly drew up a little manual, which was widely circulated. Other bishops and persons interested in the abuses of the Church, hearing of this, bribed a number of dissolute men, who are always to be found in Italy, to commit an assault on the bishop. A furious mob broke into his dwelling and committed great outrage. The good old man, nothing fearing, came out and remonstrated with them, asking if he had ever done them any wrong, and for which of his labours for their benefit they treated him thus. The only reply which he could obtain was that he had made innovations in religion, and taught the people to pray in their own tongue, adding, moreover, that God had been so accustomed to hear prayers in the Latin language he would not recognize their prayers in a new one. But, said he, He who gave man his tongue must understand all that the tongue can utter. It may be so, was the ready answer, but

besides God there is the Virgin, and many saints to whom we address prayer. Some of them are foreigners and know nothing of Italian—they certainly would not understand; and what is more, they would be too old to learn our language. The answer, however specious and trumpety, was, notwithstanding, difficult for a Romanist to meet on purely Romish grounds, unless at the time of their canonization the Pope had power to confer upon them the gift of interpreting different kinds of tongues.

It may not be out of place to insert the following pastoral just issued by one of their bishops, which, while it testifies their claims, is at the same time a proof of Romish weakness and impotency:—"Bartholemew Charles Count Romille, by the grace of God and of the Holy See, archbishop to the much-beloved clergy of the diocese. Three several times in our addresses to you I have deemed it my duty to bring before you a subject equally painful and momentous, viz., the very grievous perils to which the Catholic faith is at this present moment exposed in this country. At the same time to urge upon you the necessity of adopting the strictest vigilance to preserve the sacred flock committed to your care from the infection of heresy.

"Already, brethren, the forces of the degenerate sons of our own country, joined to those of foreign sectaries, who, notwithstanding the numberless divi-

sions among themselves, are united together in one common object to contend against the Catholic truth, have prodigiously multiplied their attacks, open and concealed, against the orthodoxy of Italy, and what is more, from a combination of deplorable circumstances, have already achieved successes which more than ever require our vigilance and most determined resistance.

“ In proof of this we might adduce the attempts which have been recently made in the Roman and Tuscan States for the purposes of disseminating corrupted Bibles and anti-catholic pamphlets, as well as of making proselytes. We may also call to your recollection the free licence granted to the periodical press, and to the preaching of heretical doctrines in the otherwise Catholic districts of Switzerland and of Piedmont. Moreover, we refer you to the consecration of the chapel for the use of the Waldenses in Turin itself—that city of the most august sacrament—a chapel erected as a public signal for the assembling of Protestants of every description.

“ We might point out to you the conventicles of apostates which have been opened in Genoa, and in other places of Liguria, and which are attended by apostates who, though nearly all of the lowest classes, and bribed by gold, nevertheless exhibit indisputable proof of the hellish activity, on the part of a powerful and widely-spread conspiracy

to extirpate the Catholic faith from Italy. We might even announce to you, as a positive fact, that in Genoa itself a Catholic church, originally dedicated to the great mother of God, has fallen into the hands of sectarians, to be used as a public place for holding their so-called religious assemblies.

“ Oh, my brethren, what a lamentable change is this! to think that, in the very church sacred to the Queen of Heaven, to whom, as the Church says, we are indebted for our victory over all heresies, heretics of every character will now find admission, and that there, where the great mother of God has heretofore been worshipped by the united voices of the faithful, profane prayers will now be offered up, perhaps in testimony of hatred to her faith and service. Spare, O God, we beseech thee, this fresh infliction on thy children,—this new insult to thy august mother!

“ We have before not concealed from you that mutilated and corrupt bibles in the vernacular language, which is forbidden by law, have been widely circulated, and proselytes made by these heretics. Every method that the ingenuity of man can invent has been used to set forth heretical notions, principles of sheer infidelity, through the medium of pamphlets, adulterated histories, journals, and almanacs; and, we are bound to add, they appear often

under the title and appearance of books of devotion, purporting to breathe sentiments of the purest piety.

“You, venerable brethren, have with me to lament that we cannot carry out the laws for the punishment of scandals such as these, or to make speedy and full application of them. You deplore the incalculable injury caused to the people by the circulation of the vilest books, and by the toleration of a press managed so adroitly as to evade the full penalties of the law. You lament the sad effects which these perverse writings of every kind produce, more especially on the credulous and unsuspecting minds of the young; and your hearts are overwhelmed with grief to see how perseveringly they aim to overturn the principles of social life and every doctrine of religion. Watch, then, brethren; watch over the precious portion of your sacred flock.”

There can be no doubt about it. There has been opened at Genoa a church, in which Waldensians and other Protestants worship, which was formerly consecrated to the Virgin, or, as she is called in Roman Catholic phrase, the Queen of Heaven. Multiplied copies of the Sacred Scriptures have been readily purchased by the now free subjects of the King of Sardinia. The Word of God is permitted to be preached, and the profession of the reformed faith is protected by the law of the land. And

now, in Sardinia, in Piedmont, and in Savoy, under a free constitution and a representative government, the problem is to be solved whether Popery, with its enormous abuses and corruptions, with its superstition and unmitigated idolatry, can maintain its present position.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## CANTON GENEVA.

View of Mont Blanc from the Breven—Geneva—Its Social Statistics—Prison—Ecclesiastical Establishment—Its Doctrine and Discipline—Apprehended Dangers—Their Missions to the Waldenses.

EVERY one who goes to Chamounix should, if possible, obtain a lateral as well as a *vis-à-vis* view of Mont Blanc. The former may be had by the Pass of the Col de Balme on the north-east, and from the Col de Vaza on the south-west; the latter from the Breven, the Buet, or the Flegere. Circumstances compelled me to be content with that from the Breven, or rather the mountain below it, for although the morning was unusually bright, I was by no means sure but there would be fog and rain before I could reach the valley, and being without a guide, I thought it prudent not to go higher.

Having ascended before the sun rose, I had the opportunity of seeing it in its greatest perfection. The morning was beautifully clear, as it not unfre-



quently is before rain. At such times there is a species of illusion practised on the eye, by which distant objects appear nearer than what they actually are. This was the case with the monster mountain now before me, which was looming forth in all her vast proportions a mighty mass of virgin snow. Its aiguilles, attenuated to the sharpest point, stood erect, piercing the very heavens, while the glacier streams, deep imbedded in the sides of the mountain, with their fantastic icy pinnacles, were silently, but no less surely, travelling to the ocean. The wonder is, how these sharp, rocky points or needles have withstood the tooth of time. The Mer de Glace melts, the glacier is converted into water, and both find their way to the sea, but the aiguilles of Mont Blanc remain unscathed and entire since the foundation of the world.

I was somewhat disappointed with the near view of Mont Blanc. The mountain is so vast that the eye does not grasp it, so to speak, at once, and hence it does not afford the gratification that lesser objects do, better defined. It is like those landscapes into which too much has been crowded. To my mind, the smaller mountains, such as Jung Frau, Mont Rosa, and Mont Cervin, afford greater delight, because they stand out more prominently, and are better seen. I might, it is true, have over-rated it by anticipation, and then, as in everything else, it was followed by disappointment.

The horizon was perfectly clear, and its highest peak was speedily illuminated with the rays of the sun, but, to my surprise and disappointment, it presented none of those rosy hues which I had seen reflected on other mountains, probably from the peculiar state of the atmosphere. And although it gradually illuminated the whole of the top of the mountain, even the shining sun detracted from its beauty. Every one who has seen a snow mountain just before run-rise and sun-set, and has seen it after, must have been struck with the whiteness of the snow in the former instance compared with the latter. There is no doubt more glare after the sun has risen, but this rather disfigures the object, and destroys to some extent its purity, its matchless whiteness. When the state of the atmosphere transmits the roseate hues, it is altogether different, because the glare is then softened down, and at no time is the mountain seen in so great perfection.

Having determined to go by the Tête Noir Pass to Martigny, I shall be necessarily obliged to recur to scenes which greatly delighted us in the neighbourhood of Chamounix. I now proceed to note down some impressions of a week's visit to Geneva.

This city, which has ever been regarded as the citadel of the Reformation and the stronghold of Protestantism, is built on either side of the Rhone and the shores of Lake Lemman. Although that river

comes into the lake a milk-white glacier stream at Villeneuve, it flows out of it as blue and transparent as indigo water. The upper part of the town, that on the hill, contains the houses of the aristocracy and persons independent of trade, while the lower is inhabited by the shopkeepers and the industrial classes, among whom are watchmakers *ad infinitum*.

As my time was rather limited, I directed my attention, in the first instance, to its social and ecclesiastical statistics. The population of the canton amounts to 70,000, of which about 40,000 reside in the city, and the rest in the surrounding country. In territorial limits it is the smallest canton in the confederation. About 8,000 Roman Catholics reside within the city, and in the surrounding villages the greater part of the peasants are Savoyards and French, a constituent part of the canton, and professing the same faith. By adding these to the 8,000 within the city, the Roman Catholics amount to about 25,000, or nearly three-eighths of the population of the canton.

It is a busy, thriving place, and the consequence is, there is a continual immigration of mechanics and labourers from the adjacent parts of France and Savoy. These are all Roman Catholics, and, as the rights of citizenship are immediately acquired, there is a fear lest, in a few years, they will out-number and out-vote the Protestants. If ever it should

come to pass that they obtain a numerical majority, it would change the whole character of the government. Both the great council, which is the legislative, and the council of state, which is the executive body, are chosen by the people, with the universal suffrage of every male habitant who has attained the age of twenty-one. It therefore follows, if they preponderate, it would give them both a legislative and executive Roman Catholic government, and thus altogether change the features of this hitherto stronghold of Protestantism.

There is also an immigration of another description, continually adding to the population of Geneva. These are Italians of birth and education, with some professional men who have renounced the religion of their fathers for Protestantism. As a profession of their principles is not safe in their own country they have come to Geneva. All of them were agreed that there is a deep though silent disaffection to the existing state of things throughout all Italy, which is only kept down by Austrian and French bayonets, and that it required but very little to overturn the present *régime*. The truth is, although the Popedom has made great exertions and manifests great demonstrations in foreign lands of late, there never was a period when Romanists were so ill at ease at home. The whole army of cardinals, archbishops, bishops, priests, and friars, are compelled to act at the present

moment as an army of observation, and with all their vigilance, they are scarce able to retain their strongholds, much less their outposts. In proof of which we might mention Piedmont, where they are decidedly losing ground. Some of these Italian immigrants are literary and learned men. They have built a handsome little church, and their number, which already amounts to 300, is continually receiving accessions from the other side of the Alps. When it was opened, they consulted the leading religious characters in our country, and among others the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Earl of Shaftesbury, as to what form of church government it was expedient for them to adopt, when they recommended them not to follow the model of any Established Church, as that of England, Geneva, or the Lutheran, but to originate a Reformed Italian Church. This advice, without doubt, was dictated by sound wisdom. For although a nation, emerging from darkness into the light of truth, may in some measure be guided by the wisdom and experience of the past, it is not to be expected that any religious establishment already existing possesses all the requirements for their peculiar circumstances. For my own part, I must confess, however high my opinion may be of Episcopacy, and however admirably adapted it may be to monarchical institutions, I question very much its adaptation in all cases. The Reformed Italian Church at Geneva

had for its minister Dr. De Sanctis, lately a professor of dogmatic theology at Rome.

Having made acquaintance with the Protestant chaplain, I was enabled to visit their prison. They had adopted the separate system for many years, even before it was patronised, or patronised only as an experiment in England. All their arrangements are excellent, and everything is conducted with the greatest order and efficiency. Both here and at Berne, and, in fact, in all the cantons, their convicted felons are put to industrial occupations. You will see them, both men and women, in the morning coming from the gaol to their various employments. The women conducted by a matron, to those flat-bottomed boats which everywhere in Switzerland serve for washing-houses, and the men attended by a guard with a rifle on his arm, to field labour, road-making, or other employments.

I could not help noticing a marked difference in the treatment of their prisoners from our own. We have been accustomed to regard criminal punishment too much in the light of vindicating the majesty of the law, without having sufficient regard to the reformation of the offender. Without doubt the former object should be kept in view, and their circumstances of unpaid labour, their imprisonment, &c., should by no means approach to anything like comfort; but their whole state should have stamped upon it ignominy, hardship, and disgrace. At the

same time regard should be had to their reformation, if we would not turn adrift our convicts at the expiration of their term of imprisonment, as bad, if not worse, than when they were imprisoned. Their isolation and other circumstances in Switzerland compel them to adopt this course. They have not that easy method of getting rid of them that we had till lately, for they have no colonies, and therefore they at once set about their reformation while in prison. We also are now arrived at that crisis in our history when our colonists have risen in rebellion against the old system of flooding them with convicts, so that we are absolutely driven to reform as well as to punish, and, like all other things taken in hand by our countrymen, schools for reformation are everywhere springing up, conducted on the most efficient and admirable principles.

The proportion of Roman Catholics to Protestant convicts was about equal. A chaplain is appointed for each. To prevent mistakes, every Protestant cell has the letter *P.* marked over it, while the Roman Catholics have, in like manner, *R. C.* In going over the prison a circumstance occurred, which being rather characteristic of the Roman Catholic faith, I mention it. I was looking over their libraries, for each class has its own distinct; my eye having rested upon a Douay Bible, I took it from the book-case, with the view of

examining it. To my surprise, it was as clean as when it came from the bookseller's shop, and contrasted strangely with the well-thumbed volumes on the other side. On seeking an explanation from my kind friend the chaplain, he told me in all probability it was kept there to look well, and to conciliate the magistrates, but from its appearance, which I could plainly see myself, it was never used.

The Swiss appear rather squeamish about inflicting the extreme penalty of the law, even for the most heinous offences. There was a man in this prison chained to a large stone, which served him for a seat, table, and bed. It appeared that he had twice attempted, in the dead of the night, to burn down the house in which his parents and their family resided, with the view of possessing their property. For his first offence he was sentenced to this species of slow death for ten years; but having escaped, and repeated the crime, ten more years were added to his sentence. To be sure, time was afforded him for repentance, but the poor miserable man, from his emaciated state, appeared as if he would not outlive his incarceration.

Formerly the Established Church was governed by a body of pastors, who appointed other pastors to the various parishes. Ten or twelve years ago, the greater part of them were Socinians, who nominated men of their own opinions to the different churches. The consequence was, that at that time



not more than four out of nine parishes, into which Geneva is divided, had orthodox clergymen, and the proportion was somewhat similar throughout the canton. Now, however, since the revolution of 1847, when both the civil and ecclesiastical government was overturned, and a new constitution enacted, the rulers of the church are a consistory of pastors and laymen, chosen by the people. Their powers, at present, are not so extensive as their predecessors', for, instead of nominating pastors to the different churches, they are now appointed by the people. Every inhabitant of the parish who is of full age, and a Protestant, is permitted to exercise his vote in the election of his pastor. If we may judge of the arrangement by its results, although the church is certainly provided with a better class of ministers, still it by no means ensures either an efficient or orthodox body of men, six of the present parish clergymen out of nine being alone orthodox.

The worst part of it is, that the parish ministers of Geneva do not confine their labours to the parish to which they are elected, but are obliged to preach alternately for a month in each of the other churches. It does indeed seem strange that if in any particular parish they choose to elect a Socinian, the inhabitants of the next parish, who may eschew that form of doctrine, should nevertheless be compelled to have such a teacher probably for a fourth part of the year. I exclaimed against this universal suf-

frage in things ecclesiastical by incompetent persons, by unbelievers and misbelievers, to my friend, and pointed out its practical inconveniences, saddling heterodox ministers on a reluctant people; but such were his notions of liberty that, although he could bring no argument against my objection, yet he still thought everything would come right in time.

No one can say what the national church of Geneva is at the present moment. It has no creed, no standard of appeal, no test of orthodoxy similar to our Thirty-nine Articles. It puts no questions to its ministers as to the soundness or unsoundness of their faith; and, by consequence, it is a church destitute even of the profession of Christianity. This total want of all spiritual discipline, this culpable indifference to everything which, in all ages, has been considered necessary to salvation, has caused a very large secession from the Established Church, and, what is more to be regretted, there are among its ranks some of the most pious, learned, and influential ministers of Geneva.

Probably there are few places of a like population where a greater number of intelligent, learned, and literary men are to be found. The *élite* of their society, however, has the reputation of being rather exclusive. There are, moreover, several educational establishments of good reputation, to which both English and Germans send their sons and daughters.

The extremely liberal character of the new constitution of Geneva may be judged of from some of its articles, civil and ecclesiastical, which follow:— The sovereignty resides in the people. All political power emanates from them. Citizens of the age of twenty-one have the exercise of all political rights. The legislative power is exercised by a grand council, elected by the suffrages of every male habitant. The executive power is confided to a council of state, consisting of seven members. This council of state is chosen by the whole body of electors from the grand council. Liberty of worship is guaranteed to all. Each sect is protected alike by the state. The national church is composed of all who accept its constitution. Its administration is entrusted to a consistory of twenty-five lay and six ecclesiastical members. They are elected by all the Protestants of the canton possessed of ecclesiastical rights. Pastors are appointed by the Protestant citizens of the parish, and confirmed by the consistory. The consistory decides in all cases of doctrine and discipline. It may submit pastors to censure, suspension, and deprivation.

Under all these circumstances, the thinking and serious portion among the Genevese apprehend danger to their church and state from two different causes. The increase of the Romanists by immigration, and the exceedingly loose code or rather no code of ecclesiastical doctrine and discipline, by

which there exists among them an Established Church calling itself Christian, but which does not make even the profession of Christianity. If the National Church had remained orthodox and pure, it would no doubt have raised ramparts and bulwarks against the anticipated evil, and the vessel of the State and the ark of the Church would have weathered the storm. But while those who should be its guardians are supine, indifferent, latitudinarian, the Church of Rome is introducing the thin end of the wedge, and driving it home with a vengeance.

Fifty years ago there were comparatively few Roman Catholics in Geneva; at the present, as we have already stated, nearly three-eighths of the canton are of that profession, and should they once gain admission into the Grand Council, and by consequence into the Executive of the Republic, they may bid adieu to their long-cherished civil and religious freedom. In bygone days there was probably no place which exercised such a mighty influence for good among the nations of Europe as Geneva. It sheltered our reformers and religious refugees in the days of our Mary. It defended and nourished them till the storm of persecution passed away. It encouraged and assisted reformers of every land in their conflicts against Rome, and from Geneva issued that light which cast its brilliant rays over France, and which alone

was obscured by the revocation of the edict of Nantes. From thence also, our own reformer, John Knox, carried those sparks to his native land which have never been obscured, never dimmed by persecution, or peril, or sword. And amidst all the attacks to which Geneva has been exposed from traitors within, and from avowed enemies without, her strength lay in her civil and religious freedom, secured as it was by an open Bible and the preaching of the pure word of God. *Esto perpetua*; may every admirer of liberty and truth exclaim, and to that add his hearty Amen!

There has been a voluntary society at Geneva for three-and-twenty years, whose object is to assist and sympathize with their brother Protestants in the midst of Roman Catholic populations. Their operations extend all over France, from the Pyrenees to the Rhine, and from the Atlantic to the Jura. They have long had a particular mission to the fifteen parishes of the Waldenses, shut in as they are in their almost impenetrable mountains. These are the descendants of the ancient Piedmontese, who have never submitted themselves to the yoke of Rome. The Bible and their psalm-book are their only means of instruction. Their patriarchs are their pastors. The climate in which they live subjects them to privations of the most painful character. Sometimes they are to be found living at the bottom of a valley, where their little spot of culti-

vated ground is often in danger of being swept away by the torrent; and at others the falling avalanche brings down sand and stone, which covers it many feet deep. The agents of the society state, that in some of the poorer parishes they were living in the stable with the cattle for warmth. Wood was dear, not an uncommon thing even in some parts of the Alps, and they reserved the few pines they had to repair their châteaux. Their food was badly ripened rye, baked some months before, and even this they partook of very sparingly.

Their Bible and the psalter, the agent goes on to say, afford them spiritual nourishment, and, from having them always with them, it is astonishing the knowledge of spiritual things which they have acquired. It appears from their great poverty they have been taken under the protection of this society, whose agents visit them periodically, sometimes at the risk of their lives. Many of them have been cut off by their rude climate, and the directors of the mission are now educating two natives of their own country, who will be able to stand better their cold blasts and their pitiless snow storms. Such is their anxiety to attend divine service when the missionary goes among them, that they will often walk six and eight leagues, from eighteen to twenty-four miles, to meet him.

These missions originated with the members of the Free Church, and there was something chival-

rous and adventurous in the idea, that no sooner were they thrust out from the National Church, and excluded from its emoluments, than they not only established themselves at the head-quarters of their enemies, but sent forth their missionaries to their poorer brethren in foreign lands. Since the period referred to in this report, the Waldenses have come down from their mountains, and now occupy considerable places of worship in Turin, Genoa, Nice, and other cities of Piedmont.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## CANTON VALLAIS.

From Chamounix to Visp—Pass of the Tête Noire—Couteraié—  
Val Orsine—Eau Noire—Trient—Col de Forclaz—Martigny—  
Sion—The Gemmi—Visp.

THERE is little in the village of Chamounix to interest the many visitors who frequent it during the season. Its church, like most others in this land, is neglected and dirty. Its curiosities are all included in the shops of three or four naturalists. These are generally filled with enthusiastic pilgrims who bow at the shrine of Mont Blanc, and who, if they are not purchasing votos to hang around the mountain, are selecting some little mementos of their visit in the shape of agate and onyx stones, Alpine crystals, dried plants, and flowers, &c. &c.

It is sometimes difficult to pass through the narrow streets which lead to them in consequence of the number of guides who are always seeking



employment and talking over the proceedings or the politics of Chamounix. The arrival and departure of the diligences and other carriages, as well as the setting off of parties to the mountains, form quite a climax in the events of the day.

