











## THE GRISONS

LONDON

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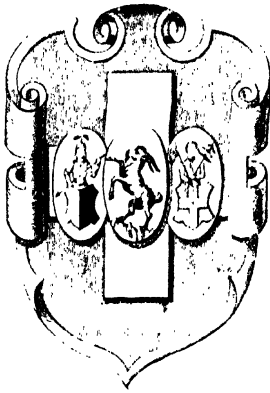
PIZ BERNINA AND THE MORTERATSCH GLACIER.





A SUMMER TOUR  
IN  
THE GRISONS  
AND ITALIAN VALLEYS OF  
THE BERNINA.

MRS. HENRY FRESHFIELD,  
AUTHOR OF 'ALPINE GARGAYS.'



'Back to the joyous Alps!'

LONDON:  
LONGMAN, GREEN, LONGMAN, AND ROBERTS.  
1862.



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## MOUNTAIN HEIGHTS IN ENGLISH FEET

	ENG. FEET
Klausen Pass . . . . .	6,150
Segnes Pass . . . . .	8,612
Albula Pass . . . . .	7,680
Bernina Pass . . . . .	7,695
Maloggia Pass . . . . .	6,060
Muretto Pass . . . . .	8,389
Canciano Pass . . . . .	8,366
Forcola Pass . . . . .	7,618
Casana Pass . . . . .	8,852
Fluela Pass . . . . .	7,891
Dodi . . . . .	11,880
Piz Bernina . . . . .	13,291
Disgrazia . . . . .	12,054
Piz Linard . . . . .	11,420
Isle Pers (Morteratsch Glacier)	8,179
Grun Alp . . . . .	7,259
Piz Languard . . . . .	10,720
Monte Nero (Valtelline) . . . . .	Not known.
Schwarzhorn (Fluela Pass) . . . . .	10,338
Pontresina (Ober Engadine) . . . . .	5,932
Val Livigno . . . . .	6,148
Davos Thal . . . . .	5,105







**ALPS OF GLARUS**  
 And Part of the  
 NEIGHBOURING CANTONS

Engraved by Edward Wedder

**GLARUS**

**RHEIN**

**VORDER**

**RHEIN**

**DISSENTEN**

**Herrisried**

**Oberdorf**

**St. Gallen**

**St. Gallen**

**St. Gallen**

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# THE GRISONS

AND

## ALLEYS OF THE BERNINA



### CHAPTER I.

#### INTRODUCTORY

*Auf die Berge will ich steigen,  
Wo die hohen Tannen stehen; --  
Auf die Berge will ich steigen,  
Wo die freien Lutte wehen'.*

**I**T is now an established fact, that Switzerland holds an important position as one of the most popular and accessible resorts of those who seek health and pleasure at a distance from home; but a natural result of the yearly increasing facilities for rapid travelling is, that hitherto secluded Alpine nooks are almost overrun, while the rushing crowd circling round Chamounix, and dispersed through the Oberland, destroys the enjoyment formerly found by

travellers who sought relief from the shackles of conventional life.

Our previous wanderings had already led us through the Alpine byways of the western side of Switzerland, and therefore we gladly welcomed some hints given to us last winter by a friend, who directed our attention to the comparatively unknown scenery of the Grisons.

The chain of the Rhætian Alps, stretching from the St. Gothard to the distant Tyrol, rises to its greatest height in the grand central group, whose rocky ridges and ice-clad pinnacles, like natural battlements, mark the boundary line between Lombardy and the Graubünden cantons of Eastern Switzerland. Here the many-headed Bernina shines forth as the brightest ornament of the Rhætian crown, yielding in magnificent beauty only to Mont Blanc or the queenly Monte Rosa.

We soon found that little definite knowledge was to be gathered at home, but we gleaned hints sufficient to direct our course towards the Ober Engadine and the mountainous district which lies between the Inn and the Adda. Secluded valleys, and peaks as yet unknown, even by name, there promised the charm of novelty, combined with some of the most lovely scenery inclosed within the Alps.

The season of 1861, the finest and warmest which had been known for many years among the mountains, was peculiarly calculated for excursions in a region where the elevation of the valleys is generally from 5000 to 6000 feet above the sea. Our hopes of enjoyment were more than realised, and each day's experience increased our surprise at finding a country so accessible, and abounding with every element of beauty, left to the almost undisturbed possession of the Bergamesque herdsmen and their flocks.

I have often seen a long line of sheep following each other along a narrow track, when the whole mountain side was open before them for choice of way; and if occasionally the herbage scattered on either side seemed to tempt a wanderer from the beaten path, such an exception was but rare. Most travellers, acting on the same principle, follow where others lead. Thus it happens, that while Zermatt, Chamounix, and the Bernese Oberland overflow with the current that sets in upon them, the equally beautiful scenery of the Bündler Oberland and the Grisons, comprised in the Rhatian range, is left unvisited by the tide. Long may its deep recesses and mountain solitudes remain undisturbed by visions of crinoline and knickerbockers! There are many, however, who love Nature in her freshness, who are prepared to



enjoy her beauties even at the cost of occasional rough lodging and some personal exertion,—and who can, when necessary, confine their wardrobes within the limits of a carpet-bag. In the hope of indicating new scenes of interest and beauty to such kindred spirits, I am induced to publish these sketches of our pleasant rambles during the past summer.

In directing attention to a district at present so little known, I shall not confine my suggestions to excursions adapted to even the most enterprising ladies. My object has been to gather together any knowledge gained from the recent personal experience of others, as well as my own, and I am much indebted to those who have kindly placed such information at my disposal.

The recent successful ascent of the Piz Bernina, by two members of the Alpine Club, will probably excite a more extended interest in this mountain range; and the details of our summer journey may prove useful to those who wish for more information than is afforded by the necessarily short notices added in the last edition of Murray.

The accommodation at present provided for travellers in the Ober Engadine and the valleys around the Bernina is limited; but at the principal places

it will be found as comfortable as in the mountain inns of the Bernese Oberland. This district of the Grisons has hitherto been so little visited by the English, that German habits prevail, not always agreeable to our tastes. There is, however, a strong and general desire to attract our countrymen, as well as every disposition to meet their wants. The charges at the inns are apparently in a transition state, and are very varying; and we often found that the amount bore an amusing disproportion to the value received.

The food provided might not always suit a fastidious taste, for fresh meat cannot be depended upon, even in the large villages; but the bread was usually sweet, and when accompanied by fresh butter with good mountain cheese, there was little reason for complaint.\*

The marked peculiarity of these valleys is the general use of the Romansch dialect, by which the traveller may be sometimes inconvenienced if with-

\* A rough lunchon-basket is a convenient and valuable travelling companion. The one which we always take contains some tea, a little arrowroot, and a small supply of Fortnum and Mason's portable soup; a wicker-covered pint-bottle for wine or brandy, an Etna, with spirits of wine, a few common spoons, &c. Thus provided we were quite independent of the assistance of others, and could boil the kettle even on the mountain sides.

out a local guide. The people may possibly guess your wants if expressed in patois Italian, or bad German; but your case is hopeless if mutual communication is needed to help you through a difficulty. The strange intermingling of tongues may be noticed in the various terms employed to denote the same object. Thus, within a very small circle, a mountain summit is described as a Horn, Monte, Cima, Spitze, and Pizzo; Valle and Thal are substituted for each other; while around the Bernina group, Vadret, or Vadretta, would commonly be better understood than Firn or Gletscher.

We found it unsafe to depend upon local information as to time or distance; indeed, except at Pontresina, no efficient guides exist. We had fortunately picked up, *en route*, Professor Theobald's 'Naturbilder aus dem Rätischen Alpen,' which, aided by the hints gained from a little book on the 'Bernina Gruppe,' published by Dr. Lechner (the Protestant pastor of St. Moritz), enabled us to arrange our movements with some degree of confidence. The map attached to Dr. Lechner's book will be found very useful. It is published in a separate cover, and seems to be in general favour among the guides around the Bernina. I have not hesitated to avail myself of the information acquired from the above sources, as well

as from the following works : 'Der Canton Graubünden,' which forms the fifteenth volume of Röder and Tscharner's 'Gemälde der Schweiz,' compressing a vast amount of knowledge into a small compass, and 'Des Schweizerland's Geschichte,' by Zschokke, which gives a slight sketch of some of the most interesting historical events by which the tranquillity of these valleys was formerly disturbed. Von Tschudi's 'Thierleben der Alpenwelt' will be peculiarly interesting, as a companion, in a region so frequently referred to in his pages, and with which the name of the artist Georgy, his friend and illustrator, is so intimately associated.

Our family trio was again joined by the friend to whose pencil I am so much indebted, and we were as usual accompanied by our good friend Couttet.

We knew that he was unacquainted with the mountain region which we intended to explore ; but we were sure that his general knowledge of Alpine travelling would be useful, and we were not disposed to dispense with the comfort derived from his attendance. Couttet has now the advantage of being the only guide either at Chamounix or in the Oberland who is practically acquainted with the byways of the Bernina.

The gratifying reception given to the 'Light Leaves' gathered during previous summers will, I

trust, be considered an excuse for the appearance of these sketches. If I am thought to presume upon the kindness already shown to an unknown writer, I may shelter myself under the suggestion made by an able weekly Review\*, that 'Byways in profusion remain to be explored, and there will be no lack of matter for another volume.'

\* Saturday Review, June 29th, 1861.

## CHAPTER II.

### LUCERNE TO STACHELBERG

THE most direct and speedy route to the Alps is by the railroad from Basle to Zurich and Chur, whence an easy carriage journey of a few days brings the traveller over the Julier Pass to Moritz, at the head of the Ober Engadine. If we wished, however, to revisit Stachelberg, and, adding to our knowledge of the scenery at the Linththal, to cross the Segnes Pass, the connecting link between the villages of Elm, in Canton Glarus, and Flims, in the valley of the Unter-Rhein, Mr. Forster gives an interesting description of this pass in his contribution to 'Peaks and Passes,' and we thought that a few days might well be spent in making some of the excursions which he recommends.

With this view we decided to approach the mountains from Lucerne, and, having left Basle

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noisiest of Sunday resting-places!) at six o'clock on Monday, August 5th, we reached the lake before eleven, and were soon joined at the Schweitzer Hof by Couttet, who was waiting our arrival. The heat and glare of the mid-day sun offered no inducement to linger, and after a few necessary purchases, we were ready to leave, by the steamer up the lake, at two o'clock. On either side, Pilatus and the Righi raised their now rival crests against the cloudless sky. A new hotel has lately been built just below the summit of Pilatus, and the extended panorama commanded by its greater height will probably attract many who would otherwise have been satisfied by a night on the Righi. The access, particularly from the side of Alpnach, is quite easy and safe on horseback. Two routes to Stachelberg were open to us from Lucerne. The most direct would have been to leave the lake at Brunnen, and, after passing through Schwitz, to sleep at Muotta. There is a horse-path up the valley from thence as far as Eigen, whence a foot-path traverses the Bisithal, and makes a rapid descent down the mountain side, and through the woods, above the baths of Stachelberg. We had already been as far as Muotta, on our way by the Prigel Pass to Glarus, but of the further portion of the route we could obtain no information, and not

wishing to risk needless difficulties at the outset, we adopted the more prudent course of going on to Fluellen and Altorf, and thence over the Klausen Pass to the Linththal.

While we enjoyed the beautiful scenery of the lake, Couttet was employed in gaining some knowledge of the journey which we had traced out. He was found in a quiet corner, with Leuthold's map spread out before him, receiving a lesson in geography from my son.

During the evening, after our arrival at Altorf, arrangements were made for horses to carry us across the Klausen. The charges here are extravagant, and our requirements were large: two horses for the gentlemen were engaged only to the summit of the pass; those for the ladies, with an animal to carry the baggage, were to be taken all the way to Stachelberg. As usual, we were detained the next morning, waiting for the convoy: at last all were assembled, and we were on our way at a quarter past six.

The early part of the ride was extremely pretty. Passing the picturesque church and village of Burglen, celebrated as the birthplace of William Tell, the way gradually leads upwards, through the richly-wooded Schachenthal, to Spiringen, where a nice-looking



country inn appeared to have been newly built. We rode on to Unter-Schachen, where the horses rested for half an hour. The scenery around is fine, particularly looking up a valley which opens out to the right, closed by the glaciers and snowy peaks, through which there is a difficult and little-used foot-path to the Maderanerthal and Amsteg. Through the mountain range to the left, a way over the Kinzig Culm leads to Muotta. It was over these wild regions that, in September, 1799, Suwarrow brought the Russian hordes, in his celebrated march from the St. Gothard, when thousands perished amidst the awful precipices and unknown dangers by which they were encompassed. Under ordinary circumstances the

gh the valley does not now deserve the given of it by Alison, as ‘the rugged and intractable pass of the Schachenthal.’

At the village the view was closed by the rocky Balmwand, towards which the path wound through the cascade of the Staubi forming a fine object on the right. The way was rough and over steep rocks, amongst which the horses fell and slipped about so unpleasantly that we were resting to our own feet, although the blaze of the sunshine made the climb hot and fatiguing. At the head of the pass, we mounted again,

to ride for half an hour over a plateau of rough pasture ground, which extends across the summit of the Klausen; from whence the gentlemen's horses were sent back to Altorf. There is no grand view here, but the scenery is wild and fine; the ridge over which we passed forming a connecting link between the snowy range of the Clariden, on the south, and the shattered precipices of the Glatten on the north, amidst which a huge tower of rock rises up, and forms a most striking object.

The horses required another rest at the châteaux of Urnerboden, where there is a small chapel and a rough inn. The people were kindly mannered, and very civil, although, being well provided with luncheon, we asked for nothing but some fresh milk. Below this a very gradual descent, over moist pastures, led to a much more interesting portion of our ride. A gate shows the boundary between the cantons of Uri and Glarus, where the path enters a wooded glade, and then winds along the banks of a noisy stream, amidst rich foliage and vegetation. The wild woodland scene was very beautiful: the rock-strewn ground was covered with ferns and flowers, of luxuriant growth, in full bloom. Amongst them the willow herb threw up its graceful pink heads, mingled with the darker colouring of the monk's-hood, and

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lighted up by a profusion of delicate yellow fox-glove, and rich golden-flowered ragworts. The lilac cacalia, which has recently become a fashionable greenhouse plant, was also very abundant. We emerged from the woods at the top of a long and steep descent, unsuited for riding, beyond which the Linththal was extended before us ; here we dismounted, and walked down to the banks of the river, at the head of the valley. The Fätschbach finds its way down the mountain side in a succession of cascades, and, after a grand final leap over the rocks, unites itself with the Linth. It is about an hour's ride down the valley to the baths of Stachelberg, which are beautifully placed in park-like grounds, rather above the river, and sheltered by the wooded heights which rise immediately in the rear. We were fortunate in obtaining the only unoccupied rooms in the house, which seems to overflow with visitors, notwithstanding the large additions it has recently received. We found ourselves the only English party there, German being the almost universal tongue.

Our first expedition was to the Pantenbruch and lower Sand Alp. We rode up the valley as far as a *châlet* inn, dignified as the 'Wirthhaus Dodi,' from whence one of the men who accompanied

the horses was to act as guide. An hour's walk up the mountain side brought us to the wild and magnificent gorge, spanned by the Pantenbruch, where the river has forced its narrow channel through the dark rocks at a vast depth below. The upward view of the Dodi is fine; with a picturesque foreground, where luxuriant beech trees mingled with the firs which spring from every rocky knoll. After crossing the Bruch our guide led us up a sharp ascent, by which we reached some cattle châteaux, whence the view in both directions was very beautiful, the Glarnisch being now a prominent feature rising beyond the valley of the Linth. The Dodi here towers so grandly above the snowy Clariden and Biferten, on either side, that one wonders why it has been hitherto neglected by our Alpine climbers. The crest is formed, not of one point, but of three summits crowned with a vast glacier plateau, which is upheld by enormous walls of dark rugged rock. Many attempts were made, commencing with those of Spescha in the last century, to conquer the difficulties of the ascent. At length, in 1837, two hunters reached the summit and planted a flag there. Their example was not followed until the 13th of August, 1853, when Professor Ulrich, accompanied by several guides, started from the

Sand Alp, and accomplished the ascent, of which he has published an account. The Dodi has been mounted only once since, by a gentleman from Berne.

Having bestowed a full meed of admiration on the scene around us, we proposed to continue our walk to the Sand Alp, and get a nearer view of these grand glaciers. We could trace the pathway winding through the pastures, and along the mountain, on the further side of the river, and asked the lad how we were to reach it; at first he pretended not to understand us, and then vehemently asserted that there was no bridge higher up: indeed he assured us that there was no way up the gorge without recrossing the Pantenbruch,—adding that it was much too late to undertake a further distance which would occupy six hours. On this point his story was supported by a man who now joined us from the Kisten Alp above, and we allowed our faith in Murray to be shaken by their united protestations. The man, however, showed us where the footpath which we were seeking diverged through the woods, up the left bank of the stream, and our would-be guide then confessed that he had never been to the Sand Alp, and knew nothing about it. He followed us very discontentedly when we turned upwards, but we were determined at least

to see the ravine, which is very grand where the noisy Limmat rushes down from the Selbsanft, through a desolate-looking cleft in the rocks, to join the Linth. A little higher up the needful bridge appeared; and after ascending a kind of ridge beyond it, we saw the path stretching away up the narrow valley, closed by the rocks and glaciers of the Dodi. So much time had been lost, that we now decided to let my son push forward with Couttet, while we slowly retraced our steps through the gorge, and tried to find a sketch from above the Pantenbruch. My friend was thus busily employed, when clouds began to obscure the higher summits; the character of the scene around us changed, and distant mutterings of thunder gave warning of the storm, which was advancing quickly up the valley. We were fortunately provided with umbrellas, but were glad to seek the shelter afforded by the trees. At the end of an hour, just as the pouring rain began to abate, we caught sight of D—— and Couttet, racing down the now flooded pathway, looking like drowned rats. They hastened forward to the inn, and we soon followed *them down the dripping and slippery mountain side*. A brew of Couttet's mull was quickly prepared, to counteract the chill, and by the time justice had been done to its merits, the sky had cleared,

and we were able to ride back comfortably to Stachelberg. Perhaps it was as well, as it happened, that my son had gone on without the rest of our party; but he proved that there was nothing in the distance to have prevented our carrying out our original plan. It was a lesson never to allow well-considered arrangements to be interfered with by local information. An hour after leaving us, D — and Couttet had passed the châteaux of the lower Sand Alp, which they found deserted. Beyond this they had crossed the stream, and gained a grand view of the Biferten glacier, which seems to resemble the Rosenlani in the purity of its colouring. The scene was a magnificent cul-de-sac; very wild and imposing, enclosed by tremendous precipices. The Linth, rising amidst these glaciers, forms an unusually fine fall over the rocks to the right. My son thought it would be imprudent to ascend further, and they prepared to return just as the storm rushed up the gorge, leaving them no alternative but to encounter a shower bath, and make the best of their way through it. Their descent was of course very rapid under such circumstances, and they reached the Dodi Hotel in less than an hour and a quarter from the Sand Alp.

The name of Placidus Spescha has been mentioned in connection with the earliest attempts to ascend

the Dodi, and it may not be uninteresting to refer to the history of a man who drew attention to this mountain region, at a time when his self-imposed labours in scientific research, and as a naturalist, were little known or appreciated. Born at Trons, as a boy Spescha tended his father's flocks upon the Alpine pastures around his home, and at an early age began to indulge in solitary wanderings amidst the mountains, where he found amusement in climbing the precipitous crags in search of crystals and minerals.

He became a priest in the monastery of Disentis, and eventually he removed to Einsiedlin, where new stores of knowledge were opened to his inquiring mind, and he devoted every energy to their acquisition. The love of nature, however, prevailed over the charms of scholastic learning, and Spescha / quitted cloister life to return to his beloved solitudes. He penetrated into the wildest recesses of the mountain-world, associating with the Bergamesque shepherds, often sleeping in their huts and sharing their rough fare. He now investigated minutely the previously unknown geography and natural history of the Bündler Oberland, while the works of Saussure, which fell into his hands about this time, led him to seek acquaintance with God, amidst His



grandest works. He drew maps, and wrote detailed descriptions of the geological formation of the region, from which science would have benefited largely; but, unfortunately, all his collections and writings were either dispersed or destroyed during the troubles caused by the French invasion in 1799, when the monastery of Disentis was burnt. Spesch's studies were not understood by his brethren, who misrepresented them as unchristian and dangerous to religion; but his character and acquirements commanded respect, even when he was carried away as a hostage to Innsbruck. At the end of eighteen months he was allowed to return to Switzerland, and closed his life as the pastor of his native place. His ruling passion was strong to the last. At the age of seventy he renewed his attempts to ascend the Dodi; but was unsuccessful. Some fragments of his later works are still preserved; they are said to display the vast circle of his knowledge, and to excite surprise at the originality of the views set forth by the old father.

One more day was devoted to Stachelberg, to enable us to mount the Saasberg, which Mr. Forster recommends as a beautiful view-point, and quite an excursion for ladies, where a mule may be serviceable. In answer to our inquiries, the last sug-

gestion was decidedly negatived: mules do not seem to be used here for riding; there are a few good horses, but they are evidently little accustomed to mountain scrambling,— and we were assured that the Saasberg must be ascended on foot. From our after-experience, I think that the pathway is quite unsuited for anything but pedestrians; a horse might perhaps be used for the first hour, but certainly not further. A man, who really knew the way, was engaged to accompany us, and at half-past six we started; this was at least an hour too late, but we did not then anticipate the after-heat of the day, and as yet we were scarcely broken in to our usual early hours.

After crossing the valley of the Linth, and the stream which flows down the Durnathal, the ascent began at once up the wooded hill-side to a group of chalets, an hour distant from the Baths. Here the path to the Richetli Pass and Elm is seen, for some distance, creeping up the Durnathal. We kept more to the left, and after passing over some meadows, our way mounted very rapidly through woods, or wound along the mountain brow, occasionally skirt-ing gullies, where the streams had worn themselves deep channels. At one spot a beautiful glade opened through the fir forest, forming an avenue, so formal

in itself and so perfect in the vista which it opened, both above and below our path, that it seemed to have been arranged for scenic effect. The broken walls of an old enclosure marked the half way, where we rested awhile, and refreshed ourselves with the strawberries which grew abundantly on the banks. Soon afterwards the ascent became very steep, and we felt the growing power of the sun ere we reached an Alp above, where several peasants were busy preparing the hay to carry down into the valleys.

They looked surprised at seeing our party, and one man remarked that it was not a way for 'Frauen.' Although not difficult, it certainly was exhausting in such heat.

We were now upon a grassy ridge, commanding a fine view towards Glarus, and of the valley which separated us from the Freiberge group. A long green slope of broken ground stretched far above us, along which we mounted upwards, wearily realising how in

'Climbing some great Alp, which still doth rise,'

distance apparently 'increases with the advance.'

The heat had now become so great, that I was glad to rest several times during our progress. The gentlemen, meantime, pushed onwards, and reached the summit in four and a half hours from Stachelberg,

while we followed more slowly. Even in this elevated position, there was scarcely a breath of air, and the sun was fierce. Couttet arranged a shelter from its power, by securing an umbrella to one of our alpenstocks, firmly planted in the ground, and thus protected the beautiful circle of mountains could be thoroughly enjoyed and studied. My son had found some snow among the rocks, which was very refreshing with a little eau de vie, and all feelings of fatigue quickly vanished.

The Dodi is the giant here ; raising its grand snowy head conspicuously above all around. It is supported on the south by the Selbsanft and Biferten, and on the north by the fine mass of the Clariden, with the curious point of the Kleine Dodi rising between them. Beyond the Klausen Pass, the Titlis and more distant Wetterhorn were clearly seen. Along the line of the Linththal, a rocky range shelters Stachelberg; the steep face of the rocks often broken by green Alps, studded with châlcts. Then the Glarnisch fills up the picture towards Glarus, and the Freiberge carry on the eye to the Karpfstock and Butzigstock, which shut out the mountains above Elm, at the head of the Sernfthal. Poor old Glarus has not yet risen from its ashes; nearly the whole town having been destroyed by fire in May last. The wonder is that

such calamities do not occur more frequently, when only a spark is needful to produce incalculable mischief and misery. Our guide gave us a graphic description of the terrible scene, and said that in five minutes after the first outburst, the flames had spread across so vast an area, that all hope of saving the town was lost.

We varied our course, in descending from the Saasberg, by keeping nearer to the edge of the precipitous rocks which form the upper part of the mountain side towards the Durnathal. We were charmed with the beautiful points of view thus gained, where the line of precipices was partially broken by enormous outstanding crags, and rocky battlements, which appear to the greatest advantage from a position about half an hour below the higher ridge to which we had ascended. The flowers, like

‘Bright mosaics, that tessellate the floor of Nature’s temple,’

were spread beneath our feet in the greatest luxuriance and loveliness; the large dark purple gentian, besides many other ordinary varieties; a remarkably fine double ranunculus, and great abundance of the vanilla-scented *Nigritella*, with innumerable others, formed a perfect Alpine garden. Nearer the summit my son had found some fronds of the moonwort, a

kind of miniature *Osmunda*, the crescent-shape leaves being accompanied by a flowerlike spray. We had previously picked this fern on the mountain side above Breuil; it is, I believe, occasionally found in the south of England, and was formerly highly prized for its medicinal virtues. Indeed, in the days of alchemy, its powers were considered almost magical.

As we raised our eyes from earth to heaven, a new source of interest presented itself in a family of five eagles, who were circling around us, quite in character with the scene. They had perhaps watched our luncheon party on high, and as soon as we were out of sight they would hasten to pick the bones we had left on the rocks. The absence of any breeze made the downward walk very oppressive, even when we were sheltered from the sun, which had quite destroyed our complexions before our arrival at the hotel. The situation of the house is too much under the hill-side, and was consequently too warm to suit us; but it is a pleasant resting-place for a few days, and, putting aside some ordinary German *désagrémens*, it is well managed and comfortable. The rooms in the new part of the building, over the salon, have a beautiful view up the valley, and must be far preferable to those in the original 'Badhaus.'

## CHAPTER III.

## ELM AND THE SEGNES PASS

MY son hoped to cross the Richetli Pass with Couttet, and to meet us at Elm, but the morning proved damp and cloudy, *brouillard* hung low down the mountains, and at ten o'clock he was reluctantly obliged to accept a seat in the carriage. With the mountains before us, it was well to be as little encumbered as possible with luggage; the portmanteau was therefore well packed, and entrusted to the care of the 'Poste restante' at Samaden, where we hoped to find it awaiting us. This mode of transit for luggage is most convenient, and we have never found it fail.

The rain passed off soon after we started, and although the clouds still hung over the distant summits, the air was sultry, and the sun became excessively hot in the valley. The large factories with which the Linththal is thickly studded do not add to the pictorial effect, but all around denotes an industrious

and thriving community. About three miles short of Glarus, the road turns to the right at the village of Schwanden, which is situated at the junction of the Linth and Sernfthals: here we remained for a few minutes, to the great amusement of the children, who collected 'round the carriage and watched our proceedings, while the village 'Uhrmacher' replaced a broken watch-glass.

The scenery of the Sernfthal is confined but very pretty. At Enghi, where the horses were to be fed, we were glad to escape from the sun, by going into the inn, although its lower portion was unattractive in every respect. To our surprise we found neat clean rooms upstairs, with a very civil hostess, whose heart warmed towards us when she found we were English; her only son had been for some time in England, and she had heard much of London. The young man seemed to be an aspiring genius, learned in languages, and was now following some mercantile occupation in Turkey. The good woman was anxious to offer us every refreshment in her power, and produced such an excellent Savoy cake of her own making, that we asked permission to take away such an unusual luxury: she seemed quite flattered by our approval of her skill, and we parted on most friendly terms. The quarries of the Blat-



tenberg, a mountain which rises on the left, are celebrated for supplying all Switzerland with slates. An hour higher up the Sernfthal, we passed the village of Matt, and very soon caught sight of Elm, which is well situated at the head of the valley. On the right an opening between the mountains leads up to the Richetli and Panix Passes; on the left there is rather an intricate path by which Sargans, or the baths of Pfäfers, may be reached. Towering high against the sky, immediately behind the village, is a range of most remarkable pinnacles, pierced by the extraordinary aperture called the Martin's Loch. The blue sky, seen through this natural window, has a very curious effect; on four days in the course of the year the sun is said to shine through it and light up the tower of the church, and so great is the local interest felt in this event, that at the beginning of the eighteenth century, the Elmers are recorded to have refused to adopt the new calendar, because the sun would no longer shine through their 'Loch' on its proper day.

We found all the accommodation at Jacob Elmer's inn at our disposal; the rooms being airy, clean, and comfortable. We took counsel with our host as to our further course, and learnt that ladies had crossed the Segnes, although the Panix was the more usual

course, because horses could be taken across that pass to Ilanz.

The 'Herr' (as we had learnt to call my husband) had felt the heat of the drive up the valley, and I was not free from anxiety as to his undertaking an arduous walk the next day. We liked the appearance of Elm so much, that the rest of the party would willingly have remained there over Sunday, in the full enjoyment of pure mountain air. He was, however, unwilling to delay our proposed expedition, if the morning should prove favourable; and arrangements were made for securing the services of Henry Elmer (our host's brother), as our guide, with another man to assist in carrying the baggage.

After settling C----- with her sketch-book, my son and I enjoyed an evening walk up the valley towards the Richetti, and quite satisfied ourselves that a day might be very pleasantly spent in rambling about. On our homeward walk we were accompanied by the village goats, who overtook us returning from their pasture-ground. — and we were also joined by a party of peasants with a rough cart loaded with cheeses, the produce of their dairy in the higher Alps.

During the night, for the first time during our Swiss wanderings, we had the opportunity of realis-

ing the old custom made familiar by the English version of the 'Watchman's Song.' The repeated interruption to our night's rest was not altogether agreeable, but it was interesting to catch the original words, sonorously chanted beneath our windows :

'Die Glocke hat zwölf Uhr geschlagen,' &c. &c.,

and to remember that they had been handed down from generation to generation, testifying, by their repetition, to the wakefulness of the watchman, as well as acknowledging the providential care of a heavenly Guardian.

We were ready at five o'clock on Saturday morning, just as the horn sounded to assemble the goats, which came forth from every side in answer to the summons. The Herr did not look vigorous, but he was quite determined not to allow the fine morning to be lost; fortunately we did not know what we had to accomplish, or his energy might have been daunted. Half an hour passed before Couttet could effect a start; then the men led off, through the meadows to the south of the village, and after crossing the Sernft, we soon began to ascend. On arriving at a rocky corner, where the path entered a wild ravine, we were called upon to halt, to allow the company of goats, which we had overtaken, to take

precedence—the narrow track which skirted the mountain side being apparently made for their accommodation only. The effect was most picturesque as

'The goats wound still their wonted way,  
Up craggy steeps and ridges rude,'

the long train passing upwards in single file, a younger or more adventurous animal occasionally diverging up the rocks. The path now rose by steep zigzags, in some places supported at the edge by fir-poles, where the earth had been washed away by the stream, which, descending from the Segnes, finds its way down to the Sernft. It was a wildly grand and striking scene as we climbed the rocks; but one could fancy it might be dismal and disagreeable enough in bad weather.

Having reached the higher plateau, we found ourselves on Alpine pastures, where the peasants were, as usual, busy securing the precious hay; here the goats dispersed, and we pursued our way to the left, with the Martin's Loch high above our heads. All traces of a path soon disappeared, and the climbing was rough, as well as slippery, over rocky ledges and through watercourses; occasionally over coarse herbage, where, among other flowers, we picked a novelty

in the white gentian. We rested a little, and found our Engli cake, moistened with a few drops of eau de vie, a good preparation for another hour's hard work; the latter part being a very steep pull over rocks and loose shale, where one's hands were occasionally useful. My son was considerably in advance, and stood conspicuously, like a beacon, on the knife-like ridge over which we were to pass, just below the Segneshorn.

In due time we scrambled up to join him, and share his admiration of a scene unlike anything we had previously met with. The mountain view was very grand, stretching from the Glarnisch to the Dodi; the Haustock rose up over the Panixer Pass, with the snowy Vorab, and wide-spreading Bündler glacier, surmounted by the Zwölfihorn and Segneshorn, beneath whose precipices we stood. By climbing a little further along the roof-like ridge to the left a most lovely view was gained to the south of the snow-mantled range of the Rhætian Alps beyond the Vorder-Rhein; looking to the far east, the eye rested on the distant, and as yet unknown, Bernina.\* The wonderful rocky arête on which we stood is broken into pointed pinnacles, so fragile that they

\* The boundary line between Glarus and the Grisons runs along this ridge.

appear to offer little resistance to the fierce storms which so often rage around them ; they form a connecting link between the Segneshorn and the Sardon, beyond which there is another fine group of peaks and glaciers.

D—— had taken five hours from Elm to the summit of the pass ; our slower movements had occupied nearly half an hour longer, and now, at eleven o'clock, we were quite ready to enjoy the provisions which Couttet had carried. The wind was so high on this exposed position that we arranged ourselves along a sheltered ledge, where our backs rested against the rocks, which again descended rapidly beneath our feet to the verge of the Segnes glacier. Here our provisions were unpacked, and room being scarce, we were amused at Elmer's readiness in spreading a cloth (in which the bread had been wrapped up) across my knees, upon which he proceeded to arrange our luncheon, particularly requesting that I would not upset the table. As we passed the cup round, the wine bottles were quickly emptied, and the men, unwilling to lose such treasures, hid them among the rocks until their return, sagely remarking, 'Where men do not come men cannot steal.'

After an hour's rest we started down the rocks to.

cross the glacier, which forms a deep basin between the mountains, its surface being quite smooth and uncrevassed. My son showed us the easiest mode of glacier travelling, and, following his example, we all glided rapidly to the bottom of the snow-covered slope. At the foot of the descent we turned to gaze upon the strange and striking scene amidst which we stood. On the left were the varied summits of the Ofën, Piz Grusen and Vorab; between the Ofën and Segneshorn, which towers above, appears a wonderful roof-like ridge, pierced by the Martin's Loch, which is accessible on this side, but another hour must be bestowed upon the *détour* which is necessary in order to obtain a view through this gigantic porthole. The rocks over which we had passed had quite the appearance of a wall split into needles of varied size and character, some of them so slender and delicate in form that the people call them 'Jungfrauen.' The upper strata might be supposed the shattered remains of the works of human hands, instead of the result of the destructive force of mighty storms, acting upon the peculiar geological formation of this mountain range.

After crossing to the opposite side of the glacier or, as it is here called, 'Firn,' we skirted a marshy valley, which had evidently, in bygone times, formed

the bed of a considerable lake. High precipices of slate-like rock rose immediately above us, down which a torrent, fed by the Flimser Firn, formed a magnificent fall. The body of water was great, and the effect was very fine as it rushed foaming down from the summit of the rocks, dividing into three grand cascades in its descent. Amidst the rough ground, interspersed with Alpine pastures on the opposite side of the valley, we remarked a small isolated glacier, to which a local tradition is attached. The ground thus covered is said to have been a fertile Alp, owned by a widow; unfortunately it excited the covetous feelings of a rich neighbour, who, Ahab-like, wished to add it to his own possessions, but the widow could not be persuaded to part with her property. The man then brought forward a doubtful claim upon the deceased husband, which he relentlessly pursued, and exerted influence to get the coveted Alp assigned to him in payment. All the poor woman's assertions and prayers were fruitless, and, in her despair, she raised her hands before the assembled judges, while she exclaimed to her oppressor, 'If there is truth and justice with the Almighty, you will never gather a harvest from that land.' The decision was in favour of the rich man; but the widow's appeal to Heaven was heard. The



following night a fearful storm set in which lasted for several days; at length the man was able to go up to take possession of his ill-acquired property, and found the once fertile pasture covered with ice and snow! Thus it remains, as long as the mountains endure, an everlasting witness of the just judgments of God.

The descent to Flims is remarkably easy, and the lawn-like turf was delightful to our feet as we passed over the freshly-cut sward, which was now studded with châtelets. The peasants were scattered over the fields; and, resting for a few minutes from their labours, they stood gazing with evident curiosity and surprise at our appearance by a route so little traversed. The hay was packed, and carried down the valley, on picturesque carts, constructed of the common long, light sledge, raised on low fore-wheels, with the curved shafts resting on the ground behind, and acting as a drag. The load, piled high above the body of the waggon, was supported by an extempore fence of interlaced fir-branches. Drawn by two of the small dun-coloured cows usually seen in the mountains, these carts formed an interesting and peculiar feature in the pastoral scene around.

The afternoon sun became hot before Flims appeared in the distance, and although we had greatly

enjoyed our walk, we were all glad to reach the end of our journey, which had occupied three hours from the summit of the pass. The scenery throughout is most grand and beautiful; but the ascent of the Segnes from Elm is an arduous undertaking for ladies.

We had proposed to go up the Vorder-Rhein from Flims to Ilanz, but we were not sure of the accommodation we might find, and therefore decided upon descending to Reichenau, with as little delay as possible.

The only inn at Flims mentioned in Murray is the Poste; but there seemed to be some question between the men as to our halting-place, and after wandering through the village, Elmer stopped at a modern and tidy-looking house, bearing the sign of the Adler, where we were received by a civil hostess. The accommodation would have satisfied us perfectly for a night, but it was not tempting as a Sunday resting-place, and our first inquiries were how we could get forward to Reichenau. Couttet went to the Poste to seek a conveyance, while we were supplied with a bottle of *vin ordinaire*, with some sugar and warm water. Thus refreshed, we were glad to rest after our long walk, and to lie down on the coloured duvets, outside the beds.

Meanwhile the hostess indulged us with her conversation, expressing particular interest in English ladies, because she had lived in the family of Mr. Hemans, while he resided at Chur, professionally engaged in surveying for the proposed line of railway through the Luchmanier.

A return carriage was found at the Poste, and all being ready for our departure, my husband asked for the 'Rechnung,' and was told '10 frs.' The cost of the wine was one and a half frs., therefore the sum named was incomprehensible, and particulars were requested. This was evidently unpalatable to our talkative landlady, but her ingenuity proved equal to the occasion, and the amended amount of 9 frs. 50 cent. was produced on paper, by adding 4 frs. for beds, to an amply sufficient charge for our refreshments, and 2 frs. for 'services.' Of course we objected to such imposition, when Herrin Brauen appeared in a very different character to that which she had previously assumed. We offered her 6 frs., and proceeded to get into the carriage, upon which she threw the money into the road. On second thoughts she picked it up, thrust it into the carriage, and poured out a torrent of invective upon her English friends; then calling her brother to her aid, they refused to let us start until their demand

was paid. Our most forcible German expressions of indignation were now heartily brought forth, but the driver looked stolid and would not move; and we ultimately submitted to the extortion, with a promise that English travellers should know the treatment they were likely to receive at the Adler at Flims. The Herrin looked somewhat disconcerted, but she gained her point; and we could console ourselves for our defeat only by telling the driver that he had forfeited all claim to 'bonne-main,' by his refusal to obey our orders to 'move on.'

The scenery through which we passed was very pretty, and our week's wanderings were brought to an agreeable close at the hotel at Reichenau, a good house, which had once formed part of a monastery, situated just above the junction of the Hinter and Vorder-Rheins. The principal mansion in the village is just opposite to the hotel, and is one of the many residences of the Planta family. It possesses historical interest as the scene of Louis-Philippe's early labours, when teacher in a school to which part of the building was at one period devoted. We were shown the chapel then arranged for his use, and the room he occupied, which contains several pictures and other memorials of one of the most chequered careers of modern times. One of the most recent

and not the least interesting, is an entry in the visitors' book, signed by 'Marie-Amélie, veuve du Professeur Chabot—un de ses plus beaux titres.' There is a charming garden attached to Herr Planta's residence, with shady walks descending to the banks of the river, where the two branches unite their different coloured waters. Visitors to the hotel are kindly allowed access to these gardens; a privilege which we fully appreciated during the heat of Sunday afternoon. We found the house most comfortable and the charges moderate; the attention and intelligence of the proprietor were also great. He was much annoyed at the conduct of the people at Flims, and in the course of Sunday he brought me a letter which he had written to Herrin Brauen, warning her against a repetition of such imposition, and telling her that such conduct was a disgrace to the country!

The valley of the Vorder-Rhein is now becoming better known, and the people are beginning to take some trouble to open its beauties to travellers. Professor Theobald of Chur has recently published some useful works descriptive of the Bündler Oberland and the Grisons generally, which we found in the salon of the hotel. We were very much attracted by a panorama of the view from Piz Mundane, which our host assured us was really most beautiful; the ascent

being an easy and pleasant ride, or walk, of three hours from Ilanz. Had we gone up the Vorder-Rhein, we should probably have been tempted to give up a day to the expedition; but our object was the Bernina, and we had no time to spare for doubtful excursions.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE SCHYNN AND ALBULA PASSES

ON Monday we started at half-past five, in two 'Einspanners,' which were to take us up the Via Mala, and then back to Tüsis, from whence we meant to ride over the Schynn Pass to Tiefenkasten, on the Julier road.

The morning air was quite chill as we crossed the river and passed up the castled Domleschthal; but the sun soon rose above the mountains, and we had a lovely drive through the well-known gorge of the Via Mala, stopping at Tüsis only to order a déjeuner to be in readiness, as well as horses for our afternoon ride. The morning drive was pleasantly accomplished before ten o'clock, and our intention was to remain quiet at Tüsis until after two, which would allow ample time for a farther journey of four hours. The master of the hotel, who provided the horses, unfortunately consulted his own convenience more than our comfort, and we very unwisely consented to

mount just in the increasing heat of the day. We had three excellent horses, with a fourth attached to a very rough cart which was to carry the luggage, and afford an occasional seat if required. We had a foretaste of what the ride would be as we crossed the valley, and the bridge over the Albula, to Sils. There was but little shade as we ascended the hill-side, and at the end of an hour the sun's rays were so fierce that the heat overpowered all enjoyment of the beautiful scenery above which we were winding our way. Trees were scattered along the mountain brow, and we continued to ascend until the path entered a fir wood, where a halt was called, and I told the men that we must bivouac in shelter. To this they made no objection, and we soon disposed ourselves in shady nooks, where some of the party indulged in a siesta, while others admired the distant vista of snowy peaks which had opened above the dark range which rises beyond the Oberhalbstein.

It was past three o'clock before we ventured to remount; meantime a refreshing breeze had sprung up, and we were delighted with the grandeur and magnificence of the wonderful defile along which our pathway wound. Enormous precipices of dark rock towered perpendicularly above our heads; beneath our feet the descent was fringed with rich foliage,



which concealed the vast depth below. At one striking point, a winter torrent had partially destroyed the path, and worn a deep dark gully between the rocks, while on a projecting knoll an immensely tall, scathed pine raised its head in solitary grandeur, its higher branches clothed with hoary lichens. Elsewhere the banks were adorned with the delicate green of the larch, light and transparent, as in our early spring-time, mingled with the graceful feathery birch, which trembled in the breeze. The river Albula was almost lost in the depths of the gorge beneath, where only a glimpse of its channel was occasionally caught. On the right, the village of Stulvis is prominently perched on a high ridge, adorned with a tall campanile tower; the buildings now assuming a partially Italian character. Many other churches appeared on the mountain sides, in isolated positions, where congregations seemed most unlikely.

Having passed over a beautiful brow, we saw a small chapel on the left, marking the summit of the pass. Near it stood a round pillar, which my attendant said was a gallows, or rather it showed the site of one, where some notorious offender had been executed in bygone days: now the name of the man and his crime are alike forgotten. The village of Obervatz, with its church crowned with a bright green cupola,

filled a niche in the picture, which was enclosed by a range of rocky heights.

It was indeed a bold idea to bring anything on wheels over the rough path we had traversed. The cart, however, performed the journey in safety; an occasional dislocation being quite unimportant, and the damage easily repaired. Once a wheel made an independent excursion, but it was fortunately captured before it had descended far.

The road now improved, and we could see Alvaschein in the valley before us. We reached it in half an hour, and, after passing through the village, our horses trotted briskly along to Tiefenkasten, followed by the cart, which travelled well laden, our attendants all hanging about it in primitive fashion. We had been very well mounted, and had found the man in charge of the ladies' horses an attentive and intelligent guide, accustomed to travel with English people. His name was Nicolaus Raget of Tüsis.

Tiefenkasten is an old Roman station. The church now occupies the site of an ancient fortress, of which slight traces may yet be distinguished in ruined walls. It is well placed, on rising ground, above the Albula, which is here a stream of some importance. The inn is a post station, on the road from Chur, over the Julier Pass, to Silva Plana, in the Upper Engadine.

It possesses an unenviable reputation for dirt and discomfort, and our only inducement to stop there was that we found it was necessary to make arrangements for to-morrow's journey, no horses being kept at Alvenu, where we intended to sleep. The master of the inn at first agreed to provide us with two 'Einspanners,' or light *calèches*, to take us to Bergun, on the Albula Pass; but, on after-consideration, I suppose it was agreed that such an honest arrangement was a weakness, and a combination was evidently made to benefit the community at our expense. The man returned in a few minutes to assure us that the road was very bad and very steep, consequently we must take a third vehicle for Couttet and our luggage. We were entirely at his mercy, and had no precise information as to the state of the road, so there was no alternative, and we were supplied with three carriages, the charge being 10 frs. each to Alvenu, where they were to remain for the night, and 30 frs. each in addition, if we took them on the next morning to Bergun. Our *cortège* made an imposing start, the leading *calèche* taking the sharp descent from the town, and crossing the bridge, at a canter. It was now getting dusk, but we could see, on a projecting rock, the ruined towers of the castle of Belfort, formerly a stronghold of the re-

nowned Barons von Patz, and destroyed in the wars with Suabia. In less than an hour we drove up to the Baths of Alvenu, to receive the unwelcome intelligence that the house was quite full. Our entreaties produced the suggestion that two bed-rooms might be had in a private residence at a short distance, to which our bags were despatched, while we stayed at the 'Badhaus,' in the hope of getting some supper, with which the residents were fully engaged. We tried to hasten the preparations for our meal, but our efforts were vain. Meantime, a band in the passage outside the room added to the usual noise made by a large party of talkative Germans. No doubt we ought to have felt flattered by the kind attention which produced 'God save the Queen,' with variations, in our honour; but we were too weary to appreciate it, and wished our friends at a greater distance. The important business of feeding being over, smoking began, and the fumes of tobacco soon encircled us, adding to the already stifling atmosphere of the carefully closed salon. After an hour's waiting, we despaired of any supper while we had appetite to eat it, and departed in search of our beds. We found our lodgings in a good private house, where the rooms were clean and quiet; probably in that respect we were much better off than

we should have been at the hotel. A slovenly breakfast and very high charges did not improve our opinion of the Baths of Alvenu as a resting-place; indeed, as a rule, such establishments are not comfortable for casual visitors. The spring which supplies the baths is sulphurous, and has considerable reputation throughout this side of Switzerland. The position of the place is pretty, surrounded by mountains, with a waterfall on the opposite side of the valley, forming an object for excursions and pic-nics. Beyond Alvenu, a car-road to the north leads up to the Davosthal, where the scenery is said to be fine, with the additional attraction of a good country inn at Am Platz, the principal village in the valley.

We started about six o'clock. Our route soon turned to the right, and crossed a bridge over the Landwasser, which after passing through the Davosthal here unites with the Albula. Between Alvenu and Filisur is the battle-field where Donat von Patz (the last of a turbulent race) defeated the troops of the Bishops of Chur, in 1623, and destroyed the influence of Austria in these valleys.

The said Baron Donat appears an enigmatical character in the traditions of the Bund: a man of wild, fearless heroism, violent and overbearing, like

others of his kind, in times when might made right, —but a friend and ally of the free ‘Waldstädte.’ In his own territories he laid the foundation of freedom, by abolishing serfdom, and enlarging the rights of those who already enjoyed some liberty. He was a man of views far in advance of the era in which he lived, and, in the proud consciousness of his own power, he freely bestowed privileges which in after years were extorted by the people.

Filisur is a large village, where the good folks seemed to be still fast asleep as we rattled through the ill-paved and narrow street. The houses were large, and externally adorned with a kind of fresco tracery; ill-repaired rents in many of the walls, and distorted window-frames, still showed the power of the earthquake of 1855, which extended to this region, although its devastations were much less terrible than in the Valais.

The road winds up a narrow valley, watered by the rushing stream of the Albula, and enclosed by rocky heights, believed to be rich in iron and silver ore. As we approached Bellaluna it opened out a little, the ruins of considerable iron-works forming a picturesque object at a distance; a nearer view dispelled such illusions, the blackened walls looking most desolate and melancholy. The works

are said to have failed through mismanagement, and have been disused for thirty years.

Steep zigzags now carried the road upwards, until it gained access to a narrow defile through which it is blasted out along the face of the rocks. This gorge, through which the river has forced a passage, is called the Bergunstein, and is locally supposed to rival the Via Mala. It is certainly a most wild and beautiful scene, and we were lingering at the most striking point, when we met a French lady and two gentlemen descending from Bergun: a few words were exchanged, *en passant*, and to our surprise we learnt that the village was close at hand; this was a convincing proof that our Tiefenkasten friends had entirely deceived us as to the length of the journey and the imaginary difficulties of the way. The drive from Alvenu had occupied three hours, the road throughout being excellent. Above this curious portal, moist meadows spread out into a wide open plateau, in the centre of which Bergun is situated. This fertile basin is supposed to have been the bed of a lake, before the river found an outlet through the Bergunstein. The fine point of Piz Aela was prominent in the rocky ridge on the south; the opposite side of the valley was also enclosed by mountains, with the village and church of Latsch conspicuously perched on high.

The young man, who seemed the leader among our drivers, now suggested that we should retain their services for the rest of the journey over the Albula Pass to Ponte, but having good reason to doubt their trustworthiness, we declined to discuss any future engagement until we had satisfied ourselves by further inquiries. We soon reached the middle of the village, where our carriages drew up before a large house, bearing no external appearance of an inn: a portly-looking Herr soon came forth to receive us, and we found that he was the Landammann Clöete, to whose hospitality travellers are indebted. Fortunately he spoke sufficient French to enable my husband to communicate with him, and to ascertain that, at present, the good road ends at Bergun: above, it is a car road, passable only for the rough 'Bergwagen' of the country, for which our *calèches* must be exchanged. The waggons were ready for our service, but not so the horses: one had gone down to Alvenu with the French party we had met; the others were employed in farm-work, and could not be available until the next morning.

Under these circumstances the Tiefenkasten men claimed us for their prey, and proposed that after their horses were rested, they should be put into the 'Bergwagen.' We were quite ready to make the



arrangement on fair terms, but they required us to engage all three horses and men, which we absolutely refused:

It was simply absurd to suppose that we would pay for the honour of being followed by an empty cart; two being amply sufficient to convey ourselves and our small amount of baggage. The Landammann, who had no object but our benefit, told us what we ought to pay for two horses; this sum we offered to the men, who adhered to their demands, and left us to consider the matter — no doubt thinking that we had no alternative. Meantime my friend and myself had been introduced to the interior of the house, and had received most kindly welcome from Herrin Clæte and her daughter. We were shown into a small but comfortable sitting-room, apparently used as the best living room by the family. Upstairs the general bed-rooms might not have been quite consistent with our notions of comfort, but to our surprise we found two charming little chambers, recently added for the accommodation of visitors. The sight of these rooms, freshly painted, papered, and neatly furnished, made us indifferent as to getting on immediately, and we went downstairs quite prepared to encounter a further parley. The young spokesman now threatened to return at once

to Tiefenkasten, if we did not yield to his demands, and great was his surprise when we said, 'Pray go, if you like.'

'But what will you do?' 'Why stay here until to-morrow morning, then we can have the Herr's horses.' This was a new view of the case, and he withdrew again, grumbling, to hold counsel with his friends, one of whom was evidently quite ready to yield, but the 'chef' still insisted that it must be all or none. The other man came in to us alone, looking very disconsolate. We said, with unconcern, 'What do you want?' He then tried to induce us to raise our terms, as if thinking our indifference was assumed; but we firmly refused to concede anything, knowing that they were already overpaid, and had meant to cheat us further if they could. The man went out to his companions very much disconcerted, and after venting their indignation in uncomplimentary remarks upon the Landammann for spoiling their market, the horses were brought out, and away they all clattered through the village.

Thus left to amuse ourselves during a day of unexpected rest, we began by taking a more careful survey of our friend's mansion, which I may here describe, as a good specimen of the residence of a flourishing farmer and landowner. The approach

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from the street rose a little to an arched gateway, within which a gloomy but spacious hall occupied the centre of the building. This seemed to be used as a common room, and served for various purposes. On one side of the entrance a raised dais was furnished with a table and benches; here the men had their dinner, and smoked. Opening out was a kind of warehouse or storeroom, and further on the kitchen. On the opposite side we entered our little salon, beyond which was a roomy, dark recess, partially under the stone staircase. Straight through the hall, and under the same roof as the rest of the building, was a large barn already half filled with fresh hay, stored up for use in winter, when some of the cows would be accommodated in vaultlike stables under the storeroom side of the house itself. The barn was open up to the rafters, except on one side, where a portion had been shut off about half-way up, in order to inclose a passage, and the two 'chambers on the wall,' which we were to occupy. Up a dark staircase, a dreary-looking lobby occupied the same position as the hall below; round it stood some ancient presses and curiously-decorated chests, which no doubt contained treasures of household linen and such domestic plenishing. The family bed-rooms opened around, the new apart-

ments being at the back, quite separate from the rest of the house, and fragrant with the scent of the hay beneath. One of these rooms seemed to be occupied, and we afterwards found that it was kindly resigned for our use by the Oberingenieur, who made the Landammann's house his head-quarters while surveying for the projected continuation of the new road above Bergun. The whole family were too kindly, and anxious to accommodate us, to make any difficulties, and we discovered accidentally that this arrangement had obliged the Fräulein to give up her room to the visitor. A separate building contained large sheds and stables; over the doorway was inscribed in large letters,—

In Gottes Hand  
Stehet diss Haus.

1673

Gluck kome hierien.  
Und Ungluck hieeraus.

We settled ourselves comfortably to our various occupations for an hour or two, and the good 'Hausmutter' came in occasionally to see what we were doing, evidently not satisfied that we were happy, because we were 'all so busy, and did not talk enough!' She was curious to know our relationships, and was much surprised to find that our companion was 'nur eine Freundin,' not my sister. There was a tidy-looking servant who came to make

preparations for our dinner, but the young Fräulein attended upon us herself, as if it was a pleasure to do so. She was much interested in the sketches; and seeing one of the Martin's Loch, she told us that there was a similar, but smaller, aperture near the summit of the high peak of Piz Aela, just opposite the window, through which the sky and sunshine might occasionally be seen.

A grand commotion and clattering in the entry made us wonder what had happened, and C——, who was coming downstairs, was rather astonished at confronting a horse in the dim light. This was the post-waggon arrived at the end of its journey, and the portals being thrown wide open, it was driven bodily into the house, and put away in the recess under the staircase!

In the afternoon my husband and our son walked up to Latsch, from whence they had a beautiful view. A swelled ankle had obliged me to be careful since our walk over the Segnes, so C—— and I amused ourselves nearer home.

Bergun is a Protestant village; the church stands a little apart, and externally it looked uncared for. The houses were large, and some of them handsome in their peculiar fashion, with fresco tracery superior to that we had remarked at Filisur. Many of the

windows were protected by richly-ornamented iron gratings, often filled with gay flowers, and curious little projecting triangular windows were very general. The people speak Romansch, as we discovered during our stroll. Several family groups were enjoying the fresh air, sitting on benches outside the doorways, and one Herr, politely bowing, addressed a remark to us as we passed. We were obliged to plead ignorance of Romansch, at which he smiled, and in a few German words accepted our apologies.

I doubt if a tea-party is an entertainment known at Bergun, the preparations for providing our tea-equipage being most amusing. The tea we produced was regarded with no little curiosity; it certainly differed much in appearance from the article which was shown to us, dignified by that name, although probably its origin was never derived from China. We invited the Herrin to try a cup in the English fashion, but she evidently looked upon its virtues as medicinal, and was not to be persuaded. The next morning, however, we found that our teapot had done second duty; and in answer to our inquiries how she liked it, the good woman said that she had not slept in consequence of taking the decoction, adding emphatically, 'Er ist so stark; er brennt.'

The charming Fräulein accompanied us to our

room, and took leave with many good wishes for our night's rest, which were fully realised. The beds were as comfortable as they looked, but we were not tempted to indulge in late hours. At half-past five the wagonnettes (to give a fashionable name to our primitive vehicles) were in readiness, and we parted from the Landammann and his household with most cordial farewells, quite pleased thus accidentally to have become acquainted with the merits of Bergun as a resting-place. The son of our host took charge of us to Samaden, and as he spoke good German we benefited by his information on the way; the other driver was a servant, and as his attempts at conversation were made in Romansch, our communication was limited.

Above the village, the road passes through a rocky but well-wooded valley, keeping on the left side of the stream until the banks draw close together. A very narrow gorge, or rather fissure, has evidently been worked out by the river, which is crossed by a rough plank bridge. The roaring, foaming torrent leaves scarcely space for the road to creep beside its rocky bed; just above, it sweeps round almost an angle in its course, and forms a picturesque fall.

We now reached the upland village of Naz, where everybody was busy in the meadows with the hay

harvest. Here the valley opens a little towards the south, and there is a fine view of peaks and glaciers extending from Piz Aela to Piz Err. A way is practicable through this range to the Errthal and the village of Tinzen, on the Oberhalbstein; the scenery is said to be magnificent; indeed, the great Err glacier is reputed to be one of the most beautiful in the country, but these side valleys are at present very little known. Passing another collection of Alpine châteaux, called Preda, the road wound above a small lake, famed for the fine trout which are found in its beautifully green water, and we soon reached the solitary inn of Weissenstein. Until recently there was a large lake which spread over the basin just below the inn, and formed the chief beauty of this pass. It has now entirely disappeared, leaving an unsightly boggy morass, through which the people have cut trenches to complete the drainage which was begun by natural causes three years ago, when a barrier below gave way and allowed the water to escape. The Albula, whose stream had so long been our companion, has its source in several strong springs amongst the rocks above.

About half an hour beyond Weissenstein the boundary of the Engadine is passed. A mountain way to the south may here be found by the pedes-



trian across the rocky ridge of the Piz Giumels, making a short cut to the Val Bevers and Samaden. These are not expeditions to be undertaken without a local guide, or by any but experienced mountain travellers. The scenery around us now became very wild and dreary, through a rock-strewn valley, where the road is carried over loose slaty débris, brought down from the bleak mountain sides, thus hinting that the way is not free from danger in bad weather : here Couttet's attention was attracted by the evidences of ancient moraines, showing that glaciers must formerly have covered these barren rocks. The last hour was wearying from its monotony, being a continuous but not rapid ascent to the summit, which is a table-land, from whence many new mountain groups appeared, but commanding no distant view. As we gradually descended, snow peaks rose up beyond the valley of the Inn, and above the richly-clothed sides of the Val Chiamuera. A very stony and steep track (for road it was not) wound down wooded slopes, and through scattered firs, to Ponte, an unattractive village, situated on the main road through the Ober-Engadine. The channel of the Inn has here been narrowed within artificial banks, and has the appearance of a canal, with no picturesque beauty. Our dusty way led by its side through the prettily-situated

village of Bevers, where large and well-kept houses showed that the people were prosperous. The valley before us was very beautiful, the foreground enlivened with scattered villages, and inclosed by a glittering range of silvered summits.

It was scarcely an hour's drive from Ponte to Samaden, which is considered the principal village in the Ober-Engadine; it is situated just opposite the valley of the Bernina, and commands a glorious view of its mountains and glaciers.

The valley of the Inn is here bounded on the west by the slopes of Piz Padella, above which rises the higher and prominent pinnacle of Piz Ot. The former is easily accessible either from Samaden or Celerina, and is a very fine view-point. We drove to the Hôtel de la Vue de Bernina, which is reputed the best in the valley; the house seemed almost empty, but we had some difficulty in persuading the host to give us even a share in the best accommodation. He expected an important 'famille anglaise,' for whom he must reserve his best apartments. We did not at first identify ourselves with his expected guests, nor did he suppose that the English travellers, whom he intended to honour, would arrive in two rough 'Bergwagen,' with scanty baggage!

No other claimants for the rooms appeared, and the people were shy of any explanation; but we afterwards found that a letter, which had been enclosed to the master of the house for my husband, from our friend at the hotel at Reichenau, had no doubt led to the delusive expectation of a grand arrival, in a travelling carriage, over the Julier Pass.

Samaden appeared to us to be too little raised above the marshy meadows formed by the spreading waters of the river Inn to be free from the exhalations which it is always desirable to avoid. At the distance of an hour's walk up the opposite valley, Pontresina possesses the highest position, and the most central situation for the various excursions which we contemplated; we therefore decided to make it our head-quarters if the hotel promised tolerable comfort. To ascertain this my son, walked up with Couttet late in the afternoon, and returned with a satisfactory report that he had secured all the accommodation we required, and he thought the locality far preferable to Samaden. Meantime letters were received, and the portmanteau was reclaimed from the 'Poste Restante;' we took leave of our friends from Bergun, and all was arranged for a short journey the following morning.

## CHAPTER V.

## PONTRESINA AND THE ROSEGTHAL.

**B**EFORE we commence our wanderings through the hitherto untravelled valleys around the Bernina, it may be useful to gather together a few of the principal characteristics of a region at present but little known in England.

Von Tschudi says, 'Nowhere do we find more intricate heights, lovelier valleys, or more luxuriant vegetation,' than in the Grisons. 'It contains more than one hundred and fifty valleys, and must be held to surpass every other district in the exhibition of those wonderful contrasts of sternness and beauty in which Nature gives play to her caprices.'

To no part of the canton can this description be more truly applied than to the Ober-Engadine and its many lateral valleys, which spread their branches far into the mountain region round the Bernina, extending upwards until they meet the chilling embraces of the glacier, or are enveloped in a

mantle of snow. Nature is here seen in her most varied and attractive forms,—sparkling, transparent lakes, enshrined in rich pastoral valleys, reflecting the wooded slopes around ; or verdant alps, surmounted by giants of the Alpine world, in their wildest, most imposing, and most beautiful aspects. Nothing can be conceived more lovely than a warm summer-day in the clear, pure air of these high regions, where the snow-capped mountains stand in strong relief against the deep blue sky, with the smiling valleys nestling at their feet. At the average height of more than 5000 feet, where a few wretched huts, occupied only during the short summer months, are usually the only evidences of human habitation, we here find large villages with an industrious and thriving population.

Flax and ordinary vegetables are grown in the well-tended gardens, and in the Sertigthal we saw the potato flourishing at the height of 5600 feet. The warmer climate of these elevated and narrow valleys of the Rhætian Alps is accounted for by Von Tschudi, who says that ‘the high valleys are the heaters; the temperature of the confined air, rising rapidly under the rays of the sun, passes upwards, and imparts its heat to the higher portions.’ The warm season, however, is short, and the climate very

changeable ; even during the summer time the cold is often severe, and fresh snow falls upon the mountains.

We were told at Pontresina that the year consisted of nine months of winter and three of cold weather ! The season of 1861 was spoken of as most extraordinary in its long-continued clear skies and brilliant sunshine, so that I fear our experience must be considered exceptional as regards the glorious weather under the influences of which we visited this lovely scenery. The small loop-holed windows, so general in the old houses, bear testimony to the excessive cold to which the inhabitants are exposed during the long and dreary winter.

The magnificence and variety of the forest growth of this region is very remarkable, and contributes greatly to the beauty of the Alpine slopes. Without entering minutely into a description of the different kinds of fir which attract attention, I may mention the Roth Tanne, or red spruce ; the Larch ; the Legföhre or creeping fir ; and the Arven, also called the cedar of the Alps, as the principal species with which the sides of the valleys are clothed. The Arven, or *Pinus cembra*, deserves special notice, from its richness and abundance. Its form is pyramidal, with wide, drooping branches ; the blossoms are of a beautiful bright red,

succeeded by large oval cones of a rich brown tint, containing a nut of which the kernel is well flavoured. The cone becomes grey with age, and the tree often presents a picturesque and venerable appearance, with long tresses of silvery moss pendent from its outspread branches.

The 'Wettertanne,' known in the dialect of the country as the 'Sapin,' is also one of the marked characteristics of the Grison Highlands. This tree belongs to the family of the ordinary Pine, but it assumes such peculiar features in its struggles against the hardships and perils of its exposed position, that its relationship is scarcely recognised. Instead of the straight stem with which the lowland pine shoots upwards, the 'Wettertanne' often appears like a group of trees, clustering round a centre, and forming a thick shelter, capable of resisting the storms and avalanches to which it is exposed. The branches, instead of drooping gracefully, look torn and ragged, turning upwards at their extremities, as if ever struggling to attain maturity, and the whole aspect of this patriarch of the forest is grand and weatherbeaten.

The animal life which abounds opens a vast field of interest to the naturalist. In minerals this district is also rich, and the mountains afford large supplies of fine marble and serpentine. The chaly-

heate spring of St. Moritz was celebrated in the time of Paracelsus, who pronounced it the first in Europe, while sulphur and other medicinal springs also abound.

The Alpine flora is very extensive, and the flowers most beautiful, and remarkable for their depth of colouring. Many species are found peculiar to these regions.

The people are a hardy, good-looking, and kindly-mannered race, their dark hair and eyes, in some places, showing Italian extraction. In many of the principal villages of the Engadine, a large proportion of the men become wanderers in early youth, leaving their homes to seek a livelihood among strangers; they often go to Paris, as well as to the towns of Germany, and display their genius as bakers and confectioners. Enterprising, industrious, and saving, they frequently acquire considerable means, and return to their native places to enjoy the fruits of their industry. The external appearance of the houses generally indicates comfortable circumstances; many of them occupy much ground, and are handsome buildings, inclosing large barns for storing hay, under the same roof as the dwelling. Beggary is a thing unknown; with one exception, and that in Italy, not Switzerland, we were never asked for alms,



and witnessed none of those painful spectacles of human misery which are often forced upon the notice of travellers.

The religion of the Engadine is Protestant, and it is worthy of remark that the Reformation reached this district of Eastern Switzerland from the Italian side of the Alps. It is endeared to the people by the struggles to which they have been exposed in support of their faith. The history of their wars with Austria, for civil and religious liberty, is full of interesting and heart-stirring incidents, of which the Unter-Engadine and the Pratigau were the principal scenes.

This brief account would be incomplete without some notice of the migratory flocks by which the high valleys of the Grisons are overrun, as soon as the mountain passes from Italy are opened for their passage.

Leaving the dry plains of Lombardy, the Bergamesque shepherds conduct their flocks to the fresh Alpine pastures, for which an annual rent is paid to the communes. These men are universally considered trustworthy and honest, although their bandit-like and weather-beaten appearance might make a stranger start, if he encountered them in a solitary place. They are fine, handsome men, often with

chiselled features and black eyes; their dark hair sometimes hanging in long curls over their ears. Their costume is a coarse linen shirt, with a short jacket,—a red scarf being sometimes tied round the waist, displaying a tassel at one side. The nether garments are always unbuttoned at the knees, hanging loose above rough gaiters. In cold or wet weather a large loose cloak, of brown or whitish rough cloth, is thrown around them, and the picture is completed by the wide-brimmed, peaked, Calabrian hat, often weather-stained and battered out of any describable shape. The sheep are long-legged, lean, sedate-looking animals, with pendent ears, and a kind of dewlap below the chin. In wet weather their presence is said to be injurious to the pastures over which they tread, for they move in masses, and plough up the thin vegetation. The cows, which sometimes accompany the flocks, also do much mischief to the trees around their pasture-grounds; but, blinded by present gain, the country people welcome these strangers, as their forefathers have done before them, and thus from 30,000 to 40,000 animals are annually spread over the land.

The men are hardy and frugal, and lead a life of primitive simplicity amidst their flocks; their ordinary food being Polenta (maize and water) and cheese.

Their migrations are generally accompanied by an ass or two, loaded with the cooking utensils and necessary household goods; occasionally during the summer a picturesque figure may be encountered, mounted on one of these animals, descending to the inhabited world to make some needful purchases. In September the flocks are assembled to be shorn and marked, before their departure southwards, and the Alps are soon afterwards shrouded in their winter clothing of snow.

On the morning of the 15th of August, the beautiful Bernina group shone before us in tempting, unclouded loveliness, and increased our impatience to reach the head-quarters, from which we hoped to explore its recesses. We are taught in early youth that 'patience is a virtue,' and never is it called into more active, or rather passive, exercise than in travelling! Our early hours seemed to take the household by surprise. Breakfast was obtained after long waiting, and then the horses required for our conveyances to Pontresina had to be sought, and have their breakfasts. We were again to travel in two 'Einspanners,' which could be retained, if necessary, for any further excursion upon which we might decide. It was nearly eight o'clock before we could get away from Samaden, where our host must have been not

a little disappointed at the downfall of the expectations he had raised, of entertaining, and benefiting by the lengthened sojourn of, 'distinguished foreigners.'

The main road continues up the valley to Celerina and St. Moritz. Our way turned through the village to the left, crossed a substantial wooden bridge over the Inn, and brought us, after half-an-hour's gentle ascent, to Pontresina. This name includes two groups of houses, separated by meadows; the higher division is known as the Oberdorf; the lower, and more important portion, is sometimes called Laret.

It is situated at the foot of the Bernina Pass, at an elevation of 5932 feet, and is probably destined to become the Zermatt of this district. We drove through the village, passing large, but primitive-looking dwellings. One house especially attracted general notice, from the windows being filled with gay flowers, many of them hanging through the iron gratings. The first inn, apparently a respectable house, on the left, is kept by Enderlin, who has the reputation of being a good guide. Our destination was the Crown, at the further end of the street, which my son had selected, because the windows of the south side commanded a glorious view of the Rosegthal, closed by a lovely glacier. The Bernina

Spitze is not visible here, being shut out by the ridge, of which Piz Morteratsch is the highest peak.

We found small, but tidy rooms preparing for us, in the best part of the house, over the salon, and looking upon the Rosegthal and the distant silvery heads which rested so softly against the sky. We consulted the master of the house (Laurenz Gnädig by name), and it was decided that the best excursion for the day would be up the Rosegthal. We stopped only to deposit our luggage, and exchange one of our conveyances (a *calèche*) for the springless and stronger 'Bergwagen;' and then, having laid in a store of provisions, we set forth.

The valley of the Bernina is watered by the Flatzbach, which is lost to view a short distance above Pontresina. The stream dives between rugged rocks, the chasm being crossed by a bridge, whence the water is seen rushing below in noisy commotion. It is a picturesque spot: the dark rocks clothed with red and gray lichens, with fir-trees springing from the crevices. The way we were to follow crossed this bridge, and a second one immediately beyond, over the stream which flows from the Roseg glacier. It then led up the valley, through rocky woodland scenery, with the high cliffs which form the foundations of Piz Rosatsch, rising above

us on the right. Our Samaden drivers grumbled loudly, and apparently with some reason, at the extreme roughness of the track. According to their account, their village had agreed to share with Pontresina the cost and trouble of making the Rosegthal accessible, and while the Samaden people had done their part by improving the upper portion of the road, their neighbours were apathetic, and had done nothing to fulfil their contract. As we rumbled slowly on, my son scrambled among the rocks, and by the river side, seeking additions to our flower-book. He was rewarded by finding several that were new to us. The prettiest was a mountain everlasting, (*Antennaria Dioica*), the lower portion of the globular bloom being a bright rose-colour, finished off with silvery white. A simple white variety of the same plant was very common. The trailing *Linnaea* creeps among the rocks, and we also picked the *Achillea Moscata* (here called the Iva Kraut), which abounds in this district. A powerful liquor is extracted from it, which is exported in considerable quantities to Paris and Denmark. Higher up the valley, the rocks were ornamented by the delicate flowers of the elegant, fringed pink, which I have seen cultivated at home, and used very effectively in a table-bouquet.