Now and then, that is, whenever there is an ascent of Mont Blanc, this dull tenour of their way is enlivened by early salvos of cannon reverberating among the mountains, by guides and porters bustling backward and forward, and manifesting an unusual degree of importance. At an early hour a long table is spread in front of the hotel from which the ascending party leaves, literally groaning under the weight of eatables. They are soon brought together, as most persons are at a feast, when, acting upon the principle of the Laplanders, of there being some degree of uncertainty when they shall feed again, they devour beef, mutton, and ham, sufficient for an ordinary mortal for many days. Their capacity in all probability may have been increased by the fast of the previous day; since when they start they appear by no means encumbered; on the contrary, they are full of life and spirits, joking each with his fellow. The great difficulty is to get them under way, the last plate and the last cup are so oft repeated. Call upon call, and monition upon monition having been exhausted, they rise to the undertaking with alacrity and spirit, bundle together their trappings, the

tomahawks, the hatchets, and the snow gaiters, which are at all times requisite to defend the legs from the ice, and off they go.

Having frequently observed the difference between the height of the Aarve, which flows a turbid glacier stream before the Hotel Royal, I fixed a stick among the rocks to measure its rise and fall, and found it to be four feet between seven in the morning and seven in the evening. It varied indeed from day to day, according to the intensity of the sun or the dulness of the weather, but the variation was trifling, not more than six inches. There are other causes, besides heat, which conspire to melt the glacier, such as peculiar localities or springs issuing out of the rocks and coming in contact with the ice; but, generally speaking, the evening is the highest and the morning the lowest of all rivers and streams which flow from glaciers.

As soon as the sun shines with any degree of fervour, you perceive pools gradually forming in the hollows of the glacier. These soon overflow; one rill meets another, till they form a stream, which is sent over the *crevasse* in the shape of a mimic cascade. These are the feeders of the various water-courses at the bottom of the glacier, which, uniting in one main stream, issue from its mouth. In the morning these pools are all frozen up, and all the waste which takes place is from beneath. It follows, therefore, that not only the Aarve but

also every other stream proceeding from the glacier, must be at its greatest height in the evening and at its lowest ebb in the morning.

The number of guides at Chamounix exceeds 300, whose names are registered on a muster-roll. One of the number undertakes the responsibility of appointing them by turn. If, however, you desire the services of one you have previously known, or to retain your guide of yesterday, there is no law to prevent it. These guides may be obtained with or without a mule. It so happened that the *chef des guides* had allotted us one possessing neither brilliancy of parts nor fertility of imagination; but having for his companion a superb mule of fourteen hands high, and as strong as he was tall, and as sure-footed as he was strong, we retained him for the benefit of a lady rider, who pronounced Dragon, for that was his name, the very best of his tribe.

There is a great difference in these animals; some of them have narrow wedge-like backs, which never allow the saddle to remain upon a level. The consequence is, that the rider, if a lady, can by no possibility sit at ease; she is always struggling to raise herself to the opposite side, and is subjected thereby to the fatigue of extraordinary exertion in addition to the ordinary fatigue of mule-riding.

There are not less than from 300 to 400 of these useful animals kept in the neighbourhood of Chamounix, and may be had at all times at the shortest

notice. They are bred for the most part on the Sardinian plains, south of Mont Blanc; some, however, are procured from the valley of the Rhone. A strange jealousy exists between the mule-owners of Chamounix and Martigny, which operates as an absurd tax on the tourist. Both communes have a law which prohibits every muleteer and mule from taking back carriage. Of course the drift of the prohibition lies upon the surface. They are afraid by any chance one shall be employed more than the other. So that, notwithstanding their boast of liberty and liberal principles, of freedom from custom and excise laws, each petty community is ever ready to break down on their own vaunted principles—to tax the stranger with double fare, that is, one day going and the other returning.

These mules generally belong to proprietors who own one or more, and are not the property of the driver. Their attention to their charge in difficult places is beyond all praise; they encourage him by divers warnings and sundry admonitions, at other times they threaten him with angry words, but they seldom strike a blow, and the result is that accidents very rarely occur.

There was nothing whatever to interest in the upper part of the sandy valley of Chamounix till we ascended the hill of Treléchant; we then obtained from the ridge which divides the Val Noire from that of Chamounix, a beautiful view of La Tour

and Argentiére glaciers, bounded as they are by the slender aiguilles of the same name. On the other side was sterility and barrenness.

The descent might have been two miles to the hamlet of Couteraie, and as we proceeded we were greeted on our left by the bluff points of the aiguilles rouges peering between openings in the mountains, as well as the snow-clad top of the extensive Buet. There were a number of cabins immediately beneath the perpendicular rocks above the village of Orsine, which, being built in rows with exceedingly low roofs and small windows, reminded me of the tiers in a line-of-battle ship. Although, when I first saw them, I shuddered and followed that feeling with expressions of pity and fear, yet I afterwards perceived, as I passed further on, that the avalanches which once destroyed the church, and where a breakwall or breakfall has been now erected to protect the new one, could not in the least injure them, since they were too close to the perpendicular wall through which it must have passed; and I could not help thinking, that if an avalanche could be seen to perfection it must be in its transit through this cleft or rent in the mountains.

The bridges in the dip or bottom of the pass were much out of repair, a proof that we were still in the dominions of the King of Sardinia. They were, moreover, of very bad construction: a few loose, rickety trees were thrown across the river,

and fastened together with wooden pegs by cross bars. Between these loose planks were inserted, some which were decayed and not trustworthy. How they could be safely passed in the night I cannot tell, since they were destitute of any kind of rail to protect the passenger. Even the passing of such furious torrents by day without a protecting rail is nervous work—Dragon by no means liked them. Instinct, to my mind, told him of their insecurity. Be this as it may, he had no sooner reached the middle of one when he made a halt, put his nose down to what looked like a rotten plank, and having by this scrutiny satisfied himself, he moved soberly on, taking the utmost care that not one of his trotters should touch the decayed wood.

This is but a solitary trait of the instinct of these remarkable animals. To watch them coming down clefts, stairs, chimneys, or runs in the rocks—for such you may call those places through which you have to pass—and see how suddenly they contract the muscles of their hinder legs, and bring all four feet to bear on the smallest possible space, to avoid imminent or apparent danger, you feel as if they could not by any possibility fall.

After we had left Val Orsine the rocky part of the pass began to contract, and the Eau Noire, now increased to a considerable stream, from the great fall of the valley, came boiling furiously down. We

were obliged to cross over the narrowest and most frightful parts of it, as is frequently the case in Switzerland, for the plain reason that a barrier of rocks prevented us proceeding on the side on which we were.

After crossing two more bridges we fairly entered upon the pass of the Tête Noire. We had no sooner done so than we perceived the character of the valley to be altogether changed. From scenes of savage grandeur and desolation, we entered upon those of beauty and luxuriance. Our way lay by a road which was carried up the lateral side of the mountain. It was of sufficient width and of good bottom; but, in consequence of skirting the hill in a continued line, parts of it had to be reclaimed by buttresses or bridges from the hollows or ravines in the mountain sides, and in one place it had to be carried through a tunnel of solid rock.

The mountain rose abruptly to our right, and cut off all vision in that direction. Then we came upon the tract of what must have been the remains of a tremendous avalanche. Nature, however, with her healing powers, was at work, and the young firs were springing up among the débris of rocks and sand.

The scene before us and on our left was one of unspeakable grandeur. The Eau Noire, foaming and bustling, was finding its way deep in the valley below, into which every now and then we were

privileged with a perpendicular peep of many hundred feet. On the other side the pasture lands rose terrace above terrace, in the midst of which a large number of pretty châlets were clustering around the church of Finshauts, one of the prettiest Alpine parishes I ever remember to have seen, perched up as it is on the edge of very high and almost vertical rocks. A singularly fertile knoll which rose nearly to the level of our road, and certainly was a thousand feet from the river, around which it flowed, had the appearance of a rocky island, on whose terraces potatoes and rye were cultivated with persevering industry.

No sooner had we passed the halting place at Tête Noire, and diverged into the road to the right, than the rain, which had been threatening all day, came down in torrents; but as there was no help for it, we trusted to our Mackintoshes, and pushed on to Trient. A few days before, in the same place, the sun was shining brilliantly, and some of our fair countrywomen had posted themselves close by the waters of the Trient for the purpose of sketching; and if they had searched Switzerland all over, I question if they could have found a position which afforded them a greater treat. Turn where they would there were mountains, rivers, rocks, and woods, in which a whole commune was embowered, while the huge Dent de Midi seemed to be the presiding monarch of the scene.



We made the best of our way to the little auberge at Trient, which we reached in less than half an hour ; not, however, without difficulty, the river having suddenly risen, and overflowed the road. The result was, we escaped by being drenched only below the knees. We soon called a blazing fire into requisition, and dried our clothes. Not so a young couple on their wedding tour, who arrived soon after. They had thoughtlessly travelled without umbrellas and Mackintoshes, decidedly the most useful articles in the Alps, and the consequence was, if they had been drawn through the river they could not have presented a more woeful appearance; and not having a change of apparel they were compelled to go to bed, the penalty all Alpine travellers must pay who come so ill prepared.

I never object to heavy rain, because it is generally sooner over. It was precisely the case at present; and having refreshed ourselves, and mounted the Col de Forclaz, we enjoyed our descent upon Martigny in the cool of the summer's evening. We had passed through this scene ten days previously; its beauty, however, so far from being diminished, appeared, as we proceeded, to increase. This feeling was shared by my companions, who, in common with myself, revisited scenes which we had long since regarded with delight. When we approached them the second time, we recognised the face as it were of an old friend, and saw, or at least thought

we saw, beauties which we had formerly overlooked. The truth is, that scenery in Switzerland grows upon you in the act of beholding it. If you are an admirer of the magnificent and picturesque, and if you have been induced to visit the scenes of grandeur and of wonder with which this land abounds, they will become indelibly fixed upon your memory. You may think you have forgotten them, but you cannot. When you take up a book of travels—when your eye meets a Swiss scene—or when you travel over the land again in table-talk, the spirit is kindled within, and there are evoked pictures of the past as vivid and as bright as if they were just passing before you.

We left the charming, the enchanting scenes of yesterday for the dreary valley of the Rhone. We had so damaged our shoes by the floods of the previous day that we were compelled to sit patiently the best part of an hour in the shop of a shoemaker while this necessary part of our equipment underwent repair. When this was completed, we strolled by the furious black Drance as far as the Berg de Martigny. The river, though considerably abated from what it was yesterday, still continued a turbulent torrent, a fifth part of which consisted of mud. However, it mattered not. Such was the nature of the country and the violence of the stream that it carried with it trees as if they had been straws, while boulders and stones, gravel and mud,

found no rest till safely deposited in the bed of the less rapid Rhone.

In our progress up the great Rhone valley we found but little to interest. We were traversing a broad flat, through which the river, not always confined to its original bottom, was winding its snake-like course to Geneva. Lofty ranges of mountains formed the boundary of either side. In these were occasional gaps, the openings of lateral valleys, which conducted to the snowy ranges of the Bernese Alps on the left, and the Piedmontese Alps on the right.

To these lateral valleys few tourists of Switzerland resort, but it is in them that the wonders of the country are especially to be seen. They cannot, however, be traversed without some degree of toil, and the sacrifice of daily comforts; still they are worth all the labour. If a traveller was to take his impressions of this land merely from the great towns which persons of all nations frequent, or even from villages which lie in the way, he would return, it is true, having seen the country, but not its peculiar charms—its inhabitants, but not in all their simplicity.

After leaving Martigny, French was no longer spoken, and although we had not, as on a former visit, to change the coin when we changed the canton, we were necessitated to change our language. I know not the reason, but the fact was

so obvious that it could not be mistaken, that in every village through which we now passed the inhabitants were extremely dirty and slovenly, and most of them wretchedly poor. The children especially were running about half-clothed; and as for stockings and shoes, it was a luxury they appeared not to know. What can be the cause of such misery? I inquired of an intelligent Swiss, who now joined us. His reply was, "It is attributed to their race. Their ancestors were not Northmen or Scandinavians, but Gauls." I thought, however, it was by no means satisfactory, because there cannot be a more thrifty race than some of the descendants of the ancient Gauls.

The popular notion is to attribute Vallaisian indolence and poverty to the profession of the Roman Catholic religion. This, however, is a summary way of getting rid of the question, rather than solving the difficulty. The profession of that religion does not necessarily entail idleness and want. In proof of which we might appeal to the condition of the inhabitants of Belgium, who, although Romanists to the core, are nevertheless particularly industrious and cleanly. And to come a little nearer to these Vallaisians, to the Cantons Schwytz and Underwalden; we there met with a cleanly, thrifty people, equal to any of the Protestant community, not only in Switzerland, but in any part of

the Continent; and, what is more remarkable, the statistics of crime in these two cantons are lower than in a similar amount of population in some of the Protestant cantons.

These causes are decidedly insufficient to account for the moral and physical condition of the peasantry in this valley, and I am consequently led to attribute it very much to their peculiar circumstances, cooped up as they are between two ranges of the Alps. Their climate is exceedingly moist, much rain falling throughout the year, and they are constantly in fear of being invaded by torrents, which in one night might bring down beds of stone, and destroy the labour of years. Then, again, there are no high banks to confine their river, and the consequence is, that it is constantly overflowing and breaking into new channels. I do not think, taking the acreage from Martigny to Brieg, one-half of the land was redeemed, or available to the industry of man. Wherever any degree of uncertainty exists as to the results of human effort, the mind naturally relapses into indolence. Indolence is the fruitful mother of all the filth and wretchedness which it engenders, not only in this, but in all other lands. It is remarkable that in the upper part of the great Rhone valley, where they are not exposed to such casualties, and also in the lateral valleys, you find a different state of things. The peasantry are in-

dustrious, and as well off as those in other cantons; so much so, that you would imagine you were travelling in a different country.

As we were desirous of finding our way as quickly as possible to Mont Rosa, we did not remain long at Sion, the chief town in the Canton Vallais. From a hasty survey of it, both the public and private buildings, as well as the outlying chateaus, indicated a degree of affluence and comfort which is sought for in vain in the other towns of the canton. The country surrounding it is rather picturesque—the acclivity running up to the Sanetsch, which raises its snowy peak behind the town. It seemed to be a place where a few days might be spent very pleasantly. There are no less than three mountain passes, of which the Sanetsch, at an elevation of 6,400 feet, is the highest, which diverge to the mountains on leaving the town.

The costume of the Vallaisian women is simple, and differs little from that of other Europeans, with the exception of the coiffure, which, to say the least, from its being worn both indoors and out, must be very inconvenient. It is nothing more or less than a man's hat, only made of a lighter material. It is not confined to the lower and industrial classes, but, in more tasteful shapes and in better material, is worn also by the more affluent.

The village of Leuk, which is situated at the end of the gorge of the Dala, and which we reached soon

after leaving Sion, is the general rendezvous and starting point for the Gemmi Pass.

Although we had been now wandering a fortnight among the mountains, and had travelled east and west, north and south, yet we were not more than forty miles in a direct line from Interlaken, the place from which we started—a specimen of the facility with which distance may be multiplied in Switzerland while moving around a given point. Before reaching it, however, it was necessary to traverse the perpendicular wall of the mountain by the Gemmi Pass. Most tourists are frightened at it, though in reality there is no ground for it. There might have been a time, as the guide-book tells you, when the eyes of patients, who were being carried to the baths of Leuk, were bandaged to remove their fears, but that time is gone by; still, whether right or wrong, unreflecting, timid people will be alarmed whatever may be said. I remember some years since meeting a lady in Paris who with ourselves had returned to that city from a tour in Switzerland. As we frequently met I occasionally reverted to the scene of our mutual travel. Whenever I did so she immediately became unusually excited, exclaiming, “I shall never forget that Gemmi—that horrid Gemmi.” Poor soul! the Gemmi had obliterated all the beautiful and picturesque scenes she had witnessed. A sort of panic fear appeared to have overcome her; I therefore considered it prudent not to allude to the subject again.

To approach it from Kanderstag it is much like other passes—rugged, steep, and stony. To ascend it, however, from the valley of the Rhone, you are obliged to walk up to what looks like a perpendicular cliff, in which you see no rent, and from whose summit there appears no outlet; but when you come to its base you enter upon a lateral zigzag path, which is carried up its face, and protected by a strong dwarf wall on the outside. The way is nowhere less than four, and in many places five feet wide. After you have proceeded upon it awhile, you find it neither so frightful nor dangerous as your imagination pictured. To be sure it is very steep, for it is a perpendicular wall of 1700 feet, up which you are to climb after the fashion of the spider. The path, however, is struck out to the distance of two miles, and it takes two good hours to ascend it. A great portion of it is certainly steeper than the roof of any house, but here you are assisted by stairs which have been cut out of the rock. Looking at it from above you would imagine ten minutes sufficient to bring you to the valley below, but after a trial you find it the longest pair of stairs you ever came down, and you must be indeed a good walker, or rather a good jumper, if you can hop it in an hour.

This pass, which was known to the Romans, and is that through which the greater part of the merchandise of mid Switzerland finds its way into Italy, is perfectly practicable for mules; indeed, you sel-



dom pass it without meeting many of these useful creatures ascending and descending with their burdens. Like their kindred in South America these mules of the Alps take great care at all times to keep to the very outside of the path, lest some article on their back should come in contact with the sides of the mountain. If this were the case, in all probability both mule and its burden would be precipitated into the depths below. From the habit thus acquired they always take the outside with their rider—frequently to the excitement of his nerves, and what is worse, very often at quite a dangerous point will stop to crib a tit tuft of grass. If the rider has the least regard for his bones he will request his muleteer to keep always close by the head of the animal—a practice which they generally pursue, but which, if through neglect and inadvertence they omit, may lead to the most serious and fatal consequences.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## CANTON VALLAIS.

Viege—River and Valley—Zermatt—The Riffleberg—Ascent to the Gornergratt—The Panorama and its effects—The way up to Stalden—St. Nicholas—Randa—&c. &c.

IF circumstances should occur that you have but a limited time to spend in this delightful country; I would recommend you without delay to make the best of your way to the upper valley of the Rhone, to a place called Visp or Viege, and from thence by the side of a river of the same name to Zermatt.

I give this advice, because if you wish to have a view unparalleled even in this land of wonders, and probably not surpassed anywhere, by following this route you will be on the high road to realize your desires. For, confessedly, when you are on the heights above Zermatt, you are in the presence of more snowy mountains and their accompanying glaciers than are to be seen, *vis-à-vis* and near, in any other part of Switzerland.

After passing the night either at the Mont Rosa or the Mont Cervin, two little inns of the village of Zermatt, and having retained your four-footed companion of the previous day, recruited by a night's rest, you must ascend the Riffleberg—premising first of all that you take with you your havresack or saddle portmanteau, because you will find much better accommodation at the neat little inn just erected on its summit than below. Being thus provided, should time permit and the weather be favourable, and you so disposed, you can spend, as we did, several days on this enjoyable spot. By so doing, we had the opportunity leisurely to explore the mountains in all their length and breadth, and to obtain the best possible views of the glorious objects around us, as well as to examine the infinite number and variety of plants and flowers with which they abound.

I must confess I could never reconcile it with my ideas of pleasurable travel after taking a toilsome journey of ten hours, such as that from Vierge on the previous day, not to allow time for repose in order to recruit the otherwise overtaken powers both of mind and body.

After leaving the village of Zermatt which, like most others in the valley, consists of châteaux built of dark red fir, which gives them a very sombre appearance—narrow streets and their everlasting treasures of liquid and semi-liquid manure. The course for a quarter of a mile lies along the left bank of the

Visp, at this point a comparatively small body of water. Having crossed the stream by a wooden bridge you come upon the little village of Wiegelmatten, and shortly after ascend through a wood which, sloping towards the west, afforded at times a splendid view of the main glacier, whose spiral points resembled the whitest alabaster. On leaving the wood the path lies through verdant slopes with their accompanying châteaux, and from their appearance tenanted even in winter. By an abrupt turn to the right you now ascend by a steep zigzag path the bare outside of the mountain—a sort of Gemmi-like way—till you reach the crest of the hill on which the inn is built.

Being comparatively shut in by the mountain we were ascending, but few of the Alps were visible. Mont Cervin, however, raising his perpendicular head of rock and camel-like back of snow, compensated for the absence of the others.

It took just an hour and a-half to arrive at this halting place, but the weather being fine it proved no halting place for us. In so uncertain a climate as the Alps, where it is beautifully fine one hour, and stormy with rain the next, you always do well to act upon the old adage—to make hay while the sun shines. Adopting this principle, we bent our course for another hour to the northern horn of the Riffle, which brought us to the rocky ridge or apparently the highest crest of the mountain, and

to a point where all vegetation ceases. The view from this is grand indeed, particularly the perspective of Mont Rosa; but you must now scramble for another hour on loose stones, continually giving way under your feet, before you attain the Roth Kumm, which is the highest horn of the mountain. Notwithstanding this little inconvenience walking is preferable to riding.\* When you have arrived there you will be most amply repaid for your fifteen hours' toil—the labour you have spread over the two past days.

I will attempt to give you some idea of the unprecedented scenes which now burst so unexpectedly on your vision, and which, when seen, after all you have heard, so infinitely exceed your expectations that you are taken by surprise, awed, and even confounded. It is one thing to behold magnificent scenery, but it is altogether another to describe it. When you take up the pen you feel your utter incapacity to convey to others any just conception of the picture. It has printed an indelible form on your own senses, and made a lasting impression on your memory, but to describe it in all its grandeur is entirely beyond your power. Probably by certain scratches of the pen you may convey some faint idea

\* An English lady, however, did ride up to this point in 1854. I would not recommend it to future travellers, not that there is danger in so doing, but because, to see the glorious objects around you, it is far better to walk than to ride. For my own part, I never mounted mule or horse in all my travels.

of the manner in which you were affected by it, but this, so far from being the reality, is only a very dim shadow. To realize it more fully you must take up the pencil, but even then, how tame, how insignificant is it to the scene itself!

Bear in mind you are now at an elevation of 8000 feet from the level of the sea, and that those mountains around you which, from their very magnitude, appear comparatively low, are some of them 6000 and 7000 feet above you. Then again, those glacier streams which glide between their peaks are many of them ten and twelve miles in length, and unite with that broad indented main stream or sea of ice which sweeps the mountain on which you stand, and is not less than a league in breadth.

You are at the head of one of the lateral valleys of the Rhone, the inside or concave of whose ridges consists of six-and-twenty distinct snowy mountains: their convex or outside being precisely of the same character—rock and iron-bound ice covered with perpetual snow—the barrier which divides the kingdom of Sardinia from the Canton Vallais in Switzerland.

The weather was all we could desire—an Italian sky without an intervening cloud. Around us some of the loftiest of the high Alps towering from their icy beds. Walls of perpendicular ice, many hundred feet in depth, forming the reservoirs of the glacier streams which stretched far into the valley, lay against

them as if to support their towering masses. The snowy vista of the horizon was every here and there broken by white peaks of the most exquisite form, and anon by huge mountains and crags of bare rock; while the bases of Mont Rosa, the Silberblast, the Briethorn, and Mont Cervin, could not be more than five miles distant. This, however, though presenting the grandest, was not the most exquisite view, it partook too much of bird's-eye vision, and in order to see it in a still more beautiful or individual light, it was necessary to descend and look into each part in perspective. We consequently wandered over the mountain, north, south, east, and west; descended to the main glacier—that wonderful torrent of ice which detours from south to west. There we had the opportunity of inspecting the snow-fields and projecting ice hummocks which lay in and around Mont Rosa, and the result was, we became so excited either with the extreme rarity of the atmosphere, or with the wild magnificent scenery, that we were bewildered, and seemed to possess nothing but the stimulating sense of all that was extravagant and wonderful.

The sublimity of the scene may be judged by the height of some of the mountains which compose the chain whose circuit is not altogether beyond twenty or five-and-twenty miles, as follows:—

1. Mont Rosa,	14,267		3. Petit Mont Cervin,	12,012
2. Les Jumeaux,	12,644		4. Dent Blanche,	13,425

5. Bruneckhorn,	11,556	10. Mont Cervin,	13,853
6. Blumlis Alp,	11,393	11. Weisshorn,	13,900
7. Bietschorn,	12,178	12. Doldenhorn,	11,227
8. Silberblast,	13,974	13. Gyaltenthorn,	10,874
9. Briethorn,	12,766	14. Briethorn,	11,649

Together with the following, whose heights are not computed, which complete the panorama:—

15. Sparenhorn	19. Alphubal	23. Hohthaligrat
16. Nadelgrat	20. Rumishhorn	24. Weissgrat
17. Gubelhorn	21. Rympfwdug	25. Stalhorn
18. Taishchhorn	22. Fluhhorn	26. Mittaghorn.

We were literally encircled by snow, glacier, and rocks which towered to the very heavens. Independent of those around us, the day was so bright and clear that we could see as if comparatively near the chain of the Bernese Oberland, from the Blumlis Alp to the Jung Frau. These filled up the gap at the bottom of the valley and made the panoramic circle complete. The effect was admirable, for, by omitting the various peaks, there was one continuous line of snowy horizon, and in tracing it by the ice streams which descended by the sides of the rocks to the main glacier, we saw at a glance that wonderful economy by which treasured ice and snow become in summer the fruitful means of transporting on such rivers as the Rhine and Rhoné the products—the necessaries and the luxuries of life—from one kingdom to another.

Then again, the number, height, variety, and form of the twenty-six mountains to which we were



*vis-à-vis*, and none of them twelve miles distant, afforded subjects for hours of contemplation. Every peak had its peculiar and erratic form. First of all, there was Mont Rosa, which from its very vastness, and having no spiral point, though possessing a number of bluff bold masses, appeared rather low, and yet, with the exception of the Jung Frau, whose configuration is very peculiar, there is no mountain so beautiful. Its vast extent and numerous glaciers invest it with a sublimity and grandeur which even time cannot obliterate.

The same may be said of Mont Cervin from a different cause. It towers up in one vertical mass of rock nearly 4000 feet from the glacier, tapering like some huge pyramid to its summit. Its appearance and character are altogether unlike the other Alps. The perpendicular sides of the Wetterhorn may be equally lofty, but since that mountain is so vast, and terminates abruptly in a bluff rather than a spiral peak, it bears no comparison with it in point of beauty. The Finster Aahorn may be more slender, but it has not the camel-like back of Mont Cervin, which being continually covered with riven snow, is so full of beauty and loveliness. Probably there is no mountain which imprints itself so deeply on the mind from its strange, grand peculiarities as Mont Cervin. It rises directly from a bed of ice, and stands much nearer than the rest of the group, and when viewed from the inn on the Riffle,

presents a distinctness, a magnificence, and isolation which can never be forgotten. Imagine for a moment if you can this pyramid, cone, obelisk, or vertical pillar, call it what you may, enveloped in mist, as I have frequently seen it at early morning, resting on a bed of ice, which is itself 11,000 feet above the level of the sea, and then rising in slender proportions to the enormous height of 3700 feet, when suddenly, by the effulgent rays of the sun, the darkness and mist are dissipated in a few seconds, and it stands out at once in all its gigantic proportions. I well remember the day and the effect the *toute ensemble* of this ravishing scene from the Gornegratt produced on my mind. There was my isolated position, enchained as I was by mountains and perpetual snows. Then there were the mountains themselves, so splendid and so tranquil, resting in all their grandeur and peering into brighter worlds above, and the result was, that after viewing them for some time, I became first enamoured, then abstracted and absorbed with all that was majestic and grand. We were favoured with fine weather, and though I had previously beheld many wonderful things in this land of enchantment, I had never expected to behold scenes such as these; not only do I consider it payment in full for all the toil encountered, but a sufficient compensation for travelling a much greater distance, had it been necessary.

Nor let any one be deterred by the difficulty and the labour of approaching it. I must confess, such was the description of danger represented by guide-books and books of travel, in traversing the valley of the Visp to the Gornergratt, that I was half indisposed to attempt it; but after having travelled through it, I am competent to say, that it is not near so difficult or dangerous as it has been represented. To be sure there are some difficulties and dangers for timid ladies and nervous gentlemen everywhere. But if any have been induced to traverse the passes of the Wengern Alp, the Sheidach, the Grimsal, or the Gemmi, I would tell them the passage of the Visp is not nearly so difficult or so punishing.

It is really too bad to deter tourists, as books of travel sometimes do, by their narrations of all that is frightful, and I can only account for it on that principle of human nature which is apt to overrate its own hardihood. Tourists should remember that, however courageous they may appear to themselves in thus estimating their powers, they alarm and prevent others from treading the same paths.

Who, for instance, would have thought of riding to Zermatt, when one says "the path in many places is carried along a deep slope, where a slip of a mule would hurry the unfortunate passenger to his certain destruction"? Or another, "the pathway is, for a mule path, very good, but in many

places it passes along the brink of frightful and dangerous precipices—dangerous because the fall of the horse in such places would ensure the destruction of the rider.” It is certainly true—and so it would be in many parts of our own country—but when have we heard of these sure-footed trusty mules and horses of the Alps taking false steps, and hurrying their riders to destruction? Think a moment, and I am sure your reflection must bring you to this conclusion, that the instinct of the animal is given for self-preservation, and is probably greater in the brute than in the human animal—the absence of that property we call mind being compensated by greater instinct.

There is, however, really nothing to fear, and I will put you in the way of accomplishing it. First of all I would observe, there are four points from which Visp may be approached: from the Bernese Oberland, by either of the passes of the Gemmi or Grimsal; from Martigny in the lower part of the valley of the Rhone; or from Italy by that wonderful pass the Simplon. Your plan will be to stop at Visp, which you may reach by diligence or voiture from Lausanne or Vevay in one day, as it lies in the direct route of the Simplon.

Visp, though superior to many of the towns in the Canton Vallais, is but a sorry place. The only decent inn, which, by-the-by, is also very reasonable, is the Soleil. It is kept by an obliging

landlord who will do all that is necessary in providing horses overnight for an early start in the morning.

In most instances where there is a river, there will be found a path conducting to the glacier from whence it flows. It is for this reason that most of the Alps and the mountain passes are approached by ravines and rivers. It is so here. The commencement of the valley is narrow and the river wide, throwing itself into two or three different channels. The road, however, is very good in the bottom, sufficiently wide and not at all steep, except in one or two instances, where bluff headlands or cliffs are to be surmounted, and these are but few. The bottom of the road nearly all the way consists of small particles of limestone and sand or grit which binds well, and soon becomes dry after rain. Much of the path, particularly that between Stalden and St. Nicholas, has been considerably improved by the thrifty people of the latter place during the past year. There is a large carrier trade on horses from St. Nicholas to the lower valley, and they have found it their interest to remove it as far as Neubruch, where the river is crossed by a substantial stone bridge. Soon you begin by a gradual ascent to reach Stalden. The road after leaving that village is carried nearly a mile above the river along a slope in the side of the mountain, which bounds and contracts the Visp. At this

point another branch valley called the Saas diverges from the Visp on the left. You ascend the road on the right, keeping the same side of the river.

If you give yourself the trouble of walking down to the cliffs where the valleys meet and the river contracts, you will have a scene similar to the Via Mala. However, there is not much occasion for this, for in crossing one of the many bridges which connect the road about two miles below Zermatt, you come upon a chasm still deeper than that renowned road, with a greater body of water and a more furious torrent. Indeed, though I crossed the bridge that spanned it on foot, it so boiled and foamed, and the gulf was so awfully deep, that it made me shudder. My companion, who was on horseback, being rather timid, was induced to alight, and even then could not be persuaded to look into its depth till it was passed—what made it more frightful was the insecure bridge. Throughout the valley they are of a peculiar and, to my mind, a very frail and clumsy construction. They are built with a number of firs laid upon the rocks on each side the river, their shorter ends projecting one above another until they approximate at the top, each successive tier being anchored by huge stones extending further on the land side than the bed of the stream; when the whole is completed it is clamped together and secured by upright beams, while thick planks are laid on the way or path.

By this means a complete arch is formed similar to that of a stone bridge, and it may be, though I confess it does not appear so to be, a very strong construction. In some cases, where the nature of the ground admits, the successive layers of firs are all on one side, and only a few planks are thrown across to connect them with the rock on the other.

The mountain which bounds the valleys of Saas and St. Nicholas, as well as the enormous buttress of rock which divides them, is merely a continuation of the mountains at the head of the valley, or rather they are their attenuated points. These are clothed with firs of various hue, and reach from the bed of the stream to the mountain top; while the pasture slopes, at high elevations, with their dingy red fir *châlets*, give life and animation to the scene. These fir-crested hills are now and then intersected by ravines or rents into small lateral valleys, and, from changing your position and frequently inter-lapping each other, present the appearance of islands in the distance.

As you approach St. Nicholas, which is half-way to Zermatt, and especially beyond it, the valley contracts. Below and about that village it is luxuriant and interesting, particularly on the right bank. The verdant slopes on which the cows were grazing, and the waving corn fields above them—for it was the time of harvest—indicated a degree of wealth and thrift not frequently seen in the Canton Vallais.

Some of the little hamlets and villages were on the top of the mountain, and built upon projecting crags, where it was fearful to behold them, much more to be compelled to dwell in them. In the valley were large stones, which appeared to have been rained down from the mountain, of a loose, friable nature, and many others seemed ready for a move. Notwithstanding this, they planted their fields and built their *châlets* in the midst of them; it may be, on the principle of those who, being frequently exposed to danger, and as frequently escaping it by hair-breadth interposition, become altogether reckless.

Just before arriving at St. Nicholas, the Weiss-horn, the Brunech, and the Schwartzhorn, with the lower part of their glaciers, burst forth in huge proportions.

There is proof that this valley is becoming better known and more frequented, from the circumstance that two small inns have sprung up at St. Nicholas within the past year. They afford tolerable accommodation for travellers. Having to rest at this place for two hours, which is usual, I wandered into the church and grave-yard, in which there was nothing remarkable, except a gaudy supplement to the gaudy church, in the shape of a small chapel of the Virgin, and a skull house. The skulls, however, were not ranged on shelves and labelled, as they were in the Cantón Zug, where an informant told



me you might honour this portion of the remains of your ancestors, but were thrown promiscuously together. I therefore was quite at a loss to divine the reason of such an odd and offensive practice.

The valley now contracts, and the river has considerable fall, so that great boulders of many hundred weight came rolling down like pebbles. To a nervous person this continuous walking by the side of a furious torrent, with its accompaniment of precipices and tumbling stones, is very disagreeable, and almost induced my fellow-traveller to break away from them. During the whole of the day's walk, and upon the Riffle more particularly, our path was bestrewn with the most beautiful flowers of every variety and hue, and it was the only time I felt any desire to increase my luggage with a little drying paper, to preserve some mementos of Zermatt. On the Riffle we met two English ladies, who were indefatigable in this species of amusement, and the collection they made was marvellous. I think they had not less than five distinct varieties of the brilliant blue gentianella. These, together with the bee larkspur and other flowers of bright colours on the margin of the snow, present a smiling and most agreeable appearance.

At the small hamlet of Harbruggen the valley begins to expand, but the soil is barren and stony. Several mountain-streams and avalanches, which had fallen the previous spring, had left their track

behind them, in some places 400 and 500 yards in breadth, making even sterility more sterile. There were, however, two splendid waterfalls, the Blabach and the Dumibach, the latter of many leaps, with an immense body of water, which graced even this landscape of barrenness.

In about two hours and a-half after leaving St. Nicholas you come upon Randa, situated in the midst of fertile valleys. It is memorable from the catastrophes which have befallen it from avalanches. In the year 1819 one of these huge masses of ice and stone fell from the height of 1500 feet from the Bies glacier, which is the other side of the valley; in fact, a part of that huge field of ice which connects the Weisshorn with the Brunehorn, and forms their united glacier. The remarkable part of this untoward circumstance was that, although it committed great havoc with the châteaux and cattle, more than 100 of the former having been dispersed to the winds, and the whole valley covered with snow, only two lives were lost. The rest providentially escaped, having gone to Zermatt to observe the Christmas festival.

A little above Dash, a village which is about an hour from Randa, the stream has broken its channel and overspread some hundreds of acres, which once, in all probability, were fertile and luxuriant meadows. On this plain there have been poured from the mountain on the side you are ascending

blocks of stone of immense weight, many thousand tons, some of which have been projected far into the bed of the river.

You now gradually ascend a rocky buttress, and, by a sudden turn of the road, are brought *vis-à-vis* to the object, which, if not the most beautiful, is certainly the most imposing and wonderful of the valley. This is Mont Cervin, which rears its head, taking the base of glacier and the perpendicular pinnacle itself into computation, to the height of 12,000 feet.

Although we had already crossed four bridges, we had yet three more to pass over before arriving at Zermatt. This circumstance will enable you to form some idea of the valley you have to traverse. The reason you are compelled to cross so frequently is that, pursuing the path, it may be on the right bank, you are stopped by some perpendicular rock of great height towering above your head; and though, by some convulsion of nature, a rent has been made in the mountain, through which the stream passes hundreds of feet below, still it has left no ledge on which a road or gallery may be constructed. The only alternative in such cases is to cross the bridge, and pursue your path on the opposite side, till you are again stopped by a similar obstacle. The chasm now spanned is that referred to a few pages back, and which, in sublimity and grandeur, exceeds even the Via Mala.

Zermatt is at length reached, situated at the top of the valley, and not more than a mile from the glacier from which the Visp issues. It stands in the midst of the most wild and imposing scenery, and, from the height of the surrounding mountains, appears as if sunk and depressed. This is not, however, the case, since it is nearly 3,000 feet higher than the valley of the Rhone.

## CHAPTER XIX.

From Brieg to Baveno—The Simplon—The Ascent—Views—Galleries—Hospice—The Descent—Isella—Domo D'Assolo—The Toccia—Baveno.

WHEN travelling on the continent, and particularly in Switzerland, you realize the benefit of early rising. Most foreigners rise with the lark, and such is the force of example, that they frequently convert us to their better habit. If your destination be to a town or city, by starting early you arrive in time to ensure good accommodation, whereas those who are later may be wandering about the streets at night, and after all obliged to put up with indifferent quarters. If this be the case in travelling generally, it is especially so when traversing the Alps, because there are many things, such as stress of weather, missing the way, and wrong estimate of distances, which are calculated to detain you, and

if not early, to overtake you with the shadows of night.

We left Zermatt at five, before we could procure a comfortable breakfast. We did not, however, much heed this, because we expected to reach St. Nicholas about ten, and make amends for it. But on our arrival, to our great disappointment, we found the bread was still at Visp, a distance of twelve miles, from whence they receive their supplies, and consequently we were obliged to put up with the swartz brot of the country. For, strange as it may appear, from the curé to the herdsman, all the inhabitants of St. Nicholas, so said our informant, eat only rye-bread: not probably from its being more wholesome, but because of the difficulty of obtaining grist from the miller at Visp. We, however, compensated for our disappointment at St. Nicholas on reaching the former place at four o'clock, when our host as usual, all civility and attention, gave us the best his larder would afford, which, from our long fast, was devoured with more than ordinary relish. He then drove us in his own char as far as Brieg.

In our way thither we passed the stony beds of several torrents which were now dry; but from the apparent damage they had done in winter must have been most furious streams. The Saltine, just as we approached Brieg, was one of them, and from the circumstance of its bed being many feet higher

than most of the town, in the event of an irruption, it may one day inundate all its lower parts.

Indeed all the way from Martigny on both sides of the Rhone, these torrent beds are continually forcing themselves on your notice. In some places a way has been dug for them and paved on the inside, in order to carry off the stones which are brought down from the mountains into the bed of the larger river. In others, stones are spread over what were once verdant meadows and fruitful orchards, overflowing the small and inefficient breakwaters which have been constructed to protect them against their inroads.

In a land of brooks and rivers like this, its inhabitants must live in constant alarm. For my own part, I scarcely know how I could sleep under such circumstances. For there are not only the old torrents which are known to descend at certain seasons and in certain states of the weather; but new ones are continually breaking forth, caused sometimes by an avalanche blocking up the usual course of the stream, and diverting it into other channels.

Brieg, like all the other towns in the canton, is very indifferent; its streets are narrow and dirty, its inhabitants are poor and affected with goitre. There is, however, in it a very grand church, and also a college, where, if the replies which the professor of mathematics gave me to certain questions serve as an index to their attainments, a very

moderate degree of education can only be obtained. I rather wondered at the inefficiency of this instructor, especially as he was a Jesuit, since I have always found in their other educational establishments men quite up to their work. The inns were sufficiently spacious but intolerably dirty, the bedrooms could not have been scrubbed for an age. This, together with everything I witnessed in this moist canton, corresponded with the observations I had frequently made in the mountain districts of my own country, namely—that there is always an inverse proportion between the presence of water and the cleanliness of the people.

Having frequently traversed the Alps in various directions by bridle paths, we were desirous of seeing one of those works of human industry and skill by which these high mountains are laid under further tribute to man. Up to the commencement of the present century there was but one way by which carriages could pass into Italy, and that was by the great St. Bernard Pass, inconveniently situated at one end of Switzerland. It remained for the genius of Napoleon, stimulated by his ambition, to construct this road, regarding it no doubt as an effectual means of acquiring dominion over that country. Some idea of the vastness of the undertaking may be conceived from the fact that it required the labour of 30,000 men for six years to construct it, at a cost of no less than £230,000, which sum, and even more, he



was willing to pay for the achievement of this object. The question which he so frequently asked the engineer during the progress of the work, when will the Simplon be ready for the cannon? making it manifest that he considered it essential to his ascendancy in Italy.

We had booked ourselves by the diligence, but as that heavy vehicle did not leave till late in the morning, we took the lead with the intention of being taken up should we be tired. It was quite refreshing as we walked along the windings of the way to be lifted above the swamps and the waters of the great Rhone valley, and to breathe again the pure mountain air. The scene, moreover, was extensive and full of interest. In the first place, we wound our way by the side of undulating fields and vineyards, in which the most prominent feature was the meandering chapels of a calvary. The Saltine, the mountain torrent on our right, was issuing from a picturesque gorge; before us the great Rhone valley with its numerous villages and hamlets, lay open for at least twenty miles, whilst over our heads the glacier of Schalbet was peeping out from among the rocks. The view of this ice stream, which we literally passed under three hours after, I obtained by turning out of the road to examine the deep and dismal Saltine. As we proceeded, there was nothing very remarkable either in the scenery or the road till we drew near the fifth

refuge, where we passed a gallery ninety feet in length. This, however, was only one of a series, for a little further on there were three similar constructions erected for the double purpose of carrying on the way, despite of rents and gaps, and to protect them from the falling avalanche and destructive torrents.

It is in these runs for ages and generations that the mountain torrent and the falling avalanche have grooved out their path; and it was in such places that the engineer encountered his greatest difficulty. For, in the first place, he had by building up buttresses on either side to make good his foundation for the bridge which was to span the chasm, and afterwards to guard it from intrusions from above. Consequently over most of these galleries are erected tunnels and inclines of the most solid masonry, which sometimes convey the glacier stream, and at others the avalanche, over them into the abyss on the opposite side. The effect in passing through them is similar to that of traversing the Thames Tunnel, with the exception of going under the Kaltwasser glacier instead of that river. This is by far the most exposed and dangerous part of the pass in winter, hence within a very short distance there are an increased number of refuges and houses of shelter. Some of these galleries are constructed differently, being in fact tunnels which are bored through the mountains, and whenever practicable the engineer

appears to have preferred this method of getting over his difficulty, since they are less subject to those casualties which sometimes destroyed the others.

Near these galleries we obtained a splendid view of the Bernese Alps, on the other side of the Rhone valley; among the most prominent were the Jung Frau, the Aletschhorner, and the Viescherhorner. The Aletsch glacier, which is six miles long, in consequence of the straightness of its course, and its great depression, was to be seen through all its range. Its end also spread out over the rocks, and appeared at least to be double its ordinary breadth.