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After about an hour's jolting, the valley widened, and some cattle châlets occupied a corner of a sheltered pasture. The road then improved, and crossed to the left bank of the stream, creeping upwards along its margin. The scene before us was now most picturesque and beautiful; the centre filled up by hills of rough débris, apparently ancient moraines, sometimes presenting a bare, sterile embankment, in other places overgrown and wooded, reminding us of the approach to the Belvedere at Macugnaga. The base of the rocky mountains on either side was covered with luxuriant foliage; indeed, these regions seem peculiarly to illustrate Byron's description, where he says,—

‘But from their nature will the *Tannen* grow  
Loftiest, on loftiest and least sheltered rocks,  
Rooted in barrenness, where nought below  
Of soil supports them, 'gainst the Alpine shocks  
Of eddying storms; yet springs the trunk and mocks  
The howling tempest, till its height and frame  
Are worthy of the mountains from whose blocks  
Of black-grey granite into life it came,  
And grew a giant tree.’

A huge boulder, thrown ‘as by a giant's hand,’ rested on the brink of the roaring, chafing river, while the snowy range beyond glittered through the delicate foliage of a group of larch in the foreground.

The valley again contracted to scarcely more than the width of the river, which was crossed by a rickety bridge made of sods and fir-poles. Here another Alpine pasture opened, where the carts were to be left to await our return from a further walk. We continued to skirt the rocks on the banks of the now wide-spreading bed of the river; above us, on the right, were some extraordinary, zebra-marked precipices of black and white strata; and further on, the high glacier from which Piz Corvatsch raises its rugged head.

On the opposite side of the desolate, stone-strewn valley, the gloomy cliffs which support Piz Tschierva and Piz Morteratsch were hung with massive drapery, whose icy folds, pendent over the ridge, looked as if they might, at any moment, be loosened from the unseen hand by which they are upheld. Immediately in front, Nature was presented in one of her most bewitching forms of Alpine beauty,—where the brilliant Piz Roseg is attended by the Schwestern, or sisters, whose snowy line is continued to the lofty Bernina Spitze. On the west, the grand Roseg glacier stretches its long arm down from the side of the Caputschin, strongly marked by a central moraine; above it, and just below the Piz Roseg, is an Alpine ‘jardin,’ called ‘Agaglioul,’ to which, during fine



weather, the shepherds, attracted by its sweet, flowery herbage, sometimes conduct their sheep across the ice. This Alp separates the Roseg glacier from that of the Tschierva, which descends in unsullied purity from Piz Bernina, broken below Piz Morteratsch into perpendicular cliffs of brilliant transparency. The force with which it unites itself with the sister glacier is so impulsive, that the moraine already mentioned is driven, almost in an angle, to the foot of the rocks below Piz Corvatsch. The united masses then fall in a steep icy slope, beneath which the river issues from two vaulted caves. From this point we scrambled over the rocks, down the side of the Alp Ota, to the verge of the moraine. Loose, rolling stones made caution needful; and in his anxiety to remove danger from our path Couttet received an ugly blow, by which one of his fingers was much torn. At first he would not own to the extent of the hurt, but afterwards he was glad to let us bind up the wounded hand, which evidently became very painful.

Meantime he chipped steps along the slippery brow which terminates the glacier, and carefully following, we entered upon the ice-world. It was a grand and beautiful scene, presenting a vast extent of unsullied snow and far-stretching glacier, with crevasses almost as brilliant in their transparent colouring as

the cloudless sky above—a combination unearthly in its purity—as incapable of description as of representation.

We had not intended to go upon the glacier, for which the aid of a local guide, in addition to Couttet, was almost essential; our excursion was consequently limited; but I should recommend all those who are not afraid of encountering ordinary difficulties upon the ice, to cross the glacier to the Alp Agaglioul, and make the Rosegthal a long day's occupation.

We had to descend very carefully to the edge of the moraine, and walked about half an hour further down to a beautiful knoll, where, under the shade of a fir-tree, we could enjoy our luncheon, while we gazed upon the lovely scene, and began to understand the geography of the new mountain-world around us. By continuing up the Alp Ota, and skirting the south side of Piz Corvatsch, the Val Fex may be reached, and the walk continued down to Santa Maria and Sils. An easier way leads on the north side, below the glacier, to Surlej and Silva Plana: this last must be a very interesting excursion.

After rejoining our voitures, the carelessness of one of our drivers nearly led to serious mischief,—the waggon in which my son and myself were sitting, with Couttet, being completely upset, where there was

no excuse for such an accident. Fortunately it went over gently, enabling me to hold to the upper side of the seat, while D—— landed safely on soft turf below me. Our friends behind were somewhat alarmed at our sudden summerset; but happily no harm was done, and all was right when the vehicle was restored to its proper position. We had, however, learnt prudence, and walked over the fragile bridge, which seemed scarcely safe as it trembled above the greatly increased force of the stream, which now rushed brawling and foaming over the obstructions in its way. The downward drive was very pleasant; and on arriving at Pontresina, we found a tolerable dinner provided for us, but we discovered that fresh meat or fowls were not every-day luxuries here; we therefore impressed upon the Herrin that the mountain air sharpened the appetite, and that if we remained some days we must have plenty of food! Addressing me as ‘Meine Liebe,’ she assured me that our wants should be supplied; indeed, all the household were evidently desirous to make us comfortable.

We had now to arrange for the excursion, which had been the only definite object of our visit to Pontresina. The next morning was to be spent in the ascent of Piz Languard, the celebrated viewpoint of this country. It stands back in a north-

east direction above the village, from which it is concealed by an intervening ridge. We were told that the way towards it was riding-ground for the first two hours; three horses were, therefore, ordered to be in readiness before five o'clock, with a local guide and the usual luncheon. These arrangements being concluded, even the moonlight view from our bedroom windows of

‘The white Alps glitt’ring through the solemn sky,’

did not long detain us from our slumbers.

## CHAPTER VI.

## PIZ LANGUARD AND THE MORTERATSCH GLACIER.

EARLY hours are quite the fashion at Pontresina ; and if one is *not* going up Piz Languard, it is rather irritating to be awakened about three o'clock by an over-zealous Kammermädchen. A party of Germans were *en route* before us ; and, as usual, we suffered from the delays caused by the use of horses. After we had started, our progress was stayed by something evidently amiss with one of the animals ; its master reluctantly pronounced it to be 'krank' from having over-eaten itself with fresh hay during the night. It was therefore left behind, and we proceeded with two horses only.

The mountain range beyond the Morteratschthal was very beautiful in the morning light, as we crossed the meadows, leaving Oberdorf on our right. A ruined tower which stands apart from the houses, nearer to the hill-side, is of very ancient date ; indeed, tradition assigns its origin to the eleventh

century, and it is believed to be the remains of a fort built by the Saracens when they sought to hold possession of the Bernina Pass. Close by is a small bridge over the stream which flows from the Languardthal; and thus the present name of the village is locally explained as derived from Ponte Saracino.

The ascent immediately became very steep, through a fir forest, where the bloom of an abundant undergrowth of 'Alpen Rosen' had been very beautiful. We thus quickly reached a much greater elevation; and the path then wound gently upwards to the right, until the object of our expedition appeared before us, presenting a dark, pointed cone, standing severed from, and high above, all around it.

The attractions of Piz Languard as a view-point were first perceived by Colani, the leading guide at Pontresina. He enjoys an hereditary claim to distinction from his father's wide-spread fame as a hunter and mountaineer. The elder Colani seems to have reigned supreme in these regions, and bold was the man who ventured to question his authority, or poach upon his domains.

His son, with more advanced views, is anxious to share the advantages likely to arise from opening to others the magnificent scenery with which his

Alpine home is surrounded. Having satisfied himself of the wondrous beauty of the panorama as seen from the Piz, Colani, conjointly with some enterprising friends at Pontresina, surveyed the best course to the summit, and made it more accessible. Since this was done (in 1855), numerous travellers, chiefly Germans, have benefited by their labours.

As we skirted the Languard Alp we, for the first time, saw a large establishment of the Bergamesque shepherds. Their position here afforded quite a sheltered home compared to many of the Alpine stations, and they appeared to have a large number of cows and goats, besides the usual flock.

The track now rose more steeply, over moist and rough pastures, until it became difficult for the horses, which had been serviceable for two hours and a half, when they were here dismissed to return to Pontresina. We then began a steady upward climb, with the rugged peak rising straight before us. The red colouring of the mountain strata was very remarkable, contrasting with snow and glacier, and with broken and picturesque crags, also richly tinted with black, sulphur-coloured, and bright green lichens. Numerous flowers were scattered around, where apparently,

‘In wasteful bounty shower’d, they smiled unseen by man.’

The Edelweis (*Gnaphalium Leontopodium*) grows here abundantly, and to a large size. It is a very favourite flower, and, among the Tyrolese especially, is presented by lovers to their betrothed as an emblem of purity and constancy. Every upward step extended the horizon, and revealed new beauties in the mountain-world around us. Many small lakes, whose existence was previously unknown, now appeared reposing in deep recesses. Amidst the rocks and glaciers which form the outworks of Piz Languard on the south-east, one lovely gem attracted, and frequently recalled, our admiration to its beautiful colouring of brightest cobalt, sprinkled with snow-flakes of pure white. A ridge, which might be trying to dizzy heads, brought us to the base of the actual pinnacle, where the last twenty minutes' climb up the face of the rocks was certainly very steep, although without difficulty to any one accustomed to such work. It had occupied full an hour and a half, from the time when we left the horses, to attain the summit, which reminded me of the *Æggischhorn* more than of any other mountain with which I am acquainted. It is, however, more precipitous on all sides, and the view is indisputably more magnificent.

At the first moment it is difficult to realise the



details of such a position, encircled by a wide-spreading wilderness of mountains. When the eye has become somewhat accustomed to the scene, it seizes some well-known point, and thence, as from a centre, begins to identify surrounding objects.

The Piz itself is a broken, rocky pinnacle, flattened sufficiently to afford standing-room for from twenty to thirty persons closely packed, but I confess I should not like to be one of so large a party. On the south, in immediate vicinity, the Bernina range must always be the prominent feature of this grand panorama, offering, as it does, every combination, and contrast, necessary to the perfection of an Alpine picture. Precipitous rocks, and dark, bare pinnacles, stood forth amidst silvered summits, and threw a soft shadow upon the otherwise unsullied snow with which they are encircled. Piz Palu is conspicuous in pure beauty, contrasted with the rugged sides of Mont Pers. Beyond them, to the east, are Piz Cambrera and Piz Verona; to the west; Piz Zuppo; and then the Bernina Spitze, with its glittering crown and massive glaciers. Piz Morteratsch and Piz Tschierva rise in front, with Piz Roseg more withdrawn, and a further background comprising Piz Tremoggia, the Monte del Oro, and other giants, with whose names we were as yet un-

familiar. Nearer again, the ridge from Piz Corvatsch to Piz Rosatch separates the Rosegthal from the valley of the Inn, in whose depths the chain of lakes from St. Moritz to the Silser See gleamed like gems in a rich setting. Turning the eye still further west, a range of nameless heights is seen, far beyond which the well-known form of Monte Rosa is readily distinguished. Mont Blanc itself is said to be visible against the distant horizon, but we failed to identify it as a fact. Turning to the north, the magnates of the Bernese Oberland raise their heads, the Jungfrau and Finster Aarhorn being quickly recognised; nearer are the peaks and glaciers of the less known Bündler Oberland, and in the immediate foreground Piz Ot, Piz Err, and Piz Ketsch, are conspicuous above the Ober-Engadine. Further away again we saw the Titlis, and a group amidst which the Dodi is an important object; continuing the circle were the dark blue mountains of Appenzell, and the chain of the Rhætikon, which separates the Swiss valley of the Pratigau from the Austrian Voralberg. The dark pyramid of the Schwartzhorn, rising amidst vast glaciers, with Piz Linard, and the brilliant Selyretta, lead the eye above the Unter-Engadine to the far-stretching mountains of the Tyrol; a magnificent group, offer-

ing to us no object for friendly recognition. Among the many names to which we were henceforth to attach a local habitation were the Oesthaler glacier, the Wormser and Stilfser Jochs; then the snow-clad Orteler, with its three pinnacles, and the Monte Cristallo. A light vapoury haze played upon the Tyrolean side, —

‘Soft clouds that  
Threw their bright veil across the heavenly way

adding a changeful beauty to the scene.

Turning to the south, the mountain range included St. Catharina and the Tre Signori, and extended to the Alps of Bergamasco and the Valteline. The nearer heights around Poschiavo united the panoramic view with the Bernina group from which we started; and in the foreground a line of small lakes, apparently in a deep valley, marked the old route over the Bernina Pass to Italy.

We were not alone upon the pinnacle, for besides the two Germans and their guide, who had left Pontresina before us, there were two gentlemen who had ascended by moonlight the previous evening, carrying wraps and provisions to enable them to sleep in a rough cabin, built under the shelter of a rock, about 200 feet below the summit.

This hut was constructed for Herr Georgy, of

Leipsic, a well-known painter, who was such an enthusiastic admirer of these mountains, that he lived three weeks in this exposed spot, engaged in making drawings for a panorama which is not yet finished.

We also made acquaintance here with Peter Jenni, one of the guides who had recently ascended the Piz Bernina with Messrs. Hardy and Kennedy; Jenni seemed proud of his English acquaintance, and a most laudatory entry in his book showed that he had acquired their good opinion.

It must have required considerable energy and active labour to place a heavy circular iron pillar, about three and a half feet high, in its present position upon the summit. At first it was difficult to understand for what especial purpose so much trouble had been taken; but it appears that this pillar is intended to bear a metal plate, engraved with a panoramic view, and the names of the principal mountains. Its designation, 'eine Orientirungstafel' seemed to indicate this purpose; at present the interior serves only to preserve a visitors' book, to which our names were added. Additional warm clothing is generally required for any lengthened stay upon this exposed point, but to-day it was quite unnecessary, although we remained full two hours enjoying the reward of

our toil. The general circle had disappeared, but we had been joined by four young boys, who took great interest in the view, and were much pleased by the loan of our map, and an occasional peep through the glasses. These lads belonged to the middle-class, and were school-boys from Samaden, who had chosen this elevated play-ground, as a holiday excursion, for the exercise of those energies which an English boy would have expended in cricket or foot-ball. When we prepared to descend, they started in company, but such lively companions were neither safe nor agreeable among precipitous rocks abounding in loose stones, which were easily dislodged; we therefore requested them to go a-head, and soon heard their merry voices rising up from far beneath our feet.

The unusual continuance of dry weather had turned the earth to dust, and in descending the cone we found the surface of the rocks both heating and fatiguing to the feet. Any one wishing to vary the way back, and not afraid of extending the walk, might keep up under the crags to the left, at the base of the pinnacle; thence follow a track below the glacier of the Paun di Zucher, past the Cobalt Lake and the falls of the Pischa, down through the Val di Fain, to the Bernina châlets, where a car

should be sent forward in readiness to drive back to Pontresina.

The full power of the mid-day sun was reflected on the mountain side as we wound gradually downwards to reach the shelter of the fir forest; and the absence of air made this part of the expedition rather tiring, otherwise the walk would have been pleasant, and easily completed in three hours and a half. We occupied nearly four hours in our return, and were glad to take an hour's rest before dinner.

I then found 'the Herr' in the salon, enjoying the refreshment of a little English conversation with a friend, who had unexpectedly arrived with an English family who were staying at St. Moritz. They were spending a few hours at Pontresina, and this was the only occasion, during three weeks' sojourn among the mountains, that we heard our own language, except among ourselves.

In the evening we strolled about the meadows above the village, and caught some lovely mountain views,

'Touched by the lingering sun with gold.'

As soon as the last rays had faded, the air became quite fresh, and soon so decidedly chill, that we felt

it imprudent to sit out, notwithstanding the charm of watching the gradual influence of

‘The silver light, which, hallowing tree and tower,  
Shed beauty and deep softness o’er the whole,’

and entirely changed the aspect of the scene around us.

We had made an appointment to see Jenni during the evening, in order to discuss our further excursions. He quite confirmed our intention of going, the next day, to the Morteratsch glacier, for which a good local guide was essential. Jenni himself was engaged, and recommended Alexander Fruli, one of the three men who had shared the recent ascent of the Bernina: this seemed a security that he was qualified for his work, and we found that he was also one of the six guides who are enrolled at Pontresina, and who are responsible to Colani as ‘chef.’

We proposed a glacier excursion of five or six hours; and as there was no use in being upon the ice too early, our arrangements were made to start at six o’clock, in two cars, which would take us up the valley to the entrance of Morteratschthal. Fruli greeted our appearance in the morning, carrying his baton, neatly fitted with a small hatchet, and provided with a coil of ropes round his shoulders; this

looked businesslike, and amused us, as we had no expectation of requiring such aid. Fortunately, a good luncheon was also packed into a knapsack, at his suggestion. The morning air was so keen, after a sharp frost, that we were glad to unroll cloaks and shawls during our drive. We thus felt how entirely enjoyment here must be influenced by fine weather; for the bright sunshine is really necessary to modify the cold caused by the great height and surrounding snow-fields.

When we arrived opposite to the opening where the Morteratsch glacier fills up the entrance to the valley, our carriages stopped, and Fruli suggested four o'clock as the time for their return to fetch us. We thought that hour rather late, and two o'clock was fixed for our meeting at the same place. The first great attraction, amidst the beautiful combination of scenery around, was the fine fall of the Fatschbach, beneath which our path led, and of which we were promised a nearer view upon our return. We then crossed a substantial bridge over the stream fed by the glacier, and keeping up the right side, over broken ground, richly wooded, we skirted the Morteratsch Alp, towards the dirty-looking moraine which disfigures the approach to the upper ice-world.



In about half an hour we left the track up the rocks, and descended to the glacier; then climbing its slippery brow, we were soon walking upwards upon a glassy but tolerably level surface.

The ice-valley extended beyond us to a vast distance, spreading into two branches, like the letter Y; — the glacier on the left descending in high broken pinnacles from Mont Pers; the other, with a less rugged surface, sweeping down from the Piz Bernina. On all sides the views were so magnificent, that we continued to advance, without any question as to the precise object of our walk. As we wound among crevasses up the centre of the glacier, our course was very devious. We passed over undulations, and skirted valleys inclosed by icy ridges; then we looked into depths, between transparent crystal walls, which shone with sparkling brilliancy, and discovered a lovely lakelet, the colour of ultramarine, hidden in the heart of the glacier-world. Now came a crevasse, which must be crossed by a very narrow natural bridge; but as this was situated some feet lower than the banks on either side, the access required improvement. Fruli apparently felt no doubt of our intention to overcome such impediments, and at once began to chip footsteps which, with the aid of an outstretched hand from

himself and Couttet, enabled us to pass securely. He then led us to the margin of another beautiful lake, near which he had, on a previous visit, hidden a bottle containing a slip of paper with the names of his companions. The paper was found safely frozen into its case; and after adding our cards to the visiting list, we restored it to the custody of the Ice-king into whose palace we had penetrated.

After skirting up the side of a glassy ridge, we gazed from above upon the startling beauty of the fairy scene, which might well be deemed the realisation of an Arabian Night's tale. The icy pinnacles around were reflected in the deep, clear water, beneath which a line of glittering rocks, honeycombed into fantastic forms, seemed to rise up to meet the gleams of the bright sunshine—unconscious that the warm greeting would quickly annihilate their fragile loveliness. Words quite fail to describe a scene in which earth had certainly no part. Again we descended into a deep hollow, where a long, narrow chasm opened vistas into the recesses of the glacier, with here and there one of Nature's deceitful bridges spanning the fissure.

The sun had loosened the bonds which frost each night renews, and the transparent water now flowed in serpentine streams, working out rocks and pro-

montories in its course ; occasionally finding its way over an icy precipice, to be lost for a time in the unseen depths below ;—in the glacier language these falls are termed ‘ moulins.’

We could not linger long in this strange dream-land of beauty ; and as we advanced, we found that some difficulties must be surmounted before our way out of the labyrinth was clear. We were encircled by crevasses, but Fruli seemed confident of his course, and quite in his element. He had previously pointed out a minute ‘ Steinmann,’ situated on a rocky projection, rather to the left of the fork of the glacier ; this, he said, marked the Isle Pers, and was the mark he intended us to reach. The air of the glacier annihilates distance, and we were quite satisfied to go forward under his guidance. At the next crevasse Fruli hewed a foothold on the opposite side, where the bank was higher than where we stood ; then throwing himself across, with perfect indifference, he rested his shoulders against one side, and fixed his feet upon the other, while he whistled merrily, and offered his alpenstock as a rail for our support in getting over. At the next obstacle, the practical use of the rope was suggested, and Couttet looked much happier when he thus exercised control over our movements. Where a jump was necessary to

clear the crevasse, the rope fastened round the waist, and held on either side by a strong hand, gave a feeling of perfect security that was very pleasant. The queerest passage we made was where a narrow and steep icy ridge had to be scrambled up, just over the crevasse; this was successfully, if not quite elegantly accomplished, and still we appeared only more closely encircled by a labyrinth of ice. Doubtful of the prudence of continuing our advance, I asked Fruli if such exploits must be often repeated; he assured us that there were only two more 'Spälte,' less difficult than those we had already overcome. Advance was therefore better than retreat. When the last of the party had cleared the final jump, Fruli joyously exclaimed, in a peculiar medley of bad Italian and German, 'Il battaglia ist gewonnen!' the victory is gained! And he had not deceived us.

No further difficulties impeded our way to the central moraine, over which we passed upon the comparatively flat surface of the glacier de Pers, which subsides into a tranquil course after it has effected a grand descent, throwing up fine pinnacles and rugged ice rocks between the bare precipices of Mont Pers and the 'Isle' above, to which we were bound.

Fruli fixed his alpenstock upright in the ice,

and after screwing on a cleverly-contrived circular rest, he mounted his telescope, and thus enabled us clearly to see the flag, recently planted by our countrymen, waving in the breeze on the Bernina Spitze. He showed us the circuitous route taken by the travellers, and pointed out the position of the enormous crevasse which nearly stopped their progress altogether. Fruli did not ascend the last 200 feet himself, but remained with Mr. Kennedy when it was thought prudent to divide the party. He is light, active, and evidently a first-rate ice-man; very attentive, without being forward in manner; and he understands a little French, besides speaking better German than is usual in these valleys: he showed an intelligent pleasure in pointing out every subject of interest, and found traces of animal life which would probably have escaped our notice. A species of pheasant is met with, even upon the glacier; and Fruli moved a large stone in order to bring to light some tiny insects (the *Desoria glacialis*, or glacier flea), which were congregated in a little black swarm upon the surface. They were evidently alive and merry, but how they can exist and find nourishment in such a spot remains quite a mystery. Two or three common white butterflies were picked up, apparently dead, upon

the glacier; when held in a warm hand their circulation quickly returned, and they flew away, probably astonished to find themselves enjoying bright sunshine.

A rushing sound of hidden waters guided us to a grand 'moulin' upon the verge of a crevasse, where the swift stream sped over the ice rocks, and after making two springs in its descent, was lost in an icicled cavern below. We now kept rather to the left, where the glacier was covered with half-melted snow, over which we reached the base of the rocks which form the foundations of Isle Pers. Here there was some rough scrambling, and loose stones made the foothold rather precarious. A little higher up the rocky surface was mingled with vegetation, enlivened by many flowers: I remarked great quantities of the faded bloom of an auricula which must have been most luxuriant; we also picked forget-me-nots and gentians, and a very pretty variety of the caccalia, with a brighter coloured and more compact flower, and smaller foliage, than the common kind.

Here again we were surprised by the busy hum of active life, from a diligent bee, which was culling the fragrance, which any one would have supposed must be 'wasting its sweetness on the desert air.' Whence had the little creature come, and whither

was it bound with its hardly-earned riches? Pontresina was apparently its nearest home, and to reach it the whole extent of the glacier must be passed over.

The rocky surface of Isle Pers is much more extensive than it appears from a distance; we had quite a circuitous walk ere we reached the Steinmann, upon which my son had mounted his Alpenstock with a flag for our guidance.

The view was most magnificent, with vast glaciers and snow-fields on all sides, surmounted by rugged rocks and silvered summits. We were in the centre of an enormous bowl, encircled on the south-east by a line of colourless brilliancy, amidst which Piz Palù rose up in resplendent beauty. The boundary line between Switzerland and Italy lies amidst the wild precipices and eternal snows of these

‘Mountains, that like giants stand  
To sentinel enchanted land.’

In former days they might be supposed to bear their icy breastplates to withstand the approach of hostile forces; now the yoke of the oppressor has been cast off, and Lombardy as well as Switzerland rejoices in the freedom of her people. Fruli pointed out a high but remarkably flattened ridge of massive

rocks, surrounded by perpendicular precipices, just visible against the sky beyond Piz Zuppo. Even the most adventurous hunters (not excepting the first Colani) have failed to scale these fearful crags, which are known as the 'Gemsen Freiheit,' because amidst their recesses the chamois may take refuge in perfect security from the approach of man.

A peculiar feature of the magnificent scenery found amidst this Alpine group is the number of distinct pinnacles, which entitle it to the designation of the 'many-headed Bernina.' It is seldom that so many summits exceeding 10,000 feet are congregated together so closely, and the variety of form and effect produced is very striking.

The height of the Piz Bernina is about 13,500 feet; until recently its position was scarcely known beyond the immediate district; and its ascent had been attempted only by some of the most enterprising chamois hunters of the neighbourhood. In September, 1850, Herr Coaz, a Swiss official, engaged in a government survey, determined to mount the Spitze, and successfully accomplished the enterprise, which he recorded by raising a stone pyramid and planting a flag on the summit. During last summer, two distinguished members of the Alpine Club



directed their energies to the conquest of the Bernina, and on the 23rd of July, the ascent, to which I have already referred, was achieved.

Their steps have since been followed by a Russian traveller, and the Spitze now holds an established position among Alpine exploits worthy of the most aspiring mountaineers. We read the short account written by Mr. Hardy, in the hotel-book at Pontresina, from which it seems that the difficulties to be overcome are greater than those usually encountered either on Mont Blanc or Monte Rosa.

The Piz Bernina is approached by a steep, knife-like ridge; and girded with icy armour, which sparkled in the cloudless sunshine, it grouped most beautifully with the dark pinnacles and rocky projections which threw their shadows upon a surface of ethereal purity. Numerous glaciers hung pendant over the precipices around, and the whole line of the magnificent Morteratsch was extended above and beneath us, as it swept down from the Bernina, and stretched its length to the furthest limit of the valley, which it has so entirely usurped.

Our luncheon was spread upon the rocks, and we had time fully to enjoy the glorious scene by which we were encircled, while we refreshed ourselves with the iced *vin d'Asti*, which was very welcome after

our long and exciting pilgrimage. The Steinmann produced the usual card-case, in the shape of a bottle, containing the contributions of previous visitors, among which we did not find any English names. The autograph of Professor Theobald was interesting, after reading his account of the day he spent in exploring these rocks and glaciers, which he had approached by a dangerous course down the precipices of Mont Pers.

Fruli was in high spirits at the successful termination of our walk, and now told us that only one lady (a German, from Leipsic) had hitherto reached this isolated point.

It was his ambition to be the first guide to conduct English ladies through the difficulties of the glacier to this remarkable 'jardin' amidst the snow-fields. Fortunately we had been able to realize his wishes, by carrying through an expedition which had certainly revealed scenes of marvellous beauty unequalled by anything in our previous wanderings.

Couttet considered that we had performed quite a feat, and assured us that the Col de Géant might sometimes be passed with less glacier-work than we had just overcome. He expected us now to listen to prudent counsels, and to take a longer, but perfectly safe way back, in order to avoid the central crevasses.

He said that the descent amidst such difficulties must be attended by danger, especially as the ice would be treacherous, under the influence of the mid-day sun. Personally, I had no wish to renew our recent experiences, and I believe that all the party were quite satisfied to take the longer course, which Fruli pointed out, while he promised that we should have no more 'Sprünge' to make. We had been five hours in reaching Isle Pers from the Bernina road, to which we might have returned in about three down the glacier; but full four hours would be required for the circuitous course.

It was nearly two o'clock when we left our rocky view-point and descended upon the slippery slopes of half-melted snow. Tending rather upwards, towards the base of the Piz Bernina, we found it easy walking upon the glacier, where the surface was comparatively smooth, before its temper became ruffled by its obtrusive, pushing neighbour from Mont Pers.

The views of the mountains and snow-fields were magnificent; but the glare was so dazzling, that we feared our eyes would suffer. As to our complexions, they were already hopelessly destroyed!

We were nearly an hour before we reached the rough moraine, over which we passed, and descended again upon snow. Scattered rocky débris offered us

the accommodation of seats, while we rested and watched the large stones, which detached themselves without any visible cause, and rolled noisily down the sides of the moraine, rendering it unsafe to take a course within reach of their vagaries.

We had now reached the rocks at the base of Piz Morteratsch, with the prospect of some very rough upward climbing over loose stones and dry water-courses, which we found less pleasant than the ice. We had thus ascended high above the glacier, which formed a fine feature in the grand picture, whose combinations were quite unlike those we had previously seen. The lofty isolated cone of Piz Languard is very fine, rising above the range which bounds the vista down the valley. The grandest view is perhaps from the Boval Alp, where a rough cattle ch<sup>^</sup>âlet offers shelter. Fruli told us that Messrs. Hardy and Kennedy had rested here, for a few hours, during the night before their ascent of the Bernina; their course from Pontresina having been up this side of the glacier. We constantly passed entrances to the summer dwellings of the marmots (called in the Engadine, *marmotella*), which seem to delight in these regions. Several times we heard their peculiar call, showing that our approach was not unnoticed. Once, the deep, clear whistle seemed quite close to us, and

looking upwards among the rocks, which were scattered around, we saw two of the sentinels on duty, watching our movements. One quickly vanished, but the other sat still on his stone, with his head erect, looking at us with impertinent security, and every now and then uttering his note of warning. These little animals employ themselves during the short summer in 'making hay while the sun shines,' in order to provide for the comfort of their winter retirement. They carefully excavate their abodes, at a lower level than those to which they resort in the summer, and prepare for their seclusion during the long months of torpor in which more than half their lives is spent. It is believed that the hay, which they gather in great quantities, is provided only to line their apartments, and secure a certain amount of warmth. Under ordinary circumstances, the marmot does not feed during the winter, but is supposed to exist upon the accumulation of its summer fat.

The track along the mountain side is fatiguing, owing to the winding course necessary to avoid deep gullies and other impediments. Sometimes we had to ascend a high brow only to descend more rapidly, and then repeat the operation! at others we skirted the ridge midway among loose rocks and underwood,

where the footing was rendered treacherous by a thick growth of the trailing juniper. Suddenly clouds appeared gathering before us, and looking back we saw mist eddying round the summits of the Bernina. A few drops of rain, followed by thunder, made us hasten on our way, and we reached the Morteratsch Alp and the foot of the glacier safely. The path was now good, and we ran merrily down through the forest, hoping to reach the *calèches* which we had discovered in the distance; but as we crossed the open pastures a heavy hailstorm burst over us: we were obliged to rush past the roaring waterfall, quite regardless of its beauties, and console ourselves for our wetting by thinking how much more inconvenient it would have been had the storm come earlier in the afternoon. It was now six o'clock, so no wonder the men were a little cross and tired of waiting for us; however, we soon restored their good temper, and we all returned to Pontresina highly delighted with our day's adventures.

The name of Herr Georgy must again be mentioned in connection with the Morteratsch glacier, with which he is, probably, better acquainted than even the best guides at Pontresina.

Dr. Lechner gives an interesting account, written by the artist himself, of the privations he encountered

in his eager pursuit of Nature in her wildest moods. Late in the autumn of 1856, Georgy took up his residence, with a companion, upon the verge of the moraine, 'where,' he says, 'we lodged until nearly the middle of November in the Hotel Granite-block, à la Marmotte.' It was indeed a strange and desolate abode amidst the rocks, built by no human hands, and encompassed by all the fearful sounds which at that season perpetually issue from the depths of the glacier-world. Such temerity was scarcely justifiable; and, as might have been expected, a night of storm almost buried the granite house beneath the snow. The artist and his companion, not being prepared to remain torpid, like the marmot, were exposed to considerable danger, and encountered great risk in escaping from their prison to the habitable world. The following year, Herr Georgy returned to his remarkable residence; but it was then fitted up with some conveniences and comforts, and became a favourite resort with those who visited the glacier.

We were told by a German gentleman whom we met at Pontresina that he knew the artist well, and feared that he would never recover from the rheumatic affections to which he had become subject in consequence of such rash exposure. He had always been lame on one foot; now he had become per-

manently crippled, and his friend said that even his great work, the panorama from Piz Languard, was not likely to be completed. The Morteratsch glacier is decidedly the finest excursion in the neighbourhood of Pontresina, and should be made by every one who is equal to such a long day's work. Those who object to encountering crevasses may reach Isle Pers by reversing our route to the Boval Alp, and crossing the upper and level portion of the glacier. The Boval Alp itself is well worth a visit, even if the excursion is not prolonged; but I own that I should be unwilling to retrace my steps from that point.

Among the many tales of the olden time which find a local habitation in these valleys, it is not surprising that the scene of our day's wanderings claims a tradition peculiarly its own. It can scarcely be considered inappropriate if my chapter closes with an illustration of the customs of primitive days as they are described in

#### A LEGEND OF THE MORTERATSCH GLACIER.

Three hundred years ago, the lower part of the valley, now covered by the desolating glacier, is said to have been a fertile Alp. The continued encroachments of the icy current within the last twenty years confirms this opinion.



In yet more ancient times, the meadows may possibly have extended up the Morteratschthal even to Mont Pers ; this must certainly have been the case at the period to which my story refers, when a shepherd from the Bündler Oberland brought his flock to spend the summer upon these Alpine pastures. It seems to have been the custom for the owners of the various herds scattered over the mountain sides to meet, at a festival, at one of the Alpine stations, when the milk of each cow was measured, and the value of the dairy produce apportioned. The inhabitants of the neighbouring villages joined in these gatherings, and it was on an occasion of this kind that the shepherd became acquainted with a maiden belonging to one of the first families of Pontresina. The young folks were mutually attracted ; kindly words were often exchanged between them ; and when from time to time the shepherd descended to the valley to purchase provisions, they found opportunities of meeting, and indulged dreams of future happiness. Ere long the parents of the maiden became aware of the attachment which had arisen, and naturally they would not listen to any proposal for such an unequal connection. They required that the youth should not revisit the Alp with his flock ; but still a gleam of hope was permitted. The father promised that, if

the young man succeeded in placing himself in a position to aspire to his daughter's hand, he would not refuse his consent to the realisation of their mutual wishes.

The lovers took a sad farewell in the autumn, when the damsel plighted her troth, promised never to love another, but patiently and hopefully to await happier days.

The shepherd returned to his home, where, discontented and miserable, he found no rest in his ordinary duties. Anxious, if possible, to meet the condition prescribed, he entered into a foreign military service,—a road by which many of the Swiss, in those days, attained honour and acquired property. The young man now distinguished himself, and, step by step, he was advanced to the rank of a captain.

In the mean time, the maiden received no tidings of the absent one, and pined away day by day. Her parents would willingly have recalled the lover, but they sought him in vain, and after the lapse of a few years, they had the sorrow of seeing their beloved child sink under the prolonged trial of hope deferred.