Our ascent had been very gradual, not more than six inches in six feet, while the road itself was broad enough in many places to admit four carriages abreast. We had been ascending nearly seven hours when a plain cross of wood indicated that we had reached the elevation of 6,500 feet above the level of the sea, which is the summit of the pass. Soon after we alighted at the hospice of the Simplon, where one of the fathers was in attendance to conduct us over this friendly establishment. After having visited the refectory, the drawing-room, and the gaudy chapel below, and patted one of those noble animals which rescue snow-bound travellers, we bade them adieu, thanking them also for their civility and attention. I should say everything within this substantial stone building bore marks of

cleanliness and order; the numerous bed-rooms were very comfortable, and the chapel was one of the cleanest for Roman Catholic worship that we entered during our sojourn in Switzerland. In the sitting-room was a good oil-painting, and several engravings which delineated many great events in the life of Napoleon I., who, it would appear, in this as well as in the other parts of the Canton Vallais, still adorns the walls of almost every inn, and, if their expressions are to be relied on, still lives in the affections of the people: this may be attributed to the fact, that when he was in the zenith of his power he constituted them Frenchmen, and added their territory to the dominions of France.

In our descent we encountered a number of hay-makers—servants of the hospice who were collecting a very scanty crop of grass which grew in the meadows below, the only food for their cows in winter. The whole valley, bounded as it was by mountains of snow, was gloomy and dreary, consisting of a quantity of rock, and but little pasture. In fact it appeared from its desolateness like the crater of a burnt-out volcano. At the bottom of the meadows stands the homely inn of the Simplon, where, though perched in the regions of barrenness, we found a most substantial meal served up with all the paraphernalia of a *table d'hôte*, and of which we partook with a relish sharpened by the cold mountain air.

The galleries are by no means confined to the Swiss side, for, after trotting down a pretty sharp decline, and by a path that skirted the mountain, we dipped, as if by magic, into one of these subterranean vaults, to be transmitted to mountain cliffs and buttresses which seemed to bar our further progress; the rocks rose high and perpendicular over our heads, while the torrent boiled in its straitened bed below. After crossing the Doveria, which is the name of the stream, we were ushered into the longest of these necessary constructions, the gallery of Gondo, hewn out of hard granite. Its length is nearly 600 feet, and cost the labour of 100 men a year and a-half to bore it through. At the end, a body of water, after having been carried over the top, is shot into the ravine in the shape of an artificial waterfall.

We were at length transported from these wild regions by coming suddenly upon the pretty little village of Isella, where, after having our passports and luggage examined by the authorities of Sardinia, we were introduced into the warm and sunny clime of Italy. Trees, houses, earth, air, and sky had altogether changed their character; the fir and the beech gave place to the chesnut and the vine, the wooden châlet to the neat Italian villa, and the birds again favoured us with their songs. The road, however, was dreadful, in some places almost impassable, not having been repaired since the

winter inundations. It was dark before we entered the welcome little town of Domo d'Ossolo and its grateful inn, having traversed by the help of man's ingenuity and skill, fifty miles in a very heavy cumbrous vehicle, one of the most difficult and desolate passes of the Alps. Here everything and everybody was in confusion. The diligence was preparing for Milan; the passengers were seeking accommodation, and the waiters were running to and fro to satisfy the wants of hungry travellers, and such was the demand upon their services that, after sundry delays and some difficulty, we procured a cup of miserable coffee, with bad bread and equally bad butter.

There were some, however, who fared better. The courier of a French Count who, through neglect, lost one of his master's portmanteaus, contrived, in the space of a few minutes, to procure and devour a roasted chicken with the accompaniment of trout and soup. The count, poor man, who travelled with us, was in another room in great distress, where his daughter, an interesting young person, was suffering from *tic doloieux*. The paroxysms were so frequent and violent as to deprive her for the time of reason; but, to our surprise, as soon as she was relieved, she resumed all the vivacity of her countrywomen, and much enjoyed the wonderful objects which were continually bursting upon her view for the first time.

These couriers may be, and no doubt sometimes are, very useful personages. I have met with such. They have spared their employers all manner of trouble. They have spoken for them, provided for them, looked after their luggage, paid their bills, and then cared for themselves. But I have also met with others of a totally different character; so useless were they, and so intent upon their own gratification, that it would have been infinitely better, not only for the pocket, but also for the comfort of their masters, if they had catered for themselves.

As a general rule, when not travelling with a family, and possessing a competent knowledge of French and German, they are positively in the way. I recollect having met a small party on the Riffleberg, who had encumbered themselves with one of these useless appendages—an Italian. Of course, he was no manner of use on the mountains, and upon the ice; that was not to be expected; hence they confided themselves to the guidance of one of the youths of Zermatt, and during three days they took great delight in traversing the mountain. They were on their legs nearly from morning till night, and left none of its wonders unexplored: not so the poor courier; he considered it a barbarous species of enjoyment to scramble over rocks and to walk upon slippery ice; and, shivering and shaking all the day long, was bemoaning his hard fate, or

seeking comfort in his cigar. One morning, however, he was seized with the spirit of enterprise, and wandered as far as the edge of the glacier, where he found the withered branch of a tree. If it was not a production of art, it was doubtless a great curiosity; he bore it along in triumph upon his shoulders, and having brought it to the chalet with all the importance of one who had found a mare's nest, called us to see his treasure. As it produced in the party none of the emotions which had been gendered in his own breast, he felt somewhat disappointed; and although it was thrown away upon us, he was determined it should remain for the benefit of future travellers. With some labour he dug a deep hole in front of the chalet, and with stones and soil fixed his withered tree of disappointment firmly in the ground.

If I had been in any doubt, from the lateness of our arrival last night, as to which side of the Alps we were now on, an early walk in the morning put it beyond all question. The trellised vines and the luxuriant maize, the dark green mulberry, and the odorous walnut-tree, all manifested the atmosphere of a tropical climate. The desolate-looking huts of the Vallais gave place to the handsome chateau, and the commodious dwelling, with their vineyards and extensive grounds. Neat villages and hamlets, with white-washed towers and pretty cottages, lined the hill sides, while the broad streets of Domo and



the colonnaded houses, with their verandahs and awnings, convinced me we were in one of the valleys of Italy.

It being our intention to visit one if not more of the Italian lakes, we were stirring betimes with the expectation of meeting the steamer either at Baveno or Palanza. In order to accomplish this, and time being a consideration, we placed ourselves in one of the most rickety of rickety voitures, which we scarcely thought would hold together for the journey. No sooner were we fairly on the road, than we discovered, from the horses taking their own way, that our voiturier had fallen asleep. Again and again we awoke him, but all to no purpose; he had been up the preceding night on his vocation, and sleep on he would till we came upon what had once been a bridge across the Toccia; but which was swept away by the floods of 1849. There were a number of carriages and cattle coming out of the curiously-constructed passage-boat which was to ferry us across, so that our coachman was compelled to open his eyes or lose one of his wheels. This float was constructed by lashing two large boats together, and fixing upon the top of them a sort of raft or stage, which was passed from side to side by a rope which spanned the two shores.

The Toccia which we now crossed, although nothing but a glacier stream of the Gries at the top of the Val Formosa, yet, by accessions from the

Antron, Mont Rosa, and the Simplon at Mulera and Pieve, where the stone bridges had been destroyed, had become a rapid river, larger and much swifter than the Thames at Westminster.

The scenery on all sides was magnificent, for, while the plain and everything connected with it partook of the softness of Italy, the mountains, at least the distant ones, were invested with the wildness and grandeur of Switzerland. There were, however, a number of lesser hills on either side, particularly those on the right, which were wooded with the broad-leaved trees which luxuriate in this climate. It is in the midst of hummocks, within three miles of each other, and separated only by a mountain ridge, were found quarries of the purest white marble, and of rose-colour granite. As we passed them a great number of workmen were employed in squaring blocks and rounding pillars which they were preparing for embarkation on the lake.

After passing Gravellona, where the lake Orta empties itself into the Toccia, the country became exceedingly interesting; the lake Maggiore with its islands opened before us. From Fariolo, which is at the head of the Bay of Baveno, the road skirts the margin of the lake, and as you pass on presents a succession of graceful and striking scenes.

The small town of Baveno and the larger one of Palanza on the opposite side, are situated at the

entrance of this bay; they are both built pleasantly by the side of the lake. We should have been amply repaid had we remained long enough at the former place to have ascended Mont Morgozzolo, which has the reputation of possessing a grander panoramic view than that from the Rigi; but having stolen the time from our Swiss tour to visit this Italian lake, we passed over in a gondola to Palanza.

## CHAPTER XX.

## CANTON TESSINO AND THE GRISONS.

From Baveno to Choire—Bellinzona—The Bernadine Pass—Its grandeur and savage wildness—Moesola—Village of Bernadine—Source of the Rhine—Splügen—Via Mala.

As the steamboat did not touch at Baveno, we took one of the river boats of the country and crossed over to Palanza. In doing so, we had to pass the Borromean islands, which are naturally nothing more than barren rocks. Art, however, has come to their assistance, and converted them into extensive hothouses—every foot of soil having been brought, at great expense, from the mainland. In the presence of the bold lines which nature has drawn to depict some of her loveliest and grandest works—which she has decidedly done in the neighbourhood of this lake—art appears rather contemptible and intrusive.

In traversing the lake, which is within ten miles the length of that of Geneva, you are presented

with a combination of Swiss and Italian scenery. Its southern and south-eastern shores, towards the plains of Lombardy, are soft and not very interesting ; but the western and upper parts, which belong to Sardinia and the canton of Tessino, are bold and striking, like parts of the lake Lucerne—the only difference being, that in the latter the snow-capped mountains, as in the Bay of Uri, rise abruptly from the lake ; whereas, here they are to be seen in the distance. If the hills immediately bounding it are not on so grand and majestic a scale, the foliage of the trees which clothe them is more luxuriant and tropical. Nothing can be prettier than the towns which border the lake, and the upland villages and hamlets, with their white cottages and neat parish church. Merely looking at them from the deck of a steamboat, with their pretty gardens and well-cultivated grounds, you infer they are a thrifty, industrious, well-circumstanced population. Besides villages, there are the villas and the chateaux of the more affluent, and their bowered summer-houses constructed after the light, fantastic style of Italy, in whose grounds, terrace rises above terrace and mound above mound, and where the neatly trellised vine and the blossoming myrtle are found by the side of the olive, the citron, and the pomegranate.

According to the custom of all steamboats on the lakes, we landed and embarked passengers at dif-

ferent parts. Among these were Palanza, Intra, Cònobio, Locarno—the two former belonging to the kingdom of Sardinia, the latter to Tessino. At some of them it was market-day. The women, with a red kerchief loosely tied upon their heads after the French style, had laid out their baskets of fruits on the plaza, and were tempting us with figs, peaches, and pears; while the men, with divers kinds of wares adapted to the wants of the peasantry, were shopkeeping in the same manner. The bustle and the activity which everywhere prevailed, not only bore the traces of a teeming population, but that the subjects of the King of Sardinia were a prosperous, and what our American friends would call a go-ahead people.

It was near six before we reached Mogadino, the port at the upper part of the lake and the end of our voyage. Here a number of omnibuses and carriages for Bellinzoni awaited the arrival of the steamer; voituriers, cads, and porters were importuning, whether you were willing or not, to press you into their particular vehicle; and it required no little energy and not less decision, amidst the confusion of landing, to prevent being swept along in their train. All this is occasioned partly by tourists avoiding Mogadino, which is built in the vicinity of the marshes, and has the reputation of harbouring fever, and partly because passengers, bound to Switzerland by the passes of the St. Gothard and Bernadine, pass

on at once to Bellinzona, from which place all the diligences depart.

In olden times it must have been a formidable place, commanding as it does, with its three castles, the whole valley. Indeed, the strait on which it is built is so narrow, that the only means of passing up or down is through its gates. A portion of the fortified wall still remains, which formerly spanned the mountains on either side. These rise high and abruptly, and are well wooded to the top; while the soil in its vicinity is a rich alluvial deposit, and vegetation so luxuriant that it leaves but little for the efforts of human industry. Being one of the principal towns of the canton, it shares the seat of government alternately with Lugano and Locarno, and, consequently, possesses for Switzerland a handsome hall for the assembling the representatives of the Canton. This building, together with the other parts of the town, which consist of high colonnaded houses and very narrow streets, give it far more the appearance of being a part and portion of Italy than Switzerland.

The feudal times are now gone by, and baronial castles afford no longer a defence against the modern arts of war. Switzerland is a small state, and can offer a very ineffectual resistance against the more powerful nations which surround her; and, therefore, even this defile, so strongly fortified by nature, ceases to be a stronghold on her borders. Still,

however, it is a place of considerable importance in a commercial point of view, being the *entrepôt* for the traffic which passes from Switzerland and the southern parts of Germany into the Italian states, and the starting point of two of the great passes over the Alps—the St. Gothard and the Bernadine.

On the morning of our departure, before the office of the Post, there were at least a dozen cumbrous diligences drawn up in a sort of hollow square, within which all was confusion. Porters, coachmen, and conductors, with portmanteaus, bags, and cloaks, were bustling their way through a throng of passengers and idlers. The waiting-room was full to overflowing. Italians were commingling their soft and flowing words with the harsh and discordant language of Germany—a very Babel of confusion—and yet, notwithstanding, there were others who, by unmistakable sounds, for it was very early, proclaimed they were asleep. I endeavoured to follow their example, but the more I courted rest the further it seemed to recede from me. There was no help for it; and, therefore, till the cracking of the coachman's whip announced the departure of the diligence, I preferred pacing before the Council Hall.

At length we were fairly on the way to Splügen by the Bernadine Pass, one of the most picturesque in Switzerland. It is of recent construction, having only been completed by the Sardinian government, aided by the Swiss, since 1822. It presents none of



the engineering difficulties of the Simplon or the St. Gothard, because the valley by which it ascends is rather wide, and is carried over a great deal of ground; and although it is very high, being 7115 feet above the level of the sea, it is not particularly steep, except towards the summit.

The course to the passes of the St. Gothard and the Bernadine is the same as far as the valley of Levantina, when the road to the latter turns to the right, and you soon enter the canton of the Grisons. As we began to ascend, we passed several pretty villages; and the river Moesa, which appears to have taken possession of the centre of the valley, was pouring forth its furious stream, while bright waterfalls were everywhere bursting forth from between the rents in the mountain. The weather was exceedingly fine, and the Griston peasantry, who have the reputation of being a hardy, industrious race, were busily employed cutting an abundant crop of grass. It was here as in other parts of Switzerland, at least half who were employed in the fields were females.

In this valley of the Misocco or Cremao you have a striking instance of the terror, the devastation, and the loss to which the inhabitants of the Alps are continually exposed in a land of floods and storms. In the latter part of the summer of 1834 a tremendous thunder-storm alighted upon them, and brought down from the Forcota such

masses of rock and stone, sand and soil, that many of the habitable parts of the valley were buried to the depth of ninety feet. It is now twenty years since the sad catastrophe happened, but the traces of it are as visible in many places as if the storm had fallen but yesterday. Bridges, houses, châteaux, and human life were involved in one common ruin.

We were now leaving the regions of summer and sunshine for those of winter and desolation. The mulberry, the chesnut, and the vine, which abound in the lower part of the valley of Cremao, were replaced by the fir and the beech. Even these appear to be stunted, and to have some difficulty to penetrate the soil with their roots. I have seen, on the contrary, where the mountain has been of friable rock, that the pine has luxuriated and grown to some size at a much greater elevation. Here, however, there is no protection from perpendicular cliffs, and the wind in winter must sweep wildly and fearfully up the valley. This, in part, may account for their want of wood—a deficiency by no means experienced lower down.

Although booked in the diligence, I found my way to the summit much sooner than that cumbersome vehicle. I accomplished this by breasting and climbing over the rocks, along which the zig-zag was constructed. In the Simplon the road is frequently carried through a rent in the mountains, or along a ledge reclaimed from the cliffs, and has

therefore to be protected from floods, tempests, and the falling avalanche, by no less than seven long galleries, varying from 100 to 700 feet in length; but this pass being quite open, and through a gorge from which the mountains which bound it retire, and are even then rather depressed, they have need of only one of these constructions, and that only to protect it from the *tourmentes* or sudden gusts which sweep up and down the valley.

At Bernadine, which is at the head of the valley of Cremao, several handsomely-built pensions have sprung up within a few years, for the purpose of boarding invalids, who come hither from all parts of Switzerland to partake of a mineral spring, which in colour very much resembles the muddy waters of the Drance. What its peculiar properties may be, I cannot pretend to say; but from the number of patients I saw strolling in every direction, the Bernadine waters, to say the least, were in great repute.

From this village to the summit, which is 7000 feet above the sea, the pass becomes increasingly wild and desolate. The rocks appear dark and frowning, gigantic blocks were piled up in the most erratic manner, while others assumed the most fantastic forms. Even the very atmosphere itself seemed to be influenced by the darkness of the scene; and, as if to add to the pervading gloom, there was a stagnant lake, whose sombre waters

were unmoved by the least ripple. This was the little lake of Moesola.

There is a substantially-built stone house at the top of the pass, and the family who reside in it are employed in sheltering the cattle which are continually in transit to Lombardy, and in providing wooden sabots,\* required by the carriages traversing the road—a great number of which were ready-made and piled up in store.

Having furnished ourselves with one of these wooden shoes, we began to trot smartly down the hill. Some idea of the abrupt and precipitous nature of the ground may be imagined from the circumstance of the village of Hinter-rhein, not more than six miles distant, being only 4800 feet, or 2300 lower than the top of the pass. There is, however, no cause for fear, it is so skilfully carried along, and by this means the descent becomes so gradual that you are soon convinced, with a good driver accustomed to the road, he may safely trot and turn as fast as his horses will carry him.

These zig-zag roads are among some of the most remarkable things in Swiss engineering. They pass you to and fro in parallel lines so swiftly, from the top of one precipice to another, that you sometimes think you are going to be hurled over

\* The wooden sabot which is used in all the Alpine passes is a flat, broad piece of fir, hollow in the middle, and when the wheel is lifted upon it acts precisely in the same way as our iron drag. At the bottom of the hill it is thrown away as useless.

headlong, and yet all the while gradually, and scarcely without your perception, they are bringing you speedily and safely to the valley below.

In our descent the Rhine opened upon us not larger than one of our smallest rivers, a strange contrast with what we found it a month later, when steaming from Manheim to Cologne. Then we were sailing upon a sea, in some places half a mile wide, on whose bosom vessels richly freighted were conveying to its destination the traffic of central Europe. The point at which we first saw it, could not be more than five or six miles from the glaciers, from which it flows. These are those of the Rheinwald and the Moschelhorner, two of the highest mountains in the Grison range. At its source it is a very inconsiderable stream, but soon receiving numberless accessions from the lateral valleys, as it passes the Rheinwald Thal, it becomes one of the largest of European rivers.

The Hinter-Rhein valley is sterile and desolate beyond description, and the rock, which is of a dark reddish hue, imparts additional gloom to the scene. The rigour of the climate is such, that not even the pine, except in a very stunted form, grows there. Were it not for the snow-mountains, such is its rockiness and solitariness, you would imagine you were traversing the regions of Petrea. Indeed, the whole way from the top of the pass presented a

scene of savage grandeur rarely surpassed in the Alps—a region of darkness, of gloominess, and despair.

Before reaching Splügen we crossed the Rhine by a narrow covered bridge, and were soon ushered into Lang's commodious hotel, which, if equalled, is not excelled in all the country for real comfort and cleanliness. To the *maitre d'hôtel* he unites the office of postmaster, and is always on the *qui vive* to advise and direct those who honour him with their company, to the many excursions which are to be made from this interesting point. There is one I would by all means recommend you not to omit, particularly as you can return the same night; it is to the Medissimo, which is at some little distance below the summit of the Splügen. The road by which you descend from Isola, crosses the river from which the fall derives its name, on the verge of a précipice. It then leaps forthwith a distance of between 800 and 900 feet into the valley of the Lira, and forms one of the grandest and most magnificent cascades in all Lombardy, or Switzerland either. The whole fall is well seen from above, but the best view is about halfway down the zigzag road which conducts to the valley below. Altogether it is indescribably grand.

Every one who visits Splügen will be desirous to see the Rhine where it escapes from the glacier, and by following Lang's advice, and making use of

one of his horses, he will be enabled to accomplish it, and return in time for the table d'hôte.

The importance of Splugen arises from its being the point of departure for two of the great roads into Lombardy and Italy, by the passes of the Splugen and the Bernadine. Both of them present scenes of wildness and grandeur which are not surpassed. It is, moreover, the chief place in the desolate valley of the Rheinwald, and, being nearly 5,000 feet high, possesses at all times a fresh, if not a chilly, atmosphere. In the autumn vast droves of cattle assemble here from all parts of Switzerland, to be transmitted into Lombardy and Sardinia.

We had not long left Splugen when, from an eminence near the hamlet of Roffla, we were able to command a fine view of the valley of the Schams, into which we had now to descend by a zigzag. The heights on which we were, formed part of a chain of the Roffla, which stretched across the valley; and at its further end, towards the little village of Zillis, there was a similar mountain barrier, but much broader, being a continuation of the Piz Beverin and the Piz Pigneu. Originally, there can be no doubt, the whole valley formed a lake, whose outlet must have been over the top of the Via Mala. This is confirmed by a mere glance at the obstruction on the south, at the gorge of Roffla, where the river is at present carried sometimes

under and out of sight, and afterwards emerges a furious cataract; at others, it is in part pent up into a narrow rent which a man may leap over. This gorge is extremely picturesque; the hills are well wooded; and by the side of the Rhine there are a number of pretty châlets and self-acting sawing machines.

In our way to Zillis we passed the little village of Andeer, and were greeted with the sight of passages of scripture written on the outside of their houses, which is also common in the cantons of Vaud and Berne—indicating that we were once more in the land of Protestants. Although long after the Reformation, they nevertheless shook off the Papal yoke. Late in the sixteenth century they were vassals to the Bishop of Coire, who ruled them with a rod of iron. At length a Grison peasant, being exasperated at the arrogance of one of the bishop's officers who had turned his horses into one of his fields of green corn, gave vent to his anger by forthwith killing them. For this offence he was imprisoned. After his release, it so happened that the same officer came into his châlet one day at the time of dinner, and, being invited to partake of his humble meal, had the ill-manners to spit in the dish. Roused by the insult, he seized him by the throat and thrust his head into the smoking dish, and compelled him to devour the soup which he had thus fouled. This became a signal for a



general rising. The peasants flew to arms, the feudal castles were stormed and burnt, and ever since that period they have remained free, and professed the Protestant faith. Instead of fortified towers, the peaceful abodes of the Grison peasants now strew the valley. There are several separate jurisdictions throughout the canton; but, like the petty states of Germany, these small communities meet every year in diet at Coire. They are but an assembly of unlettered men, yet they possess that inestimable boon, sometimes denied to larger communities—the blessings of civil and religious liberty.