The young soldier returned home soon afterwards, and hastened, full of hope and joyful expectation, to the Engadine, where common report soon informed

him of the melancholy fate of his betrothed. Without making himself known, he paid one sad visit to Pontresina, ascended to the Alp, and lingered amidst his old resorts, now doubly endeared to him by remembrances of past happiness; then he left the country, and was never heard of again.

The name of the youth was Aratsch. The spirit of the maiden, burdened with the oath she had taken, and attracted by affection to the beloved spot where so many happy hours had been spent, now appeared every evening on the Alp. The 'Sennerinn' and the shepherds heard her go into the milk-cellar, where she occupied herself busily, and often, with a spoon, tasted the cream, as if to see that all was good, and carefully attended to. Whenever she approached, a soft sigh was heard, which murmured forth the plaintive words: 'Mort Aratsch!' ('Aratsch is dead!')

The people became so accustomed to the apparition, that at last they welcomed it gladly; for they remarked that the milk seemed to be blessed, and that the produce of the Alp was unusually rich.

When the first occupant was about to leave the station, he told his successor the story, advising him to take care of the wonderful maiden, and to avoid disturbing her.

The stranger was less credulous; he despised the

well-meant counsel, and declared that he would investigate the matter thoroughly. The first evening that the new Senner arrived at the Alp, the apparition made its usual visit. The man followed it into the milk-cellar, and remained a silent spectator of its proceedings, until it took a spoon from the shelf and began to stir the milk. With a loud and angry voice, he suddenly ordered it to desist;—he would not have his milk disturbed! The maiden turned round, cast a melancholy look upon the man, and then disappeared, amidst the crash of a terrible storm, which was long remembered in the valleys.

From that time the pastures became impoverished, the cows yielded less milk, the cream was thinner; indeed, the blessing was gone. After a few seasons it was necessary to abandon the Alp; it was soon absorbed and covered by the glacier, which thenceforth descended with rapid strides into the valley. Hence is derived the name Mont Pers, or Lost Mountain.

The maiden, with her fair hair floating around her, is said still to appear in cloudy weather, or when a storm approaches, gazing sadly on all sides, as if she was seeking something. She is called the Signora di Morteratsch, and hence the glacier has its name.

## CHAPTER VII.

## SUNDAY AT PONTRESINA.

WE anticipated undisturbed slumbers, and breakfast at eight o'clock on Sunday morning, with feelings of decided pleasure. All appeared quiet in the house; and even the wakeful 'Kellnerinn' might sleep in peace; for however fine the morning might be, no early climber would expect her punctual summons at three o'clock.

Our hopes of quiet repose, however, were not realised. A large, benevolent-looking mastiff, evidently a privileged member of the household, habitually slept in the open space at the foot of the stairs, and exercised a general guardianship. We had occasionally heard his deep voice, when aroused from his slumbers by evening loiterers, or the untimely arrival of the 'Postewagen;' but now the general peace was rudely broken, just after day-break, by most unsuitable sounds of angry warfare

below, followed by discordant noises and rushing footfalls in the passage, outside our doors. No one had energy, or public spirit, enough to get up and eject the intrusive cat which was the cause of the disturbance; but we were all awakened to a sense of luxury, in feeling that we might comfortably go to sleep again!

The morning again proved one of cloudless beauty. Our local friends spoke of the heat as 'wunderbar,' and 'furchtbar,' when exposed to the sun's rays; but, in the shade, the mountain air was always fresh and delicious. The day seemed to be quietly and religiously observed in this Protestant community; and during the time of the church service in the morning, very few idlers were seen about the village.

The lower church of Pontresina is comparatively modern, and has nothing attractive or remarkable in its appearance. The old church is at the Oberdorf, and is the burial-place of the neighbourhood. The small tower is very ancient, but the building generally is of later erection: the interior was formerly adorned with curious frescoes, which were covered with white-wash about forty years ago. The date of 1477 is found upon a stone in the churchyard.

This church is an object of peculiar interest, in connection with the religious history of the country.

In it were first preached the doctrines of the Reformation, which went forth from Pontresina, and rapidly spread throughout the Ober-Engadine. It is only of late years that the name, and remarkable character, of the man who evangelised these regions has become generally known, although the results of his labours were so important.

It was in November, 1549, that an Italian priest found his way over the Bernina, of whom it might truly have been said, 'How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings—that publisheth salvation.'

The traveller went to seek a night's lodging at a house, then an inn, almost adjoining the church. The host, who was the Amtmann, or high-bailiff, of the place, entered into conversation with his guest, and mentioned that the congregation was without a minister, and that a meeting of the principal burghers would take place in his house, in the course of that evening, to make an election.

The stranger then made himself known as the Reformer of the adjacent district of Poschiavo,—Peter Paul Vergerio by name,—who had formerly been Bishop of Capo d'Istria, near Trieste. He declared himself ready to speak before the assembly that evening, and the Amtmann consequently com-

municated the offer to his coadjutors. At first many ✓ of them would not listen to the proposal, but out of curiosity to hear what 'new thing' this Italian had to say, they ultimately assented. Vergerio did not hesitate to proclaim the strange doctrines which were then turning the world upside down; and discoursed forcibly against the worship of images. His eloquence, which was aided by a noble appearance, and commanding manner, disquieted many of his hearers, but excited such attention, that he was earnestly entreated to preach publicly before his departure.

The following day was Sunday, and the Reformer chose for his subject, justification through faith. The Amtmann, on leaving the church, inquired how the Italian had pleased the people. 'So well,' answered a venerable man, 'that he must preach to us again to-morrow.' Vergerio gladly complied, and now he dwelt upon redemption through the blood of Christ. The word of life was truly set forth, and hearts, perhaps as hard and cold as the ice-covered rocks around them, melted before the fervent warmth of the preacher. The people were awakened and convinced; they determined at once to abolish the mass, and to elect an Evangelical pastor.

If tradition speaks correctly, these good people



were at first rather carried away by the ardour of newly excited feelings and their anxiety to remove all vestiges of their previous superstition. They gathered together the vessels used in the services of the mass, with many valuable church ornaments, and carrying them down to the river, they threw them over into the deep gulf, where the bridge still spans the rocky gorge.

The personal history of Vergerio is remarkable. He was born at Capo d'Istria in 1498, and after distinguishing himself as a learned jurist, he adopted the clerical profession and went to Rome. His abilities and eloquence attracted attention, and he was advanced to the distinguished position of Papal Nuncio to Germany; there, in 1535, he was brought into communication with Luther himself, by whom he was deeply impressed. A cardinal's hat had been destined for the Nuncio on his return; but rumours unfavourable to his orthodoxy reached Rome, and, suspected of a leaning to heretical opinions, he obtained only a bishopric.

Vergerio now devoted himself to the careful study of the German divines; he was convinced by their reasoning, and became a convert to Evangelical truth.

After the death of his beloved brother, the Bishop

of Pola, who, suspected of similar views, died suddenly, a victim to poison, Vergerio fled from the Roman Inquisition, and took refuge in the recesses of the Rætian Alps. In these regions he worked with energy and success: first at Poschiavo (where he also established a printing-press); then, crossing the mountains, he appeared at Pontresina; and afterwards extended his labours in the Bregaglia and Valtelline; everywhere advancing the cause of the Reformation. In after years he accepted a summons to Wirtemberg, and made several journeys, for the promotion of the same views, in Austria and Poland. He was also the founder of the first Bible society in Germany. His life of active usefulness closed in 1565.

Although our Sunday was necessarily passed without any public services in which we could join, it was pleasant to find that we had quiet companions in the house, with comparative freedom from the excursionists, who on other days make Pontresina their resort from St. Moritz, for a few hours' amusement and variety. The Italians, of whom these parties were generally composed, seem to realise the greatest amount of enjoyment in talking all at the same time; the feminine voices being pitched in a loud and shrill key, which is not quite agreeable to those who are unaccustomed to such demonstrative

pleasure. A German family were, like ourselves, engaged in the salon in reading or writing ; the only difficulty in pursuing the latter occupation being a general exhaustion of the ink-bottles, which Pontresina afforded no means of replenishing.

We gladly welcomed a packet of letters which had been carelessly detained at Samaden, until our host (who is also postmaster) sent a special messenger to reclaim them ; and after a little needful discussion of our future movements, we escaped from the glare of the house, and took our books to a shady knoll at the entrance of the Rosegthal. The quiet repose of all around was broken only by the cooling sound of the ever-restless stream, and all seemed to speak of an ever-present God, whose voice is heard alike in the soft breeze and in the rushing storm. What more appropriate temple could be found for reading the words of the Psalmist (as they came in the ordinary course), ‘ Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever the earth and the world were made, Thou art God from everlasting and world without end.’

When each successive day finds us amidst new scenes of wonder and beauty, how pleasant and refreshing, both to mind and body, is the return of this day of rest ; appointed, in its fixed recurrence, to recall our wandering thoughts from earth to heaven ;

to check us from dwelling too exclusively on the works of the Almighty, however grand and glorious they may appear; and to draw us to nearer communion with Him, who hath made all things so beautiful in their season!—‘who fixed the mountains on their eternal foundations,’ and ‘cutteth out rivers among the rocks.’

What can be imagined more lovely than the silvered summits which closed our upward view! ever pointing to realms above, and too dazzling in their purity to raise one thought of earth. The spirit in which such magnificent scenes should be regarded cannot be better described than in the beautiful words of Keble:—

‘There is a book, who runs may read,  
Which heavenly truth imparts,  
And all the lore its scholars need—  
Pure eyes and Christian hearts.

‘The works of God, above, below,  
Within us, and around,  
Are pages in that book, to show  
How God Himself is found.

‘Thou, who hast given me eyes to see,  
And love this sight so fair,  
Give me a heart to find out Thee  
And read Thee everywhere.’

## CHAPTER VIII.

## EXCURSIONS FROM PONTRESINA

WHEN we held counsel as to our further course, we soon discovered that we should not obtain much local assistance; for the guides here know little beyond the usual limits of a day's excursion from their own home.

Some of our party had studied the map carefully, and were very desirous to penetrate into the Valteline, on the south side of the mountains, and thus to make a complete tour of the Bernina range. This could be accomplished only on foot, and as there appeared to be but one village where it was possible to obtain accommodation for the night, the journey must be divided into two long days of very considerable exertion. The Herr consequently hesitated to adopt this route, without grave consideration as to its prudence.

Our actual information was gained from a brief

notice in the visitors' book, signed by two English names with which we were acquainted as those of Swiss travellers. These gentlemen had recently walked round, through the valleys and over the passes which we wished to explore, following the same course we proposed taking by crossing the Muretto Pass from Maloja, at the head of the Ober-Engadine, in order to reach Chiesa by the Val Malenco, and thence over the Canciano Pass, to Poschiavo on the southern side of the Bernina road. The scenery was described as most beautiful, and the 'Osteria Vecchia' at Chiesa as fairly comfortable. The travellers unfortunately omitted to give any information as to the time required for the journey, which would have been most valuable, in enabling us to correct the widely differing estimates with which our enquiries were met.

We at last received permission, if the fine weather continued, to undertake, at least, the first day's journey over the Muretto; then, if the further walk appeared likely to exceed our powers, we should have the alternative of getting a conveyance down a car road to Sondrio, on the main route to Tirano and the Stelvio.

Before leaving Pontresina, we had still the upper part of the Bernina Pass to see, and as every one

agreed that the Palù glacier ought to be visited, we arranged to start on Monday morning for an excursion to the Alp Grum. This is a central point, about two hours beyond the Bernina houses, above which the new carriage road diverges from the ancient and more direct route to Poschiavo. We had been so much satisfied with Fruli, that we again engaged his services, and set out, in two wagonettes, at six o'clock, with a brilliantly clear sky, but a decidedly cold, frosty morning air. Again—

‘The snow-clad peaks of rosy light  
That met our morning view’

called forth general expressions of admiration; indeed, the play of light and shade around was remarkably beautiful. The Piz Languard is quite invisible from hence, and we were startled to see its well-known cone reflected in deep shadow upon the Piz Rosatch on the opposite side of the valley. The Morteratsch glacier, half hidden by a belt of dark pines, was infinitely more interesting now that we knew its upward course and hidden recesses; while of the glittering Bernina, which towered above it, might well be said,

‘Es sitzt die Königin hoch und klar  
Auf unvergänglichem Throne.

Die Stirn umkränzt sie sich wunderbar  
Mit diamantener Krone.  
Drauf schüsset die Sonne die Pfeile von Licht,  
Sie ergolden sie nur, und erwärmen sie nicht.'

The fall of the Flatzbach, which we had previously passed by so hastily, had now to be visited. It should be viewed from various points in its downward career; an especially beautiful view being from a projecting rock about mid-way across the channel, where the eager stream is seen rushing and foaming both above and below the spectator. This fine fall is only a few minutes' walk from the road, where we rejoined the waggons. On our further way we encountered a very picturesque figure of true Italian type, quite a study for a sketch-book! The man was mounted high above the paniers with which his mule was laden, and was driving a second animal, which seemed to have no idea of occupying only a fair share of the road; the far projecting burden came into such rough contact with the wheel of our waggon, that we could only hope that the contents were not of a fragile nature. We thus saw a good specimen of the 'Saumpferde' or sumpter horses, which formerly traversed this route in large companies, conveying every kind of merchandise, but more especially the wines of the Valtelline, from



Italy into Switzerland. Since the carriage road was completed, this more primitive mode of transit has much lessened; indeed, the prevalence of the vine disease has so seriously affected the produce of the wine districts, that the exportation has almost ceased.

After passing the Bernina Inn, a dirty and unattractive collection of rough-looking houses, where, nevertheless, I believe a bed may be obtained, the entrance to the Val di Fain opens to the left. This valley derives its name from the peculiar sweetness of its herbage, and is very rich in the variety of its Alpine flowers. A track, said to be passable for horses, leads up the Val, and over the Col of La Stretta into the Val Livigno.

On the opposite side of the valley, under the sheltering slopes of the Alp Bondo, is a group of shepherds' huts, where the people were busily employed enlarging the sheds for their cattle. This alp belongs to the commune of the same name in the Italian Val Bregaglia, from whence the cows generally travel in the summer to enjoy the mountain pastures. By ascending the Alp Bondo, a way may be found to the Diavolezza See, a small lake concealed in the depths of the high ice-world, encircled by rocky cliffs of remarkable forms and varied colours. A dark Piz rises above, draped by a fine glacier, which

descends quite to the borders of the lake, and casts off detached blocks of ice, which are often seen floating on the surface of the blue water; thus resembling the Marjelen See, with which all visitors to the *Æggischhorn* in the Rhone valley are well acquainted. My son had thought that it might be possible for him to include a visit to the Diavolezza See in our day's excursion; but neither Jenni nor Fruli seconded the proposal, which was therefore abandoned. Jenni accompanied Professor Theobald when he ascended by the Alp Bondo, and passing the little lake, gained the high arête (or grat, as it is called) which unites Mont Pers with Cambra and Palù. The view of the Bernina and its glaciers is described by the professor as most beautiful; but the descent down the precipitous rocks upon the Vadret Pers was not only difficult but extremely dangerous. It was thus that he reached the Isle Pers, where we had found the record of his visit.

We left the road just before it began to climb by zigzags over the pass, and followed the rough track to the right, which was formerly the only route across the mountains. Since the longer, but much better road was made, this is used only by pedestrians, who like ourselves, wish to enjoy the beautiful scenery which it traverses.

A chain of small lakes stretches across this elevated table-land; we first skirted Lake Nero, whose dark but clear waters reflected the surrounding mountains, and then came in view of the Cambrera glacier hanging in terraces over the rocky mountain's side high above, to the right. This glacier may be ascended without much difficulty, and the trouble will be amply rewarded by the grandeur and beauty of the scene, amidst the rent ice cliffs into which its upper surface is broken.

A rough stony valley, intersected by watercourses, and marked by a scarcely perceptible elevation, separates the two lakes, Nero and Bianco, which, as their names indicate, are quite unlike in character. The slight natural dam, or barrier, between them, is remarkable as the highest ridge of the mountain watershed, from either side of which the streams find their way in opposite directions. That from Lake Nero, taking its course towards the north, joins the Flatzbach or Berona water, and adds its tribute to the Inn; thus finding its outlet in the far distant Black Sea. The waters of Lake Bianco flow southwards, through the Poschiavo Lake, and are carried by the Adda into the Adriatic. The Cambrera glacier supplies the milky source which gives name and colour to Lake Bianco; the rushing stream not

unfrequently overleaps the slight impediment which restrains its course towards Lake Nero, and thus its divided waters take their opposite directions, and flow downwards into the two far-severed seas.

Along this ridge also runs the boundary line between the districts of Poschiavo and Pontresina, and in former years, when all communication with Italy passed by this route, this spot often presented a busy and interesting episode of mountain-life.

A long file of loaded horses, left to the guidance of their own experience and wise instinct, would pick their way through the deep gullies, and up the rugged, snow-covered rocks, and then patiently rest from their labours. The men were scattered in picturesque groups around, Italian, German, and Romansch mingling strangely in their speech, as they eagerly discussed the tolls here levied upon the passage of their merchandise, or disposed of it to the enterprising traders by whom they were met from the Engadine, or yet more distant Davos-thal.

Here too might be seen the hardy border race, inured to cold and privation, whose duty it was to keep the way cleared and open for traffic. These men (known as 'Ruttners,' a word we can only express by road-menders) were always ready to share in the

'loving cup' of good Valtelline wine, which sometimes circulated too freely, and angry words were not unfrequently followed by hard blows before their claims were arranged to the general satisfaction.

Fruli had told us that we should leave our vehicles near the second lake; and we now found that their services were required, before we parted, to carry us through the main stream from the Cambra, which we should otherwise have had great difficulty in passing.

Nothing less solidly constructed could have withstood the rough jolting to which they were exposed among the rocks, and large loose stones, of the water-course; and safely arrived at the further side, we were not sorry to exchange the privilege of such conveyance for the independence of our Alpenstocks.

For some time we continued near the lake, in which, notwithstanding its high position, fine trout are caught during the autumn. The water is generally covered with ice from the middle of November to the middle of June, and during these winter months snow hens and wild ducks constantly afford sport to the Alpine hunters.

Below Lago Bianco, the stream again expands and forms the little Lago della Scala, studded with pretty

islets. Then, almost lost to sight, the water dives amidst deep rocks and overhanging trees, and rushes in wild leaps down the narrow channel which it has worn, hastening noisily through the Val Pila to the pastures of Cavaglia. Our pathway kept up to the right, skirting the rocks until we approached the green slopes of the Alp Grum, a conspicuous brow occupying the centre of the pass, which was to be our resting-place.

Immediately opposite to us, the beautiful Palu glacier seemed to hang pendent from the sky, like a giant waterfall suddenly arrested in its course by an Almighty Power, and changed into everlasting ice. Its dazzling surface in some parts appeared smooth and polished; in others, broken into steep precipices and torn pinnacles, reflecting the blue of the heavens above. This glacier is remarkably pure, and from the geological character of the surrounding mountains, it is peculiarly free from stones and moraine; its brilliant colour now shimmered in the sunshine, in striking contrast to the dark woods with which it came in close contact as it descended, in steep terraces, into the gloomy gulf whence the glacier-stream issues.

While our attention was riveted to this lovely ✓

picture, an enormous mass detached itself from above, and

‘Hark! the avalanche roars its thunder peal;  
As fierce it rushes down the glacier slope,’

shivering into countless fragments in its wild career, and finally pouring in a cascade of silvery brilliancy over the face of an ice-precipice. It was some minutes before all was quiet again, and we could turn away to study the general character of the scene around. In the deep basin between us and the foot of the glacier was a group of dreary-looking châteaux, with the cattle scattered around over the moist pastures. Here, again, the green meadows are said to have been left by the disappearance of an ancient lake, and from their swampy character is derived the name of the glacier,— Palu being a swamp.

The far-stretching view to the south was extremely pretty, extending over wooded slopes, enclosed between high mountain ranges, above which the Sassalbo and Piz Verona, on either side, seemed to guard the narrow valley where the white houses and tall towers of Poschiavo were securely placed. The position of the town, as seen from hence, at once explains its designation in former troublous times, when it was called the key of the Bernina Pass. A little more

distant, the lake glittered in the sunshine, and Fruli pointed out the Bath-house and Hotel of Le Prese on its banks, close under the shelter of the rocky ridges which rise upwards, until crowned by the Canciano. A range of soft grey summits, broken by snowy peaks, rising beyond Tirano, closed the downward view.

The warmer temperature enjoyed on the Italian side of the pass was shown by the greater height to which vegetation extended. The wooded slopes of the Cavaglia are much frequented during the summer months by the people of Poschiavo, who send their children up to enjoy the fresh mountain air and pleasant shade, although the accommodation afforded by the little village is both rough and scanty. This secluded spot has also historic interest as having afforded refuge to the persecuted Protestants in the Thirty Years' war, when, driven from Poschiavo, they here built a small church, whence the sounds of prayer and praise rose in the wilderness. No regular ministry could be depended upon; but a pastor from the Engadine crossed the mountains from time to time, and, at the risk of his life, performed the much-valued services of the church, often baptizing the newly-born infants with glacier-water.

Almost opposite the Alp Grum, beyond the river



gorge and the Val Pila, the Alp Prairolo occupies a fine position as a view-point, especially towards the east, where the conical Piz Teo, and the neighbouring range of fantastic pinnacles, pierce the sky. This locality is very rich in Alpine flowers, and is well known as producing an abundant harvest of the *Achillea moschata*, from which the liqueur which I have already mentioned is distilled.

We remained about an hour, enjoying the varied and beautiful scenery, but not extending our rambles beyond Grun itself. The mid-day heat was again great, and anticipating its probable effect upon the glacier torrent, which must be repassed, we thought it imprudent to delay our return later than could be avoided.

When we turned back to walk towards the lakes, everything appeared in a new aspect; and now the Piz Languard was seen again to great advantage, with a rich Alpine foreground. We soon found that the unusual heat had greatly increased the mountain streams which crossed our path, and at the end of an hour, we were glad to see our vehicles on the plain beyond, with the men preparing to start as soon as we reached them. The river was now running with so strong a current, that questions naturally suggested themselves as to the safest mode

of passing it, or the probability of encountering an upset amidst its hidden dangers. One of our horses was far from active or clever in its movements, and was evidently unwilling to face the necessary plunge. Couttet decidedly thought that there was some risk, and never considering himself for a moment, when our comfort or safety was concerned, he quickly bared his legs above the knees, to make a previous trial of the depth of the water and the best course for us to follow,—then, returning to us, he guided and helped our vehicles, insisting on one being safely landed before the other entered the stream.

It certainly was an awkward place, and without the aid of a strong arm to uphold the 'Wagen' in its headlong plunges, I much doubt whether we should have accomplished the passage without accident. This peril past, the way was clear, and our downward drive was most delightful; except when the young boor, who, sitting on a board in front, acted as charioteer, disposed himself to repose after his exertions, and unceremoniously leant back against my son's knees. Several broad hints and gentle shakes were given, to intimate that this was not agreeable, but nothing was effectual in removing the weight for more than a few minutes, until the projecting point

of an Alpenstock was felt, and prevented further laziness.

The mountains and glaciers on either side were most beautiful, and renewed our first impressions, on arriving at Pontresina, that in no other part of Switzerland is such beautiful Alpine scenery so easily accessible.

Immediately before us the snowy point of Piz Ot stood above Samaden, and seemed to tempt the mountain climber by the extended view promised by its commanding position. It is about the same height as Piz Languard, but the access is, I believe, more difficult.

We had taken the opportunity, during the day, of talking to Fruli about the valleys south of the Bernina, and we soon found that he was anxious to have his services retained as our guide round the mountains. We were all so much pleased with him, that we should have renewed the engagement gladly; but it was essential that we should, if possible, have a man who was acquainted with the whole route, whereas Fruli honestly told us that his personal knowledge was, at that time, limited to the Muretto Pass and Val Malenco. On our return to Pontresina, we explained our difficulty to Herr Gnädig, and, by his advice, we decided to consult Colani, the recog-

nised head of the guides, whom we had not yet seen.

Colani at once entered heartily into our plans, and although the ties of relationship may have had their influence in the advice he gave, I believe that he was quite right in recommending us to secure the attendance of Peter Jenni, in preference to Fruli, for this journey. Jenni and Colani are brothers-in-law; they are evidently the leaders of an onward movement in the village, and they take trouble to qualify themselves to act as guides, by previously exploring the country. Last year they had spent a week in the Alpine valleys of the Valtelline, and completed the tour round to Poschiavo, which Jenni had recently repeated with the German gentleman and his wife, of whom we had heard at the Morteratsch glacier.

Jenni evidently wished to go with us, but he was actually engaged with a German, who for some days past had been *talking* of going up the Bernina Spitze. Fruli meantime witnessed our consultation with no satisfaction, and feeling that it was impossible for us to decide the question, we placed the matter in Colani's hands, asking him to arrange between them. At the end of an hour Colani returned to us to say that Jenni was at our service, which, under the circumstances, was no doubt the best arrangement.

Actual necessities were now selected, and packed into a single bag, whilst the rest of our luggage was entrusted to Gnädig's care, to be forwarded by the 'Postwagen' to meet us at Poschiavo. The good folks at the 'Krone' seemed almost hurt at our leaving them so soon. They said, if we were satisfied and comfortable, why did we not remain longer? We certainly had every reason to be pleased with our stay at Pontresina, and the attention we had received there, but we wished to extend our acquaintance with the country around. The house was clean and comfortable, the fare decidedly better than from first appearances we had been led to anticipate, and the charges proved very moderate. The position of the village is lovely, and it is certainly the best in the whole district for head-quarters; the climate is most invigorating, and the weather had been magnificent.

The rate of payment for the guides appeared to us high. This Colani endeavoured to explain by saying that there were only six competent men on the list at his bureau, and that they were obliged to deposit 500 francs as a kind of security. There is already full employment for such a small number, and thus the rate of charge is supported. It varies according to the character of the excursion, and is never less than eight francs. In an engagement for some

days, as in our case, they get ten or twelve francs a day.

As yet our countrymen have been scarce in the Bernina, and the hotel is filled by a constantly changing company of Germans and Italians, many of whom come over from St. Moritz to ascend the Piz Languard.

On Tuesday morning, for the first time, there was cloud upon the mountains, and the valley was filled with mist, which quite shut out the upper part of the Rosegthal. We had no object in starting early, and by eight o'clock an invigorating breeze had cleared the air, and made the atmosphere very pleasant. The household were assembled to say adieu, or rather 'lebewohl,' with most cordial hand-shakings, ere we started, in two 'Einspanners,' down the valley.

The foot-path to St. Moritz takes a much shorter course than the road. After crossing the bridge at the entrance of the Rosegthal, it keeps along the meadows to the right, and then turning upwards through the forest it reaches the little Stätzer See. The scenery here is very wild and fine; the meadows being enclosed by dark forests and shattered rocks, which form the rugged outworks of Piz Rosatsch. Still keeping to the west (a path to the north leads to Celerina), the pretty sea-green lake of St. Moritz

appears spread out beneath; and the baths may be reached by following the lower foot-path on the south side of the See.

Our road, instead of continuing to Samaden, turned over the bridge opposite the opening to Val Muragl, and skirted a larch-covered hill, where an old grey ruin made a striking picture. This was the solitary church of St. Johann, with its two towers of different heights; it was destroyed by lightning in the summer of 1682, and has ever since remained in its present ruined state. The fire melted a great bell, of which the sound was known through the whole valley of the Ober-Engadine, and it is said that the weight of metal it contained was so great, that it was recast into seven bells of the ordinary size. The date of 1471 is seen over the church door.

The road crosses a bridge over the Inn, and after passing through the almost adjoining villages of Celerina and Cresta, it winds round a rocky, wooded headland, which projects into the valley. The course of the river is here concealed amidst the foliage of the deep ravine below, where, after issuing from the lake of St. Moritz, its course is contracted and impeded by the rocks, over which it makes a grand spring, and forms a beautiful fall. As we turned the

corner of this headland, a most lovely view opened out before us of the long line of lakes, with the village of St. Moritz placed on the high ground on the north side of the See. Baudrett's Hotel, which has recently been much enlarged, occupies a position apparently far preferable to that of the bath-establishment, which is seen in the depth of the valley below, on the further side of the stream which, like a silver thread, unites the Camper to the Moritzer See. The river is here properly called the Sela, and does not receive the name of Eent or Inn until it reaches the meadows above Celerina. The bath-house is inclosed at the back by the dark forests with which the steep mountain sides are so thickly clothed.

The spring, whose medicinal virtues are again becoming so celebrated, has its rise among these rocks, at a short distance behind the house, to which its waters are conducted. Their virtues were extolled as far back as 1539; but notwithstanding such a long-established reputation, and their indisputable efficacy in many of the ills which flesh is heir to, the spring remained neglected until a few years since, when a company undertook the management of the bath-establishment, and the present large and commodious hotel was built. It will receive about 150



visitors, and, we were told, is well conducted. The baths are now so much frequented, that it is necessary to secure rooms long before the season commences. Indeed, we heard from the gentleman whom we met at Pontresina, that he had already been asked whether he desired accommodation for next summer.

The water is strongly impregnated with iron, combined with soda, and is distinguished by the unusual amount of carbonic acid which it contains. Its medicinal virtues are valuable both for internal and external use, and the supply is most abundant. The bath-house is well arranged, and is fitted up with an apparatus for warming the water without allowing the escape of the gas. Shady walks for the visitors are carried amidst the woods above, where a pretty waterfall is also an attraction, while the neighbourhood abounds in more distant excursions, suited to different capacities.

Those around Pontresina have been already described, and to the north there are innumerable accessible points among the mountains from which beautiful views may be gained. A long day's excursion may be made by driving down the valley to Bevers, and thence following the Beversthal to the Alp Suvretta, returning by Celerina or Campfer. The scenery at the back of Piz Ot, with the Cima

de Flix and its glaciers, was described to us as most beautiful, and as yet little explored. About half a mile above Bevers is a country inn called Cas Agnias, or Au, where we heard that the accommodation was comfortable. The building has local interest, from having been, in bygone times, the place of assembly for the deputies of the district, as well as the head-quarters of the military force in time of war.

During the summer months, the village of St. Moritz presents a gay and interesting scene upon a fine Sunday morning, when large numbers of the Italians and Tyrolese, who find work during the hay harvest in the Ober-Engadine, flock together from all sides to attend mass and hear the exhortations of a priest, who, from July to September, is generally in attendance. He makes a long journey, from Bivio (or Stella) on the other side of the Julier Pass, in order to supply these wanderers with their own service in a Protestant land. The old church, at the entrance of the village, was formerly appropriated to their use; but its state is so ruinous, and the throng is often so great, that, in fine weather, mass is celebrated in the open air.

Some friends of ours, who spent a Sunday at St. Moritz, just before our arrival at Pontresina, have

since given me an account of the very pretty scene which they witnessed there. Immediately after breakfast, parties of gaily dressed people appeared wending their way, on all sides, towards the hotel, where they assembled in picturesque groups.

A Franciscan monk had arrived to perform the service, for which a temporary altar was raised close to the house. His wardrobe was in attendance, in various boxes, but robing room there was none, and all necessary arrangements and changes of vestment were consequently made in public. The congregation consisted of from 500 to 600 people, who all appeared attentive to their devotions during the celebration of the mass. Some fine female voices were heard in the chants, but very few men joined audibly. An eloquent sermon was then preached in Italian, which was evidently unintelligible to a large portion of the assembly; they consequently dropped off in small parties, and strolled about. The service concluded with a beautiful hymn, of which the effect under such circumstances was most striking.

Our friends stayed for some days at Baudrett's 'Pension and Hotel,' which they found clean and comfortable, although the fare is rather rough, and not equal to that of houses of similar pretension on the other side of Switzerland.

We stopped for a few minutes only at St. Moritz, and then followed the road to the south, through very lovely scenery along the whole distance to Maloja. The sun was now bright, with a delicious breeze, and I cannot recall anything, during our whole journey, more luxuriously enjoyable than this morning drive. The bright sparkling lakes, along the margins of which we passed, seemed to require nothing but a few boats to give variety and completeness to their beauty. In the distance, to the north, the dark cone of Piz Languard rose conspicuously above its neighbours, suggesting the extensive panorama which it must command; while on the opposite side of the valley, the glacier-belted forms of Piz Rosatch and Piz Corvatsch were prominent amidst the rocky range which separates the Ober-Engadine from the Rosegthal. At Silva Plana, the path comes in from Surlej; an excursion I have already mentioned, upon which a day should, if possible, be bestowed from Pontresina. Here also the road from Chur over the Julier Pass descends into the valley of the Inn. It is regularly travelled by a 'Postwagen,' which continues downwards through Samaden to Scaufs, from whence it starts on its return journey.

The villages of Sils and St. Maria are most pic-

turesquely situated in the foreground of the Silser See, which is the largest of this chain of lakes. St. Maria is on the left side of the valley, sheltered by wooded heights, which open to disclose the Val and Glacier of Fex, backed by the dark rocks of the Caputschin. The scenery of the Val Fex must be well worth a visit; and those who are prepared to undertake the more difficult passes may cross this grand glacier into the Val Malenco.

A pedestrian with less aspiring views should walk from St. Maria up the wild valley, and return to the Alpine village of Cresta, at its entrance. An easy way thence may be found over a pretty col, to Isola, at the entrance of the parallel and equally fine Val Fedoz. The stream, which here finds its exit in a pretty fall, is by some people considered to be the true source of the Inn; but its origin is generally traced to the little Longhin See, enclosed in an amphitheatre of rocks, amidst the precipices of Mont Gravelvas, on the opposite side of the lake. The easiest access to the Piz Margna is from the Val Fedoz. Professor Theobald made the ascent with a guide from Maloja; but he decidedly recommends the approach from this side. He describes the view as one of the finest, both in extent and beauty, to be met with in the Alps. A foot-path, through woods





Honhart, lith.

C. G. del.







and over moist meadows, leads from Isola to the scattered houses of Maloja.

We reached the same point by continuing our drive along the banks of the Silser See, where the road has been gained from the rocks, which in some places project into the lake and leave no room to spare. One of our drivers told us that two days before a poor man had here lost his life, owing to his horse and cart backing and falling over into the lake.

When we had passed round the Silser See, the solitary Osteria of Maloja appeared before us, standing at the head of the pass, and looking downwards to Italy. We had been led to expect tolerable accommodation, and were therefore rather dismayed at the dreary and unpromising appearance of the house. No one came out of the dismal entrance, and we had to grope our way upstairs to seek a welcome. There we found the kitchen and a family party, consisting of a tidy-looking woman with two or three children. She seemed much astonished at the arrival of such visitors, and still more amazed when she understood that beds were required. Our personal communication was very slight, for our hostess spoke nothing but *Romansch*, with a little *patois* Italian, almost equally unintel-

ligible. Jenni, however, acted as interpreter, and he told us that the needful accommodation could be provided. The whole party then mounted another flight of stone steps, and the good woman enlightened the darkness above by throwing open a door, beyond which she proudly displayed a small room, lighted by a proportionably small window, containing four beds, and little other furniture. Jenni looked very contented, and evidently thought all our wants ought to be satisfied, for in reply to an inquiry whether this was the only room, he seemed amazed, and said, 'Vier Persone! vier Betten!' what more could be required? The hostess, nevertheless, showed ready compliance with our English prejudices, and with great good temper promised to have two of the beds removed into a living-room downstairs.

The little salon was clean, and had shelves adorned with glass and crockery. Thus, better lodged than first appearances had led us to expect, we prepared to enjoy the afternoon out of doors.