If water did not wear the hardest rock, or had there not been some marvellous convulsion in nature to rend asunder the mountains, there never could have been a Via Mala. As it is, the Trou Perdue is certainly a great curiosity, as well as a great feat of engineering skill. It does not properly commence till you have passed the bridge at Zillis, when you enter the narrow defile on the left bank, along which the road is carried for more than a mile. Very soon the rocky walls by which the rent is bounded, appear to close upon the torrent, and the cliffs above seem beetling as if they would topple into it.

The great object of attraction is, doubtless, the second bridge. The engineer, having carried his road by a reclaimed ledge along the face of the ra-

vine by blasting asunder the rocks, was at length effectually stopped by the projecting and vertical barrier of mountains. Above, below, around, there was no way—the perpendicular rocky walls concealed the sun above. The rent from the top of the cliff to the bed of the river is not less than 1,400 feet, while in some parts it is extremely narrow. What then was to be done? Was the ingenuity of man to be foiled by these formidable obstructions of nature? Not so, thought the able engineer. He boldly carried a stone bridge across the chasm, which was not more than thirty feet; and, by blasting the rocks, found his way by another ledge on the opposite (the right) side of the stream.

The view here is gloomy, and savage beyond all compare. The torrent struggles, and then rolls on deep in the depths below, while overhanging cliffs threaten to overwhelm you from above. It must be inconceivably grand in a storm, when the thunder re-echoes from cliff to cliff, and the lightning-flash lights up the depths below—when the black vapour ascends from the valley, and the swelling stream threatens to carry all before it. Such was the awful season when the postmaster of Thusis visited it in the storm of 1834 to speed the passage of the mail, and when the torrent had risen to a few feet of the bridge, although the chasm was 400 feet deep, and was boiling furiously and struggling

through. Even on a calm summer's day the gorge was fearful to look into, and I know not where heads could be found steady enough to hover over it as upon nothing, and to build a bridge.

The road proceeds along this second ledge till it begins to overhang the river, and where it is also overhung by loftier precipices. Here again, from obstructions presenting, similar to those the engineer had before experienced, he was compelled to pass again to the left bank. Even then he could only maintain his position and push forward his road, by blowing up many tons of rock, and excavating in one place a tunnel through it. The road now finds its way to a lower level, and as you pass along there are points where you command a great portion of the ravine. Here also, the dip of the river being more considerable, the torrent roars along its rocky bed, and sends forth a boiling stream both far and near. Recently it proceeded from under the glacier, and wound its way, a comparatively small stream, along the desolate valley of the Rheinwald. Since then it has received the accession of the Aversa from the valley of Ferrara, and having struggled for its very existence in the defiles of the Via Mala, flows on till, by the accumulation of many a flowing stream, it is swallowed up in the mighty deep, only to be resolved again into the particles by which the summit of the Alps and the bed of the glacier are again replenished.

## CHAPTER XXI.

## CANTONS GRISONS AND GLARUS.

From Via Mala to Zurich—Thusis, Coire—The Grisons—Sargans—Lake Wallenstadt—The Linth Canal—Lake Zurich, and the Zurichers.

THE first village at the north end of the Via Mala is Thusis. All the way down, the road is on the descent, and there are many ugly turns in it. It so happened that we had a young horse and a young though capital driver, who had the animal under perfect control. But, notwithstanding this, and our admonitions into the bargain, he was determined to run down, Jehu-like, at a swinging pace, as though it were impossible that any accident could happen under his skilful administration of the whip. At this place the Nolla, an impetuous mountain stream, joins the Rhine, and, from the force of its torrent, causes the latter river to burst its bank and overflow the valley. All the way along there were traces of the barriers which had been ineffectually raised to prevent these periodical devastations.

As we descended, the Fore-Rhein valley, so called by distinction, opened and gave us a magnificent view of the snowy peaks of Glarus, among which the Dodi and the Tschängel are the most conspicuous, the former being at an elevation of 11,000 feet. At Reichenau, six miles above Coire, the village which sheltered Louis Philippe during the dreadful hurricane of the French Revolution, the Hinter-Rhein, which we had been following from its source, and which had now become a considerable river, is joined by its twin brother, the Vorder-Rhein, which issues from the glaciers of Crispalt and Sexmaden at the head of the valley of that name. When thus united, it forms already the largest river in Switzerland, in comparison with the distance it has run.

This part of the Rhine valley is called the Domlesch, and is remarkable for the number of ruined castles which crown every knoll and the projecting crags on either side of the valley. Time there was when they belonged to those feudal chiefs who were continually making war upon each other and oppressing the people under their jurisdiction. They are all of them well situated for the defence of particular localities, and to collect the blackmail which they doubtless levied from the surrounding valleys. Their only use would appear now to be the additional charm which they communicate to the landscape. Coire, the capital of the Grisons, is a fine old town, with a population of near 6,000, and ap-

pears to be a bustling, thriving place. Its central situation, and the great roads which radiate from it to Italy, South and West Germany, and to various parts of Switzerland, cause it to be frequented not only by a great number of tourists, but also by men of business. There is scarcely a place throughout the whole valley so beautifully and picturesquely situated. It rests upon the entrance of a lateral valley called the Schalfik-thal, and, from being immediately backed by three mountains, occupies a strong military position.

Its government, even for Switzerland, is quite ultra-radical, since it brings down universal suffrage to all who have attained their eighteenth year. Berne, Geneva, and Zurich, on the contrary, though admitting the same principles, do not allow the franchise to be exercised till the inhabitant has arrived at our own age of manhood. This canton is divided into twenty-six districts or communes, which possess their own constitution and peculiar forms of government. Each of them is represented at the great council of the canton, which meets at Coire, by three peasants, elected by universal suffrage, who are again represented by two deputies of their own body at the great council of the Federation of the States. Every officer, civil and ecclesiastical, from the prefect and the judge to the constable and the organist, is elected every year. If it be found beneficial, in some respects, that they

should give an account of their stewardship annually in this manner to the commonwealth, still it may be a question whether even this method secures efficiency and promptness of administration; seeing it is very possible to be bribed in more ways than one.

Not only are their civil institutions very peculiar, having been transmitted from feudal times and from different feudal lords, but there is also throughout the canton a strange admixture and confusion of language and religion. So much is this the case, that there are scarcely two parishes or hamlets which speak the same language, or profess the same faith. Some are Protestants, and speak German; while others are Roman Catholics, and speak Romansch. Nevertheless, there exist everywhere the most perfect toleration and religious equality. Where the Roman Catholics and Protestants are equal, they use the same church at different hours in the day. The ministers and schoolmasters of each mode of faith are equally paid by the state; and parents are alike compelled, as in other cantons, to send their children to the parish school at nine years of age.

Although I was aware that Constantius, the Roman emperor, had in his day resided temporarily in this capital of the Grisons, I certainly was not prepared to find the ashes of a British king. And yet, if the chronicle is to be relied on, of which

there may be much doubt, it must have been even so. It goes on to say that St. Lucius, a British king, took the great pains to come hither in the second century, and became the means of converting this part of the population of the Rhoëtian Alps to Christianity. In return for this benefit, after having conferred upon him the privileges of canonization, they preserved his bones, and allowed them ever since to rest in the sacristy of their church, which they have piously called by his name, and dedicated to his memory.

Their language is what is called Romansch, and it is best described by saying that, with a basis of Latin, it contains a considerable dash of two or three other languages.

From the little acquaintance I made with them, they appear a simple-minded, interesting people, and such is the beauty of their country that a month of agreeable travel might be easily marked out, in the higher and lower valleys of the Engadine, the Vorder as well as the Hinter Rhein, as also in the Munster-thal.

Having partaken of the civilities and good fare of the landlord of the White Cross, whose inn I would recommend to all who visit this place, we started early, without our breakfast, for Wallenstadt, as we were anxious, if possible, to reach the end of the lake Zurich before night. The road as far as Sargans follows the course of the Rhine,



at which point that river is turned by a continuation of the mountains, which rise above the right shore of the lake Wallenstadt, and from thence takes a northerly direction to the lake Constance. Although we had parted with our old friend, it must not be imagined we had got rid of the water—a thing altogether out of the question in this land of springs and rivulets. Indeed, Sargans itself stands upon an eminence very close to the town, but there is very near a promontory or embankment, not more than 500 feet broad, which divides the torrent coming down from a western valley to feed the Rhine from that of the Weisstannen, which flows into the lake Wallenstadt; and, from the circumstance of the bed of this latter river being only twenty feet higher than the bed of the Rhine, it is imagined that the accumulation of soil and rock, brought down from the latter, may be the means of diverting it from its present channel into the lake Wallenstadt, the difference between the levels of the two rivers at the present time not being more than twenty or thirty feet.

The approach to the western end of the lake is similar to that of all others. You have to pass over a low, marshy flat, on which there is nothing but flags and rushes, formed probably by the soil which is continually brought down from the mountains. No sooner, however, are you brought to its shores, than a scene of rare beauty springs

up. In comparison with the lakes Lucerne, Zurich, and Geneva, it is certainly rather small, not being more than twelve miles in length; but, taking it as a whole, neither of them is to be compared with it in magnificence and grandeur, except probably the lake Lucerne, to some of whose reaches it bears a resemblance. The mountains on the north are considerably higher than those on the south, some of them being 3000 feet, and form a perpendicular breastwork of sterile and impenetrable rock, from which a number of waterfalls descend. Beyond them is the interesting little canton of Appenzell, while there are here and there rents which discover hamlets and luxuriant pastures high over head. On the south there are hummocks and knolls which rise gradually from the margin of the lake, and these are again intersected by valleys and ravines which terminate in gloomy shade. The whole is wooded with trees of various sorts, but chiefly the fir, with its many shades of green, adorns and beautifies the scene. This is soft and Italian, while on the opposite side there are steppes which are not surpassed in Tartary, or in the wilds of Siberia.

This combination of softness and savage grandeur is seen in other waters, as in those of Lucerne and Geneva. There, however, the contrast is between one end of the lake and the other; while here it is

between approximating shores not more than three miles apart.

The day was particularly calm and lovely, which induced us, on our arrival at Wesen, to embark in the boat which traverses the Linth canal. It was of rare construction—a sort of flat-bottomed lump, or lighter, navigated with oars, on which a raised platform was placed for the accommodation of the first-class passengers, while those of the second were stowed in the hold below. In stormy weather, however, if the extra price is to be paid for superior accommodation, certainly I should have taken the liberty of reversing the order, and have become a second-class passenger.

Previous to the construction of this canal, which is about nine miles long, the Linth, a furious mountain torrent, used to dam up the little river, the Mag, which connected the two lakes, and which also received its waters. The consequence was, that the whole of the country between Wesen and Wal-lenstädt was flooded many months in the year; and the only way to remedy an evil which threatened whole villages with destruction, was to cut, at an immense expense, the present broad watercourse, called the Linth canal. How they can raise funds in so poor a country as Switzerland, to effect some of the grandest works ever designed by engineers, I know not, since the traffic or transit can by no

means pay the lowest possible interest on the outlay.

Having a head wind, it was full two hours before we reached Schmerikon, at the head of the lake Zurich. There we found the steam-boat waiting our arrival, and were, consequently, soon on board, and under way for Zurich. For the first time for near a month, in which we had been among the mountains, we caught sight of an English newspaper. Involved as we had been in scenes where the very elements were at strife, we had lost sight of European politics and all interest in the war. Nor did the journal in question cast much light upon the subject, except to tell us that everything remained in pretty much the same state in which we had left it a month previous.

Before leaving England I had been advised to traverse every lake from end to end, advice which, I would say, I scrupulously followed, and can commend to all who follow after, because it is impossible to form a just estimate of the beautiful landscapes with which this romantic land abounds, without viewing them from the different parts of the lake, and in combination with the element which forms a principal part of the scene. It is, moreover, the most expeditious, and, in some instances, the only way of getting from one place to another at a very reasonable rate. One meets, as I have had occasion before to observe, with all

sorts of character when travelling: One such we encountered in our present voyage, who felt or feigned the desire to depreciate everything which brought pleasure to the many. Steam-boats were vulgar, because every one travelled by them—the Righi was a sight not worth seeing, because all the world visited it. Having, however, nothing to advance but his own foregone conclusion, if we had been in doubt before, even this of itself would have determined our choice, since the generality of mankind—the aggregate and the masses—are not wanting in common sense, and do not ordinarily combine for the purpose of deceiving others.

Although it does not partake of the grandeur of other lakes, yet the scenery in many parts is very beautiful. At its eastern extremity, the slopes and woodlands are backed by the snowy peaks of Glarus, while the glades of the Albis, which is 3,000 feet, adorn the west. All the way along, on either side, the hills slope down to the water's edge, and are adorned with hamlets and villas, with their luxuriant and neat gardens. There was, however, one feature in the landscape which, though not so poetic, was doubtless the source of their prosperity and much real comfort; and that was, the many large manufactories which, of late years, have sprung up in every direction.

There can be no doubt but much of the prosperity of this canton is to be attributed to the

wise policy which their forefathers pursued, on embracing the Reformation. They received with open arms, and treated with the greatest hospitality, all who were persecuted on account of their religion. It so happened that at this time there was a considerable movement in the north of Italy, in Lombardy, Sardinia, and in the southern cantons of Switzerland; and probably from being so near Rome, that see was too powerful for them. The most industrious part of the population, such as weavers of cotton and silk, and workers at various handicrafts, had embraced the Protestant faith, and were consequently compelled to flee their homes, and find shelter in foreign lands. The chronicle states that, on one occasion, in the town of Locarno, in the canton of Tessino, alone, there were no less than 100 artisans, with their families, in the depth of winter, compelled to cross the Alps, and carry with them all their earthly goods, simply because they refused to purchase the privilege of remaining in their fatherland at the sacrifice of their consciences. Being, at the instigation of the priests, thus inhumanly treated by their fellow-citizens, they left their homes for ever, and with them fled the prosperity of Locarno. The men of Zurich received and treated them with hospitality, and, what is remarkable, among them were the names of some of the most wealthy merchants and manufacturers of that city at the present day. It

was by their means that the art of weaving silk was introduced into Zurich; and, being helped by their brother Protestants, they speedily built mills and manufactories. They, moreover, introduced the art of dyeing, which at that time was known imperfectly in Switzerland. The present thriving state of the population along the lake, and the numerous mills and silk manufactories, are consequently to be attributed to that blind policy of persecution which has ever characterised the church of Rome.

We cannot at this day read the history of Zurich without being struck with the effect of the same policy in France; for it was upon the revocation of the edict of Nantes, that the Huguenot silk weavers of that country, were compelled, on account of their religion, to leave their own homes, and to seek shelter in a foreign land. We, as we ever have done, sheltered them—helpless, homeless, and persecuted—and, in doing so, received our reward. They established themselves in the heart of our metropolis, and introduced among us the Spitalfields manufacture of silk.

## CHAPTER XXII.

## CANTON ZURICH.

Zurich—Its situation, manufactories, natural advantages—The Zurichers—Their Society and Political Condition—Their Temperance contrasted with the Intemperance of our lower orders—Contentment and Happiness.

ZURICH, like many of the cities and towns of Switzerland, is situated at the lower end of a lake, and is built on either side of the river Limmett, which, entering at its upper end a muddy glacier stream of almost milky whiteness, issues at its lower end a noble river of emerald green. This said river Limmett, after flowing about thirty miles by a very circuitous route, empties itself into the Rhine. Indeed all the rivers which flow from the Alps are feeders of this noble stream, or of its brother the Rhone.

As Zurich is the chief seat of the manufactures of Switzerland—a sort of Birmingham and Manchester combined on a small scale—it presents the not uninteresting subject of contrasting some of



their domestic manufactories and mercantile institutions with our own. Before, however, I proceed, I would observe that for the last twelve miles before you reach this city, you are conveyed by the rail—the only one which exists at the present time in Switzerland. This, probably, is to be attributed to the manufacturing character of the place, which, in this solitary instance, has overcome the prejudice and selfishness of their land-owners and inn-keeper aristocracy, who being all engaged in the carrying trade, appear determined to uphold the old régime. There is no reason in the world why good railroads might not be constructed in many parts of Switzerland, so at least as to connect their mercantile and manufacturing districts. Still they move so slowly, and are so wedded to antiquity, that probably many years will elapse before so desirable an object is accomplished. But I forbear; they are to have a grand one at last.

My present object being with Zurich and its affairs, I will not fly off in a tangent by steam, or by any other projectile. It is built, as I before observed, on either side of this Limmett. The right bank, however, contains the most considerable portion of the city, the lower parts being antiquated streets, inconveniently narrow, and the houses most unreasonably high. The suburbs, everywhere, are studded with very neat and picturesque villas, the residences of merchants and others, whose busi-

ness is in the town. Some of these villas, together with their manufactories, are built on the glades of the Albis, a mountain about 3,000 feet high, at the south of the town. Indeed the sides of the lake, in its whole extent of thirty miles, may be said to be thick with villages, manufactories, &c. &c. A perfect nest of human abodes, surrounded by orchards and gardens, which reach down to the water's edge. This commingling of the adorned country-houses of the rich with the neat châlets of the poor, clustering round the parish church, has a very pretty effect as far as scenery is concerned. That, however, which impresses the traveller, and gives him the idea of the go-ahead character of the place and the enterprise of its people, is, that everything in nature is pressed into the service of man. Every village has the appearance of a workshop, and every mountain stream is made to turn the busy wheel. So thickly are the hamlets set, that the shores of the lake present the appearance of a continuous range of human habitations. The comfort and the wealth produced by so much thrift are visible, not only in the interior economy, but in the outside appearance of the houses of the artizans. Unlike the miserable hovels which belong to that class in our own country, they are large, capacious dwellings, their bed-rooms are numerous and lofty, and evidently constructed to promote health and longevity; while the large under-rooms have frequently

not less than three or four looms, in which the various members of the family ply the shuttle in the long nights of winter. The raw silk which is brought them from Italy, is returned woven to that country, by the Great St. Gothard, which is the northern high road from Germany and this part of Switzerland into that country. In addition to this, the abode of almost every artisan, weaver, or workman on the lake has the appearance of a farm homestead. In one of his *châlets* the cows and the goats are stalled, while in another, hay, roots, and fire-wood for the winter. There is scarcely a proprietor that does not own many of these outhouses, and from the pretty manner in which they build them, they present a much grander front than their interior and the state of their inhabitants would otherwise warrant.

Interesting, however, as the description of these scenes may be, I pass on to consider that they have always enjoyed the blessings of free and unrestricted commerce, and that articles, and in fact all kinds of goods, both raw and manufactured, without any impediment or impost, have been allowed to be imported into their country. This of itself proves so great a benefit, that it more than compensates for many natural disadvantages of position—mountainous districts, difficulty of conveyance, &c., and is the means of already bringing into existence large manufacturing establishments, which compete

successfully with those of other countries. If, however, they labour under many disadvantages, they have also corresponding benefits created out of their very adverse circumstances. Their Alps and their mountains afford them sufficient water-power to turn the mills of the whole world. Without the aid of steam they have one of the finest engineering manufactories in Europe, at Zurich, and if to this you add the cheapness of provisions, the primitive simplicity and temperate habits of their workmen (for there are very few drunkards here; indeed they are always the exception—the blot on our manufacturing escutcheon), it must appear that this country has become a rival both to Germany and France in some departments of manufacturing industry.

Take, for instance, the Limmett; it is a splendid stream, and though certainly not so broad as the Thames at Westminster, nevertheless sends forth a noble river, which equals the power of the largest engines invented by the skill or ingenuity of man. There are below the town at least a dozen immense manufacturing establishments, each of which bridges the whole span of the river, whilst their many water-wheels are busily plying underneath. Then, again, there are other establishments by the river's side, where the water, being let in, in a continuous run like a mill-stream, flows through the manufactories which require this species of

water-power. One of these establishments which I visited, that of the Messrs. Eschers, I believe to be one of the largest on the continent, and its peculiar economy is this: that by the aid of water-power alone, the finest and most exact machinery, screw-cutting, &c., is made to compete with similar materials made by steam and by higher-paid labour.

We need not discuss that portion of our domestic economy called free trade, because the question, in the year 1854, is set at rest. This much, however, we may say, that the Swiss, who have never had laws to exclude foreign machinery, or any protective code to enhance the value (as it might be thought) of their own inventions, can, nevertheless, manufacture and sell all kinds of machinery at a much cheaper rate than it could be imported from other countries. I believe, moreover, I am warranted in saying, that this establishment alone of the Messrs. Eschers, supplies nearly all the spinning and other machinery used in central Europe. This I know—they are able to supply it for at least 15 per cent. less than it would cost if brought from England.

Whenever we consider the social condition of a people, it is well to look at both sides of the question—the advantages and disadvantages of their peculiar position. That the Swiss have advantages there can be no doubt, but, as it is with everything in this world, these advantages are probably even

more than counterbalanced by corresponding drawbacks. Their form of government is very simple—indeed, purely democratical, extending to universal suffrage. They have among them, at present, no privileged or pensioned orders, so that the machinery, if I may so speak, of their political and social system is extremely simple. Every Swiss, through the influence of his democratic institutions, *apparently* with the exception of the professions and capitalists, and they are very few, appears of equal rank, whatever be his fortune. Each has a free voice in electing his representative at the cantonal and federal government; and, as a result of this, he possesses the cheapest government and the highest amount of civil liberty compatible with social organisation. Swiss freedom is something more than a theory, a mere idea; it is an embodiment, something carried out into everyday life, from which they deduce a large amount of human happiness, but it is happiness in a primitive state of society. None are exempt from taxation, like the privileged orders in France at the time of the first French revolution, but all burdens, great and small, are spread equally over the whole body of the people. Besides this, the humblest and poorest may purchase any and all their wants free from excise and custom laws in the best market, though these comforts may come from the ends of the earth. In one word, they realise the utmost

that can be obtained from free institutions. They secure good executive, administrative, and legal institutions to the protection of life and property, at the lowest possible charge upon individual exertion. They leave every man to pursue the scheme of human happiness which his own feelings or his sense of duty may dictate; in fact, every man may sit under his own vine, surrounded by his family, and reap the fruit of his labours.