The full beauty of the situation is not discovered until, after crossing the road, you stand upon the brow of the rocky headland which occupies the centre of the pass. Here the broken ground sinks precipitously in steep terraces, and the deep valley seems immediately beneath your feet. On the left,

the spiral road creeps down the mountain side and leads to Casaccia, the first village in the Bregaglia, which stretches down hence in sunny slopes to Chiavenna. A varied mountain range bounded the horizon in this direction. To the east, Piz Forno and Piz Margna, rising amidst glaciers, guarded the Muretto Pass. On the opposite side, numerous mountain groups formed a wild barrier between the Ober Engadine and the Septimer Pass and Val Avers. To the north, the view down the lakes formed an exquisite picture, framed between wooded hills and dark pinnacles fringed with snow. Here again we found ourselves upon the great central watershed of Europe. On one side the Orlegna Bach, rushing down from the Muretto and the Forno glacier, flows south into the plains of Italy. On the other, the Inn commences the course during which it gathers a large tribute to be carried to the Danube; while the glaciers around the Septimer Pass give birth to many of the feeders of the Rhine.

We had talked of climbing up to see the source of the Inn, but time passed on while we enjoyed the many beauties of our breezy knoll, and then suspicious clouds gathering round the mountains raised doubts as to the prudence of any distant wandering.

The ground which formed this fine headland was

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broken by scattered piles of rocks and undulating grassy brows clothed with purple heath (our common English ling) and trailing juniper, mingled with an abundant growth of bilberries in full fruit. Dwarf firs sprang from every nook, often hanging in tangled masses over the edges of the rocks, and adding much to the picturesque effect by their shaggy foliage.

The air grew chill as the sun declined behind the mountains, and warned us to retreat to the house. Storm clouds began to roll together, and, as the day waned, they burst around us. Thunder, lightning, and heavy rain were accompanied by gusts of wind which roared wildly for several hours, and the evening closed amidst somewhat gloomy anticipations for the morrow's mountain journey. The husband of our hostess had meantime come home; he was an intelligent, respectable-looking man, and spoke a little German. His information was quite satisfactory as to the state of the Muretto Pass and the time required to reach Chiesa. A porter was found to carry our luggage, and there was nothing more to do but to go to bed, in hopes that the morning would prove more favourable than appearances then suggested as probable.

## CHAPTER IX.

THE MURETTO PASS TO CHIESA, IN THE VAL MALENCO.

LONG after our room had been consigned to darkness, vivid lightning gleamed in through the tiny casement, and the wailing wind sang us to sleep. At daybreak the clouds were scudding wildly across the heavens, but the storm was past. Our hour of starting was rather delayed; but Couttet took a hopeful view of the weather, and '*J'espère que le temps s'arrange*' was a most welcome opinion. Jenni did not make his appearance until we were almost ready; and we soon had reason to suspect that, although amusing and agreeable when all went smooth, his temper would not bear ruffling. He had evidently no notion of hurrying himself, or of making his personal comfort subservient to our arrangements.

At half-past five we would wait no longer; and, leaving Couttet to pack the provisions and start the



porter, we set out across the meadows, which were dripping from the recent wet. The scene around was grey and rather gloomy, but the air was fresh, with sufficient wind to make us hope it would clear off the drifting brouillard which hung upon the mountains.

Our way was up the valley to the left, over broken, undulating ground, keeping near the course of the Orlegna Bach, now noisy and turbulent after the storm of the previous night.

Immediately after we started we were joined by a party of peasants carrying their short scythes for haymaking. The group consisted of three men and two women, the latter with bright kerchiefs round their heads, adding much to the interest and picturesque beauty of the scene. They, like ourselves, were bound for the Val Malenco; and such companionship was a pleasant assurance that no unusual difficulties need be anticipated. Our porter was a young lad, who had never crossed the pass before, and he seemed to be exposed to a continued fire of raillery as to the work he had undertaken. Continuing to mount, we soon left the wooded slopes below us, and a pretty little lakelet became visible, nestled in a hollow, on the opposite side of the stream, which is supplied by the Forno glacier. The view of

this great ice-stream, as well as of the mountains around, must be magnificent upon a clear day; now, drifting clouds obscured the distance, and the vast extent of the glacier was only occasionally visible through the brouillard, which concealed the upper region, and gave a gloomy grandeur to the scene. There were some rough watercourses to cross, and steep loose banks to clamber up and down, before we reached the snow-covered ice, where we found the surface consolidated by the recent heavy rain, and the footing unexpectedly good. We walked steadily upwards, with the occasional variety of a climb up the rocks which skirted the snow, until, at the end of two hours, mists swept around us, and thenceforth it was a wild and dreary scene, in the midst of dark rocks and gloomy glaciers. We here met a man crossing alone from the Val Malenco. He was greatly surprised at the appearance of our party, for, although much used by the country people, this pass is at present almost unknown to travellers, and its difficulties are decidedly exaggerated. We had the satisfaction of hearing that the weather was much better on the Italian side; which was very consolatory, as we were about to enter a dark cloud hanging over the summit of the pass, which we reached after three hours' rapid walking, without a halt, from

Maloja. All around was snow and rocks, enveloped in chilling mists. Under such circumstances, there was no temptation to rest or linger, and after making a quick descent over tolerably firm snow, we joyfully perceived that we were leaving the clouds above, while breaks in the grey brouillard now showed us high rocky peaks, and glimpses of blue sky.

We turned upon the rocks on the left, to skirt a very steep ridge in the snow, and looking back from beneath upon the route we had passed, our view was bounded by an apparently perpendicular white wall, surmounted by a heavy mass of black cloud, thus happily left behind us. As the sky rapidly cleared, Piz Guz pierced through the mists on the left, the Piz d'Oro and Monte Rosso appearing on the opposite side, with a fine glacier descending between them. A winding valley, bounded by a transverse mountain range, was before us, and soon the snowy crest of the beautiful Monte della Disgrazia, sending forth magnificent glaciers towards the valley, was opened to the right. The path skirted the mountain sides, which now resumed their drapery of firs. A large bouquet of Alpine flowers had been gathered since we left the snow: one plant was very conspicuous by its bright orange bloom, which we here picked for the first time. It is, I believe, one of the *Senecio*

family, and would be an addition to our gardens if its brilliant colour would survive a change of soil and climate. We found it afterwards in greater beauty upon the Forcola (leading to the Val Livigno), as well as upon the Casana Pass. At a spot where a clear stream crossed our way, we stopped for 'déjeuner.' It was four hours since we had started, and we were quite ready for a substantial meal, so that Couttet's burden was much lightened when we prepared to continue our journey! Our movements were hastened by a threatening cloud, and after passing some squalid-looking stone huts, we found cleaner and more tempting shelter from a shower by creeping into some curious holes, amidst a pile of rocks, where we were accommodated *à la Marmotte*. Jenni and Couttet both looked grave; they foreboded continued rain, and urged us not to delay. We, however, maintained that it was 'only a shower,' and as we had time enough, we remained snugly ensconced for half an hour. We then started again, and were soon cheered by returning sunshine, before which the clouds dispersed and vanished, leaving us to the full enjoyment of a lovely afternoon. Near a group of *châlets* on the Alp d'Oro, a projecting brow affords a very beautiful view-point, facing the three grand glaciers which descend from the Disgrazia and Monte

Sissone. In a wild ravine beneath, the river Mallero finds its way to the Val Malenco. A tattered man came forth from the châlets (of which he was apparently the sole occupant), and seemed anxious to impart to us all the information in his power. Jenni was not very clear as to his course, and was evidently well pleased to be directed as to the best way of getting down through an entangled wood, which offered every facility for losing oneself. We followed the route recommended by the woodcutter, and descended rapidly, amidst brushwood and ragged stumps of trees, high above the rocky ravine, where birch-trees began to intermingle their lighter foliage with the larch and fir. Emerging from the wood, we reached the pastures, and came upon the remains of an ancient paved road, which led down to the half-ruinous châlets and church of Chiareggio.

These châlets might afford welcome shelter in bad weather, but their appearance did not tempt us to enter them. They may be better than externals led us to suppose, for the gentlemen whose account we had read at Pontresina, lunched in the house nearest to the church, on their way from the Muretto Pass to Chiesa. They are about five and a half hours' walk from Maloja, and we found that the further walk to Chiesa occupied three and a half hours more, thus

making the time required for the whole distance about nine hours, irrespective of delays *en route*. The situation of Chiareggio is wild and full of beauty, surrounded by rugged peaks, which descend in such steep precipices between Piz Guz and Piz Tremoggia, as to make all passage on that side apparently impracticable. On the opposite side the Disgrazia was now withdrawn behind an intervening ridge, amidst whose rocks the small lake Pirlo is hidden. I believe that this is easily accessible from Chiareggio, and a way may be found between Monte Braccia and Monte Senevado, by which the Val Malenco may be re-entered lower down. Before us, a continued easy descent led down the pasture-valley, dotted with châteaux, where the stream, which we had accompanied from its source below the Monte d'Oro, played an important and troublesome part,—the ruins of a mill, and other buildings, being surrounded by its rock-strewn bed.

A small chapel stands very prettily upon a projecting green knoll, round which a sharp descent leads to a bridge across the rapid river, now beginning to fret and foam at the obstructions it finds in its way. The path wound up on the right bank, and brought us to a large slate quarry in active operation, the whole mountain side along which we passed

being formed of the loose *débris*. Wonderful dark crags towered above our heads; the black mass of the Monte Motta rising opposite, with the Mallerio forcing its noisy way in wild eddies and gleaming cascades through the rocks of the narrow ravine. The colouring of these rocks was very remarkable; white, gray, red, and black being curiously intermingled. A very rough car-road, for the transit of the slates, leads down from the quarries; and gives easy access to scenery of a very different character, where the richly wooded slopes of the Val Lanterna unite almost at a right angle with the Val Malenco: picturesque villages, each with its church-spire, are scattered around; a soft haze rests upon the mountains, and all tells of an Italian clime.

The situation of Lanzada is particularly pretty, and we fancied it must be the goal of our pilgrimage when it appeared before us in the opening of the ravine, which, narrowing to the width of the stream, is spanned by a picturesque bridge. Leaving this on the left, our way turned round to the south, and we found ourselves upon a good road, which leads down the valley to Sondrio. Chiesa was still invisible, and we walked on for ten minutes, while Jenni amused himself by telling our wearied porter that it was still an hour distant. The sound of the church

clock contradicted his words, and gave pleasant notice of its vicinity, as we rounded a bend in the hillside, and saw the picturesque village close before us. Just at its entrance, we passed an enclosed burial-ground, with a flight of stone steps leading up to its iron gates, where an apparently devout old woman was on her knees busily repeating her "aves" before a picture of the Virgin. She might be excused if our appearance disturbed her devotions; her lips, however, still moved as if mechanically, while she showed a ready aptitude to improve the opportunity; her shrivelled hand being extended as we passed, while 'Per amor di Dio, Signore,' formed but a momentary interruption to the monotonous words which no doubt she believed helped her on her way heavenwards. This poor woman was the only beggar we met with amidst these mountains, even here in the Valtelline, where of course the population was Italian and Roman Catholic.

The situation of Chiesa, midway up the fertile hillside, overlooking the beautiful valley, was perfectly lovely. Richly wooded ridges formed a foreground to the mountains which closed around, except to the south, where they stretched down towards the soft blue outline of a more distant range, which bounds the valley of the Adda, in which Sondrio is situated.



Here we had again reached a region easily accessible from the great Stelvio road, but it was very questionable whether we should find reasonably good accommodation, which is too often wanting in these Italian villages. The 'Osteria Vecchia' occupies the best position in the place, standing upon a kind of terrace, just above the church ; but we were not destined to find rest there. It boasts two or three rooms, which we were told were really furnished, and comfortable for such an out-of-the-way place ; but they were pre-occupied by an Italian family from Sondrio, who had taken them for a fortnight, to escape from the heat of the lower valley.

The second inn was not far distant, and was necessarily our refuge ; its character seemed more that of a 'Trattoria' or wine-house than a 'Family Hotel,' but the woman said that there was sleeping accommodation, and we followed her upstairs. There could be no doubt that there were beds enough, for we were shown into a large lofty room containing five ; two of the number being of ample dimensions ! The inspection was not prepossessing, for although it was late in the afternoon all was in disorder, and the beds bore evidence of recent occupation. There was, however, abundant space and air ; the people too were civil, and vacated a small room adjoining for our

additional use. Some fears were expressed that the place would not prove endurable for a second night; but for the present moment there was no choice, and we hoped for the best.

Our own resources, aided by a jug of Couttet's mull, provided us with immediate refreshment, while the *cuisine* promised its best efforts;—but 'carne' did not exist in the village, and we found that a tough old hen (whose maternal career had no doubt been brought to an untimely end to supply our wants) formed the mainstay of our dinner. Meantime our further arrangements were discussed, but all was necessarily left uncertain until the morrow. Colani and Jenni had both strongly advised us to stay at least a day at Chiesa, and to visit the lake Palu, above which, to the north, the high ridge of Monte Nero commands a magnificent view of the Italian side of the Bernina group, and the Monte Disgrazia. To the south of Chiesa, Monte Canale is also accessible, and must, from its position, be a fine view-point; but if one excursion was to be made, the lake Palu was preferable. To accomplish this a second night at Chiesa was inevitable, so the question was adjourned, to enable us to decide whether it could be encountered without great discomfort. A marked improvement had been made in the appearance of the barrack-

room, when we returned upstairs, and I believe that we all quickly forgot our fears of nocturnal annoyances, in sleep too sound to be much disturbed even by the noise of music and dancing, which went on in the house far into the morning.

After we returned to England, we learnt that our friend Mr. J. Macintosh Wedgewood, accompanied by Mr. F. C. Grove, had been the first Englishmen to cross 'the Roseg Pass,' from Pontresina to Chiesa, about a week after our own visit to the Valtelline. I am indebted to Mr. J. M. Wedgewood's kindness for the following notes of this somewhat perilous journey:—

'We started from Pontresina on the 28th of August, with Peter Jenni and Alexander Fluri as guides, and slept at the *châlet* near the foot of the Roseg glacier, on the left side of the valley. Our quarters there were rather confined, but clean, and supplied with excellent butter and milk.

'We were off the following morning at 4 A.M., keeping on, or as near, the medial moraine as possible, until the glacier became too steep, when we took to the rocks on the right for about an hour, and then up the snow slopes leading to the top of the pass, which we reached at 9.30. Whilst breakfasting on the rocks, about half way, we had the

now rare sight of watching a group of twelve cha-mois, on the ridge terminating in the point called Piz Caputschin.

‘The pass lies to the left of this peak, at perhaps 500 feet beneath it. We had no means of taking its height accurately, but comparing it with that of Piz Caputschin, as marked in Lechner’s map, I should estimate it at nearly 12,000 feet.

‘There were no difficulties in the ascent, and we began to think that the guides had considerably exaggerated the qualities of the pass; but a look at the rocky wall, down which our path lay to reach the Fex Glacier, was quite sufficient to convince us that *there* was the stiff work.

‘The view from the top is quite grand enough to reward the climb; the chief object being the Monte della Disgrazia, immediately in front, on the opposite side of the Fex Glacier. This mountain presents a mass of peaks and glaciers, resembling Monte Rosa, but the peaks are more beautifully shaped; and this portion alone of the view far surpassed, in our estimation, the somewhat similar view of Monte Rosa from the Monte Moro. Here, as in other parts of the Bernina range, the extreme whiteness of the snow and ice adds much to the beauty of the mountains. This is no doubt owing to the absence of dirt bands,

the rocks around being too hard to get much dis-  
integrated.

‘The dangerous descent to the Fex Glacier occupied us nearly an hour, down a couloir of Gneiss and slate, covered, in many places, with hard and slippery ice. We had to trust here to the guide who held the rope behind us, for there was often no hold of the rock, either for hand or foot. In the worst places, one guide was lowered,—sliding down the rock, to establish some footing for those who followed, in case of slips. At the base of this wall, which equals the well-known one at the Strahleck in steepness, the glacier was reached, and we turned up to the left, mounting gently for an hour, till a snowy ridge was gained, whence there is another grand glacier view. Another hour, keeping to the right, partly ascending and partly siding, brought us to the end of the second ascent, at 1 P.M. Thence there is a *steep* descent down loose slate for an hour more, when we came upon the upper pastures, and, keeping a course bearing generally to the right, we arrived at Chiesa at 6.30 P.M. This pass might be done in one hard day from Pontresina, but it would involve fifteen hours’ continuous walking. It affords splendid views of the Disgrazia, a mountain never yet ascended, and, owing to its position, seldom seen.

Thirty francs were paid to Fluri for the day's work ; but Jenni would not have gone with us for that sum, had we not engaged him to make the tour round by Poschiavo, at 12 francs a day.'

Fluri completed the tour of the Bernina with these gentlemen, at his own request, in preference to returning over the Muretto Pass to Pontresina : he has thus qualified himself to act as guide to future travellers.

## CHAPTER X.

## AN EXCURSION TO LAKE PALU, AND MONTE NERO

A GOOD night's rest, and a beautiful morning, prepared us to look at everything in its brightest light, and it was quickly decided that the excursion to Lake Palu should be the day's amusement,—leaving it to my son's choice to make the further climb up the Monte Nero. We did not neglect to suggest due preparations for the dinner which we should want when we returned to Chiesa, and the woman promised to provide for us, by sending down to Sondrio (distant about three hours) for some mutton, which, with some potatoes, would form a *pièce de résistance*.

Jenni indulged in late slumbers, and while waiting for his attendance, we went to look at the church, which is considered the finest in these valleys: the chancel is adorned with some curious old wood carvings.

At half-past seven we started up the same road by which we had entered the previous afternoon, and followed it as far as the mouth of the ravine; there, instead of going up to the slate quarries, we crossed the bridge, and immediately began to climb the mountain side, passing through two or three small villages, and skirting the dark crags of Monte Motta. The view was very beautiful as we rose above the valley, all around being lighted up by an Italian sun, which shone rather too powerfully upon us during this portion of our walk. After an hour's continuous ascent, we reached the higher pastures, where picturesque groups of *châlets* were scattered around. The women came out, and gazed upon us with astonishment,—often asking who we were, and where we were going. As yet they are little accustomed to such visitors, and evidently did not understand what there was to attract us to wander among their mountains. The upper pastures here were very fertile, and in some places were carefully fenced off by low walls. A well-marked track guided us on our way, winding pleasantly amidst dwarf fir and birch trees, through which fine views constantly opened up the Val Malenco. Rising high before us, the rocky snow-edged ridge of the Tremoggia shut out the glaciers of the Bernina. We continued to ascend through wooded



glades and over rocky knolls, until, on reaching a brow, a lovely lake appeared just beneath us, secluded in the recesses of the mountains, with a soft sward descending to the edge of its transparent water. To the left, upon the sloping bank, sheltered by a low wooded ridge, a small chalet gave signs of habitation; and a more charming spot in which to while away a long summer day can scarcely be imagined. Our approach was quickly discovered, and noisily announced by some dogs, which evidently belonged to a party of sportsmen, of whom we now caught sight. We found that they had come up from Chiesa the previous day, and were seeking amusement with their guns; but beyond some birds of pretty plumage, about the size of partridges, they had not been very successful in their sport.

We had now reached the limit of our excursion, after a walk of three hours and a half, and delighted with the pure fresh air, and lovely scene around, we were quite satisfied to remain and enjoy it quietly. D. however was decided in his intention to ascend the Monte Nero, which Jenni had originally suggested, although he now showed great reluctance to exert himself further; in fact the weak side of his character began to appear. We had brought two bottles of

wine, with plenty of bread and cheese for luncheon ; Jenni had told us that we should also get milk at the *châlet*, and we had provided some coffee, which was to be prepared when required. He now had half a bottle of wine for his own share, and as much as he chose of the common supply ; nevertheless he grumbled, and at the end of half an hour's rest, he refused to move until he had some milk. As there was none at the *châlet*, and it was quite uncertain whether it could be obtained near at hand, we saw that he was only making excuses, and my son becoming impatient at the unnecessary delay, I was obliged to speak decidedly and tell Jenni that we expected him to do his duty,—whereupon he roused himself and they started off together. The course they were to pursue skirted the mountain on the north side of the lake, and having watched them on their way for some time, we turned to amuse ourselves during their absence.

My friend was soon busily occupied with her sketch book ; while at Couttet's request, I went to the *châlet*, to superintend the boiling of the coffee, in preparation for the arrival of the milk, which never came ; the coffee, however, proved very refreshing, when served "*au naturel*," although perhaps not cleared to perfection.

The *châlet* was occupied by a man and his wife, with a family of little children. It consisted of a small dark room, lighted from the door, upon the ground floor; with an external stair, giving access to a room above, which served as the family sleeping apartment. It was clean and tidily kept for such a habitation, and the people themselves seemed of a respectable class. The children also looked neat and clean; they were pretty, dark-eyed, little things, and with white bodices and red kerchiefs knotted round their heads, they gave brightness and animation to the foreground. At first they came shyly to peep at us; then they pursued their play upon the bank above, or on the margin of the lake, where a square, flat-bottomed tub was moored just below the *châlet*. It did not appear a very trust-worthy craft, even for the shortest voyage, but it certainly served as a charming dabbling place for the children.

The home scenery on this side was extremely pretty; but after scrambling over the rocky ridge behind, we gained a much grander view in the opposite direction, looking up the Val Malenco, bounded by the glaciers of the Sissona and Disgrazia, with the rugged precipices of Piz Guz and the Monte Tremoggia. Here we settled ourselves, while another sketch was in progress, the Herr and I reposing in









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the shade of the fir-trees, whilst C. was obliged to take a position more exposed to the sun than was quite agreeable. It was rather a treacherous resting place, for the rocks were rugged, and tumbled together in wild confusion; full of insidious pit-falls, and narrow clefts, which were partially concealed by tangled roots, mingled with an under-growth of juniper and bilberries.

I had been using the lunettes, and having placed them by my side, I was presently startled by a rattling sound, and found that they had disappeared down a concealed hole, leaving us little hope of extricating them safely from the depths to which they had probably descended.

As we peered downwards, and our eyes became accustomed to the gloom, the lunettes were discovered lodged within reach of our poles; aided by a side aperture, we succeeded in guiding them up until they could be grasped by my husband's hand, when they were happily found quite uninjured.

After this incident, we began to think that our son ought to be on his way back, and scanning the mountain side for some time, with the help of our rescued friends, we were delighted to see two figures moving rapidly downwards among the rocks. Diverging a little from the direct course, they were lost for a few

minutes among the châlets of the Alp Raggione, on the opposite side of the lake; and soon afterwards we heard a loud 'jodel' from Jenni, to give notice of their approach. They soon rejoined us on the banks of the lake,—my son in high spirits, after a most successful ascent, and Jenni apparently quite restored to good humour. He evidently entertained a much greater respect for the 'junger Herr' since the exhibition of his power of mountain climbing, which now entitled him to claim the honour of the first ascent to a point which, from its position, will probably become well known. They had been absent three hours and a half, having reached the summit of the Monte Nero after two hours' quick climbing. My son's account of the expedition was, that after passing round the head of the lake, there was half an hour's scrambling through a pine wood; then they skirted the mountain side, at the base of an upper tier of rocks, till the ascent became more broken, and Jenni led straight up them. This was a very stiff climb over loose stones, varied by smooth slabs, made slippery by trickling streams. It led to the rocky ridge which here divides the Val Malenco from the Val Lanterna, and shuts out all view of the Bernina range. They had been just an hour from the lake when they turned the corner of this ridge, where a flock of

goats were browsing, and saw before them a long ascent in a northerly direction. Jenni proposed to turn to the right, towards a lower point, projecting over the Val Lanterna, which had been the limit of his previous visit; but his young companion preferred continuing the ascent, through shattered rocks of curious geological formation, to a considerably higher summit. After they had passed through a remarkable fissure, the Bernina Spitze came into sight, and Jenni, considering that his work was done, sat down contentedly with his pipe and telescope, while D. climbed upwards for ten minutes more, and thus gained a complete panorama. This ridge of the Monte Nero is a lateral offshoot from the Bernina range, to which it stands in the same relative position that the Pousset does to the Grivola, above the valley of Cogne.

It affords a view of the Bernina in its southern aspect, quite equal to that gained from Piz Languard on the north: the latter, from its conical form, commands a more distant view, but it is probably not more beautiful than the nearer grandeur of mountains and glaciers upon which the eye rests from the rocky *arête* of Monte Nero, from which the almost unknown Monte della Disgrazia is also magnificently seen. My son thus described the view:—

‘A line of broken crags led from the point upon which I stood to the Piz Tremoggia; the Piz Roseg, Bernina, and Zuppo, forming a semicircle of rugged peaks fringed with snow, above the vast and splendid Scerzen Glacier, which descends from the Bernina. On this side these mountains rise precipitously from the ice, in richly-coloured pinnacles of red rock. Piz Palu appeared beyond Piz Zuppo, and beneath our feet was a narrow glen, traversed by the torrent fed by the Scerzen Glacier,—the Sasso Moro, which projects from Piz Zuppo, forming its opposite boundary. The Tyrolese Alps shone over the Canciano Pass, with the nearer Piz Scalino, and a fine glacier-streaked mountain beyond, rising amidst the range which encloses the Valtelline. In the south, Mont Canale was prominent, with a more distant horizon towards Lago Como. The grand snowy mass of the Disgrazia towered over the intervening crags of the Monte Braccia, which here appeared in its true position as a buttress of the higher mountain; then the long range of peaks and glaciers, including Sissona, Rossa, and Monte d’Oro, completed the circle to Piz Guz and Tremoggia. The small mountain lake Pirlo, imbedded in the recesses of Monte Braccia, was a beautiful object, resting, apparently, just below the glittering head of the Disgrazia.’

Jenni took his companion's absence very easily, until he became anxious to return, and summoned my son to rejoin him. They kept along the ridge until they reached the rocky point which is visible from lake Palu, whence the southern view over the rich Italian valley was very beautiful. On the rocks below we caught sight of them, and after refreshing themselves with some milk at the châteaux, they rejoined us in little more than an hour and a quarter from the summit.

The chasseurs had been amusing us, as well as themselves, by firing across the lake to try the range of their rifles, awaking often repeated echoes amidst the surrounding crags. We now found that one of the men was the host of our inn at Chiesa, who, with his companion, intended to return with us, while the third chasseur started over the mountains in a different direction.

Pedestrians, who are prepared for a night's rough lodging, need not to return to the Val Malenco after ascending Monte Nero; by descending into the Val Lanterna they may find their way across to the Val Campo Moro, on the route to Poschiavo, by the Canciano Pass. There must be many fine glacier excursions to be explored on this side of the Bernina group, and doubtless enterprising A. C.'s will discover

some mode of ascending the Piz Verona, and reaching the upper ridge of the Palu glacier from the south. The similarity of names may lead to mistakes, but it must be remembered that the glacier Palu, and the lake are widely severed from each other.

When we prepared to take leave, we were quite surprised and pleased at the unsophisticated kindness of the family into whose solitary dwelling we had intruded. The good woman absolutely refused to accept any remuneration beyond our thanks, although we had used her fire, and made ourselves quite at home. With many friendly adieus, we turned away from this most delightful mountain retreat, and soon found the advantage of the companionship of the chasseurs, who led us down into the Val Malenco by a much shorter and easier path, which brought us out at the châteaux above the chapel of St. Guiseppe, and the bridge which we had crossed in descending from the Muretto. We had the most beautiful views on all sides during the walk down. After passing the bridge, we followed the path which we had previously traversed, by the slate quarries, and reached Chiesa in an hour and a quarter from the Chapel, after a day of perfect enjoyment.

The invigorating air, and the great attractions of the mountain scenery, induced a unanimous vote in

favour of the Canciano Pass, in preference to a drive down the valley to Sondrio, and before the end of our walk, it was arranged that the necessary preparations should be made for a very early start the next morning.

When Jenni was told that the whole party would continue the mountain journey under his guidance, his answer was characteristic of his regard for his own comfort! 'Of course you must have the baggage carried, and you must take plenty to eat,' evidently fearful of being called upon for extra personal exertion, and desirous to sustain his powers at our expense!

Our only remaining care was to show attention to the mutton which had been fetched from Sondrio; it now appeared as an excellent stew, with the promised potatoes, and made amends for yesterday's meagre repast. Jenni showed considerable skill in the composition of an omelette, which was served as second course, and fully appreciated; and the evening was finished out in the balcony, whence we overlooked the beautiful valley, gradually fading into twilight.

C. and I had just gone upstairs, intending to keep very early hours, when Jenni summoned us, with a request to see our baggage, saying that Couttet could not arrange with a porter. We knew that there

could be no real difficulty, the same things having been carried across the Muretto by a lad of eighteen or nineteen, but Jenni was greatly excited, and expressed himself in such improper language of Couttet that we soon saw it was a case of jealousy, in which we had really no part. It was necessary quietly to show displeasure, and the question was dismissed with an assurance that we were satisfied to leave the arrangements to be made as usual. Apparently, there was only one man in the village willing to act as porter, and his demand was twenty francs for the journey. We did not wonder at Couttet's demurring at such a sum, but the fact is, that travellers are so unusual in these districts, that there are no fixed charges for anything, and of course they must submit to be imposed upon occasionally.

Poor Couttet was the only person whose comfort was affected by the difficulty of providing for our expedition: we all enjoyed sound slumbers, but we afterwards found that he remained up all night, in order to get some bread baked, in time to supply our unreasonably early wants. A party of carabineers were quartered in an adjoining Caserne, who honoured the 'trattoria' with their patronage; the house was open all night, and Couttet soon saw that nothing would be done, except under his own superintendence.



## CHAPTER XI.

### THE CANCIANO PASS TO POSCHIAVO AND LE PRESE

WE assembled at half-past three ready for breakfast, and found Couttet busy packing the provisions, which were the result of his night's watching. The porter had finally agreed for fifteen francs, and made his appearance punctually, but without the usual long basket, which, carried on the back, is so essential for settling the weight equally. Nothing looks more uncomfortable than a man vainly endeavouring to balance loose packages, or shifting a bag wearily from shoulder to shoulder. No difficulty, however, was made, and at 4 o'clock we left the still slumbering village, while the pale moon threw a beautiful soft light upon the mountains, as yet untinged by returning day.

Following the good road we turned down to the right and crossed a narrow, but long and well-built, stone bridge, which spans the river at a considerable height

above its bed ; walking briskly on in the fresh morning air until Jenni remonstrated, and said that the porter could not keep pace with us. As we approached Lanzada, the day broke beautifully, casting a warmer tint around, and lighting up the mountain summits which form the outworks of the Disgrazia and rise above Chiesa. Lanzada looks more picturesque from afar, than attractive upon closer investigation. We spent ten minutes in examining the church, which is well placed, large, and well kept ; the wood carvings it contains are richer even than those at Chiesa. When we left the village we observed that the porter was not in company, and, in reply to our inquiry where he was, Jenni replied that the man had found the load heavy, and no doubt was resting. This was not quite satisfactory, so Couttet sat down to await his re-appearance and we walked slowly on ; Jenni meanwhile suggesting carelessly that perhaps the man would find a friend in Lanzada to help him. We began to suspect some underhand arrangement, when, after considerable delay, two men approached and joined Couttet ; the original porter now carrying but a very small portion of the burden.

It would have destroyed our comfort for the day had we quarrelled with Jenni, but as the truth came out by degrees, it required some forbearance to with-

hold the expression of our opinion upon the trick which we had been played. We now learnt that while trying to delude us by excuses for the porter's lagging behind, Jenni had himself sent the man back from the bridge in search of his umbrella, which he had forgotten. On our porter's return to Chiesa a friend was found ready to join him, and accompany our party across the Canciano; by a remarkable coincidence this man had recently acted as porter and guide to the English travellers who had preceded us in the tour of the Bernina, so that Jenni's responsibilities were entirely relieved. When we engaged him at Pontresina it was stipulated that he should carry the provisions if required, and during our walk over the Muretto he had taken charge of two bottles of wine, but this morning he absolutely refused to share the burden with Couttet, who had quietly carried the whole without making any complaint -- showing his indignation only by avoiding all communication with Jenni. Of course we accepted the second man as a volunteer, who had some personal object in going to Poschiavo, and we turned a deaf ear to the suggestion that he was engaged in our service.

Above Lanzada the road ceased, and a mountain path led up the narrowing valley, past the village of

Vetti, above which all egress seemed to be closed by a ridge of rocks, through or over which there was no apparent passage ; it was in fact a complete *cul de sac*. There was, however, abundant evidence of a busy traffic with the mountains, through some unseen outlet; for we met numerous parties of peasants descending to the valley, carrying far-projecting sacks of charcoal upon their heads ; and we were frequently obliged to stand aside in order to avoid collision upon the narrow way. The bearers were principally women ; some of them young and good looking, notwithstanding the disfiguring effects of their grimy employment, and the heavy burdens which they are obliged thus early to bear.

Suddenly we came to a break in the mountain side to the left, and saw before us a very steep zig-zag ascent, leading up to the Val Lanterna. As we looked upwards, the effect was very peculiar ; a broken, but long extended line of people, being seen, apparently winding down upon our heads. Some family groups here mingled with the charcoal carriers, evidently migrating from summer quarters, with all their household goods packed upon their backs. One basket load was surmounted by a poor baby, swaddled in the usual mummy-like fashion, and carefully strapped down in a position that looked neither safe

or comfortable, with its little face turned up to meet the full glare of the light. Habit is said to be second nature, so I suppose that the babies do not suffer from such an irrational mode of treatment.

The summit of this Col was a most wild and beautiful scene, or, as Couttet would say, 'un peu sauvage;' the path kept to the left, amidst masses of broken rock evidently severed from the crags around, with fine groups of pines, clothing the knolls, which shut out any distant view. We had been just two and a half hours from Chiesa, when we stopped to rest after our steep climb, and refreshed ourselves with some cold tea, which my husband had carefully bottled after breakfast; and which now proved most acceptable. The peasants still passed in undiminished numbers, and lent their aid to form a striking picture, in the centre of this wild ravine, where a small chapel stood in the foreground, with a numerous party resting around; goats and pigs being added to the family groups. A slight descent led down to some châteaux, upon a bright pasture, sheltered under the dark mass of the Sasso Moro. It is near this point that the way from Lake Palu, and Monte Nero comes down from the left.

The scenery was remarkably fine, and unlike any pass we had previously traversed, in the wild grandeur

of the surrounding crags, combined with rich woods and sunny pastures. The valley is watered by a stream, which descends from the vast and unknown Scerzen glacier, finding its way down a dark gully amidst rugged rocks, where the narrow channel has evidently been forced through strongly-resisting barriers. At the mouth of this gorge, we found ourselves standing upon a natural bridge, built up by the huge boulders, under which the river is apparently lost. It re-appears immediately below, and pursues a tranquil course over the meadows, receiving a considerable addition on its way, to aid in another struggle with the rocky rampart, through which it must find a passage to the Lanzada valley, before its union with the Malero.

The path now skirted the steep mountain side where magnificent rocks towered above our heads, or projected in dark torn crags, with pine-trees springing from every cleft and cranny. Looking back towards the Sasso Moro, one very curious crag attracted our attention, from its resemblance to the beak of a huge bird, jutting out from the overhanging cliffs, which were fringed with large and remarkable specimens of the creeping fir, spreading forth their gnarled and twisted branches over the edge of the precipices, in most wild and picturesque forms.

It seems doubtful whether this tree is a distinct species, or merely a variety of the common pine, which assumes this peculiar creeping character under the influences to which it is exposed at an elevation of above 6000 feet. Many of the trees here were of unusual size; but ordinarily the "Leg-föhre" is of comparatively dwarf growth, and the tangled masses formed by its branches are considered to afford protection against avalanches. Unlike other species, the cones remain on the trees for two or three seasons, until they become silver-grey with age.

As we climbed upwards a grand view was gained, through the dark pines, beneath whose shade we were often glad to rest and gaze upon the picture. The deep hollow below us seemed to have been upheaved by some natural convulsion; its surface was strewn with huge masses of rock piled together in wild confusion, their desolate aspect being softened by the rich green drapery with which time has clothed them. Down the opposite mountain-side a strong stream poured in a succession of magnificent cascades, until it was lost to sight amidst the dark foliage of the ravine. Above all the Pizzo Scalino reared its snowy head, and completed a view of unique beauty.

After surmounting the stiff and stony ascent,

which led, on the left, to some châteaux, we entered upon another division of our day's walk; the path now winding up a glen, amidst mossy rocks and trickling streams. A halt was suggested for *déjeuner*, but our volunteer porter, who was intelligent and ready to give information, advised our continuing onwards for half an hour, to a spot where a spring noted for its purity issued from the rocks. We followed his counsel, and were rewarded by a perfect resting-place, where we encamped, in delightful shade, just before nine o'clock. Fortunately our supply of water had been secured, before the stream was troubled, and our solitude disturbed, by the passage of a herd, which came down upon us, and made straight for the spring, with which the animals seemed well acquainted. Our next visitors were of a superior class, and formed a characteristic and interesting group as they appeared round the corner of the rocks. The party consisted of an elderly man, dressed in full suit of black, the coat being of the ancient cut known as 'swallow tailed,' finished off by nether garments, tied neatly below the knees with black ribbons, above well-fitted black stockings and shoes. His wife walked by his side, apparelled with corresponding neatness and propriety; her dark gown, relieved by a small shawl, and a coloured kerchief



across her head, fastened under her chin. They were accompanied by a young maiden, whose steps were not so sedate as those of her elders, for she was rather at the mercy of a large and handsome black sheep, whose erratic movements the girl vainly endeavoured to control by the string to which it was attached. The sheep knew its own power, and indulged in many vagaries, instead of setting a good example to the lamb which trotted along in company. As the good folks spoke Romansch, our passing compliments were limited; but, doubtless, such an unusual incident would afford them much subject for speculation during their mountain walk.

The provision basket had been well supplied, and every one seemed satisfied, when, after an hour's rest, the remains were collected, and we resumed our walk. It was a continued gentle ascent to a grassy ridge, whence, looking back, the summit of the Disgrazia became visible for the first time; before us were the châteaux of Campo Moro, placed in an upland valley, enclosed between the outworks of the Sasso Moro, and the range of Monte Spondaccio. Numerous flocks were scattered around enjoying the rich mountain pasturage; and looking upon the sunny scene, we scarcely realized the great elevation which we had here reached.

The Val Campo Moro is traversed by the Torrente Cormor, which flows from the Fellaria glacier; we followed its course upwards, often stopping to look back at the lovely view of the tooth-shaped peak of the Monte della Disgrazia, rising grandly out of its eternal snows, and forming a most magnificent object.

The pastures soon merged in another rocky glen, and the river was lost in a deep cleft, covered by huge boulders; by leaving the path glimpses could occasionally be caught of the torrent, boiling at the bottom of a narrow cleft far below, while the roar of rushing waters indicated some hidden disturbance. Jenni scrambled down among the rocks, and led to a ledge immediately overhanging a dark chasm, where, when the eye became accustomed to the gloom, it distinguished the course of the stream, which plunged into a dark gulf, making a wonderful fall, while surging and foaming at the obstacles in its way.

Just above this scene of commotion, the river flows comparatively calm in an open channel, and crossing it by a plank bridge, we ascended the slopes on its right bank, where we were exposed to the full power of the sun, and found the heat grilling. A track continued up the left side of the stream, which leads to the Alp Fellaria, and by the Rovano pass

and the Val Orsè to Poschiavo. We could gain no information about this pass: both Colani and Jenni recommended the Canciana as preferable, but I doubt if they had any personal knowledge of the other.

The beautiful Fellaria glacier soon opened upon us, streaming down from the double peaks of the Zuppo and Palu, which are difficult to recognise, as they rise in almost perpendicular walls, whose icy edgings are the only evidence here of the brilliant mantle with which they are enwrapped, where they face the blast on the northern side. A continued rocky ascent brought us to the entrance of the long Val Poschiavino, another Alpine pasture, sending down its tributary to the Cormor. Hence the Disgrazia shone forth in still greater beauty, beyond the dark crags of the Sasso Moro. A considerable group of châteaux held out the hope of finding milk, in which we were not disappointed. As soon as our wants were known, a large pail of delicious cold milk was brought out, with a long iron ladle and a small wooden bowl, to assist us in emptying it. The ladle was found the most convenient, and much to the amusement of the people, the pail was speedily emptied. In these dairy châteaux the milk is often kept fresh and cool by a very simple application of

nature's gifts — the spring (which is always near at hand) is conducted into the cellar in which the pails stand, and they are kept surrounded by water, nine inches or a foot deep. The passage of the stream thus serves to ventilate and purify the air, as well as to keep the milk cool.

Another ridge had to be surmounted before we reached the pass, above which, to the right, a grand glacier descended from the Piz Canciano, with the Pizzo Scalino beyond. The distance is deceitful. As ridge after ridge is gained, a yet farther height appears in front, until, bearing to the left, the summit of the Col is at last attained, and the Tyrolean Alps shine forth, a beautiful group in the horizon to the south-east.

It was now one o'clock, and having the whole afternoon before us, we were glad to seek the scanty shade afforded by the sloping side of a rock, where we rested after our exertions, and admired the beautiful view around. Just below us a small lake, imbedded in the rock, was formed by the recent melting of the winter snow, from which, in ordinary seasons, the pass is never quite free; now, the ground was quite clear, in consequence of the unusual and long-continued warmth. Again the Bernina group appeared in a new point of view; another rugged peak

rising up beyond Palu and Zuppo, which Jenni pronounced to be the Piz Bernina itself. The Disgrazia was concealed by the intervening crags of the Monte Spondaccio, and the great glacier which raised its ice wall immediately behind us to the east. The depths of the Poschiavo valley were as yet concealed; beyond it rose the Sassalbo, which with its adjacent heights, marked the boundary line between Switzerland and the Italian Val Grosina. Overlooking many intermediate heads, the grand snowy mass of the Ortler Spitze towered above the Stelvio pass, behind which Austria has been obliged to withdraw her legions from enfranchised Lombardy.

A varied range of glacier-clothed mountains rested against an unclouded Italian sky, separating the Val-Telline from the Val Cannonica; beyond which again, a conspicuous group of silvered summits seemed to occupy the position marked in our map as Monte Aviola; this, however, was mere conjecture, for Jenni did not pretend to any knowledge of the distant Italian range.

The air was fresh and cool, but the sun was very powerful, and the heat induced us to remain for an hour and a half under the shadow of the great rock, where some of the party indulged in a siesta. Jenni said that the descent to Poschiavo would be a three

hours' walk. The commencement was particularly easy, the path winding gradually down the mountain side to the left, over rough pastures, where Alpine flowers were abundant and beautiful. One of the remarkable springs called 'Maibrunnen' bursts forth from the rocks, just above the spot where the track turned down towards the Alp Ur. This spring is said to begin to flow in May, when the Silser See thaws, and to dry up again when it freezes. Doubtless its variations really depend upon the season, and the state of the higher glaciers, from which its origin is derived.

The view here discloses the beautiful Poschiavo lake, encircled with mountains; and the deep valley with the white buildings and towers of the town, backed by wooded Alps. We had reached a kind of wide terrace, or table-land, midway down the mountain side, where scattered châteaux dotted the green slopes, over which we passed upon the moist, elastic turf, until we arrived at a steep descent through a forest, where the extremely rough stony path was very fatiguing and trying to the feet, at the conclusion of such a long day's work.

When we emerged from the wood, Poschiavo seemed to be almost at our feet, but the distance proved greater than we had anticipated. We fancied

that by keeping to the left our walk would quickly be brought to a conclusion; but the man who now virtually acted as guide assured us that a deep gully made all passage on that side impracticable, and that we must follow the disagreeable sledge track by which the upland *châlets* communicate with the valley. Short cuts were occasionally tried down the slippery slopes, and, after a most wearying hour's walk, we gladly found ourselves at the foot of the descent, with only some meadows intervening between us and the main road, about half a mile below Poschiavo. Seeing the termination of our journey immediately before us, we walked briskly on to the bridge at the entrance of the town, which is bounded on this side by the embankments within which the stream is confined. A narrow street led us up into the principal Platz, where we found cordial welcome from the host of the 'Croce bianco,' the principal inn of Poschiavo.

It is a large old-fashioned house, forming one corner of the Platz, and was in former times the private residence of the Barons von Blassus, one of whom held a conspicuous post at the Bavarian court early in the 16th century. The mansion is full of memorials of its former occupants: the saloon opens from a large lobby approached by a stone staircase, and is quite a curiosity from its antique furniture and fitments.

The locks and hinges of the doors in this room were remarkable specimens of elaborate workmanship in wrought-iron. The wainscoted walls were enlivened by a series of pictures, representing Sibyls of various nations ; the crowning decoration being a massive Venetian mirror, in a ponderous and richly-carved gilt frame, upon which the family arms were emblazoned. The ceiling and architraves of the doors were of dark wood, carved and partially painted ; the armorial bearings being repeated above the entrance of a small inner chamber—perhaps the lady's boudoir in the olden time. One of the quarterings borne by the Barons von Blassus was a blackamoor's head, encircled by a fillet, which suggested a curious speculation as to the possible connection between this ancient race and the family of our friend, who bear this crest. The sleeping-rooms were comfortable, and the 'Wirth,' who was quite a character, was most assiduous in his attentions, and anxious to supply all our wants. He quickly sent to fetch our baggage from the 'Poste,' and, quite refreshed with the additional comfort thus afforded, we felt we were ready, after an hour's rest, to do justice to the excellent dinner, and fine old vin d'Asti, which he placed before us.

The worthy man was very loquacious, and happily



he spoke German, which was a great relief after the unknown tongues to which we had listened for the last few days. He would gladly have persuaded us to remain under his roof instead of descending the next morning to the baths of Le Prese; doubtless his all pervading superintendence would have made us very comfortable, but an Italian town in a narrow valley is not a pleasant resting place in warm weather, and the situation of Le Prese, on the margin of the lake, offered attractions which even our host's eloquent recommendation of his own locality, could not overcome. One inducement held out in favour of Poschiavo was that the Protestant pastor there had been for some years the minister of a Swiss congregation in London, and still retained a partiality for our nation, which induced him to shew friendly attention to travellers who seek an introduction to him.

Our arrangements with Colani, before leaving Pontresina, had been too definite to admit of any discussion now, and when, after dinner, Jenni requested to take leave of us, we parted very good friends. I believe that there was much truth in his apparently joking remark, that he would rather make the longest and most difficult day's excursion from Pontresina, than walk round the Bernina again with English

ladies, who worked him so hard as we had done. The excitement of a difficult ascent, or a glacier pass, is more suited to such a man, than the continued exertion of consecutive days travelling. As far as our limited experience gave me the opportunity of judging, I should decidedly recommend Fluri as the more agreeable and useful guide for such a tour where ladies are of the party. Couttet had given an additional five francs to the porters, with which they were perfectly satisfied; thus our travelling party separated on most friendly terms, and we were all ready, as soon as our rooms were prepared, to enjoy the night's rest we had earned by our unusually long walk.

## CHAPTER XII.

## POSCHIAVO AND LE PRESE

THE deep-toned bell of the neighbouring church prevented any indulgence in late slumbers; indeed, when the habit of early rising is established, it is difficult to remain quietly at rest, with the sounds of busy life awakening around, and the bright sunshine streaming in at the open window.

The Italian character of the Platz below, with the tall tower of the church of St. Vittore, just opposite our room, reminded us that although still in Switzerland, the style of architecture and habits of the people were influenced by a warmer temperature than is known on the northern side of the Bernina Pass.

We had no definite plans beyond the arrangement to spend Sunday at Le Prese; therefore, after breakfast, we were glad to hold consultation with our host, who seemed to possess considerable know-

ledge of the country around. In reply to our inquiries about the lateral valleys opening to the north-east, from the Bernina road, he said that the scenery of the Val Livigno was very fine, and he encouraged us to believe that rough, but clean country accommodation would be found there. Our views, however, had been turned to an opposite direction, and we decided to seek for a conveyance for Monday morning, to take us down to Tirano, from whence we proposed to drive up the Stelvio Pass, and after seeing the finest part of this celebrated road, we hoped to find our way again to the west, by the Munsterthal and Buffolora Pass to Zernetz, at the head of the Unter Engadine. A man was introduced to us, who had a carriage ready to take us to Le Prese, and his home being at Tirano, he was prepared to make any further arrangements that we might desire. The matter being so far satisfactorily settled, we had nothing to do, except to make a survey of the town, before we turned southwards.

Poschiavo, from its position as a frontier stronghold, was in earlier times an object of contention between the dominant powers, on either side of the Rhætian Alps.

In the fifteenth century its allegiance was transferred from Switzerland to Lombardy, and for some

years the inhabitants had to receive their governor from Milan. In 1487 they returned to their original dependence upon the Bishops of Chur, by whom the Vogte or high-bailiff of the district was appointed until 1537, when the people combined to purchase their freedom from a galling yoke. By the payment of a large sum, they acquired the privilege of self-government. About ten years later the doctrines of the Reformation were introduced here, and a Protestant congregation was formed by P. P. Vergerio, when he fled from Papal persecution to these Alpine fastnesses; thus evidencing how the wrath of men may become the unconscious instrument of working out higher purposes, and of advancing the cause, which it is straining every energy to crush.

The two communities lived in peace and Christian brotherhood for many years, worshipping in the same church, until the early part of the seventeenth century, when the attention of the zealous Cardinal Borromeo was attracted to the strong hold which the Protestant faith had taken upon the people. All means being deemed justifiable when the object was to uproot heresy, the Protestants soon found themselves subjected to the most cruel persecutions.

Meanwhile, the Cardinal endeavoured to allure, and retain adherents to the old faith, by dazzling the

outward senses of the people. With this view he caused a beautiful church to be built a short distance above Poschiavo, upon which no expense was spared. It was dedicated to his own patron saint, St. Carlo, and still attracts many visitors to admire its rich decorations, for which the marbles were supplied from the quarries of the neighbouring Sassalbo.

The population is now about equally divided between the two creeds, but under the softening influence of time a better spirit has arisen, and these old religious animosities have almost disappeared. The Protestant church stands to the north of the town, at the foot of the hills, and has flourishing schools attached to it. The Catholic church of St. Vittore forms one corner of the Platz, and is conspicuous on all sides from its tall tower of many tiers. The principal portal is closed by massive iron doors of elaborate workmanship. Internally, the rich carving of the pulpit, with figures in bold relief, is the only object of particular attraction.

The opposite corner of the Platz is occupied by the Rathhaus, which is still the centre of government for the district. It is decorated externally by ancient frescoes, representing figures larger than life, which now shine forth in the vivid colours of recent restoration. Some large modern houses complete the group

of buildings around, and indicate the prosperity of the Poschiavans, who seem to be an energetic and thriving people. Like their neighbours in the Ober Engadine, they are frequently wanderers in early life, and find profitable occupations in foreign lands, whence they return with the well-earned reward of persevering industry.

This rambling life leads to a curious intermixture of tongues in the coffee-houses where, as in Italy, the men are fond of congregating to spend their evenings.

Many of the private houses have gardens adjoining them, where fruit trees, mingled with gay flowers, bear testimony to the more genial climate of these southern slopes. As we entered the town the previous evening, we were surprised to see several fields covered with the rich foliage of the tobacco plant: we now found that the cultivation had been recently introduced, and that several large buildings which had attracted our attention, had been erected for the manufacture of the fragrant weed, as a commercial speculation.

On our return to the 'Croce bianco,' our luggage was already packed upon a light open carriage, certainly not of modern construction; but the prospect of a vehicle hung upon springs was quite luxurious,

even for the short drive to Le Prese. We left Poschiavo by the same road by which we had entered it, when, at the close of a long walk, we were not disposed to make many remarks upon the scenery by the way-side. Just below the town, on the right, at the entrance of the Val Orsè, are the remains of an ancient fort, still called 'il Castello,' which was in former times the residence of the governors appointed by the Dukes of Milan, or Bishops of Chur. Tradition says that the last of these governors was killed by lightning as a judgment from heaven upon some wicked deed, and that the castle was afterwards demolished by the people who had suffered from his tyranny. The Val Orsè leads up to the Rovano Pass, by which, after skirting the Verona Glacier, the Alp Fellaria and châteaux of Campo Moro may be reached, as I have already mentioned.

A little further down, the ominous name of Mille Morti marks the spot where a large village, with all its inhabitants, was buried under one of the fearful earth avalanches, which render the vicinity of these steep Alpine ridges so dangerous. On the opposite side of the valley the Sassalbo, standing prominently amidst the mountain range to the north-east, is the grand view-point of this neighbourhood: it is also



celebrated for fine red and grey marble, of which its rocks are formed. The Sassalbo has been frequently ascended, and when approached from the châteaux of Sassiglione on the south side, the summit may be reached without any unusual difficulty. The rocky pinnacle affords standing-room for only five or six people, and commands a beautiful panorama beyond the peaks and glaciers of the Bernina group, stretching over the Val Malenco to the Monte della Disgrazia and mountains of the Bregaglia. It is encircled by dark peaks and gloomy valleys, which sink in steep terraces to the east, where, in the Val Grosina, many of the feeders of the Adda have their source. Far beyond, the Tyrolese and Bergamesque Alps rise in countless groups.

The meadows spread out a little as we approached the lake, and after passing some scattered houses we drove up to the 'Bad-haus' of Le Prese, a building of considerable external pretension, but no architectural merits, most beautifully situated on the margin of the water. Here we found every accommodation we could possibly require, with the additional welcome of letters and newspapers forwarded from Pontresina to await our arrival.

This hotel was opened in 1857 with the object of attracting travellers, as well as the more permanent

visitors who come to benefit by the powerful sulphuric waters of a mineral spring, which issues from the rocks within a few yards of the house. A small building is erected by the roadside over the source, and the water is conducted into a marble basin, which is accessible to all passers-by. The odour is most unpleasant, resembling that of the Harrogate spring; and it would probably induce even the most thirsty traveller to withdraw the intended draught untasted from his lips! The hotel commands the beautiful view down the lake to the south. On the north a semicircular excrescence is attached to the main building, up to the first floor: this contains the bath establishment, and is divided into fourteen little rooms, neatly fitted with marble baths, into which the water, previously warmed by steam, is conducted. The flat roof of this projection forms a large balcony, accessible from the corridor, whence a fine view is enjoyed up the Poschiavo valley, with its encircling mountains. The house is opened about the 10th of June, and usually closes before the end of September. It provides accommodation for about sixty visitors; the charms of the spot being appreciated chiefly by the Italians, who are glad to escape from the heat of the plains to this pure mountain air, tempered by a southern aspect.

We were now in the last week of August, and the height of the season was already past, not more than eight or ten residents remaining in the hotel. Amusement is provided for the gentlemen in a large billiard room, where they are allowed the indulgence of smoking, which is not permitted in the handsome salon, where books and a piano are attractions to the ladies. We found that Le Prese fully merited the praises which had induced us to make it our resting-place after the tour of the Bernina, and I should recommend all who visit these mountains to spend two or three days, at least, in this charming spot.

In front of the house, the garden offered a shady retreat, where the shrubs overhung the rippling water, and boats belonging to the hotel were moored in readiness for excursions upon the lake. We proposed to enjoy a row in the cool of the evening; meanwhile we amused ourselves by wandering about, seeking the prettiest spot whence a sketch might be secured as a remembrance.

An hour's occupation having been provided for C.'s pencil, maps were stretched out on the ground, and a privy-council was held as to our further progress. The description given of the Val Livigno by the host of the 'Croce bianco,' had excited a wish to extend

our rambles in that direction, instead of descending to Tirano, and spending a day in a long dusty carriage journey up the Stelvio road. The Herr was as yet unconscious of our design to attract him back among the mountains, but when our plan was presented for his consideration, he readily adopted it, in preference to encountering the probable heat of the other route. The slight additional information that we could obtain at Le Prese, confirmed our expectations of finding a tolerable resting-place for one night at Livigno, and ultimately Couttet received instructions to make arrangements for returning up the pass, as far as la Rosa, on Monday morning.

Among the letters which had been forwarded from Pontresina, was one for Couttet from Chamonix, of which the contents were unusually interesting. It gave an account of the discovery of human remains which had been identified as belonging to some of the party whose melancholy fate is associated with one of the earliest attempts to ascend Mont Blanc for scientific purposes. It was in August, 1820, that Dr. Hamel, with two companions and five guides, were swept away by a snow-avalanche, near the Petit Plateau, under the Dôme de Gouté. Three of the guides were carried over the edge of a crevasse and lost in its fathomless depths. No traces of these unfortunate men

had ever been discovered until now, when, after an interval of forty-one years, the unseen, and long unsuspected, progress of the ice had brought their remains to light amidst the crevasses of the Glacier de Boissons.

Couttet was a boy of thirteen or fourteen when this calamity overwhelmed the then small community of Chamonix with sorrow; he had still a vivid remembrance of the melancholy return of the diminished party, and of the dismay and horror with which the sad tidings of the loss of three valuable lives had been received. He was quite excited with the news, when he brought the letter for our perusal, and it afforded us subject for long and interesting conversation.

In the afternoon the weather became overcast; clouds gathered over the mountains, and a decided chill in the atmosphere induced us to give up the evening expedition upon the lake. As darkness closed around, fitful gleams of lightning played upon the southern horizon, and during the night storm and wind made their voices heard.

On Sunday morning the sky was bright and clear on the Italian side, but dark canopies of cloud overhung the mountain peaks, and a keen wind rushed down from the bleak heights, which were streaked

with newly fallen snow. Small waves ruffled the surface of the lake, while eddies of dust whirled up from the road which skirts its margin, and leads to the village of Meschino, at its further extremity.

In the afternoon we walked in this direction, passing the remains of ancient fortifications, by which this entrance into Switzerland was formerly closed. During the religious wars which caused so much misery and desolation, this portal was often fiercely contested. Here the Protestants withstood and repelled the murderous bands, which, incited by bigoted hatred, had ravaged the Valtelline, and sought to penetrate to these Alpine valleys in their vain endeavour to quench the light of the Reformation.

The eastern banks of the lake rise immediately from the water's edge, and are traversed only by footpaths, leading to scattered châlets on the mountain slopes. The principal opening is up the Val Trevesina, a beautiful wooded ravine, which is recommended as a very pretty excursion from Le Prese. The Poschiavino issues from the lake near Meschino, and takes its rushing, brawling course downwards, forming several falls upon its way, before it waters the valley in which Brusio is situated. Walnuts and chestnuts here begin to mingle their foliage with the large soft green leaves of the fig, while the vine

twines its garlands round the windows of the picturesque houses, and all tells of the approach to a soft Italian clime. Campo Cologna is the frontier village of the Grisons, beyond which, until recent changes, the appearance of the Austrian eagle, gave notice that passports must be strictly in order, or the traveller might find his progress stopped. Now the Sardinian tricolour is an assurance that no difficulties will be placed in his path, and he may follow the course of the stream, through a wild rocky ravine, until it leads him out at Madonna, near Tirano. A little below this point the Poschiavino is absorbed in the more important stream of the Adda. After wandering along the bank of the lake for some distance, we retraced our steps to Le Prese, which appears to the greatest advantage from this side, with the hotel reflected in the clear waters upon whose verge it is situated, backed by rich woods, and mountains losing their snow-capped summits in the clouds. To the many attractions offered to detain the traveller here, must be added the amusement of excellent fishing in the lake, in which fine trout are abundant. There seem to be two distinct species; the best being of a pale pink colour, and very delicately flavoured. We were well supplied with them at the hotel, where the cuisine was decidedly

good, and deserving of remark in a district where any refinement in the culinary art is generally unknown. The wine was also of a superior quality, and to our great surprise, some good sherry enabled us to refill the bottle which was reserved in our luncheon basket for special occasions. An Italian family, who were the last of the summer sojourners here, evidently shivered under the change of temperature;—to us the air, although unexpectedly cool, was fresh and pleasant, but our companions all appeared wrapped up in warm coats and mantles, when they ventured outside the house. During the afternoon, nicely dressed peasants seemed to be enjoying their Sunday walk in the meadows near the village, and everything around gave the impression of prosperity and comfort. Our notice was particularly attracted to a travelling party, consisting of an old man, and two younger companions, who were journeying from the south, attended by a very handsome ass which carried their goods and chattels. They were evidently Tyrolese, wending their way homewards after a summer visit to the plains. When we first remarked them they formed a most picturesque group by the roadside, in front of the spring, of which all (including the donkey) seemed to partake with satisfaction. When they had, as we supposed, satisfied their



curiosity, or performed a duty by imbibing the uninviting draught, the old man was carefully mounted up on the ragged, but brightly bordered blanket which covered the donkey's load, and the trio then passed gaily up the path, forming a picture worthy to be transferred to an artist's sketch book.

The proprietor of the hotel was very attentive to his guests, and endeavoured to obtain information and aid for our further mountain wanderings. The portmanteau was again packed and entrusted to his charge to be forwarded direct to Zurich, and all arrangements having been made for an early start, we enjoyed a second night in this most comfortable resting-place.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## THE BERNINA PASS AND THE FORCOLA TO LIVIGNO

AS our rooms at Le Prese had a southern aspect, we were not disturbed by the storm of wind which, after midnight, rushed down from the Bernina, betokening wild weather among the mountains.

On Monday morning, clouds were scudding about, but the sky was clear, and the fresh snow which mantled the higher summits and streaked the rocky ridges, told of the recent storm which had now apparently expended itself. It was probable that the weather would settle fine again after such a disturbance, and we saw no reason to alter our determination to undertake another mountain walk. The provisions here were so good that we did not forget to order the basket to be well filled for us to carry away. The bread, which was excellent, we now found was brought from Poschiavo, and as the fresh morning supply had not yet arrived, we were advised to stop, and procure some *en passant*,

a recommendation to which we fortunately attended. My husband also remembered that his brandy flask required replenishing, and he requested that it might be filled, and the amount added to the bill which he had just settled, with much satisfaction at the moderation of its charges. The account was immediately returned with the polite addition, *Eau de vie compris*. The proprietorship of the hotel seems to be shared by two young men, of whom one speaks French well, and there can be no doubt that if they continue their present good management and attention to their visitors, they will be rewarded by the patronage and success which they deserve.

The sunshine was so bright on the sheltered side of the house that we were rather disposed to grumble when we found a cumbrous-looking closed carriage awaiting our readiness to depart, instead of the open one which we had ordered. We were assured that we should soon appreciate the comfort of protection from the cold wind, and as it was too late to change, we resigned ourselves to our box, of which we quickly discovered the value.

The bleak cutting blast came down the narrow valley with a keen edge that would have penetrated all our wraps; and Couttet, who, on the driving seat, felt its full force, soon congratulated us upon

our sheltered position. After a few minutes' delay at Poschiavo, where some newly-baked bread was added to our store, we continued our drive, and in about half an hour we reached the church of St. Carlo, which has been already mentioned. On the left the Cavagliasca (whose early course we had traced from the Alp Grum) rushed over the rocks in a pretty cascade before uniting its waters with the stream which here receives the name of Poschiavino, and then hurries downward, increased by another tribute from the Verona Bach, before it skirts Poschiavo and finds its way to the lake.

The ancient way by the Cavaglia and the Alp Grum takes the shortest course to the Lago Bianco, and the Bernina Houses, and travellers who have not seen the Palu glacier will do well to follow this footpath in preference to the circuitous carriage road over the pass. The valley contracts above St. Carlo, and the real ascent begins, as the road climbs up the right bank of the torrent which is soon seen in the wooded depths below, with the village of Angelo Custode nestling in a hollow.

A little further on we crossed the bed of a stream which, judging from the *débris* around, must sometimes make the passage dangerous, if not impracticable. This torrent has its source in the Lago di

Teo, which is imbedded amidst the recesses of the wild range above. A glacier is described as descending from the Pizzo di Sena to its margin, where in warm weather the ice cliffs fall and float upon the surface, as they are said to do at the Diavolezza See.

The scenery increased in beauty as we advanced; the stream rushing at the bottom of a deep ravine, with banks adorned with picturesque groups of fir. Behind us Piz Canciano and Scalino closed up the valley, while Piz Palu occasionally peered out through the clouds, above the green pastures of the Alp Pedriolo. The footpath to La Rosa leads near the scattered hamlet of Pisciadella, the last village on the Italian side of the Bernina; and after passing a pretty waterfall, the wild, broken character of the country corroborates an ancient tradition which attaches to this locality, and is further indicated by its name, Le Rovine. A village is believed formerly to have stood here, containing about 300 inhabitants, the whole community being unhappily proverbial for lying and deceit. In those days much of the mountain traffic passed this way, and woeful was the fate of the benighted wanderer who was obliged to seek shelter for himself, or his wearied pack-horses, in a place whence none escaped without paying a

heavy toll. The poor animals were not even allowed to enjoy the food for which their masters paid so extortionately, their teeth being secretly but carefully soaped previous to their meal! It is said that, as in the case of Sodom and Gomorrha, the iniquities of these people, after many unheeded warnings, at length brought down upon them the judgments of heaven. An earthquake, accompanied by dreadful tempests, shattered the mountains around; huge rocks were torn away and spread over the valley, overwhelming the village and burying its miserable inhabitants.

Ulrich Cambell, the historian of his country, who died in 1580, relates this story as authentic, and in recently discovered documents, the 13th of June, 1486, is given as the date when these events occurred.

The new road makes a broad sweep to the right, crossing a bridge over a noisy, tumbling stream, which descends from the Val di Campo. The scenery of this valley is reported to be of the wildest and finest character, its upper portion being studded with small lakes, encircled by rugged peaks. A way leads up it by the Val Viola to Isolaccia and Bormio, which we were told was a walk of six or seven hours. Our carriage wound slowly up by steep zigzags, amidst straggling pines, which here clothe the

mountain side to a great height. From the top of this ascent a last view of Poschiavo was obtained, and a few minutes more brought us to the solitary house of La Rosa, which stands by the roadside in a marshy basin. Its name is derived from the growth of 'Alpen Rosen,' which bloom in thousands upon the mountain slopes around during the short summer time. Couttet, who had followed the old mule track, had arrived some time before us, in the hope of making some arrangement for the help we required during our further journey. His inquiries were, however, fruitless, until an old man arrived, most opportunely, with a donkey from the other side of the pass, and the services of both were secured to carry our luggage over the Forcola to Livigno. As rest and refreshment were needed by the donkey and his master, we entered the house, which, although rough, looked tidier than usual, and we soon found our way to the kitchen fire. The day had proved so bitterly cold that we were glad to order some hot coffee, which was served in another room, where preparations were already made for a meal. It was soon explained that the 'Post-wagen' from Pontresina stops at La Rosa for its passengers to get dinner, and occasionally provision is required for a large party.

This conveyance might be very convenient to travellers wishing to cross the pass from Samaden or Pontresina, and then to find their way on foot, either to the Val Livigno, or to Bormio by the Val Viola. Our English party, and our unusual route, evidently roused observation, and our coffee was enlivened by the company of a queer, talkative old woman, who wished to satisfy the curiosity which seemed to [have been excited *en route* by Jenni's stories of the English ladies and their Chamonix guide. From our experience of Jenni's inventive capabilities, we did not doubt that our doings had gained piquancy in his report, while his unconcealed jealousy of Couttet, might lead to all kinds of ridiculous stories.

The good folks seemed utterly at a loss to account for our fancy for mountain wandering, and the old body chattered and gesticulated in the strangest way, to prove the absurdity of our walking across the passes to Livigno and Zernetz, instead of going round by the road in a carriage. Her *patois* was so unintelligible that we could not discover whether she spoke from personal knowledge, or from report only, but she illustrated her description of the inn at Livigno by a lively pantomime. Taking up her apron, she twisted it into a roll, with which she



encircled her face, peering through in the most ludicrous manner—to show us the size of the windows! then drawing her garments close around her, the comical old dame proceeded to urge the impossibility of our getting through the narrow door ways, or compressing ourselves into the small rooms, which although good enough for country folks, were not intended for the accommodation of ‘Herrschaft.’ The scene was very amusing until the old woman’s volubility became fatiguing, and we were glad when she retired to the kitchen to pursue her reflections upon our peculiarities. In about half an hour the ‘Post-wagen’ arrived, bringing, among other passengers, the mistress of the house, who seemed to have been absent for a few days. She was a bustling, independent-mannered person, quite unlike the usual style among her class here; this was accounted for when we learnt that she had spent several years in America. ‘Madame’ understood and spoke a little French, and she soon informed us that she had paid a passing visit to England, on her way back to Switzerland from the United States.

When the announcement was made that the donkey had finished its dinner, we all sallied forth to meet the bleak north wind, which even when tempered by the bright sunshine, shewed us what the

character of this climate must be in an unfavourable season.

The houses of La Motta are seen a little higher up, near the road, where it commences its last steep climb up the pass. Parts of this upper portion require the protection of galleries for the security of the traveller in the dangerous season of storm and avalanches. Just as we started another party issued from the out-buildings of the inn, and we recognised the Tyrolese peasants whose appearance had interested us so much the previous evening at Le Prese. They took the same route that we were going to follow, and greatly enlivened the scene around as, leaving the main road to the left, we turned over the moist pastures, and crossed the stream which, brawling even in its infancy, descends from the Forcola, and near which our path lay up the Val Agone. This Val, celebrated for its rich pastures, is a favourite resort of the Bergamesque shepherds. As we passed over the moist, rough hill-side, the old man, who had now dismounted from his donkey, intimated that the seat was very comfortable, and made us understand that the animal was quite at our service; but as active exercise was necessary to keep us warm, we declined the proffered aid, and walked steadily up the contracting valley, with the extraordinary

rocks of Le Cune rising high above us to the left. Glittering groups of white and sandy pinnacles, projected from the crown of the mountain ridge, in most singular clusters of points, and jagged teeth, presenting beautiful and wonderful specimens of the remarkable geological formation assumed by the gypsum strata, of which these rocks are composed. We were just an hour from La Rosa in reaching the foot of the Forcola, and as we climbed its rocky side we gained very striking backward views of the bald ridge, thrown forward by the dark crags and snowy heads of Palu and Cambrera, over which clouds were still scudding. Beautiful flowers were again strewed around, and my son found another specimen of the pretty bi-coloured *Antennaria*, which we had previously seen only in the Roseg Thal. About half an hour's walk brought us to the Col of the Forcola, over which the cold blast came with a chilling force, which did not allow us to linger on the summit. It is a narrow ridge, along which runs the boundary line of Switzerland and Lombardy, and unites the Piz di Leis with the rocky range of the Orsera and Cima di Carten, which enclose the head of the Val Livigno. The Orsera Horn, about two hours distant from the Forcola, is said to command a grand view, and is also accessible from La Rosa, by the Cima di Carten.

Ranges of mountains, intersected by a labyrinth of valleys, stretch hence towards Bormio, and the whole district must abound in beautiful and interesting scenery. The source of the Spol is found amidst the grand glaciers which descend on the right; this stream waters the whole extent of the Val Livigno, and then finds its way through a very savage, rocky gorge to Zernetz, where the tribute which it pours into the Inn, nearly doubles the water of that river. The descent from the Col is into a barren valley, of which nearly the whole width is occupied by a stony watercourse. As soon as we were sheltered from the wind, the temperature became much more agreeable, and pines again began to clothe the lower slopes.

To the left, we passed a track to the Col di Stella, over which the Val di Fain communicates with the Val Livigno. The higher summits were powdered with fresh snow, and new beauties opened on all sides as we approached a rocky knoll, sprinkled with fir trees, and marked by a tall wooden cross. This formed a striking centre to the picture, where a group of châteaux, with cattle and horses scattered around, enlivened the green pastures to the right, and filled up the foreground of a fine view of a grand three-tongued glacier descending from Monte Zembrasca and Piz di Campo. On the left, richly

wooded Alps sloped gracefully down to the widening valley, which was lost in the far distance, amidst dark coloured rocks and distant mountains. While we lingered in admiration of the scenery, we observed that Couttet and the old man in front were in eager conversation with two countrymen who had suddenly appeared from the wood, and who were apparently stopping their farther progress. One of the men carried a gun, the other wore the official cross of Savoy upon the front of his cap, and remembering that we were near the frontier, we supposed that they were douaniers, making polite inquiries as to the contents of our baggage.