This state of primitive simplicity and humble independence, has its virtues no doubt, but how far it may produce the amount of human happiness attainable elsewhere—for instance, in our own country—we may doubt. Happiness is a comparative blessing, being one thing to one and another thing to another, according to a variety of circumstances and different standards—birth, education, habits, tastes, and pursuits being taken into the account. The Laplander having but few wants is soon satisfied. The standard by which the Swiss measures his enjoyments is by no means high, and therefore may be easily attained; but if he enjoys advantages, he possesses also things which, from his very situation, become considerable drawbacks. Surrounded by states far more powerful than his own, he is in danger, at the outbreak of every war, of being overrun by his powerful neighbours; and well indeed will it be for him if his country does not become the battle-field of contending armies.

Their climate is also against them ; the rigours of winter rest upon them, while the delights of spring and of autumn are smiling upon ourselves. Besides which, there is no combination or system of great capitalisation in their mercantile or manufacturing institutions. They are a nation of small manufacturers and small farmers, in comfortable, but certainly not in affluent, circumstances. A skilful, and even laborious, artisan cannot alter his condition, or emancipate himself from the class or the caste in which he was born. If all the family work, they are well clothed and well fed, and all they earn becomes their own ; but if they do not work, and work hard too, they are pinched in every way. With the same degree of sobriety, prudence, and intelligence, combined with industry, our countryman could go ahead, and from a servant soon become a master ; but it is not so in that country. With the most perfect personal freedom, as well as free institutions—with the power of moving where he pleases without a passport—unlike his neighbours ; without being constrained to permanent military service, as they are in all the German states, though liable to be called up on any great occasion ; with his time his own, and the power to dispose of it as he thinks fit ; with always plenty of work, though he is paid but scantily for it, and hence cannot become rich ;—the Swiss artisan,



nevertheless, is to be envied in comparison with our own.

The bane of our working population is their constant desire for present enjoyment ; early marriages, with high wages, seem to have given, many of them at least, improvident and sottish habits ; in the tastes and in the enjoyments of their parents they have been themselves trained to become spend-thrifts and drunkards ; the gin-shop and the public-house has been their bane from their youth, and entails misery upon them even to old age. The enormous consumption of luxuries, according to the taste of our artisans, in the shape of beer, spirits, and tobacco, may be conceived from the fact, that the value of these articles, including the duty, amounts to near two-thirds of the revenue of the United Kingdom.

During a tour of three months on the continent I only saw two drunken men, and one of them was a soldier. In the long streets of some of the Swiss towns, as Berne, Geneva, Zurich, &c., and some a mile in length, you will not see a single spirit-shop, although you may find a few houses in which wine is sold. When I returned to my own country, however, I blush to say, I saw twice as many drunken men in one day as I had abroad in three months in a small town, while in some streets in our sea-ports, every third shop was a

public-house or a beershop. It is said that in Manchester there are 10,000 persons intoxicated from gin every Saturday night. A writer, speaking of the working population of that city, says:— “Notwithstanding the present wretched condition of the poor” (it was a period when many manufactories were closed from want of work), “the number of persons who frequent ginshops is perfectly astonishing. These dens of iniquity appear to thrive upon misery and vice. The destitution of want appears to be met and counterbalanced only by the excitement of gin: Temperance societies have done something, but the mass appears to be unchanged.” From an inspection which the writer caused to be made, there were found to enter a given gin-palace the astonishing number of 484 persons in one hour, the greater part of whom were women. Some were decently dressed, apparently the wives of mechanics; others almost naked, carrying in their arms a squalid infant. If the wife frequents the ginshop, no wonder that the husband, when he leaves work, is found to take his place in the beershop.

It may appear that, in speaking of the vices of a large portion of our people, I have travelled somewhat out of my record; but I do so designedly, in the hope that something may be attempted to raise the tastes and the habits of those who struggle on in life by the sweat of their brow. Far be it from me to involve all in one sweeping condemnation.

Many among them are highly respectable, in conduct and in everything else; but too many, far too many, reduce themselves below the inferior animals by habits of intemperance. The blame of all this must be shared with the working classes by the privileged orders and the government itself. Not only have we bestowed no pains to inculcate better tastes and habits among our labouring population, but for many years we have done all we can to rivet the chains of drunkenness upon them by legislative enactments. Where in the world can be the necessity of permitting gin-palaces to open upon the Sabbath? or licensing houses to sell beer upon the day which, in other respects, is made sacred by Act of Parliament? It is absurd to plead necessity, the only ground on which the system is at all attempted to be propped up. Let houses for victualing as many as you please be opened for wayfarers and travellers, but do not say there is a necessity for gin-palaces and beershops for the idle, the dissolute, the profligate, and the expectants of your gaols, on the Lord's-day.

What reason is there that the homes of our operatives should not be the abodes of happiness, like those of the Swiss? They may be, on this condition: Intemperate habits must be got rid of—waste and improvidence must be superseded by frugality and carefulness—our artisans and their wives must early instruct their children in the arts

of common life; the girls, to knit and sew, to buy, cut out, to make and mend their clothes; the boys as well as the girls must not be merely instructed in secular and divine knowledge, but in the way in which they are to earn their bread—to be trained, in fact, so as to occupy an honourable and useful place in the human family. It is the want of this which fills our gaols, where nothing is more common than to hear young offenders telling you, I was never taught anything; I never had a chance in life.

The Swiss are the contented, happy people we have described them, not so much from their institutions and other outward circumstances, for in some respects these are inferior to our own, as by their temperance, their primitive mode of life, which knows but few wants, as well as the extraordinary economical manner in which they live. They are exceeding clever in little things—some member of the household, from necessity, generally combining the office of carpenter, cooper, and mason when required. Their forests supply them with splendid firs, which they work into almost every article of household utility; and hence they have no need to frequent the market for such things, or even their necessary food, which, to a great extent, is raised upon the strip of land adjoining their dwellings. By means such as these, their domestic hearth affords pleasure

and delight to every member of the family. To a Swiss, no place is to be compared with his home—the spot in which the best feelings of his heart have their free scope and healthful play, while religion sanctifies the whole and unites them all in the bonds of love.

## CHAPTER XXIII.

## CANTON SCHWYTZ.

From Zurich to Schwytz—Richtenschwyl—Accident—Voituriers and their rickety carriages—Einsiedeln, its Church and Monastery—Pilgrims—Lake Egeri and Battle-field of Morgarten—Schwytz.

It was our intention to have proceeded to Einsiedeln by Rapperschwyl, according to the direction of "Murray's Handbook"; but finding our journey would be considerably lengthened by this route, and that Richtenschwyl was the port at which pilgrims bound to the abbey usually disembarked, we steered for that point. The little village is pleasantly situated by the water's edge; and at its clean, commodious inn there were several respectable families residing *en pension* at the rate of five francs per diem.

Time being a consideration, we forthwith hired a vehicle with one horse, which was to take us to the

end of our journey (just twelve miles) for so many francs. We immediately began to ascend by a good road through orchards and cherry grounds, which were quite exposed and without any kind of fence. Nothing can be prettier than the prospect which we soon obtained of the lake and the delicious country which covers its banks, presenting as it does, in combination, a high state of civilization with the most romantic landscapes.

It took us two good hours before we reached the top of the Etzel, the ridge which separates the valley of the Sihl from the lake Zurich; and, notwithstanding we were thus slow, we were in danger of being overturned more than once. Nothing can be worse than the loose, careless manner in which they drive the young, unbroken, skittish animals which they harness to their voitures, or the wretched voitures themselves, which are so crazy and rickety. The whole of these disagreeables were united on the present occasion. The boy was sleepy and careless,—the voiture as shaky as the top of a jelly—the horse just green from the pastures, and scarcely broken in; and the consequence was, that in passing a wain heavily laden with poles, the mettlesome thing took into its head to make a start and a bolt, which landed us, providentially, against a high bank on our right, and by which means we escaped unhurt. Had it, however, happened on the other side there could have been no alternative, humanly

speaking, but we must have been rolled down a steep incline, where, if we had escaped with only broken bones, we might have considered ourselves fortunate. It would, indeed, have been a most inglorious affair, after having traversed frightful mountain paths, where there were not more than a few feet between us and the most awful precipices, to have been put *hors de combat* on a good road through the carelessness of a driver and the friskiness of a horse which we never ought to have trusted.

The canton Schwytz, which we were now entering, although it does not possess the wild grandeur and majesty of the Vallais and the Grisons, is, nevertheless, invested with a romantic beauty and a soft luxuriance, which was most pleasant and enjoyable after the savagely wild scenes and the foaming cataracts we had so lately passed over.

As we journeyed on, we overtook a great number of pilgrims going and returning from the far-famed shrine of our lady of Einsiedeln. Some of them had their rosaries in hand, and were repeating aloud their aves and their paters, while others were chanting hymns and liturgies in honour of the Virgin and the saints. They presented a very picturesque appearance, clothed, as they were, in the various costumes of the Roman Catholic cantons of the Confederation, or in those of the Tyrol, Bavaria, and the Black Forest. Many of them were so poor that both women and men were carrying in knap-



sacks provender for the way; and there was one company of women, who were so foundered from the distance they had come, that they were scarcely able to put one foot before the other.

I know not how it is, but the monks always appear to have taken care of themselves, living as they do in luxuriant situations. It was so here, for the Monastery is situated in the midst of the most fertile pasture-sweeps, all of which belong to the fathers. For near a mile before we reached the establishment we came upon an immense number of plain wooden houses, some of them three and four storeys high, and which, together with those in the village, can accommodate ten thousand pilgrims. There are, besides these, a number of inns and auberges, which entertain many more who are capable of paying for the accommodation they afford.

The establishment itself is an immense quadrangle, built a little way up a gentle slope, and faces the south. The church, which is adorned with two cupolas, in the centre, presents an imposing spectacle; while the wings are occupied by the Monastery and the College, in which most of the Roman Catholic priesthood, required by that church in Switzerland, are educated.

It is of very ancient foundation, dating as far back as the ninth century. Indeed, the first mention we have of the Swiss in the adjoining cantons is found in the record of a quarrel between them

and an abbot of Einsiedeln, in the beginning of the twelfth century. The fathers that then were, had cast a longing eye upon some rich pastures, on which the capital of the canton now stands, and, in order to obtain them, applied to the Pope for a patent which might put them in possession. In their representation they altogether ignored the Schwytzers of the locality, as if they never existed, and set the land forth as some wild wastes. With this pretext they obtained a grant from His Holiness, but found to their cost that, before they could take possession, they must dispute it at the point of the sword; and the upshot was, they were not powerful enough to deprive their neighbours of their possessions. It appears, moreover, they must have been very powerful allies of the Dukes of Austria, the oppressors of the people, since, from a record now existing, it is found that a body of their retainers were found in arms with Duke Leopold, and that their sacred pennon floated in the battle of Morgarten. They, however, as we shall have occasion to see, as well as their lay associates, were discomfited, routed, and slain, by the confederates of the four cantons, as late even as the fifteenth century. Their abbot was a German prince, and possessed the power of inflicting the extreme penalty of the law on all members of the Roman Catholic Church who were his dependants.

Its history, which is mixed up with a good deal

of fable, is that Minred, a hermit in the days of Charlemagne, about the middle of the ninth century, repaired hither for meditation and prayer, taking with him, for devotional purposes, a little black image of the Virgin, which had been given him by St. Hildegarde, an abbess of Zurich. Minred, it appears, was murdered in 860, but his reputation for sanctity had so hallowed the spot, that about 150 years after, the Benedictines built a church and convent on the site of his cell in honour of the Virgin. The legend then says, that on the eve of its consecration, the Bishop of Constance and his priests were at prayer in the church, when suddenly it resounded with melodious strains, to which they listened in prostrate admiration. The next day as the said functionary was about to consecrate, a voice was heard from heaven, "Stay, stay! there is no need, the powers of heaven have already sanctified the place." The strains were those of angels. The apostles, the saints, and the Virgin afterwards appeared around the high altar in all the brilliancy of fire.

When Leo VIII. heard of this, by a bull bearing date the 14th September, 948, he pronounced it to be a miracle, and granted plenary indulgence to all pilgrims who should repair to the shrine of our lady. He, moreover, forbade the faithful, under severe pains and penalties, even to call in question the truthfulness of the said strange

occurrence, and the result is, that for 900 years, pilgrims from Germany, France, Spain, Flanders, Bavaria, Piedmont, and the Tyrol have flocked to Einsiedeln, bringing with them their precious gifts.

The *rationale* of all this is simply, that the Bishop of Rome not only claims to be Christ's vicegerent in virtue of apostolical succession, but also that the church, of which he is the head, has the power, from time to time, of working miracles in order to prove it is the Church *par excellence*.

It therefore stands in need of such stories, fables, or falsehoods as those of Einsiedeln, the holy coat of Treves, and the winking Madonna of Rimini to prove, as occasion renders necessary, that they are of divine origin, while, in return for the blind services of her infatuated or deceived leaders, she is always ready to give them a shrine like that of Einsiedeln by which they may be enriched.

There is, however, a strange story told about the object of attraction, or, as we should call it, the idol, which is nothing more or less than the black figure of the Virgin, which St. Hildegarde gave Minred, and which is said to possess miraculous powers. When the French revolutionary armies overran Europe, their mission was not merely to spread the pestiferous principles of their philosophers. Oh, no! they had regard to more terrestrial objects than these. Hence in 1798, when these marauders, like the locusts of the East, plundered the abbey of our lady

of its treasures, they also carried away this far and wide renowned image of the Virgin, and common report says, that it is now to be found in the shrine of some church at Paris. The monks tell a different tale, viz.—that when they abandoned the convent and retired to the Tyrol, they carried the black image with them; although it is said it was only a sham and an imitation which they contrived to get up for the occasion. Be this as it may, the abbey remains to the present day the richest in the land, and the mock image of the Virgin possesses all the virtues and properties of its predecessor. The average number of pilgrims who resort to this shrine and partake of the sacrament of the mass, is estimated to be 170,000 per annum.

Most of the Roman Catholic communes and parishes are in the habit of sending a deputation to Einsiedeln every year, headed by the Landeman or the chief magistrate of the district. While we were there, the representatives of a large parish in the remote canton of Glarus, amounting to more than 200 persons of all ages and degrees, met with the usual reception. As they approached the cathedral they were chanting their litanies, and advancing by two single files about fifty feet apart. In their front were two bannerets bearing the pennons of their canton. Then came the representative of the Church, their priest, followed by the magistrate, proprietors, and peasants, among whom were a

goodly number of young persons of both sexes. When they came within 100 yards of the front, the authorities of the cathedral, bearing a huge gilt cross upon a pole and the banners of Schwytz, greeted the approaching company by touching their banners, and then, falling in the rear, accompanied them within. As soon as they were inside the walls, they forthwith betook themselves to the renowned shrine, where all of them, without distinction, falling down on the marble pavement, began to sing or chant hymns in honour of the Virgin.

We were told that every Swiss Roman Catholic considered it a virtue to visit this shrine at least once in his life. If, however, circumstances prevent, it may be done by deputy, the wealthier sinner paying for the services of his poorer brother who does the penance. It should, moreover, be added, that a pilgrimage performed by proxy is equally efficacious with one made in person.

There were also before the door, a number of blind, lame, and impotent folk hovering round the great church, who, if they could not obtain healing from the miracle-working image, were, at any rate, imploring alms from its worshippers. Others had left behind on the walls, mementoes of gratitude for the deliverances which the black Virgin had wrought for them. These were perfect curiosities of their kind, such as rude drawings of boats contending with

tempests; houses on fire, and the inhabitants retreating from them; storms of lightning blasting flocks and destroying all manner of stores. All of them intended as votos for deliverances wrought or imagined to be wrought from fire and flood, tempest and storm, by the intercession of the Virgin.

After purchasing a few rosaries, a fac-simile of the niche of the Virgin, and some capital tapers, we bade adieu to our lady of the hermits. As we ascended the hill, we encountered the ever-flowing tide of pilgrims, chanting by troops and companies the hymns which no doubt had beguiled them in their fatherland. From their various appearance many of them must have come from far off countries, even from Alsace, Spain, and the upper parts of Austria and Poland. Poor creatures, we pitied them, dupes as they no doubt are, either to the cunning or craft of their priests. If they had remained at home employing themselves in the honest arts of labour, and prayed to Him who seeth in secret through the mediation of his Son, His own word declares their prayers would have availed. Why then the necessity to make themselves poor, to macerate and torment themselves by a long and painful pilgrimage to Einsiedeln? Either the priests are themselves deceived to believe their own lie, or for lucre's sake, they being better informed, willingly deceive others. In the former case they

are to be pitied ; in the latter no amount of reprobation can be sufficient to mark the enormity of their crime.

A splendid day found us once more on our way to Schwytz and Brunnen. After passing Rothenthurm we came upon a full view of the lake Egeri and the battle-field of Morgarten, which, as it is the scene of the first struggle of the ancient Swiss for independence from the intolerable yoke of Austria, and a spot teeming with the most spirit-stirring historical recollections, it may not prove unacceptable if we indulge our feelings with a narration of its tale.

For a length of time the forest cantons had become the avowed object of the hostility of the house of Hapsburg. Eight years had elapsed since the expulsion of the Austrian bailiffs by the patriots of the field of Rutli, during which period there had been constant quarrels, either with the Austrian princes themselves, or with their powerful allies the monks of Einsiedeln. The proud dukes, the nobles, and the prelates, had pent up their rage within their breasts like hidden fire, because of their impotency. They were, however, biding their time, and anxiously looked forward to the day of vengeance. On the other hand the Swiss maintained the calm and dignified position which arises from a consciousness of the rectitude and justice of their cause. They simply opposed to their enemies the



assertion of their rights, and, if necessary, their readiness to defend them with their lives. The sentence of excommunication had been thundered from Einsiedeln. Edict after edict had been launched against them from the imperial court, without producing the desired effect. At length an overwhelming force was collected, under the command of Duke Leopold, the brother of the then king Frederick, with the intention of extirpating the whole race.

In the month of October, 1315, a force, commanded by Otho, Count of Strasburg, entered the valley of Oberhasli, with the view of crossing the Brunig Pass and falling upon the inhabitants of Oberwalden and Unterwalden. Another similar force from Lucerne were to make a simultaneous attack upon them by water. The chief body of the invaders, however, were under the command of the Duke himself, and consisted of heavy cavalry, the flower of the Austrian chivalry; these, together with the nobles and retainers of the ducal house, mustered a force of twenty thousand warriors, and were to operate against the canton Schwytz from the lake Zurich.

The confederates in the mean time being fully aware of the storm that was gathering around them, did all in their power to avert the threatened calamity. They assembled their thin and apparently feeble ranks, and renewed their ancient compact of

union, of brotherhood, and co-operation. Their attitude, if not strong, was imposing, for they were knit together like a bundle of arrows, and to all entreaties which were urged by friends or foes to sue for peace and surrender, their only reply was that they were the injured party, and would, with the help of God, stand firmly by each other, and repel every attack of their adversaries.

The sympathy of their neighbours was excited; and being aware of the perils of their position, the men of Uri sent four hundred of their stoutest warriors, while those of Unterwalden, although themselves threatened, spared no less than three hundred who landed at Brunnen, and were in time to share the glories of the day.

Their head-quarters were at the town of Schwytz, where they assembled around the châlet of Rudolph Reding to seek his able and matured counsel against the day of peril. The old man himself was past bearing arms; but his age and his experience, with the soundness of his judgment, gave him the influence of a father and a commander among the confederates; nor did they hesitate for one moment to follow promptly the advice which he speedily gave them. It was, that they should meet the attack of their adversaries in the defiles of Morgarten, through which he calculated the Duke would be obliged to pass. The whole army then knelt down, and looked to God, whom they declared to be their only

help; and after praying that He would bless their arms in defence of their hearths, their families, and their freedom, they marched forth to meet the enemy. After all their reinforcements, they could only muster thirteen hundred valiant men, who took up their position near Sattel, at the southern extremity of the lake Egeri. What they lacked in numbers, was in some measure made up by the strength of their intrenched camp, for it commanded the pass of the defiles of Morgarten.

A little circumstance occurred while they were waiting the approach of their enemies, which shows in vivid colours their uncompromising principles—their deep sense of honour and consistency, which even their perilous position could not in the least shake—as well as the strong love of their country which the Swiss, under every circumstance of life, manifest. There were fifty convicts who had been exiled from the forest cantons for various offences which they had committed against the laws. These men, having heard in their exile, the dangers which were hanging over their native land, forthwith marched to the patriots, and besought their fellow-countrymen to permit them, in the day of battle, to lead the forlorn hope of their army, since they were ready to peril their lives in defence of their fatherland. They were desirous of proving as they said, that, although criminals, banished and condemned, they were worthy of being Schwytzers.

There can be little doubt but the principle which influenced these men must have approved itself to every heart, yet the leaders, in a very courteous manner, declined their proffered assistance, judging, as they expressed it, dishonourable to violate an ancient law for the sake of expediency. However wrong we may consider their conclusion, every one must admire their stern Helvetian consistency. But though thus repulsed they were not diverted from their purpose. They resolved to act independently, and in advance of their brethren; and, taking up a position which overhung the defile, they collected huge masses of rocks, and trees which they felled for the purpose, to await the approach of the Austrians.

The mule path from Sattel to the lake, soon after leaving that village, enters a narrow defile, which is closed in and overhung with loose, crumbling rocks. Above these rocks, there is a small space of table-land which communicates with the mountains, whose steep and thick-wooded sides hem in the valley and the little lake Egeri to the south-east. After emerging from this defile, the first object which meets the traveller's eye is a small chapel built on the meadow which slopes towards the lake. The heights are everywhere clothed with wood; while the road passes round the lake, and runs, by a very steep, rough path, to its extremity, and then on to the canton Zug.