The matter, however, seemed to be more serious than any questions which would arise from a suspicion of contraband tobacco; and after much discussion, which we had considerable difficulty in comprehending, our astonishment was great when we learnt that our humble porter was the innocent cause of our detention. The poor ass was in fact arrested! and forbidden to set foot within the Commune of Livigno.

The explanation of this strange proceeding was, that three weeks previously a mad dog had run through the village and passed up the Val, having bitten six men and a woman, besides many of the

cattle, in its mischievous career. Under these trying circumstances, the governing members of the Commune had met in council, and in their united wisdom had decreed, that for forty days no animal should be allowed to enter the district from the direction in which the dog had disappeared. A guard was consequently kept night and day at an appointed spot, where it was assumed that the danger was likely to approach, and thus our useful companion became obnoxious to the law!

There was no appeal from such authority; the guardians of the public safety were inexorable, and the donkey being relieved of its burden, immediately began to display its desire to use its teeth upon the sweet herbage around. The serious question was, how were our bags and chattels to be conveyed downwards? for the old man was naturally averse to separation from his ass. He was, however, induced to accompany us to the nearest châlets, one of the men lending his aid to carry the luggage, and seek further help, while the poor donkey was left in safe custody to await his master's return. When we reached the lower châlets, which were found deserted, the baggage was deposited upon a low wall,—and the old man departed, apparently not sorry to have his journey thus shortened. The

prospect of assistance now seemed dependant upon the promises of the Communal guard to send some one from the Alp above. In this state of things, the Herr thought it best to remain with Couttet until the expected help arrived ; while my son accompanied my friend and myself to seek lodgings for the night at Livigno. The valley was spread out before us in wide pastures, unbroken by any divisions, with scattered châlets showing a considerable population. The recently cut sward was like a soft green carpet beneath our feet, and the enjoyment of our walk was troubled only by the fear that the unexpected difficulty with our luggage might cause my husband lengthened detention. The dark, sun-burnt colour of the houses, gave peculiar richness to the pastoral scene through which we passed ; the remarkably small windows of these primitive dwellings quite justified the description of the queer old woman at La Rosa, and showed that in the precautions taken for protection from cold, in this high region, even the enjoyment of light was sacrificed to warmth.

The amount of timber used in the construction of these buildings was evidently no matter of consideration ; projecting ladders formed of rough logs, added to their picturesque appearance, and gave access to an upper floor, which, sheltered by far-projecting

eaves, must be even darker than the living rooms below. The village was in sight long before we crossed to the left bank of the Spol, and reached the first church, which is ornamented with brilliant frescoes. Rude paintings of the Virgin on the walls of some of the houses also reminded us that we had re-entered a Roman Catholic country, where the people have a common faith and language with the Valtelline. They are certainly a very peculiar, primitive-looking race, clothed in sad coloured garments of antiquated cut. The position of the first group of houses was very pretty, with the gaily decorated white church raising its tall steeple in the centre.

As we looked back from below, it stood prominently in front of a beautiful opening in the mountain range to the left, where the distance was closed by a new group of glaciers and snowy peaks, which cluster round Monte Foscagno. Two churches still appeared before us, each surrounded with houses, and we began to doubt where we should find the resting-place which we had been instructed, at Poschiavo and La Rosa, to seek 'chez Bronolino.' A respectable-looking old peasant (equipped in shorts and black stockings!) was repairing the roof of his house by the road side; he fortunately comprehended our request for direction on our way, and informed



us that we were still nearly half an hour's walk from the main village. There was a white house conspicuous near the farthest church, and our hopes were excited that this would prove to be the Osteria; but prudence led us to address a young woman at the second group of houses, and renew our inquiries. The damsel stared at us in amazement, then laughed merrily, and proceeded to show us the house we wanted, which we had just passed without the slightest notion that it was our destined rest.

The only feature distinguishing Signor Bronolino's abode from the neighbouring châteaux, was that the lower windows were on rather a larger scale than the ordinary peep holes; of 'Osteria' there was no external sign to attract the attention of the weary traveller. We crossed the dark threshold, and an old woman having been called forth from the still gloomier depths of the kitchen, our best *patois* was exerted to make known our intention of honoring her with our company for the night. Such unusual visitors seemed greatly to perplex Madame Bronolino; but her energies rose to the emergency, and having been introduced to a very small but tolerable room on the ground floor, we followed our hostess up a ladder to explore the bed-room accommodation. As our expectations had by this time descended to the

lowest point, it was quite an agreeable surprise to find a clean-looking room, the same size as that below, and a second apartment with two beds, which we hoped might be made tolerably comfortable for the gentlemen. The old woman opened a chest, which contained a store of coarse, but white linen, which we regarded with great satisfaction; and we begged that preparations might at once be made for airing and transferring it to the beds, by which their appearance would be greatly improved. Madame assured us that all should be 'proprio,' and having, at our request, produced some bread and cheese, she withdrew into the dark regions of the kitchen, to build up a fire, and hasten the needful preparations.

My son watched anxiously for his father's appearance, while we could not help laughing at the queer quarters in which he would find us installed, and wondering what he would think of our arrangements. At the end of an hour, the Herr arrived, and his countenance certainly depicted unfeigned astonishment, when he was greeted on the threshold by D., and our voices were heard from the top of the ladder, inviting him to ascend to our apartment. Compelled by necessity to bow low as he approached, his first impressions were not altogether pleasing; but we were satisfied that appearances were the worst part of our

present lodgings; and whatever the good woman's culinary skill might prove, we were so far independent that besides the ordinary contents of our luncheon basket, the store brought from Le Prese was still untouched.

Couttet soon followed, accompanied by a boy and a small donkey, carrying the luggage. He quietly observed that our 'Osteria' was 'quelque chose particulière,' and proceeded to aid in every possible arrangement for our comfort. After we parted, there had been considerable difficulty, and long waiting, before assistance could be obtained; and when, at last, a donkey was procured from the other châteaux, it proved no easy matter to make the bags ride comfortably, with only a cord to keep them together across the poor animal's back. However, all had arrived safely at last, and the provisions were so ample that we left Couttet to do justice to a veal stew which Madame was preparing for our supper.

My husband rather distrusted our knowledge of the further journey, and was anxious to find some village authority from whom we might obtain more certain information of the route to Zernetz. This was not an easy matter, owing to the almost universal Romansch, or equally unintelligible Italian *patois* spoken among the people; but Signor Brono-

lino now appeared upon the scene,—he understood a few words of German, and it was proposed to send for a young man from the other end of the village, who could converse in that tongue. When the interpreter arrived, his Tyrolese German was almost as incomprehensible as the general *patois*, and amidst the various opinions given, it was impossible to learn even the time required for the journey.

We had proposed to take the mule path, which follows the course of the Spol down the valley, until the gorge narrows between overhanging rocks, and obliges it to cross the stream, and diverge to the right; it then skirts the Monte della Schera until it joins the Buffolora Pass, at Ofen.

Professor Theobald mentions the ‘Wirthhaus’ at Ofen as tolerable, and a good centre for excursions; but we had no intention of stopping there. The walk or ride from Livigno to Ofen could not, according to our calculations, occupy more than six hours; and as the road thence to Zernetz can be travelled in the country ‘*berg-wagen*’ in three to four hours more, there would be no difficulty in completing the whole distance during the day, if the weather was favourable.

Another mode of returning to the main road of the Engadine, was over the Casana Pass to Scansf;

but of this we literally knew nothing, except that its height is marked at 8,850 feet.

The good folks of Livigno now suggested that this pass would be the preferable course for us to take, and the Herr having arrived at the conclusion that it was certainly the shortest journey back to civilised life, the new line was discussed and adopted. We were also told that horses might be used for two hours up the Val Federia, and as there were two animals in the village, reported to be perfectly safe for ladies, and accustomed to cross the mountains, my husband ordered them to be in readiness soon after five o'clock the next morning.

In the evening the sky was again overcast, and raised doubts for the morrow. In the meantime, the labours of the day being completed, we soon forgot both our fatigue and amusement in sound sleep.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## THE CASANA PASS TO THE OBER ENGADINE

MADAME BRONOLINO'S promise that all should be 'proprio' was fulfilled. The beds were clean and comfortable; and although the means provided for our morning toilets were curiously small, the good woman supplied all our wants to the utmost of her ability.

The clouds had all passed away, leaving a clear sky, with a fresh, invigorating mountain air, and all seemed to promise favourably for the Casana.

Much excitement was occasioned by the preparations for our departure; the two horses were in readiness at the door, and Couttet had retained the services of the little donkey, which now carried its burden properly secured upon a pack.

After taking leave of our friends I proceeded to mount, and finding that men's saddles were provided, I placed myself sideways upon my steed, and no doubt we should thus have managed very well

had such an innovation upon established usage been permitted at Livigno! The men remonstrated, but in vain, until seeing C. about to follow my example, her attendant put her aside, and supposing that we were unaccustomed to ride, he jumped upon the saddle, thrust his feet firmly down into the stirrups, and energetically explained that thus, and thus only, could the horses be used. They assured us that the way was 'cattivo,' that it was impossible for us to retain our seats as we proposed, and that we *must* follow the fashion of the country if we meant to ride. We decidedly declined the alternative, and the horses were reconducted to their shed amidst evident wonder at the unaccountable perversity of the English ladies. This affair settled, we started on foot, attended only by the owner of the donkey, which was to be dismissed at the top of the pass; another man was to follow us from the village, who would act as guide and help to carry the baggage down to Scans. Our path lay across the meadows towards the entrance of the Val Federia, leaving the church and lower village about ten minutes walk further down to the right. We had not the opportunity of ascertaining whether there was any other Osteria in Livigno; our general inquiries led us to believe that beds could be obtained

only "chez Bronolino," but that there was a house of entertainment for the passing traveller near the principal church.

Nothing could exceed the beauty of the scenery in the soft morning light: in many of its characteristics, the Val Livigno is perhaps unrivalled.

Rich, wide-spreading pastures, watered by the Spol, rise gently to Alpine slopes, clothed with magnificent trees; picturesque houses are scattered over the valley, or clustered round the churches; the general appearance of the people is primitive, but very comfortable, and their kindly manner seems to denote contentment in their seclusion from the external world, from which they are divided by high passes and mountain ranges, presenting a great variety of character and colouring.

The lower slopes are remarkable from their rounded, undulating forms, which soften the sternness of the rocks beneath which they spread. Above these, snowy summits look down upon the valley, which is itself so high that one is scarcely conscious of the loftiness of the surrounding peaks. In the peaceful seclusion of such a scene, it is difficult to realize that even here the strife of man has penetrated, producing its usual accompaniments of desolation and death.



The beautifully situated upper church, marks the position of a battle-field, upon which in 1635, the Austrians were defeated by the Swiss forces, led by a French general. It is a curious episode in the history of the religious wars of Switzerland, that the Cardinal de Richelieu, in furtherance of his own political and personal views, determined to engage France in hostilities with the house of Austria, and to aid the discontented Protestant subjects of that power in Switzerland. Under these circumstances the chivalrous Duke de Rohan commanded a force of combined French and Swiss troops, against the Catholic Cantons, supported by an Austrian army. The Austrians were obliged to retreat from the Ober Engadine; and forced their way up the valley, and over the storm-vexed peaks of the Casana, into the Val Livigno. They were closely pursued by the Duke de Rohan, and a fierce encounter took place just above the village, resulting in the utter discomfiture of the Austrian host, which was driven across the Forcola, and after encountering further disasters in the Val Agone, dispersed in broken bands down to the Valtelline.

Our way up the Val Federia was, as usual, guided by the course of a stream, above which we gradually mounted. The unusual size of the 'Sapins' as well

as of the larch and 'Roth-tannen' on the opposite mountain side, particularly attracted our attention. The trees were sometimes scattered in groups, as if by an artist's hand, to produce pictorial effect; or occasionally one stood alone, a splendid forest giant. Looking back upon the valley of Livigno, the craggy castellated ridge of dark-coloured, red-streaked rock, which encloses its north-eastern extremity was very marked and singular in appearance. The highest peak of the ridge, known as the Piz del Ferro, might without much stretch of fancy, be supposed crowned by rocky fortifications, from which, when we saw it, light puffs of cloud seemed to issue, as if a salute was being fired from the commanding battlements.

The path continued good, passing the hamlet and chapel of Federia, and the ascent was so gradual, that we might safely have used the horses in our own fashion, for nearly two hours. The valley then turned to the left, with a track up it, leading by the Lavirum Pass, to the Val Chamuera, which may be followed down to Ponte on the high way of the Ober Engadine. A well-marked path to the right led us up rough Alpine pastures, over which a large flock of Bergamesque sheep were scattered. Their guardian was a very wild-looking specimen of the race, well-wrapped in his thick mantle, looking as if the morning air had been very cold.

The ascent up the bleak mountain-side continued very steep for about an hour and a half, and we wondered to see how steadily and well the patient little donkey climbed up the sharp zigzags with its heavy load.

We had been so ignorant of the character of this pass, that the beautiful views which extended before us at each upward turn took us quite by surprise. Peak after peak of the Tyrolese range rose gradually above the horizon, and when we reached the summit of the ridge, the scene was most magnificent, bounded by a semicircle of snowy mountains, amidst which, to the east, the Ortler Spitz was grandly conspicuous. Looking down to the Engadine, Mont Ketsch towered before us, shining brilliantly in a mantle of recent snow, supported by Piz Vadret, and its great glaciers. Above us on the left, was the ridge of the Casanella; on the right were the steep indented peaks of the rugged Casana, which raised its grey, storm-torn summit against the cloudless sky. All around was bleak and without vegetation, and notwithstanding the warm sunshine, the wind was so cold, that we fortified ourselves against the blast by passing round a loving cup of the Le Prese sherry. Fresh snow covered the surface of the rocks, and showed how fortunate we were in having escaped the storm which had passed over these 'high places.'

The donkey had been relieved from its burden, and when its master now turned its head homewards, the sagacious little animal trotted back contentedly alone. We had seen the man exchange greetings with the shepherd on the mountain-side, and supposed that the donkey was committed to his friendly care, until reclaimed on its master's return ; but he told us that he could trust to the animal's own instinct to find its way safely home to Livigno.

The second man had joined us at the foot of the steep ascent ; now the baggage was divided between the two, and we began a still more rapid descent over loose gravelly *débris*, down a spur projecting from the ridge into the stony valley beneath. The jagged rocky pinnacles of the Piz Casana stood forth on this side in peculiar and desolate grandeur amidst the surrounding snow-fields. As we stood gazing upwards upon them, a 'Schnee-Huhn,' or Ptarmigan (Couttet called it a white partridge) sprang from the ground close beside us, and took its course above our heads. Some deserted cattle *châlets* stood at the foot of this ridge, and when we reached a water-course just beyond, there was an unanimous call for luncheon. We had nothing very substantial left in store ; but a sheltered kitchen was skilfully built up with blocks of stone, where the *Ætna* quickly boiled

some water, and a good supply of our portable soup, thickened with arrow-root, was prepared with great success. With the remains of some stale bread, we thus compensated for a somewhat spare breakfast, and were quite ready to enjoy the further walk.

The upper part of the Val was very barren, enclosed on the right by a high ridge of rocks, most curiously streaked and coloured. After a sudden fall in the ground, firs and larches re-appeared on the left, clothing the sides of a fine opening, closed by snowy peaks and glaciers. Leaving the dairy châteaux of Casana on our right, the path wound along steep banks, thickly covered with the dwarf fir (or *Læg-föhre*), which gives such great protection to the loose soil of the mountain-side. We picked the silver-grey cones of two or three years old, which were still hanging on the tree, with the young fruit of this season. This species of fir is here also called the *Barenkrys*, because the shelter formed by its creeping, interlaced branches is believed to be a favourite resort of the bears, which still abound among these wild ranges. These animals are said to have been particularly bold during the autumn of last year (1860), and many stories are told of the dismay caused by the appearance of such unusual

visitors, and of their mischievous depredations. We saw nothing more exciting than a pretty little black squirrel, which D. started amidst the overhanging branches, whence it took long, flying leaps from tree to tree. A substantial bridge of fir poles, over a wild torrent, showed that the way was now more traversed; it wound down the mountain-side, with lovely views opening through the trees, until it reached the grassy banks of the main stream, where a saw-mill gave employment to a colony of woodcutters. After crossing to the left side, the path became a good car road, winding through fir woods, varied by beautiful green glades, with the river occasionally gleaming far beneath in the valley of the Inn. The most striking point of this charming walk was from an open brow, whence a lovely vista up the Trupchum Thal was closed by the snowy group of Piz Esen and Piz Quatervals, which peered through the tall larches in the foreground. The Arven and other pines are here thickly covered with the hairy moss, which floats like long grey tresses from their spreading branches, giving them a most venerable appearance.

•  
‘The murmuring pines,  
Bearded with moss, in garments green,  
Stand like Druids of old.’

At the next turn round the hill side, Scanfs came

into sight, well placed upon the further bank of the river. The larger village of Zutz appeared a short distance higher up the valley. A quick descent brought us out upon open meadows, where, exposed to the full glare of the sun, we found the heat so great that we hastened on to cross the bridge, and seek shelter and rest at the 'Poste.' The people were so little accustomed to visitors, that it was some time before they could find us space to sit down; the only sitting-room being for the time devoted to the preparation of a large batch of bread. As our object was to descend the valley at once, we asked the 'Wirth' to provide us with a conveyance. Scanfs produce one 'berg-wagen,' but a second was needed, besides the horses, which had to be fetched from Zutz, where, I believe, that the accommodation is clean and comfortable. Travellers wishing to cross the Casana from this side, should sleep at Zutz, and arrange to have horses, or a 'berg-wagen,' for the first two hours up the valley; the excursion to Livigno would thus be easily accomplished. We had been just six and a half hours walking from Livigno, exclusive of the time we had rested *en route*, and no doubt it might be done by a gentleman in six hours. The two men who accompanied us were paid 16 francs, which included the services of the donkey to the summit of the pass.

After our return to England, I heard from an A. C. traveller who had crossed the Casana the previous season, that no guide who knew the route could then be obtained at Scanfs. At last a chamois hunter agreed to carry the knapsacks to Livigno for 14 fr., but at the conclusion of his engagement the man refused to take less than 15 fr. Mr. N—— reached Livigno in six hours, on his way (with a friend) to the baths of Bormio; no guide or porter could be found to accompany them further, and the gentlemen started alone by a well-marked track, which led them across a col to the village of Trepalle, and thence by Foscagno and Isolaccia to Bormio. This second portion of the journey occupied six hours more, and the scenery is described as ‘a happy combination of Switzerland and Italy.’

We enlivened the time of waiting by ordering something to eat; and as there was no fresh meat in the place, some ham was to be fried, followed by an omelette. To our amusement the two dishes appeared combined in the form of ham fritters, which were by no means despicable, in addition to excellent bread, with butter and cheese from the ‘Wirth’s’ own farm. Our host told us that the country inn at Suss, although rough, was clean, and probably preferable to any sleeping accommodation



we were likely to find at Zernetz. As it had, besides, the great advantage of being at the foot of the Fluela pass, by which we intended to reach Davos the next day, we decided to make it our resting-place for the night, the distance not being more than three hours' drive from Scansfs.

The 'berg-wagen' arrived in due time, and we mounted our carriages in the cool of the afternoon to enjoy a pretty drive down the excellent road which now traverses the Engadine as far as Ardetz (about an hour below Suss).

Soon after leaving Scansfs, the Sulsanna Thal, on the left, leads up to the Scaletta Pass, which is also a line of communication with the Davos Thal. The scenery must be decidedly grander than the Fluela, and we were assured both here and at Davos, that there is neither difficulty nor danger to be encountered, except in bad weather, or in the season for avalanches. It may be passed with mules; indeed, much of the former traffic with the Valtelline used to cross the Scaletta.

The road keeps along the left bank of the Inn until a short distance above Zernetz, where the river is crossed by a massive covered bridge, marking the division between the Ober and Unter Engadine. A second bridge spans the Spol, which we

had parted with in the morning in the Val Livigno, and now met again, just before its waters were absorbed in the Inn. Zernetz is a considerable place, and a fair specimen of the olden villages of the country. Many of the houses are large and dreary-looking. Its principal ornaments are a conspicuous church, and the old feudal tower of Wildenberg, the residence of a branch of the Planta family, many of whose names are celebrated as leaders in the contests between Austria and the Grisons. Several other ruined towers are seen on the hill-side above. Zernetz lies in an angle, a little removed from the river, which now rushes on its way with redoubled force. The road again crosses to its left bank below the village, and passes through beautiful scenery to Suss, which is most picturesquely situated on both banks of the stream, sheltered by wooded hills, with ruined strongholds of bygone times peeping through the foliage. A fine background is formed by the sharp cone of Piz Linard, and the mountains which are grouped around it.

The house to which we had been recommended, proved to be a clean country inn, rich in the possession of a bed-room furnished with two spring mattresses. An active young woman spoke good French, and seemed charmed to have the opportunity

of exercising her conversational powers. When we inquired about supper, we received the usual reply, that there was no 'viande' in the village, but it was possible that the carrier's cart might arrive from the upper valley in time to supply a beef steak for supper. Meantime the preparations for tea were tempting, cakes of various kinds being produced, in addition to good bread. Fortunately for those who required more satisfying food, the lumbering waggon soon rolled up to the door, bringing the promised meat; and although the steak was not particularly tender, it furnished a substantial meal.

The house was also provided with literary food for our amusement, and we gleaned the latest news of the world from the *Gazetta d'Inngiadina*, a Romansch paper, published for the especial benefit of the Engadiners. Aided by German and Latin we thus read an account of the accident by which a French lady had recently lost her life by falling into the stream, from a plank bridge across the Lutschine, just below the Grindelwald Glacier. Such a sad occurrence shows that those who are susceptible to dizziness, or nervous feelings, should never venture unattended, even when danger is not apparent.

There was no difficulty in making arrangements for the next day, the Fluela being a route that is

constantly passed by the country people. We were advised to take horses only to the summit of the pass. Three were therefore engaged, and Couttet was occupied during the evening in securing proper equipments for those intended for the use of the ladies. A fourth horse was to carry the baggage; this we were to take on, if necessary, to Davos, but it was probable that its services would be required only to the Tschuggen Inn (about two hours below the top), where a 'berg-wagen' can generally be procured for the remainder of the journey.

The slender pyramid of Piz Linard is the highest point of the Silvretta group, and may be ascended from the village of Lavin, a short distance below Suss. The summit has hitherto been reached only by a few energetic Swiss travellers, and no trustworthy guides are to be obtained in the neighbourhood. The view is described as most magnificent; from its position it must be of the same character as the panorama seen from the Schwarzhorn above the Fluela Pass.

## CHAPTER XV.

THE FLUELA PASS, AND SCHWARZHORN, TO THE  
DAVOS THAL

IN these hitherto unfrequented districts the master of the country inn sometimes seems quite at a loss on what scale to frame his charges, the result being apparently experimental and not always satisfactory. This was illustrated before we left Suss, by the amount asked for our entertainment, without offering any details. An explanation was requested, and we found that after stretching every other charge to its utmost extent, eight francs were added for 'services,' which no doubt included the French conversation with which we had been favoured!

For the benefit of future travellers, it was necessary to come to a better understanding, and the bill generally was reduced ten francs, without any discussion.

On the previous evening we had watched the goats come in and disperse to their various homes ; now, as we prepared to start for our morning ride, they were gathering from all sides, and a goodly array, numbering upwards of 300, preceded us up the Susasca Thal, where we passed them, scattered in pretty groups over the mountain-side. This valley offers nothing very remarkable in its scenery for the first two hours, being enclosed by rocky ridges, with the usual combinations of fine wood and a rushing stream. The first break was to the right, and we were much amused by the unusual appearance of a sign post, with its guiding fingers duly labelled 'nach Davos' and 'nach Klosters.' The path indicated by the last notice, leads up the Fless and Suser Thals, skirting the base of the Weisshorn, and by the Vereiner Pass to the upper end of the Pratigau above Klosters. It must command a very fine view of Piz Linard, with the grand Silvretta Glacier, and although apparently little used, we were assured that it was not difficult.

After crossing some rough, swampy ground, over which the stream spreads itself, working out many devious channels, where the horses splashed along, picking their way, while their masters scrambled over the rocks above, we ascended a grassy slope,

whence the upward view began to assume a character of grandeur and beauty hitherto wanting.

As we passed onwards,

‘The scene is wakened, yet its peace unbroke  
By the slow wreaths of quiet charcoal smoke  
That o’er the ruins of the fallen wood  
Steal down the vale,’

where a charcoal burner had set up his solitary abode on the mountain-side, to carry on his dreary employment. Partially sheltered by the black heap which it was his business to keep supplied with food from the neighbouring forest, the dingy-looking man had, with the pliant loppings of the fir branches, formed a rough sleeping-place—his only refuge from the cold night air and mountain storms. A small cross, evidently fashioned by the Solitary himself, was prominently fixed over the low entrance to his curious lair,—the freshly-cut white wood shining conspicuously amidst the dark fir branches: an emblem surely of the trust which thus in the dreary wilderness sought the protection and presence of an Almighty Guardian; and, by the universally recognized symbol of our faith, seemed to claim brotherhood with all passers-by.

Still continuing to ascend, the next object of interest was a group of low buildings beside our path, where our escort stopped for a few minutes,

while they explained to us that it was a distillery of the 'eau d'Engian,' a spirit which is obtained from the roots of the wild gentian,—large heaps of which were piled up around. The men wished us to taste the spirit, which they seemed to like, but we found its strong scent sufficiently satisfying.

A wide valley soon opened up to the left, between the Schwarzhorn and Piz Vadret, watered by the stream which flows down from the Grialetsch Glacier,—a vast and magnificent expanse of brilliant snow and pendent masses of shimmering ice, girdling the dark crags which pierced the clear blue sky.

During the remainder of the ascent the views were very fine. On looking back, the soft outline of the Tyrolean summits again marked the horizon beyond the Engadine, while in front the pass was guarded by the dark peak of the Schwarzhorn, contrasted with the Weisshorn on the opposite side.

One of our men was intelligent, and beguiled the way by giving Couttet information which led him to suggest that my son would perhaps like to mount the rocky cone, which rose so conspicuously before us. The brilliancy of the day was tempting for such an expedition, especially as the man had already made the ascent, and was prepared to act as guide. We were to lunch at the Tschuggen Inn, and consequently



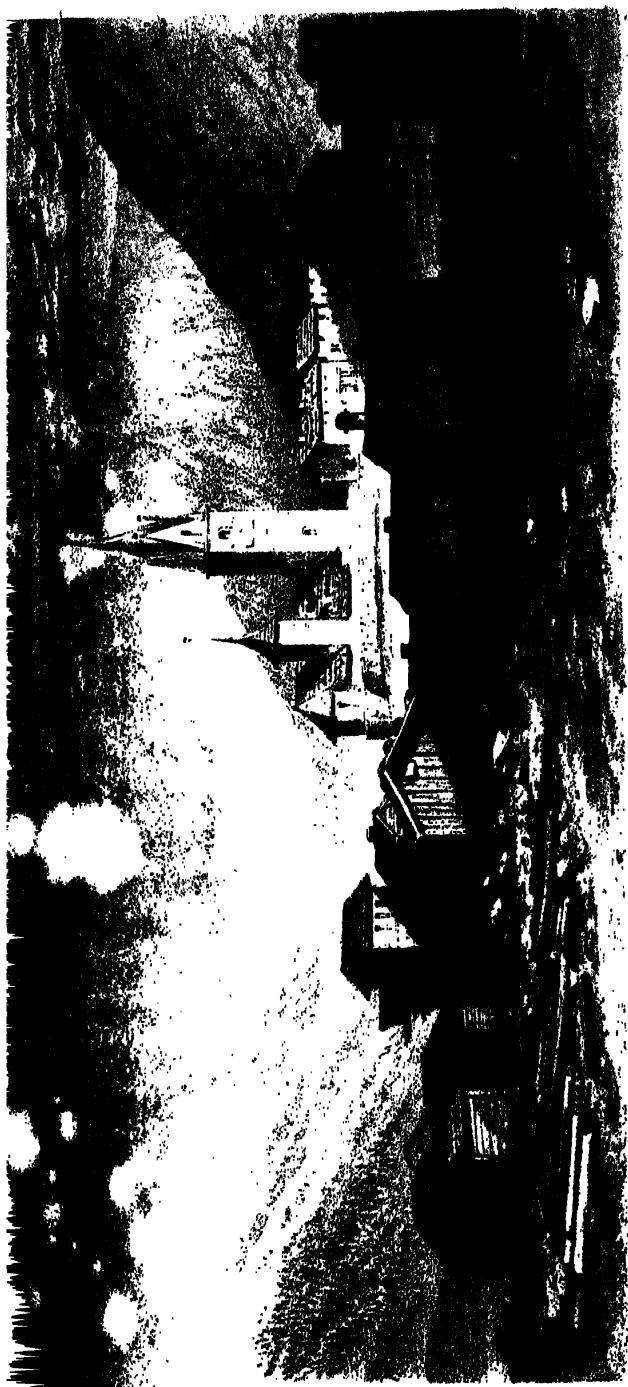
had no store of provisions, but this difficulty was overcome when we found that Couttet had still some bread, and that the brandy-flask was not empty. Thus supplied, the decision to start was quickly made, and we took leave of the trio about ten minutes before we reached the hut which marks the summit of the pass. We had been three hours *en route* from Suss, and we now dismounted to send back our horses well satisfied with their services. An old man, with the baggage-horse, was to accompany us down to Tschuggen.

A rocky, uninteresting table-land extends for some distance over the top, varied only by two small lakes on either side the path. The differing colours of their waters was most remarkable, the one pure and transparent, fed by a mountain spring; the other a milky white, deriving its nourishment from snow and glacier. A long descent over rocky and boggy ground brought us in two hours to the inn, which, sheltered in a hollow, is not visible until you are close upon it. We found the house much better than we expected, and had no difficulty in obtaining a 'berg-wagen' for ourselves, with the assurance that another should be ready for the mountaineers when they arrived later in the day. The luncheon was nicely served in a tidy salon, every one who entered the room wishing us *guten appetit*. I was afterwards asked to go up

stairs and look at the recent improvements, and additions to the bed-rooms, which seemed quite equal, if not superior, to those generally found in such mountain inns. They were certainly much better than some we had occupied of late.

The people of the house were greatly interested in hearing that our son had gone up the Schwarzhorn, and they were evidently very anxious that the fame of its panorama should be extended among English travellers. In half an hour we started in our 'wagen,' but it would have been better to walk for the first half mile, during which the way is very rough, stony, and in some places steep. We had a young boy as driver, who had perfect confidence in his horse, as well as in his own skill, which I did not entirely share. The road soon improved, and all went on more smoothly, as we rattled down the fertile and well-peopled valley. In about three quarters of an hour we reached the head of the Davos Thal, and, leaving to our right the pretty little See, which spreads itself at the wooded foot of the Seehorn, we crossed the river and trotted merrily to Dorfli. Here our young charioteer tried to induce us to stop, by strong recommendations of the inn, but its appearance was not particularly attractive, and all our prepossessions were in favour of the old 'Rath Haus' at Am Platz,





Henbert, lith.

AM ATZ N TH DAVOS THAL

C. G. Galt





a mile lower down, and the principal village in the valley. We now found that Davos did not designate any particular place, but that the name was applied generally to Dorfli, Am Platz, and the lower hamlets of Frauenkirche and Glaris.

As we drove downwards we had a beautiful peep up the Dischma Thal, with the Scaletta Glacier and the dark Schwarzhorn thrown forward by the distant but brilliant snow. To the south the view was closed by a mountain range, amidst which one remarkable summit raised its head like a miniature Matterhorn, to which its form, thus seen in the far distance, bore much resemblance. This was the Tinzenhorn, the south side of which we had seen from Tiefenkasten and Bergun without noticing it particularly.

Am Platz, adorned by the double towered church of St. Johann, is very prettily situated on a plateau rising in the centre of the valley. Just before we reached the village we passed a good looking, and apparently newly-built, house, well placed on the higher ground to the right, with an inscription in large letters, 'Gast und Curhaus zum Strela.' Its appearance was tempting, but we determined to look at the 'Rath Haus' before we decided upon our resting-place. Leaving the 'wagen' to await the result of our investigation my husband and I walked on into the

village, where we had no difficulty in distinguishing the object of our search. Close to the church stood an antiquated mansion of which the outside was curiously decorated with frescoes representing figures similar to those we had seen at Poschiavo. No signs of active life appeared about the house; we entered unquestioned, and were allowed to go upstairs without interruption. The passages looked rather dark and gloomy, but at the top of the staircase we discovered two bedrooms, which had evidently been recently repaired and newly furnished. They looked so clean and comfortable that under ordinary circumstances we should have taken possession of them gladly, but we purposed to spend two nights at Am Platz, and the situation of 'Zum Strela' induced us to make further inquiries there, before we committed ourselves to the care of the old 'Rath Haus.'

From the rafters at the head of the stairs hung the wolf-net, preserved as a memorial of the war formerly waged against these animals, which, as well as bears, seem to have abounded throughout this district. On the first-floor we entered the old 'Saal,' where so many important questions affecting the freedom and prosperity of the 'Graubunden' were discussed, when Davos was the central point of the government, and its deliberations were carried on in



this old chamber. It is panelled with the richly tinted wood of the 'Arven,' adorned with good carving, and still retains its old furniture and fittings. A woman came forth from the background, and surveyed us as we left the house; but no anxiety was shown to induce us to remain there, and we retraced our steps to the 'Curhaus.' There our reception was cordial, although it was evidently too late in the season for such visitors to be expected. One room only was occupied, by a gentleman from Chur, and we had our choice of the rest of the house, which was nicely furnished, and looked very attractive. It contained six or seven bedrooms, with a comfortable, although small, salon and ante-room. We soon made our selection, and found ourselves luxuriously lodged, with a lovely view from our windows.

While my friend and I occupied ourselves in various necessary arrangements, my husband wandered down to the river, where he fell in with a 'Herr,' amusing himself by fishing, who could speak a little French. He said that the trout were abundant and fine, but that the sport would soon be over, as fishing was usually given up on the first of September, when the shooting season commenced.

As H. returned to the house he was joined by

another man, who proved to be our host, carrying a basket well filled with the fruits of his day's sport, by which he at once proposed that we should benefit; and he suggested that his visitor should try his skill with the rod the next day.

At half-past five, my son and Couttet drove up, looking very much burnt, and greatly pleased, after a most delightful and perfectly successful ascent of the Schwarzhorn. D. was quite ready to do justice to the good dinner, which was only delayed until his arrival; and our evening was enlivened by his account of an excursion which is as yet little known; no doubt it will hereafter become one of the great attractions of the Davos Thal. Messrs. Hardy and Kennedy had slept at Am Platz on their way to the Engadine in July last, and ascended the Schwarzhorn from Durrenboden in the Dischma Thal, on their way up to the Scaletta Pass. The ascent is said to be easier on this side than from the Fluela, and the châlets of Durrenboden may be reached in a 'bergwagen' from Am Platz.