This was the position of the confederates, who were posted on the sides of the slopes and between the fallen rocks. Here they beheld the imposing ranks of their adversaries advancing towards them in the grey of the morning of the 15th October. They approached them warily, as if they dreaded a species of warfare in which their adversaries, though few in number, were more practised than themselves.

In the front rank was the cavalry glittering in their armour, who with difficulty were wending their way over the narrow mountain pass, and then pricking a path through a wood which was between the mountain and the lake. In their rear were the condensed masses of their infantry, which completely filled up the valley with their numbers.

As soon as the fifty exiles perceived the advancing cavalry had well filled up the defile, they immediately commenced the honours of the day and rained down upon them, trees and rocks of many tons weight. Their position provided them with abundance of ammunition, in the shape of stones, trunks of trees, and fragments of loose rock. These were sent thundering down upon the riders and their horses, who being crowded and pent up in a narrow pass, between the mountain and the lake, could neither advance nor retreat.

When the main body of the Swiss observed their confusion, they immediately rushed down the moun-

tain upon their enemies ; and here the conflict was a trial of strength between man and man. The armour and the accoutrements of the heavy mailed knight were of little avail against the attack of the hardy, active mountaineers, whose halberd and double-handed swords were more than a match for their cuirass and light swords.

The carnage was dreadful ; many of the pride and pomp of Austria's knights bit the dust. Here perished four barons of Taggenburg, three of Bonstetten, two Halwyls, three Urikons, and last, though not least, Landenberg, the kinsman of Herman Gessler, with two of his cousins. The whole army was thrown into confusion ; a panic seized upon the stoutest hearts, thinking their enemies more numerous and more formidable than they in reality were from being concealed and out of sight. The lake was covered with dead bodies, since many, in their efforts to escape, were drowned. The rout became general, and, pent up as they were within the narrow defiles of the pass, but comparatively few of their enemies escaped with their lives.

Thus ended this memorable conflict, from which Duke Leopold rescued himself with difficulty, under the guidance of a peasant. The Schwytzers returned in the course of the day to their chief town, where they publicly returned thanks to Almighty God for the assistance which he had afforded them in the day of battle.

Afterwards they received the fifty exiles as brethren and members of the confederacy, having obliterated, by their valour, the memory of their past offences. And they finally decreed that the day should be observed every year with rejoicings for their triumph and great victory, to which were to be added prayers for the repose of the souls of those who had fallen on the field of battle.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

## CANTONS SCHWYTZ, LUCERNE, AND UNTERWALDEN.

From Schwytz to Brienz—Goldau—The Fall of the Rossburg—  
Ascent of the Righi—A Storm—Lake Lucerne—Field of Grutli  
—Tell's Chapel—Unterwalden and Lakes Sarnen and Lun-  
gern—The Brunig Pass—Brienz and its Lake.

WE were not deterred from ascending the Righi notwithstanding we were several times reminded of its being hackneyed ground—a resolution we had not the least reason to regret; for, taking the character of the scenery around into account, a combination of snowy mountains, with verdant meads, meandering rivers, and smiling lakes, it is scarcely to be surpassed anywhere. The mountain, for Switzerland, is not very high, not quite six thousand feet from the sea-level, but being detached from the other Alps, and standing alone and lifted up, it is much in relation to the surrounding country of a lofty island in the midst of the most lovely and enchanting scenery.



We began our ascent from the best possible point, the village of Goldau, situated at the foot of a rent in the mountain, by which there is a good mule path to the summit. The weather was superb. The sun shone forth in all his splendour, and everything promised fair. At first we had to pass a series of ridges which undulated like the waves of the sea, and although for the most part they were covered with pasture, yet sufficient remained to tell the tale of the fearful catastrophe which had befallen the adjacent mountain. No one indeed can pass this spot, without calling to remembrance the calamity of that awful day, which made so many children orphans and so many parents childless. This was the severance of a large slice of the Rossburg from that mountain, when a mighty avalanche or landslip, three miles in length, and a thousand feet in breadth, was precipitated almost suddenly into the valley, carrying along with it desolation and death. Four hamlets on its slopes were swept away and buried in its ruins, and 457 human beings were suddenly launched into eternity. The mass of mountain shot across to the opposite side of the valley, with the velocity of a cannon ball, and in a few minutes the whole region became a scene of desolation and ruin. Goldau, Bussingen, Ruthen, and part of Lowertz, lay buried beneath the incumbent masses; while pastures to the value of £150,000 sterling were for ever demolished. Five minutes

sufficed to complete the work of destruction. The inhabitants of the surrounding country first heard something like the noise of distant thunder. They looked towards the point from whence it came, and saw the valley involved in a cloud of dust. When it cleared away the face of nature was altogether changed—villages had ceased to exist, and more than half the lake Lowertz was filled with the massive mountain.

Such catastrophes as these from falling mountains and overwhelming torrents are by no means uncommon in Switzerland, involving, as they frequently do, the loss of many lives and much property. There are certain situations where positive danger may be always apprehended, and yet the inhabitants build, and plant, and reap, and sleep in their beds, too, without the least alarm. It is really astonishing the hardihood which exposure to continual danger begets in these mountaineers. Like the sailor upon the mast top who is driven hither and thither, now lifted up on high and anon cast down into the depths below, becomes familiar with the elements, and by his familiarity appears to defy them; so, in like manner, these peasants appear to heed but little the ravages of storm and flood, or the destructive avalanche.

The heat was intense, too great for the continuance of fine weather. The upward path was steep, and in some places difficult of ascent, owing to its

not having been repaired since the last flood ; still onward we pushed, being somewhat suspicious of the weather. The sound of the cattle bells and the sight of the flocks gave life and animation to the scene. As we proceeded to what might be called the interior of the mountain, the scope of our vision became gradually contracted, still there was enough of the wild romantic scenery of Schwytz and Zug to delight us. By our elevation we moreover obtained a better conception of the ruin and desolation which the fall of the Rossburg had wrought upon the surrounding country. Huge rocks, piles of soil and rubbish, several hundred feet in height, stretched as far as the lake Lowertz, while in the lake itself the falling masses formed several little islands.

Soon we passed thirteen different stations in the way to a calvary, at whose shrines the faithful who were on pilgrimage to Maria von Schnee were paying their devotions—a Pope at the close of the seventeenth century having extended certain indulgences to all the pious who should visit these shrines, in connection with that of our lady of the hermits at Einsiedeln.

Just five hours after leaving Arth we reached the summit, when there broke upon us one of the most extensive and beautiful views in this land of romance and beauty. The field before us was a panorama, whose circumference might be estimated

at not less than 150 miles. At our feet lay the lakes Zug and Lucerne. We appeared so high above them from the perpendicular side of the mountain, that we could scarce divest ourselves of the idea of being lifted up in an air balloon, or some other flying vehicle. Eleven other lakes and twice the same number of rivers were stretching their extending arms north and south, east and west, though some of them, from their extreme distance, appeared very insignificant. Then there were a number of villages whose *châlets* clustered around the parish church, and whose bells for evening prayer came sounding up the mountain. Rather more than a third of our circumference of vision was filled up with the snowy Alps of the Oberland, whose peaks and flanks were white with snow.

As we feared the weather, we lingered on the scene till the shades of the evening closed upon us. We looked and looked again, till at length we became weary of beholding, and our senses refused to be gratified. As we anticipated, so it turned out; it came on to blow and rain, till at length, about midnight, it increased to a perfect storm. The timbers of our *châlet*, which was perched upon the top of the mountain, strained and creaked like a ship in a gale of wind. And it so happened, that the wooden peg which fastened the wooden blinds worked out, and the shutters getting adrift, flapped

about with a tremendous noise. Being but half-awake, I could not at first conceive my position. There was before me a confused idea of the scenes which I had witnessed in the evening, and a sense of the great elevation I was at; this suggested to me, in my dreamy state of consciousness, whether I was not some enormous vampire lifted high up in air, and that the shutters were the wings which enabled me to maintain my airy flight.

The morning, however, at length broke, and brought with it the reality, that we were perched upon the top of the Righi, in the midst of a dense fog and heavy rain. As there was no appearance that the storm would abate or the fog clear up, as soon as we had breakfasted we began to descend. We had not, however, proceeded further than a couple of miles, when we passed from the region of clouds and rain into the most transparent sunshine. The scenery was romantic and magnificent, and although we had missed the sight of sights, a fair sunrise on the top of the mountain, yet having had a fair evening, and being now gratified with the most delicious scenes, we considered ourselves amply repaid for our labours.

As the weather is so uncertain in these high regions, it is very desirable at all times to take time by the forelock. For our parts, we experienced the benefit of it over and over again, and

very frequently obtained at least half of our anticipated pleasure, while later and slower travellers were disappointed altogether.

From the quantity of rain that had fallen, the path had become very slippery, and, as we descended by a rather frightful spot on the outside of the mountain, close by a yawning precipice, the bearers of a *chaise-à-porteur*, who were travelling with us, fell. No injury, however, was sustained by the lady they carried, for, by their agility in inclining the chair, as they fell, to the steep side of the mountain, their burden was scarcely displaced. Indeed I believe, rather than have allowed her to receive any injury, they would have interposed their bodies as a rampart, and prevented, if necessary, the vehicle from falling over the brow of the mountain.

About a third of the way down we saw several patients of a water-cure establishment, wandering over the sides of the mountain in a sort of flannel gown. We were told, though we could scarce credit it, that they pursued, in this establishment, the singular method of bathing them with their clothes on, and then sending them wrapped up in the said flannel gown to exercise themselves till they were dry. If it were so, although by this means they might endanger the lives of their patients, they nevertheless secured their taking a large

amount of exercise, which is one chief ingredient in the water cure.

The path to Weggis brought us by a sudden turn to a curious natural archway, formed by two huge masses of rock which were capped by a third, which they had jammed together in their fall at their upper ends. This tunnel had been there many a long year, and had been beat upon no doubt by many a storm and tempest, and yet, as I passed under it, I could scarce divest myself of the idea of its insecurity, so strangely did it appear to be hung together.

Weggis being one of the ports at which the steamboat embarks and disembarks passengers, we took advantage of it to traverse the lake Lucerne, decidedly the most diversified and the most beautiful of all the Swiss lakes. In fact, it combines in its various reaches, which are five, the mingled beauties of the rest. In addition to its natural loveliness, its historical recollections are many. By the side of it is the field of Grutli, where the three honest patriots of Uri, Unterwalden, and Schwytz met in the thirteenth century, to free their land from the oppression of the Austrian yoke. The method which they took to effect this grand design is so singular that I cannot but recount it. Unlike other conspirators, they commenced and carried on their labours to completion, influenced by the fear

of God. As often as they met they prayed that He would grant them a land where they might feed their flocks without molestation, and where they might be delivered from tyranny and oppression. By a solemn oath, administered in the dead of the night, they bound themselves that, in the enterprise in which they were about to embark, neither would be self-willed or guided by his own opinion; that neither would forsake his friend, but that all would live and die together in defence of their common rights. They professed they had no desire to deprive the Dukes of Austria of any of their lawful rights, much less to shed either their or their vassals' blood; but that the freedom to which they as men were heirs, they were determined to obtain and hand down to their posterity intact. "Then," says Planta, in his "Helvetian Constitutions," "they stood forward and joined their right hands, raised their others to heaven, and swore by the name of God that they would die, if necessary, in the sacred cause of national and individual liberty."

Nor was this confined to their emancipation from civil bondage, since they manifested at the same time a similar impatience to be free from ecclesiastical thralldom. At that time, whatever their posterity may have done since, they revolted from the idea of rendering a blind subservience to the Bishop of Rome; for, when the Pope thought proper to declare these lake cantons under the



ban of excommunication, because they rendered assistance to the French, who were at the time competitors for the Imperial throne, these patriots boldly put the question to their priests, Will you continue to read the service and sing the litany as usual, or submit to instant banishment? They chose the former alternative. This spirit, however, has not been transmitted to their descendants, since it would be difficult to find at the present time among any people, more abject slaves to the Bishop of Rome.

This also is the land of Tell, and, as you sail along the lake, you perceive a little chapel built upon the ledge of a rock in a small hollow of the cliff, to commemorate his escape from the tyrant Gessler. With regard to the apocryphal or veritable nature of this history, Letrobe has a remark so just that I cannot avoid transcribing it: "There is something in the grandeur and magnificence of the scenes which surround you in this classic country which gently but irresistibly opens the heart to a belief in the truth of the page upon which the events which have hallowed them are recorded. Whatever a man may think, and however he may be inclined to question the strength of the evidence upon which the relation of these facts rests, while in his closet, I should think there are but few sufficiently insensible and dogmatical to stand firm and bar their hearts against the credulity which steals

over them while contemplating the spots themselves."

This lake, which is 1500 feet above the level of the Mediterranean, is twenty-seven miles in length, but, by traversing its many arms, you pass over much more ground. In the reach or bay of Uri, as it is called, the sides are almost perpendicular precipices, which form the bases of colossal mountains, many of which are covered with perpetual snows. Occasionally you pass an intervening chasm, and, when you do so, the mountain in the background peers down as if it would topple into the lake. Such was the effect of these stupendous cliffs rising abruptly and vertically from the water, that it appeared as if we were sailing through some subterranean cavern. Not many years since, as may be seen from a white scar in the mountain, a mass of rock fell into the lake below, and raised so great a surge that it was felt at Lucerne, a distance of at least twenty miles. The scar appears but insignificant, yet upon actual measurement it was found to be 1200 feet. This may enable one to form some idea of the vastness of those avalanches which attach themselves to so configured a mountain as the Jung Frau, and which sometimes overwhelm whole villages and sweep away forests in their fall.

The immediate shores of this part of the lake

being perpendicular, it is without any path, but here and there a verdant slope, caused by the depression of the Alp, discovers the ch<sup>â</sup>let of the herdsman. But how they came there, or how they hold communication with the busy world below, I could not imagine, since no path or any approach to them was visible.

Having successively visited the antiquated towns of Schwytz and Lucerne, the former of which retains much of its primitive character, and is but little visited by tourists, we landed at Beckenred, in the canton of Unterwalden, with the intention of going over the Brunig to the lakes Brienz and Thun. The country through which we had to pass was rich and picturesque. Walnut and other trees completely shaded the road, while the cherry gardens and orchards lined the slopes of the valley: although their fruit is left totally unprotected, pilfering is of rare occurrence. Indeed, the statistics of crime in this purely Roman Catholic canton are exceedingly low, there not being at the present time more than twelve convicts who are sentenced to hard labour in road-making for a term exceeding one year. The population of the canton is over 22,000, and the number of inhabitants to a square league 516, which, in comparison with other cantons, shows that it is but thinly populated. We might from this circumstance expect something approaching the

result which we have already stated; yet still the average of crime is exceedingly small when compared even with cantons similarly circumstanced.

As we passed along I could not help discovering, or at least thinking I saw, a resemblance between Unterwalden and some parts of Devonshire and Herefordshire, with the exception that the foregrounds were always backed by lofty mountains. Mount Pilatus was continually intruding on our notice. On this side, however, being clothed with magnificent firs up to the very top, it presented a more amiable appearance than from the Lake of Lucerne. It is rather singular that all the storms in this neighbourhood proceed from this mountain—a circumstance which, connected with its name, gives it a degree of ill omen among the natives. It seemed somewhat odd to be told, with a degree of seriousness, which marked at any rate the belief of the narrator, that the Roman procurator of Judea, having repented of the part he had taken in the condemnation of our Lord, ascended Mount Pilatus, where he drowned himself in a small lake which is found near its summit. However a tradition so extravagant could have arisen I do not know, except upon the charitable construction that its originators knew nothing of geography. But this is not all; for by the side of Pilate, they say, lie buried a number of malignant fiends, who haunt the shores of the adjacent lake. Although this is no doubt

nothing more than a Romish myth, yet not so the storms which any one who has resided in the neighbourhood must have seen to proceed from this mountain. The most mysterious part of the affair is, that when Pilatus is capped on the top with a cloud, and the base remains clear, it is a sure prognostic of fine weather.

We were struck with the variety and beauty of the ch<sup>â</sup>let architecture both of Oberwalden and Unterwalden. It appeared far loftier and more imposing than that of the neighbouring canton of Berne. The churches, so far as tinsel and gaudy ornament were concerned, might be said to be well furnished, and by a Roman Catholic I have no doubt they would be considered superb. I have been often struck, when entering these places of worship, with the unceremonious manner in which they treat the blocks of wood which represent the Virgin and the saints. As soon as the festival is over, the sacristan or some inferior authority belonging to the church, immediately proceeds to strip the image of its lace and tinsel, its ornaments and jewels, and then, taking it on his shoulder, consigns it, in a most ignominious manner, to a cupboard, or pitches it into a lumber-room, where it remains till required to be dressed for the next occasion. Surely the dignitaries of the church should take care to prevent what to a Roman Catholic, one would think, would appear something like desecration, but which in practice is not so re-

garded by either priest or people. This treatment, however, of the Virgin, unwittingly lets us into a little of the nature and genius of a religion which, while it seeks to captivate and enchain the senses, by representations the most painful and harrowing, yet pays little or no regard to the persons or subjects which their pictures or their images represent.

The costume of the women resembled that of Berne, except that the girls of Unterwalden introduce a white ribbon or a narrow strip of white linen, and plait it in with their flowing tresses. When married they are compelled, either by custom or fashion, to coil it upon the top of the head. In the southern parts of Germany, and in many places of the northern parts of Switzerland bordering on the lake Constance, as well as in these cantons, the peasant girls are very proud of their hair, and take great pains with it. From being always exposed and flowing, it attains great length, and at the age of seventeen or eighteen it may be seen to reach as low down as the knee. When, however, the bridal knot is about to be tied, the German girls are so poor as to be compelled to submit to be shorn of their crown of glory, the price of which, when sold, being required in the shape of fees to his reverence the priest.

The scenery, as we neared the Kaiserstuhl, a ridge of rocks which separates Lake Lungern from the

valley of Sarnen, becomes increasingly interesting. All the way along there were interminable orchards of apple, pear, cherry, and walnut trees, many of which were richly laden with fruit; while the soft luxuriance was backed up by such mountains as the Rothhorn and Schwartzhorn. The lakes of Lungern and Sarnen lay imbedded amidst green sward and foliage, and not a shadow of a ripple disturbed their glassy surface.

These lakes stand in the relation to each other of parent and child, Lungern being the sire and Sarnen the offspring. The lower is, moreover, the smallest, and is formed from the superabundant water of the higher. About twenty years since, with the view of draining Lungern, which is the topmost lake, they drove a tunnel, 1400 feet long, from the level of the lower lake into what they thought would be the bottom of the higher, but which proved not to be the case. The consequence is, that, although they have regained a great many acres for the service of man, yet it has left a most unnatural eyesore—a half-drained lake in the midst of the most romantic and picturesque natural beauty. When they had reached within a few feet of the bed of the higher lake, they deposited a thousand pounds of gunpowder in a chamber at the end of the tunnel, which was well backed up with rock and clay. Everything being prepared, a bold miner was sent down to fire the train. The match was sufficiently

long to allow of his escape to the far end of the aperture, which was announced by the firing of a pistol. Ten minutes had expired and no explosion was heard, but, about a minute after, a low rumbling, like distant thunder, and a shaking of the ground, took place. Suddenly a torrent of black water and mud rushed from the mouth of the tunnel, and in a fortnight the lake Lungern was reduced to its present dimensions. On its shores appearances were at first very alarming; the banks began to crack, and large masses gave way. The village of Lungern itself for a time appeared in some degree of jeopardy, since a large slice of land near it slipped towards the emptied lake. The reclaimed ground, which was nothing but sand and mud, produced at first but scanty crops; now, however, it appears to be in a high state of cultivation, and equal to the adjoining lands.

The ascent of the Brunig takes about two hours. It is one of the easiest passes in Switzerland, not being more than about 5000 feet in height. From its summit, looking towards Meyringen, you have a wild and desolate prospect indeed, while on the other side there is nothing but soft beauty and luxuriance. Before us lay the Ober-Hasli, one of the most savage and dreary valleys in all the land; and beyond it, towards the south and south-east, the snow-capped Alps rose in combination with bold limestone rocks. On either side of the valley the



variety and beauty of the firs were very striking: at one time they were grouped in masses thick enough to exclude the sun; at another they were perched on the crest of slopes, or on fragments and crags of rocks, where the wonder was how they came there, and how they could find nourishment for their roots. Sometimes the most beautiful scenes appeared through their vista, and at others a snowy mountain was to be seen above them. In fact, the forests were quite sceneries of themselves.

The little straggling hamlet of Brienz is pleasantly situated on a narrow ledge at the foot of the mountains, and commands a splendid view of the lake from the point where the swift-flowing Aar enters it, to the village of Bonigen at its further end. There are two paths close by the water's edge, each of which conducts you to Interlaken; and nothing can be more delightful on a fine day than a walk by either of them. Being much interrupted, the path frequently leads up and down, sometimes passing over broken country and beds of winter streams, through orchards of the most superb walnut and other fruit trees, and then through rich and luxuriant meadows and pastures. Many of the noble walnuts actually overhang the waters of the lake, and in some places the path is beside it on the margin of steep cliffs. There is a greater space of land between the lake and the almost perpendicular mountains on the left than on the right shore; and as

you proceed you pass through a number of well-inhabited villages, generally at the water's edge, where, if tired, you may always obtain a row-boat to Brienz or Interlaken. Some of these hamlets contain the most beautiful specimens of the châlet architecture of the canton Berne, whose peculiarity consists in low façades, with depressed and flattened roofs, spacious outside galleries, and numberless small windows.

## CHAPTER XXV.

## CANTONS FREYBURG, BERNE, AND BASLE.

From Thun to Basle—Thun—Freyburg and its Bridge—The Jesuits—Berne, its Civil and Religious Institutions—The Church of Vaud—The Munsterthal—Basle—Manheim—Mayence—Cologne—Brussels—Dover—Home.

AFTER nearly six weeks of constant travel over frightful precipices and dreary mountain-passes, we were glad of a few days' rest at Interlaken, the point from which we had originally started in the early part of July. Among other things we found, on our arrival, our baggage, which we regarded as the face of an old friend.

Having determined to find our way out of Switzerland by the picturesque pass of the Munsterthal, we accordingly embarked at Neuhaus for Thun. This lake is not hemmed in like that of Brienz by steep perpendicular cliffs, and, consequently, in traversing it, you command a fine view of some of the

snow-capped mountains of the Bernese Oberland, particularly the Monch, Eigher, Jung Frau, the beautiful and unique Blumliss, and the towering Altels which rise immediately above the pass of the Gemmi. On the same side, also, you have the meandering valleys of the Kander and the Simmen, where the eccentric Niesen and Stockhorn, rising abruptly from the plain, stand sentinels, to bar, as it were, both ingress and egress. On its northern side it is more sheltered, and abounds in forests of magnificent oaks. These are backed by the steepes of the Ralligstocke, which extends along the whole length of the lake. Occasionally it is broken by a ravine, in which is to be found the ruin of an old castle, the memento of Swiss subjugation to the princes of Burgundy.

Thun, standing, as it does, on the arrowy Aar, about a mile from the end of the lake, is built on either side of the river. A walk to the church, which is literally built upon a hill in the middle of the town, will give you a commanding view of the plain which stretches before you for many miles. Another, which leads by a path at the back of the hotel to the heights which rise on the north side of the town, is exquisitely beautiful when the sun is casting its retiring rays upon the opposite Alps. A third, which is by the margin of the river and the lake, will conduct you to the regions of history, of imagination and romance.

There are many furnished houses at Thun, which are generally tenanted by the English, who have retired hither for the summer months to escape the intense heat of Italy. During the past year they were occupied by a whole colony from Nice, who brought their physician and pastor—both greatly esteemed not only by their more immediate friends, but also by passing tourists. Thun also possesses a capital boarding-house, the Baumgarten; and the Belle-Vue, one of the best hotels in Switzerland.

A short visit to the antiquated town of Freyburg, a little to the left of Berne, most amply recompensed our curiosity. It appears to be one of those old-fashioned places which connect the present with the past. Situated, as it is, on a promontory formed by the windings of the Saarine, it possesses every appearance of a fortress, especially as some of the houses are built upon the very brow of the precipice which overhangs the valley. Like the antiquated town of Lucerne, it is walled; and at intervals there are a number of towers, which in olden times might have proved some defence, but which, with modern prowess in arms, would be rased in a few seconds. The view, as you approach it from Berne, is very striking. After ascending a pretty steep hill, you are brought suddenly upon an airy-looking iron bridge, which spans a deep valley, on the opposite side of which the town is built. From the top of this hill, forming, as it does, one side of

the valley of Saarine, two hours formerly were consumed by the heavy diligence, in descending and ascending to the town. Now, however, it is accomplished in the short space of two minutes by this splendid iron bridge, which, for lightness of construction, combined with real strength, may compete with any similar construction in Europe. It is suspended by four cables of wire, each of which contains one thousand and fifty-six separate strands. The guide-book of Mr. Murray, probably to give confidence to timid travellers, very kindly informs them, that it is capable of bearing at least three times the weight that can possibly be put upon it. I must however confess, that in passing it, as I did in a heavy laden diligence, and finding it to oscillate a little, I felt a bit nervous till I found, the same authority assuring me that although I was suspended in mid-air, there were no less than four thousand two hundred and twenty-four separate wires employed in my suspension. I thought upon the old story of the bundle of arrows, and took courage.

These iron cables, after having been carried across the valley to their piers, are sunk in vertical shafts, which are scooped out of the solid rock, and anchored at the bottom by great blocks of granite. The fabric is at an elevation of two hundred feet above the river which flows beneath; and the span of its arch being nearly one thousand feet, it is the largest single-spanned suspension bridge in the world.

There is also another nearly of the same description across the same valley, not many miles distant, the only difference being, that although it is not quite so long, it is, at least, one hundred feet higher—that is, at an elevation of three hundred feet. The precipice also on one side is much higher than on the other, which gives it the singular appearance from a distance, of being a suspended arch rather than a bridge with a pathway.

The peculiarity of these elegant structures is their great strength, combined with their extreme fragile and light appearance. Although constructed in the most economical manner with the iron of Berne and the rock of Freyburg, yet the former cost twenty-five thousand pounds sterling. The inhabitants, however, should by no means grudge even this large sum, for previous to its erection they could only approach their town from the Berne side, by descending into the valley by a steep, zig-zag road, and after crossing the river three times ascending the opposite bank by similar paths.

Notwithstanding the Jesuit College was suppressed by a Decree of the Diet in 1847, Freyburg is still one of the strongholds of this sect of the Romish Church in Switzerland. It possesses nine convents, twelve churches, and ten chapels; while the Jesuit boarding-school, situated in a commanding part of the town, though shorn of its former importance, still exercises an influence over the children,

who are sent hither from the Roman Catholic parts of Germany and France.

It is strange, among a liberty-loving people like the Swiss, that the Jesuits, though nominally expelled, should still be allowed to linger in this country: their principles being so diametrically opposed to all freedom of thought and action. The Spiritual Exercises of Loyola, a book which, with the order, is held in greater estimation than the Bible, enjoins them to strain every nerve to manifest the virtue of obedience, first to the chief Pontiff, then to the superior of the Society, so that in all things in which obedience is consistent with charity, we may be prompt at the voice of each, as though it was the voice of Christ. Obeying whatever is enjoined with speed, with joy, and with perseverance, persuading themselves that every command is just, renouncing every opposite sentiment and judgment of their own, by a sort of blind obedience; each persuading himself that those who live under obedience, should permit themselves to be carried and governed by Divine Providence, acting through their superiors, as *though each* were a corpse, which permits itself to be carried anywhere, and to be handled in any manner; or like *the stick of an old man*, which serves him who holds it, wheresoever or in whatsoever thing he wishes to use it. And again, that they may be altogether of the same mind, and in conformity with the Church itself,



if she shall have defined anything to be black, which to their eyes appears to be white, they ought in like manner to pronounce it to be black.

Upon these principles, every member of the order is prepared to go to any part of the world at any time : to the wilds of Siberia, or the densely populated cities of China—to the inhospitable shores of Labrador, or to the sunny plains of India, and this without the least reluctance or the least remonstrance; to call black white, and white black, if the Church tells him so; to transform his living body into a corpse, which permits itself to be carried anywhere, or to be handled in any manner. What more could be required than such a system as this, worked as it is by clever, cunning men, to subjugate the human mind and the human will to the obedience of an ignorant, ambitious, earth-born Church?

The blind devotion which these men manifest to their leaders, and to what we cannot but regard as a masterpiece of evil, is, however, very humiliating to many who glory in greater light and more extensive knowledge. Men of their order are ready to sacrifice themselves—to be bastinadoed, spit upon, mutilated, murdered. But where is the devotion, the life-giving energy, the constancy, and the zeal of Christians for their unseen King and immortal Lord whom they profess to obey?

Although the Canton Berne is now deprived of

the Canton Vaud, which it governed in a tyrannical, selfish spirit, it is nevertheless by far the most important in the confederation. The town of Berne is built upon a lofty promontory, round which the Aar sweeps in its deep channel, and, from the river having become a noble stream and its banks steep and precipitous, adds much to the beauty and general appearance of the place. The houses rest upon arcades, which form covered walks on each side the streets. This gives them not only a gloomy look, but effectually excludes the little heat and light of a Swiss winter's sun; besides which, the wind pierces through them as through a tunnel. The main street is somewhat enlivened by several sparkling fountains, each of which is surrounded by some biped or quadruped, not excepting the bear who, clothed in complete armour, is presiding over their numerous streams. Not only have they multiplied his effigy on fountains, sign-posts, coins, and public buildings, but for hundreds of years the good inhabitants have manifested such an affection for these uncouth animals, as to possess several living specimens a little without the city, maintained at the public expense.

Their prison, penitentiary, and especially their new hall for the meeting of the Diet or Confederation of the States, held now only at Berne, are on a grand scale, and reflect credit on the enlightened views of their rulers. Crimes against the person or

property within the city are said to be exceedingly rare.

Previous to 1830 the extensive cantons Bérne, as well as Geneva and Vaud, were governed by an oligarchy, who illiberally gave all places of public trust to their relatives and denied all political rights to the burghers and peasants. In 1830 these cantons followed the example of France, and revolutionised the cantonal administration. In Berne, however, although they admitted the burghers to a participation of long-denied political rights, they still continued to exclude the rural districts. Nevertheless, the country flourished: the public burdens were light, and the laws were obeyed. In 1848, when all Europe was in a state of ferment, they effected a further change, and the extreme liberals, aided by the peasantry, removed the existing government, and placed another more liberal and according to their notions better adapted to the wants of the country, in its stead.

Thus the oligarchy which originally governed was displaced altogether, and their descendants to the present day are considered ineligible for situations of public trust. Those who succeeded them were clever, bold men, for the most part destitute of fortune, and represent what may be called the popular classes both in town and country. Under them also the canton appears to be well governed. The oligarchy attributes this to anything but the ability

of their present rulers; and to converse with them, although crimes against the person are rare and property is well protected, you would imagine that plots and counterplots, revolutions and confiscations, were about to swallow them up. To be sure they are quite liberal enough. Every one who has attained the age of twenty, and can produce a certificate of confirmation, is eligible for appointment to any office in the State. They elect their representatives in the Canton Council in the proportion of one to two thousand, and out of this Council an executive of nine is chosen to administer the affairs of the canton. Any member of the Grand Council is also eligible for election as the representative of the canton at the General Diet, or Confederation of the States, in which also the liberals have a preponderance. In the more influential, that is in the liberal and Protestant cantons, there is a yearning for further progress; and their great object appears to be the formation of an Helvetian republic, which would do away with all cantonal rights and privileges, and thus they imagine their country would be greater and more prosperous than when split up as it is now, into twenty-two cantons.

The Revolution of 1848 considerably altered their ecclesiastical government. At present the Church is ruled nominally by a synod of which two-thirds are laymen. This synod, however, has but little

power, since the executive possesses a veto on any or all of their proceedings. This body is chosen by the people, who have also the right of electing pastors when a vacancy occurs. The truth is, the synod is quite a nonentity, and the Government only regard it as a body elected by the people to give them advice, which they may adopt or reject at pleasure. So that in effect the government is the Bishop of the Bernese Church, since it dismisses pastors and issues its mandates for their ordination, administers its revenues, and, lastly, decrees what doctrines and discipline it shall adopt. A Monsieur Zeller, the disciple and bosom friend of Strauss, the rationalist, who was expelled from Zurich for heterodoxy, is deputed to train candidates for the ministry; and, from his known and avowed principles, it requires but little knowledge of human nature to foretell of what cast and complexion of religious belief the future pastors of Berne will be. Not long since, four young men were examined by a commission of ministers appointed by the Government, who reported that two of them were not eligible for the ministry. Notwithstanding, the Government immediately enjoined their ordination; and when those to whom the mandate was addressed refused, others more pliant were soon found to execute its commands.

But not only is the Bishop State filling the canton with Neological and Socinian pastors, but they have

also thought proper to abolish the religious test, to which formerly the State schoolmasters, who were to be found in every parish, were obliged to subscribe; and the consequence is, that a body of conceited, pragmatical, half communist, and half rationalist young men, are corrupting the rising generation at the fountain—a calamity which the right-thinking are desirous of averting, by having the office abolished and compulsory education no longer enforced.

In the Canton Vaud the Government, that is their bishop, has not only abolished all tests of orthodoxy, but also altered their forms of prayer, besides dismissing pastors and placing unworthy and improper persons in their stead. The 83rd article of their Constitution provides for the calling of a synod to decide on all ecclesiastical cases. But the 84th goes on to say, that the decision of the synod is to be received in the light of advice, which the Council of State, that is the Executive Government, may either adopt or reject. Not many years since they commanded their pastors to read certain political proclamations, which sanctioned the revolutionary measures of the Government; and when they refused, they not only dismissed but persecuted them.

To such a height did they proceed, that 225 out of 288 ministers assembled at Lausanne to deliberate on the perilous condition of the Church.

Their discussions continued for two days without intermission except for occasional prayer, when, finally, 185, considerably more than one-half, came to the conclusion that they could no longer remain in the National Church with a safe conscience. Many of them are at the present time exiles in a foreign land exposed to the greatest privations, while some who remained in their native country, thirty-seven pastors and forty-five influential laymen, formed a Constituent Synod. These were the representatives of their brethren in thirty-three towns and villages of the canton, and on the 12th March, 1847, they proclaimed themselves the Evangelical Free Church of the Canton Vaud, to maintain the rights of Jesus Christ over his Church, the purity of the evangelical ministry, and sound doctrine ; and such have been their consistency and devotion during seven years of persecution and trial, that they have enlisted the sympathies of the most pious part of the community ; and at the present moment they exert a beneficial influence on the country, if not on the Government itself.

The secession at Berne is not so extensive, because their rulers did not carry matters to such a height as in Canton Vaud. One of their number, however, an oligarch, whose friendship and society I sometimes enjoyed, expressed himself in justification of his secession in the following terms ; some allowance must of course be made for his oligarchi-

cal prejudices, since their rulers are scarcely so bad as he makes them to appear:—"In the social point of view, the end of Radicalism is Communism, and in the religious point of view it is Pantheism, that is, the deification of the world. We must not be surprised, therefore, when we see that in Switzerland it employs all its resources to undermine Scriptural Christianity. There exists between the vital principle of the Christian Church and the vital principle of Radicalism an irreconcilable antagonism. Whether it will or not, the time is not far distant when the Church must separate itself from the State. That, however, which should determine the conduct of every Christian is his conscience, and he should not wait till he is forced to act by the enemy. For this reason I have placed my faith and my church outside the enemy's camp."

These secessions in the great Protestant cantons of some of the ablest and most devoted pastors and distinguished laymen, have already made much impression on their fellow-Christians who remain within the pale of the Established Church, as well as on foreigners; and since they are increasing both in numbers and in importance, they are, humanly speaking, by the blessing of God, likely to become the conservators and defenders of the faith once delivered to the saints.

We were fortunate in obtaining the *coupée* of the



diligence, which started at the early hour of five. The morning was delightful, and as we ascended the hills above Berne we obtained the finest distant view of the Bernese chain of Alps that we had ever seen. In consequence of the clearness of the atmosphere they appeared so lofty and gigantic, that notwithstanding they were full forty miles distant, one would have supposed they were not half so far.

This parting glance at objects which had delighted us during the past three months was altogether unexpected, and we gazed on them till they were concealed by our descent upon Bienne.

On leaving it we immediately commenced the ascent of the Jura, and as the diligence had to traverse backwards and forwards, by lateral roads, most of the passengers walked to the summit, where again we were greeted with another sight of our old friends, as well as with a very picturesque view of Bienne and its lake which lay at our feet.

Our way lay not across but longitudinally along the mountains; for the peculiarity of this ridge which separates France from Switzerland is, that it is very broad, several miles in some places, at the top, with valleys between. In descending the ridge which we had just crossed, we passed between two mountains, Mont Monto and Chasseral Gestler, each of which is above four thousand feet high. To turn these we were obliged to follow the course of the river Suze, though in doing so, we were going

from the point of our destination. It is the winding between the hills which imparts so much beauty to this picturesque pass, which, if it does not possess the grandeur and magnificence of some Alpine routes, is nevertheless replete with loveliness and interest.

The descent into the actual Munsterthal commences at the ridge which bounds the valley of St. Imier by a gentle declivity, and not only the immediate valley but the whole country for many miles, takes the same name. The river Birs, which rises at the foot of the hill, near the renowned Pierced Stone of the Romans, winds its tortuous course through it, sometimes pent within narrow bounds, and at others stretching its intending arms from one side of the valley to the other. We passed through the agricultural villages of Malleray, Moutier, Delemart, and Laufen, in the department of the Haut Rhin, and arrived at *les Trois Rois* at Basle late in the evening.

If we had not been permitted to traverse such savagely wild tracks as the Grimsal and Furea, we had seen nature in one of her loveliest and most capricious moods. At one time we would be driven through a rent in the mountains, where there was scarce room for the road and the turbulent stream, with high vertical precipices over our heads; and at another we would undulate among pasture sweeps, whose bounding ridges were rich with deep green

firs and wide-spreading beech trees. Like many of the Swiss roads, it was by the side of the stream, so that we were obliged to follow wherever it led, though it was at times so intricate that we could scarce see our way out.

On the Sabbath at Basle we were again favoured with the services of a clergyman of the Colonial Church Society ; and it may give some idea of the importance which Swiss innkeepers attach to the visits of our countrymen, when we find them, as the master of the Three Kings, fitting up a chapel for their convenience within the walls of his hotel.

Early on the morning of a fine autumnal day we left by the railroad for Manheim, and forthwith proceeded by steam-boat to Mayence the same day. The following we passed down the Rhine, but oh ! how shorn of its grandeur and glory, at least to our eye, from the time when we had traversed it in the beginning of the season. Having taken a couple of days to visit some of the lions of Cologne and Brussels, which we had overlooked on a previous visit, we took the early train with the view of seeing the chalky cliffs of Old Albion before night. The Channel, however, had to be first passed ; and we had no sooner embarked on board the crowded steamer and left the pier, than we found ourselves pitching and tossing in the trough of the sea—the residuum of the previous day's gale. The little boat, however, behaved nobly, and to the

satisfaction of every one who was not inconvenienced by her motion.

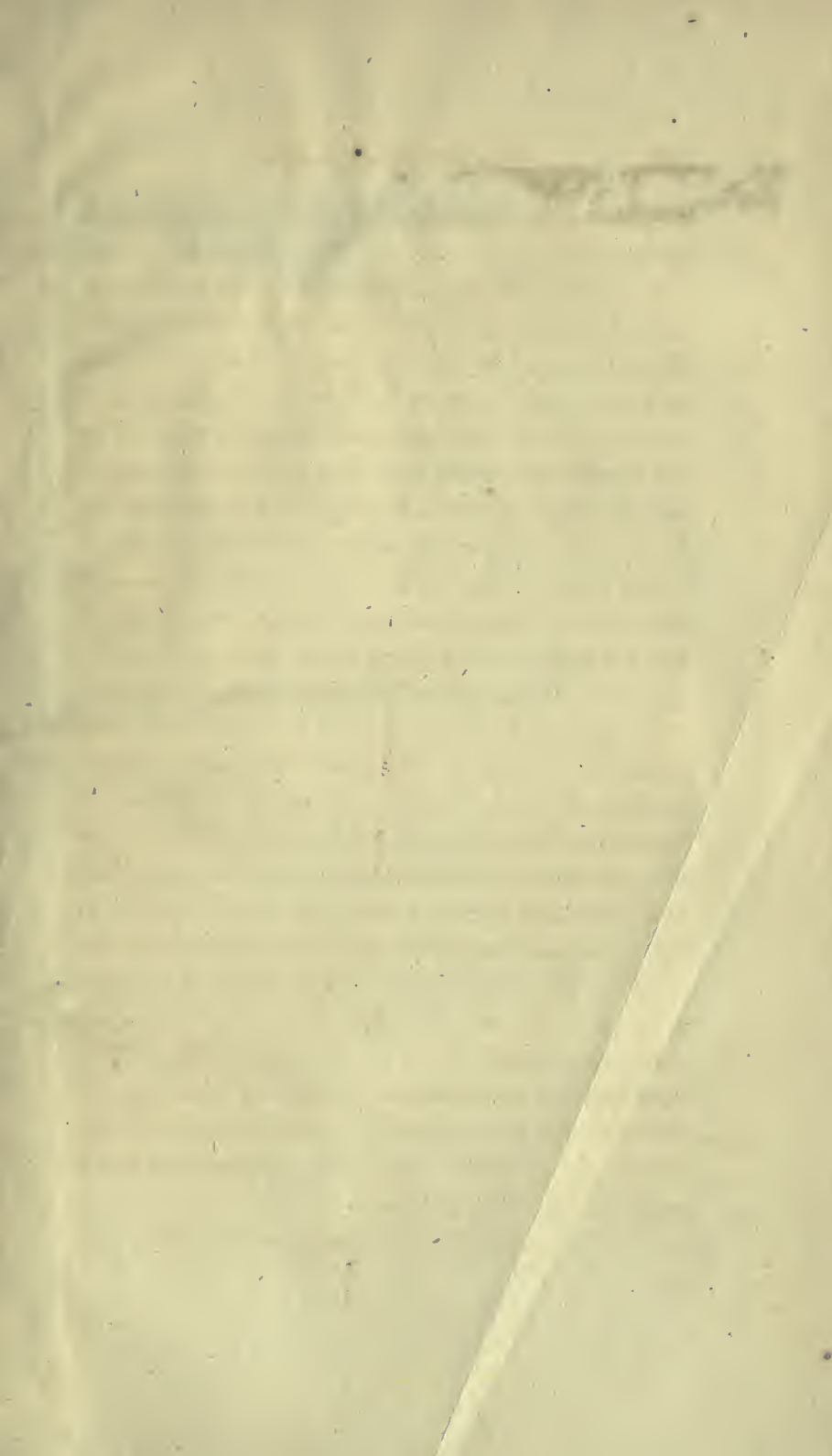
It is said that the tempest-tossed mariner experiences the most exquisite feelings when he finds himself moored in some harbour of refuge. Be this as it may, no mariner's joy could be greater than ours when we found ourselves beneath the roof of the comfortable hotel at Dover, and not the least of our satisfaction, was to hear again the sweet sounds of our own native tongue spoken by every one.

For three months we had been traversing through difficult and dreary mountain passes, sometimes by narrow paths on the verge of the most awful precipices, or by the side of the most furious torrents. We had passed forwards and backwards over more than four thousand miles, and not a hair of our heads had been injured. To whom were we indebted for this mercy? not to blind chance—not to a number of fortuitous circumstances, but to His invisible hand who had held our souls in life. To Him therefore would we raise our tribute of praise.

We had journeyed far and seen much, and yet there was an indescribable charm in the barren downs and chalky cliffs of our native land. There was also the anticipation of meeting relatives and friends who would give us their hearty welcome; and in the midst of scenes such as these we would say with the traveller bard—

“England, with all thy faults I love thee still!”

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