We saw the letter afterwards written by Mr. Kennedy to our host, from which we learnt that the weather had not been favourable to the view from the summit of the Horn. The following account, written by my son, will show the magnificence

of the panorama which was spread out around him, under an atmosphere of unclouded brilliancy:—

‘ We left the Fluela path about ten minutes before the col was reached, and took to the mountain-side on the left. The ascent was at first over rough grass, which soon gave place to rock and loose stones ; then passing over a bed of snow, in half an hour we reached a point, where the Schwarzhorn Glacier appeared before us, encircled by pointed crags, with a deep blue tarn beneath it. Our guide led along the north side of the glacier, over the rocks which form the base of the horn. This was the most “ pénible ” portion of the walk, for although not very steep, the loose and slippery boulders, which covered the surface, made it so insecure that great care was necessary. We next wound along the higher slopes of the glacier, on which the new snow lay, six inches deep, and gave good foothold, until we reached a col looking down on the châlets of Durrenboden, in the Dischma Thal.

‘ After ten minutes’ rest our course led straight up the *arête*, and though for twenty minutes it was rather steep, it was not difficult. As soon as we left the col, the Bernina range came into sight, and every upward step added fresh summits to the view. The top was gained at half-past eleven, just two hours from the Fluela Pass.

‘ The summit of the Schwarzhorn is of rough crags, of the same character as Piz Languard ; but the point of the cone is smaller. On every side except that on which we had approached it, the mountain fell in perpendicular precipices of dark rock. Just below us was the col of the Fluela, and its two lakes ; on the south, the Schwarzhorn glacier with two more little tarns at its foot. Separated from it by some crags, was the far grander glacier of Grialetsch, descending from Piz Vadret. The long Dischma Thal, leading up to the Scaletta Pass, was visible in its whole extent, stretching down to the Davos Thal.

The sky was perfectly cloudless ; not a fleck or vapour dimmed the heavens, and the panorama was magnificent. No near mountains narrowed the horizon, except on the north-east, where Piz Linard and his neighbours, around the Silvretta Glacier, formed a conspicuous group. To the right of the Piz Linard, we looked over a great part of the Unter Engadine, dotted with fields and villages, amongst which our guide pointed out the castle of Tarasp. Beyond it was the white group of the Oetzthaler Firner, and south of these, visible over the nearer summits, range after range stretched away into the Tyrol as far as the eye could reach. Then came the grand Ortler Spitze ; and the mountains around Livigno,

which we had seen so well from the Casana, again claimed our admiration. Over the col of the Scaletta, and, as it seemed, enframed between Piz Vadret and Piz Ketsch, the long range of the Bernina glowed in the sunshine. This view of it is more perfect, and I think more beautiful, than that from Piz Languard. Every summit from Piz Cambraera to the Monte del Oro stood out before us. On the left, the pure snow-slopes of Piz Palu and Piz Zuppo, with the dark pyramid of Piz Languard thrown forward in strong relief against them; in the centre, the Bernina Spitze, towering supreme, with Morteratsch and Roseg in close attendance; and beyond these the twin peaks of the Schwestern and other ice-clad summits above the Roseg Glacier, continued the range round to Monte del Oro and the Disgrazia.

North of Piz Ketsch, the Piz d'Err and Piz Aela above Bergun, formed a foreground to the mountains south of the Hinter Rhein, which spread out in wild confusion. Then the summits of the, as yet, little visited Bunder Oberland, stretched round in a long line of ice and rocks, to the snowy mass of the Dodi.

Far, far away to the west, the well-known form of Monte Rosa, tinged with a golden hue, claimed our acquaintance, clearly defined against the horizon.

Further north rose the many heads of the Bernes Oberland, amongst which we soon recognized the Wetterhorn, Finsteraarhorn, and the Jungfrau, with its silvery satellite, brilliantly reflecting the sunshine. To the right of the Dodi, we could plainly recognise the jagged pinnacles amidst which we had crossed by the Segnes Pass, with the flat-topped Glarnisch rising behind them. The long range of snowy peaks, terminated by the Calanda, gradually sank down into the deep hollow in which Lake Wallenstadt lies hidden. In the background were the mountains of Appenzell; to the north-east the range of the Voralberg stretched away into the blue horizon, while in the foreground, the chain of the Rhœtikon, extending to the Silvretta Glacier, completed a panorama, which is probably one of the most beautiful in the Alps.

We remained nearly two hours on the top, employing part of the time in raising a Steinman. Previous visitors had provided a strong milk pail, with a close fitting cover, to receive our names, which a leaf out of my pocket-book enabled me to add to the list. Couttet distinguished his own signature as 'le premier guide de Chamonix qui a passè par ce pays.'

Meantime our guide, who during the ascent was

evidently tired, had thoughtlessly fallen asleep in the sun. When Couttet roused him to return, the man seemed bewildered, but tried to get up, then staggered, and fell back apparently fainting. Our predicament might have been very unpleasant, but happily a little brandy remained in the flask; with this Couttet rubbed his forehead and moistened his lips, which revived the poor fellow, and in ten minutes he was able to descend with us.

We were only an hour in returning to the Fluela path, keeping more over the glacier than we had done in ascending, in order to avoid the loose rocks.

Two and a half hours brought us to the Tschuggen Inn, where we found that we were expected; the people seemed greatly pleased to hear that the view had been so fine, for they had evidently feared that we had started too late in the day to do full justice to their mountain. After satisfying our hunger with some luncheon which they had prepared for us, we started in a 'berg-wagen' to rattle down the remainder of our way to the Davos Thal.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## THE DAVOS AND SERTIG THALS

THE district known as the Davos Thal is an open sunny valley, which, notwithstanding an elevation of upwards of 5,000 feet, enjoys a genial climate during six months of the year. Even in winter its rich, spreading pastures are not overshadowed by the neighbouring heights, which rise gradually in gentle slopes on either side.

It is about eighteen miles long, stretching from north-east to south-west, and is watered throughout by the Landwasser, which issues from the Davos See at its upper extremity, and after passing Glaris, enters a wild gorge, whence it forces its passage amidst contracting rocks, overleaping every obstacle in its way to join the Albula below Filisur. On the east, the valley is enclosed by mountains and glaciers, separating it from the Engadine, with which it communicates by the Fluela and Scaletta passes. To the



south-east the Sertig Thal leads to a mountain path, skirting the base of the Hoch Ducan, by which Bergun may be reached through the Stulzer Thal. On the west, the range of the Plessur intervenes between the Davos Thal and Chur, enclosing a region at present little traversed. The only pass on this side is the Strela, which mounts the ridge immediately behind the new 'Gast Haus.' It requires about two hours to reach the summit of the col, from which there is a fine view ; during the remainder of the journey the path winds along the mountain sides, high above the bed of the stream, and a long descent through the Schalfick Thal leads down to Chur, in about eight hours' walking from Am Platz. The valley is accessible from Alvenu only by a rough car road, which skirts the rocky and steep hill side above the windings of the Landwasser. It is much exposed to the 'ground avalanches,' which seem to be particularly dangerous in this district. After the winter storms, the way is frequently rendered impassable between Alvenu and the portion of the road known as 'Die Zuge,' below the hamlet of Glaris. Above Am Platz, an excellent carriage road, only recently completed, leads past the 'See,' and over the low pass of the Stutze to Klosters.

Early tradition alludes to this valley as a wild and

almost unknown region. Its name, Davos, signifies *behind*, and is said to have originated with some adventurous Alpine hunters in the service of the Baron von Patz. These men penetrated beyond the rocky barriers which shut in these highlands, and on their return home they described its position to their lord, by the expression afterwards used to designate the whole district. History to some extent confirms this tradition, and the older records of the country account for the absence of all remains of ancient strongholds by saying, that a Baron von Patz bestowed the territory upon a certain Amtmann Wilhelm and his followers, free from tribute or feudal service, on condition that he settled in the wilderness, and brought it into cultivation. It is certainly true that no feudal fortresses arose to overawe the people, whose strongest fastnesses have ever been the mighty mountain ramparts with which nature has guarded them.

In 1436, Davos became the centre of the league of the 'Zehn Gerichten,' and when in 1471 the three 'Bunden' united under the general name of the Graubunden (or Grisons), it was the seat of government, alternately with Chur and Ilanz. In 1526, an edict was promulgated from Davos, by which religious freedom was declared, and the Reformed

doctrines were established on a sure foundation. A Protestant church was then built, and gradually, without external constraint, two thirds of the people attached themselves to it. In after years, the intervention of Rome produced miserable discord, and the country became the scene of long and desolating wars, during which it was overrun with foreign armies. Its freedom was not effected until 1641; when Austria had enough upon her hands in Germany, and was satisfied to yield her pretensions to supremacy in the Unter Engadine and Graubunden. Since that time her power has never been re-established in the old Rhætian land.

When the Bund thus became free, Davos, in acknowledgment of its tried and unfailing fidelity, occupied the first position in its councils, and in 1644, it was chosen as the place of meeting for the confederation; as the guardian of its banners, and the keeper of its archives; with the right of nominating the banner-bearer, subject to the approbation of the Bund.

In 1814, the Graubunden joined the general confederation of the Swiss Cantons, and the seat of government was permanently removed to Chur; but the remembrance of the former importance of Davos is still cherished, and in July, 1836, a festival of two

days was held in the valley, to commemorate the four hundredth anniversary of the league of the 'Zehn Gerichten.'

The inhabitants of this beautiful valley are an opulent people for their class. Formerly many were occupied in the wine traffic with the Valtelline, or in the uncertain but profitable employment of wood-cutting; now both sources of gain are greatly diminished;—mines also, which were formerly worked in the mountains are left unproductive; the occupations of the people are therefore purely pastoral, and their wealth consists in the abundance of their cattle, and the richness of their farm produce. The climate is too cold, and the summers are generally too uncertain to ripen grain, with the exception of barley, which we saw in the lower part of the valley; potatoes, and other root crops also come to perfection.

Our impressions of Davos and its people were formed under the most favourable influences. On Thursday morning the weather was again magnificent, and it was early decided that my husband's proposed fishing should give place to a more distant excursion. We had, meantime, improved our acquaintance with Herr Gnädig, our host 'Zum Strela,' and had discovered that he was a cousin of the

owner of the inn at Pontresina. The Gnädigs seem to be a flourishing family, scattered throughout these valleys, for another relative has an hotel at Chur. Our host formerly kept the old 'Rath Haus,' from which he moved last spring to his present much improved position. As a 'Curhaus,' it is intended to induce visitors to make a lengthened sojourn, while taking a course of the 'petit laid' (or goat's whey), the virtues of which must be much enhanced by the pure mountain air in which it is administered.

Gnädig is a man of considerable possessions as a farmer in the valley; he was quite pleased to make the beauties of his country known to English visitors, and when we consulted him as to the pleasantest way of spending our last day in the mountains without fatigue, he recommended an excursion up the Sertig Thal, and proposed to drive one of the 'berg-wagen' himself. Couttet gave us a hint that the sick-looking man, who was the only other visitor in the house, would be gratified by an invitation to accompany us, so he was asked to occupy a spare seat by the side of the driver of the second 'wagen,' and we started about ten o'clock, prepared for a day's enjoyment.

We found that the good road came speedily to an end below the village, whence it is a rough car

track down to Alvenu and Tiefencasten. A continuation of the new road is promised, and Gnädig said that he hoped that the plan would be carried out within two years; but the steep rocky slopes have an evil repute from their exposure to avalanches, and the work must be one of difficulty and danger.

Immediately below Am Platz the country bore witness to the destructive power of the dreaded mountain torrents; the surface for about a quarter of a mile was entirely destroyed, torn up into deep channels, and buried beneath rocky *débris*, over which a temporary track had been made; many houses had been overwhelmed, and several yet remained where the inhabitants could have no feeling of security amidst their tottering walls.

Our way turned to the left up a picturesque side valley, just as Frauenkirche appeared in the distance before us. The church there was in former days attached to a nunnery, whence the name of the hamlet is derived. Its position is so exposed to avalanches that the building is formed like a wedge, presenting its acute angle to the mountain side from which the danger threatens. In the turn of the road, below the point where we left it, a kind of terrace was formed upon the sloping, sunny bank above the stream which flows from the Sertig Thal; it was

divided into narrow strips of garden cultivation, and here we saw barley ready for the sickle, looking almost golden in the sunshine. Gnädig told us that such a season had not been known for years, and that the hay crop, for which the Sertig Thal is renowned, had been unusually fine; then, alluding to the coming exhibition of 1862 in London, he told us that he intended to send some of the produce of these pastures as a specimen of Swiss hay, and that he hoped we should recognise the square packages in which it would be exhibited. Such a plan is certainly a curious illustration of the effect of railway communication in bringing these hidden corners into light, and producing union of interest between those who are far severed in every day life. The whole drive was extremely pretty, up a richly wooded and fertile valley, with a bright noisy stream rushing over the rocks. At one point, a saw mill occupied a most picturesque position, and wood cutting appeared still to afford full employment to the people, whose homes were scattered along the banks where the car road followed the windings of the water. Higher up, the Thal opened out into beautiful pastures, dotted with groups of châteaux, which are occupied only during the short summer. The people here are all Protestants, and the hamlet

of Dorfli possesses a little church, which is served five or six times during the Alpine season by the pastor of Frauenkirche. A bend in the mountain-side leads up to a still more secluded corner, which is well described by its local name, 'Hinter den Ecken.' Here the head of the valley is closed by a grand wall of rugged rocks, over which the young stream leaps down in a very beautiful and broken fall of great height. Fir trees spring from the precipices on either side, and the slopes around are clothed with the Alpine roses, which must be most lovely in the early summer. Above the fall the huge bare rocks of the Hoch Ducan raise their heads; the scene being altogether one of combined grandeur and beauty well worthy of a visit.

At the last châteaux, the horses were taken out of the 'wagen' to rest, while we wandered about, looking at the fall from all sides, and gathering roots of pretty ferns and mosses to take home as a remembrance of our last day among the mountains. Gnädig proposed to show the 'junger Herr' a way over the rocks at the head of the gully, whence the stream makes its first spring. My husband joined the party, while my friend and I climbed a shady knoll, where a pleasant hour was spent during the heat of mid-day, in getting a sketch of the ravine and waterfall.



The gentlemen returned much pleased with their further walk, which had led them up to the wild rocky Hoch Ducan Thal, where, skirting the base of the Krachen Horn, a track leads over a col in front, to the Stulzer Thal and Bergun, which may be reached in about three hours from this point. As they were winding along the mountain-side, Gnädig being a little in advance, he saw a chamois perched on a crag, high over their heads; before he could turn to direct the attention of his companions to this unexpected apparition, the shy animal had taken the alarm, and vanished from sight.

Instead of turning to the Hoch Ducan Thal, a way to the left may be taken to the Kuhalp, the highest of these mountain pastures, where the cows are not always secure from the unacceptable visits of the primitive inhabitants of these wilds. Gnädig told us that two seasons ago, a bear and two cubs had been killed among the rocks above, after doing serious mischief among the cattle. The Kuhalp Thal leads to the Sertig Pass, whence the Scaletta Pass may be joined at the head of the Val Sulsanna. By keeping to the right after crossing the col of the Sertig, the lakes of Raveisch are passed, and a well-used path leads down the Val Tuors to Bergun. This is a longer, but probably a finer route than that by the Stulzer Thal.

Gnädig was very anxious to be assured that the 'Herr' was pleased, and that he admired the scenery of the secluded corner, to which he had brought us. When this was explained to my husband, he had no difficulty in assuring our friend that it was 'sehr schön,' an expression which seemed perfectly satisfactory.

Our homeward drive was warm, but very pleasant, and the views were lovely as we trotted quickly down the narrow but good road, that creeps round the mountain-side, just above the river. It surprised us to find that the summer communication with these Alpine valleys is sufficiently important to induce the people each year to restore, and in many parts to re-make, a good car road, which is always partially destroyed by the storms of winter, or the floods of early spring.

After our return to the 'Curhaus,' at our host's particular request, an entry was made in his book, both in German and English, describing my son's ascent of the Schwarzhorn, which Gnädig is anxious to make known, as an object to attract visitors to the Davos Thal. We found an excellent dinner provided for us; indeed, the cuisine here deserves to be mentioned as unusually good; a new pudding was served to us (peculiar, we were told, to the country),

which might be added with effect to a bill of fare at home, as '*Œufs emballés, à l'Engadine.*'

After dinner we walked up through Dorfi, to the margin of the 'See' which we skirted for some distance, and then spent half an hour upon a projecting knoll, commanding a very pretty view in both directions.

It was a lovely evening, and the last glow of the setting sun was fading from the Tinzen Horn, before the chill air warned us to retrace our steps down the valley. Again as we approached Am Platz, we admired its picturesque position, and many were the regrets expressed, that the limits of our holiday did not allow a longer stay amidst scenes of such varied attraction.

## CHAPTER XVII.

## THE PRATIGAU

OUR sojourn at Davos, was a most happy conclusion to our rambles through the Grisons, and left us nothing but most pleasing remembrances of life among the mountains. When all was ready for our departure, at six o'clock on Friday morning, we began our journey without any anticipations of pleasure in rejoining the ordinary stream of travel in the valley of the Rhine.

The sun shone softly on mountain and glacier as we passed upwards to the Davos See, which lay before us, a bright, sparkling mirror, reflecting the surrounding scenery in its clear waters.

The account given in 'Murray' of a portion of the road down the Pratigau had prepared us for a rough and perhaps uncomfortable journey, but Gnädig assured us that we were mistaken, and that the new road was completed throughout the whole

length of the valley. He had provided two einspanners for our conveyance at least as far as Kublis, where others might possibly be found to take us on to Ragatz. In case of need, however, he was to rést for half an hour, and complete the whole distance himself. Gnädig again drove our calèche, and enlivened us with his conversation and local information. One of his remarks amused me much, as showing the effective use that may be made of very limited knowledge of a language, when judiciously applied! My husband had evidently made a very favourable impression upon our host, which he thus explained 'Er ist ein guter Herr; er ist immer zufrieden; er sagt immer, schön, sehr schön!'

The pass between the district of Davos and the Pratigau is of no great elevation; the highest villages are St. Wolfgang and Ober Laret, situated on the slopes by which the road crosses the wooded ridge of the Stutze; below, Unter Laret is seen to the left, with the little Schwarze See, whose waters take a downward course to the north, and swell the stream of the Lanquart near Klosters.

The descent, by an excellent road, winds rapidly down the mountain-side, giving beautiful views of the Pratigau, and of the range of peaks and glaciers which encircle its upper extremity. This range is

distinguished as the Silvretta, and, like the Bernina on a smaller scale, is rather a group than a single mountain, where dark rocks and pinnacles rise up from a vast expanse of ice, amidst which the great Silvretta glacier, divided into two branches, occupies the prominent place.

Until within the last few years the interior of this mountain wilderness was unknown. Professor Theobald appears to have been among the first to explore it, and he gives an interesting account of his visits to this ice-world in the years 1856 and '57. On the first occasion the Professor, with a friend, started early in the morning from Klosters, and ascended by the Alps Parden and Novai to one of the sources of the Lanquart.

Above the huts of Sardasca, the valley separates into two branches on the north. The stream from the Silvretta Alp rushes down in a remarkable fall; to the south, are perpendicular rocky terraces, upon which an arm of the Silvretta glacier rests. By following the course of a brook, and skirting ancient moraines, which show the decrease of the great glacier, its margin was reached in an hour and a half from the huts. Its surface was crevassed and dangerous; considerable détours were necessary in order to cross it, and the high point of the Silvretta

Rothhorn was not attained without difficulty. The further height of the Silvretta Horn proved inaccessible, and the travellers returned over the glacier to the ridge of Winterthali; then crossed a very steep ice-flat to the rocks of the Kramerkopfe, and found their way through grand ice scenery, below the Schwarz Horn, to the gloomy Verstanka Thal, whence they returned the same evening to Klosters.

Late in August in the following year, Professor Theobald started again, accompanied by two friends and a chamois hunter from Klosters, and on this occasion they slept at the shepherds' huts at Sardasca. A violent storm during the night threatened to interfere with the intended journey, but the morning proved cloudless, and at daybreak the party started to pioneer a new track, which should bring them out on the Fermont pass, between the Voralberg, and Guarda in the Unter Engadine. After crossing the moraine, they quickly reached the Silvretta glacier, where formidable crevasses and the soft state of the snow made the use of ropes prudent; several immersions proving the need of such precautions. After long circuits and great exertions, a rocky ridge was gained between the Silvretta and Mittelhorn. In front, the conical head of Piz Buin obstructed all distant view, but on the west the eye ranged over

the Sardona glacier to the Dodi. Immediately around, ice and snow were mingled in their wildest grandeur, pierced by masses of dark and red streaked rock, which seemed to have forced their rugged teeth upwards, and now lifted their heads into the blue heavens. The frontier line of Switzerland runs through the centre of this wilderness. After crossing this imaginary barrier, the descent became rapid and easy, over uncrevassed ice, to the rocks immediately below Piz Buin. Here the party stopped to recruit and rest, and saw many chamois on the mountain-sides around. To the north the Fermont pass climbed over rocks and glacier, descending beyond the Ochsen and Fermont Thals. Our travellers followed its southern course, still through the wildest scenery, and after a very steep descent they reached the moraine, and soon found themselves upon the green pastures of Val Tuoi, down which they passed to the village of Guarda. The Professor speaks of this day's excursion as most exciting and full of enjoyment.

Having thus for a few minutes lifted the veil from the hidden beauties of the Silvretta, we will, before we descend to the valley of the Pratigau, trace the long line of the Rhætikon, which forms its northern boundary, separating Switzerland from the Voralberg.



This range of rocky summits rises above the richly wooded slopes which énclose the Pratigau, and reaches its greatest height and grandeur, where the glaciers and snowy crown of the Scesa Plana give brilliancy to the outline; then, stretching away to the west, the Falkniss stands as an outwork above the valley of the Rhine.

The rich and fertile Pratigau, or, 'valley of meadows,' was outspread before us as we drove down into Klosters, which is situated at its head. Beech and maple trees now dressed the lower slopes, varying the sombre tints of the 'nâdel holz' to which we had been so long accustomed. The Lanquart, which unites the streams from the Sardasca and Veraina Thals, waters the valley, and often causes great devastation when, after overflowing its banks, it retires, leaving a wilderness of sand and stones, where fertile fields, or productive gardens had flourished.

Besides the many villages which are found near the course of the river, as well as on the terraced mountain-sides, the whole valley is studded with comfortable farm-houses, and buildings for storing the abundant hay and other products of the land, which is highly cultivated. Fruit trees and spade-husbandry bear testimony to the industry of the

people, who are a thriving, good-looking race. The cows of the Pratigau are said to be unrivalled throughout Switzerland for their size and beauty.

After passing through Klosters, where the road crosses to the right bank of the stream, the large village of Sernens is seen lower down on the opposite side. In the immediate vicinity is a sulphur spring, and a bath-house, where the accommodation is said to be of the usual character. Saas is a large and picturesque village, with substantial and comfortable houses, many of them with long and quaint German inscriptions upon their walls. The inhabitants of Saas acquired great and enduring fame in the wars of 1621, when, believing themselves inspired by a heavenly vision, they commenced a successful resistance to the Austrian tyranny under which their land was groaning. The Austrians were aided by the religious animosities of the people; the Roman Catholics being led by Rudolf von Planta and the Bishops of Chur, whose united forces were heroically resisted by the Pratigans under Rudolf de Salis, the head of one of the principal families in the valley. Goaded beyond endurance by their oppressors, the people burst forth from their mountain hiding places. Armed with scythes, and spears of their own manufacture, they drove their enemies out of

the Pratigau, besieged them in Chur, and compelled the Austrian general to retreat.

In the following year, the Austrians poured over the mountain passes from the Voralberg with embittered hatred, and the Pratigau again overflowed with foreign troops, which the bands led by De Salis in vain endeavoured to withstand. A battle was fought near Saas, which is celebrated for the heroic self-devotion of thirty of the people, who sacrificed their lives to cover the retreat of their friends. These miserable conflicts continued with varying results, the country meanwhile remaining wasted and desolate, until the French intervention in favour of the Protestants in 1635; and in 1641 its freedom was finally accomplished. The remains of many old castles mark the strongholds of despotism, and the scenes of fierce encounters between the people and their oppressors.

Kublis was the next village; and here, as there were no conveyances to carry us onward, Gnädig proposed to stop for half an hour to refresh his horses, while we amused ourselves by examining the curious old buildings, which would afford endless pretty bits for the sketch book. A hasty portrait was taken of an ancient house, close to the road, much to the amusement of a group of women and

children who collected to watch the process; their interest was further excited by seeing me copy an inscription from the front of the 'Posthaus,' and then hearing their well-known words read out of my little book. As a specimen of the religious character of the people, indicated by such external tokens, this inscription has considerable interest:—

Der Grund auf den ich baue, ist Christus und sein Heil,  
 Er schenkt, da ich ihm traue, mir stets das beste Theil.  
 Mag den im Sturm der Zeiten die ird'sche Hüll' vergehen,  
 Das Haus für Ewigkeiten im Himmel bleibt mir stehen.

Just beyond Kublis a mountain torrent rushes down into the valley. A path up the wooded opening through which it descends may be followed to the Alpine village of St. Antonien, from which several mountain ways diverge across the range to the north. The whole district is greatly exposed to avalanches, and is consequently dangerous during the early summer. Below this, the valley contracts almost to a pass, through which the river is seen hurrying on its way. The new road crosses to its southern bank, high above which the castle of Strahlegg, with its sister fortress of Luzcin on the opposite hills, formerly commanded the district around. A narrow mountain road here leads up to the village and baths of Fideris, situated in a wild

and romantic ravine. The waters are alkaline, and resemble the famed Seltzer spring: they are in great repute, and the baths are much frequented by the Swiss. Keeping on the banks of the river we reached Jenatz, where a telegraph station and the commencement of a line of high poles announced our near approach to busy life. Again the river was crossed before reaching Schiers, where the valley widened, and as we approached, Grusch shewed sad traces of the mischievous career of the overflowing water at a very recent period. The old houses at Grusch were most remarkable for their size and unusual style of decoration: curiously carved eaves were pendent from roofs of great height, many being further adorned with peaked towers or cupolas. Gnädig drew up the carriage in front of one of the largest of these old mansions, nominally to give his horses some bread, but his object seemed to be to shew us the interior of the house, formerly the residence of the De Salis family. It is now partially fitted as an inn, and is occupied by his sister-in-law, whom he called the 'Maman Gnädig,' and to whom he introduced us. The general appearance of the house was gloomy, but its pride was one room upstairs, which has been most carefully preserved in its original beauty, and is now fitted up as a bedroom

for guests. It is richly adorned with wood carvings, the ceiling being in panels with elegant pendants, and bordered by a delicately carved cornice. The doors had richly carved architraves, with the De Salis arms in perfect preservation, bearing the date 1687. A highly decorated armoire, or press, stood against the wall, in keeping with the other fitments of the room; but the most remarkable part of the furniture was a very handsome stove, made of delicate white and blue earthenware. Its sides, in compartments, were ornamented with delineations of biblical scenes from the Old Testament, illustrated by their appropriate texts in the old German character. This must, in its day, have been considered a wonderful work of art, which may account for the care with which it has been preserved. In a room occupied as a family sleeping room, the centre of the ceiling was composed of another carving of the De Salis arms, which had originally been richly adorned with colour and gilding. Remains of old carving formed handsome doors to cupboards and presses. A very good specimen was used in this way in a stone-vaulted room below, which now served as a store room and shop for flour. Gnädig seemed much gratified by our admiration of these family treasures, which were well worth a visit.

On a projecting rock above Grusch, are the shattered walls of the ancient fortress of Solavers, which stood at the entrance of the gorge of Sewiss, through which a mountain stream finds an outlet to join the Lanquart. A path leads up to the valley of Sewiss, which is prettily situated on the terraced hill side, surrounded by cultivated land and meadows; here the De Salis family still possess a large but uninhabited château. Above the village the way winds up through woods, where the maple, ash, beech, and other trees mingle their foliage with the dark green of the pine, and the 'song of mountain streams' is heard in the depths below. High beyond this ravine the valley divides into two branches. To the west it is called the Sanever Thal, where in former days, a much frequented bath-house was attached to a famed sulphur spring. Now the buildings are in ruins, and the neighbouring village of Sturvis has disappeared. To the east, the wooded Valser Thal lies below the châtlet-dotted Alps of the Fanaser, and in front, the snowy head of the Scesa Plana, called by Professor Theobald the 'Queen of the Rhodtikon,' rises above its rocky battlements. The easiest but most circuitous approach to the Scesa Plana is by the Valser Thal, and over the high col of the Cavelljoch to the Luner See; from whence the ascent

is said not to be difficult. The Professor chose the shorter but much steeper course, following the centre track by the stream, up the Steigtobel, to the Alpine pastures and huts of Palu, where the shepherds gave him a night's lodging on the hay.

The traveller should start before daybreak the next morning, and turning to the left, keep up the rocks by a very rough, stony ascent to the higher ridge, which forms a breastwork on this side, concealing the glacier. Alternately passing over snow and rocks, which require great caution, and an experienced climber, but present no real danger, the glacier is reached, where it shows a vast expanse of uncrevassed ice, which must be crossed to the foot of the peak itself; the rest of the ascent is safe, but very rough. When the summit is gained, the previous labour is amply repaid to those who can spend an hour in gazing upon a far spreading scene of beauty, embracing much that has not met the eye in any previous panorama amongst the Alps. To the north, rugged cliffs sink perpendicularly down to broken glacier-slopes, beyond which the view ranges over the Voralberg to the fair expanse of the Boden See, better known in England as Lake Constance. Its shores are seen studded with towns and villages, while upon its bright surface the unassisted eye



tracks the passage of the steamboat, by its long, light wreath of curling smoke. The whole land of Swabia is traced as upon a map, and with a good telescope the cathedral of Ulm can be distinguished. To the east, bold rocky terraces and glacier-slopes are enclosed by grey mountain summits, forming a deep basin, where the tranquil water of the deep blue Luner See, reposes under the shelter of the crags, to which it serves as a mirror. The horns and glaciers of the Silvretta group blend with the further ranks of the Engadine and Tyrol. More to the south, the Bernina is recognised as the Monarch of the Rætian Alps, raising its brilliant crest beyond the ranges of the Albula and Oberhalbstein. Withdrawing the mind from things above, and descending to the level of ordinary life, the busy hand of man may be traced in the course of the railway, which traverses the valley of the Rhine to Chur. Thence again, stretching upwards to the west, the eye wanders in a maze of mountains, towards the St. Gothard, and includes the Dodi as a prominent feature in its range. A glimpse is caught of Lake Wallenstadt, through a break in the rocky wall by which it is enclosed, and beyond lies Zurich, with a rich background formed by the Alps of Appenzell.

The return from the Scesa Plana may be varied in descending to the Luner See. The safest course is by the Todten Alp, on which side Professor Theobald describes this mountain 'as accessible to everyone,' although apparently wild and steep. From the See, a mountain way to the north leads down to Blundenz, in the Voralberg; to the south, the track over the Cavelljoch will bring the traveller back by the Valser Thal to Sewiss, and the high road down the Pratigau.

Below Grusch the valley again contracts, and the road gradually approaches the margin of the river, which foams and chafes in its narrow channel, hemmed in by dark, towering rocks, which draw close together on either side. This is the extraordinary natural portal called the Clus, which encloses the beauties of the smiling Pratigau from the heedless traveller up the broad valley of the Rhine. The ruins of the old castle of Fragstein crown the rocks above the road on the right, and the remains of a connecting wall cling to the face of precipices, whose natural defences appear to defy all passage to an invader. The Pratigans worthily upheld their old repute for indomitable bravery, when in 1799, the French tried to force the passage of the Clus, and were successfully repulsed; the valley, however, did

not escape their inroads. While its defenders were resting in comparative security, their active enemies scaled the steep mountain-sides above the barrier, and unexpectedly appeared in overwhelming numbers in the rear of the Pratigau force.

How great was the change when we emerged from this grand and gloomy passage, into the dust and glare of the wide valley, down which it was now only an hour's drive to Ragatz! The country looked unusually desolate, owing to the great inundations of July, when the Rhine had destroyed its embankments, forced out new channels, and partially retired, leaving a melancholy deposit of sand and stones over the meadows and orchards which it had invaded and destroyed. After passing the railroad and the river at Zollbruche, we found that the road had been in some places quite carried away, and was only temporarily restored.

The journey had proved much shorter than we anticipated, having been easily and pleasantly accomplished in six hours from the time we left Am Platz. With the exception of the first hour's drive, to the ridge at the head of the Davos Thal, it had been a continuous descent down a beautiful road, where our one-horse conveyances had answered as well as more pretentious vehicles would have done. In reversing

the journey, it would of course be desirable to have a carriage with a pair of horses, to face the hills.

Ragatz has now become a centre of fashionable resort, from Germany particularly ; and the principal hotel has more than doubled its original size. Those who enjoy mixing in a crowd, will find it a comfortable resting-place ; we sighed under the change from the pure air of the mountains, to the oppressive atmosphere which here seemed to encircle us, although we were told that the temperature had cooled wonderfully within the last few days.

. There is much fine scenery along the course of the Tamina, and in the mountains behind Ragatz, but it is too well known to require more than a passing notice. The extraordinary natural features of the grand gorge of Pfeffers, and its seething spring, must ever remain unaltered, but it has been made so accessible, that its horrors have vanished, and the impression left upon the imagination is much lessened.

We had telegraphed to Zurich and received a reply promising us rooms at the Hôtel Bauer (on the lake), and on Saturday morning the romance of travel was over when we found ourselves at the railway station, exposed to the discomforts of insufficient accommodation while waiting half an hour for the train from Chur. The carriages on this line are admir-

ably adapted for giving a passing glimpse of the country through which you are whirled, and some of the points of view are very striking as you skirt the margin of the lake Wallenstadt, or burrow through projecting headlands over its waters. There is now no choice of transit along the lake, for since the railroad from Wesen to Wallenstadt has been opened, the steamers which traversed it have been withdrawn. After giving a view up the lake from Rapperschwyl, the line makes a long inland detour to come round upon 'fair Zurich,' where the situation of the Hôtel Baur is most attractive. Its luxurious accommodation, and charming garden, make it a delightful resting-place for those who are satisfied with a distant view of the mountains, which bound the southern horizon with their delicately traced, ethereal outline.

How many here gaze, day after day, upon those snowy summits, and admire the changeful characters which they wear, in the variations of cloud and sunshine, without dreaming of the beauties which they enclose, or giving them a place among memory's 'pleasant pages!'

To us, those Alps of Glarus had the individuality and interest bestowed by personal acquaintance, and vivid remembrances of our recent wanderings. They

formed the first link in the chain, which, extending thence over mountain heights, and through secluded valleys, embraced the region round the Bernina in its winding course.

That beautiful Bernina! the centre around which our steps had circled with such enjoyment, was apparently unknown, even by name, among the numerous English travellers whom we found assembled at Zurich. A visit to Ragatz and Chur, perhaps extended to Tüsis and up the Via Mala, seemed the limits of their excursions, while the romantic valleys of Davos and the Pratigau, with the magnificent glacier scenery hidden amidst the eastern range of the Rætian Alps, appeared to be passed by unheeded, as either unattractive or inaccessible.

We had emerged from a region of which even the position was doubtful, and when we advised other people to follow our course, and explore its beauties, we were constantly met by the inquiry 'where is the Bernina?'

This question has been so often repeated since our return home that it has induced me thus to retrace our summer journey, in the hope that the answer which I have endeavoured to give may open new scenes of enjoyment to others. No attempt

has hitherto been made to direct attention to a district rich in natural beauties and historical associations, and the object of my present volume will be obtained, if it excites a wider interest in the Grisons and the Alpine nooks of the Valtelline. Its perusal may perhaps enable others to enjoy their numerous attractions, with the advantages of better previous information than we were able to obtain.

It must be remembered that in the remote valleys accommodation is very limited, and the fare will be found rough; therefore, travellers who suffer from such inconveniences should at present confine their visits to the more frequented places, which are reached by roads as good as any in Switzerland. St. Moritz, Samaden, and Pontresina, are centres from which the grandest scenes of the Engadine and Bernina are within reach of daily excursions. At Le Prese, pure mountain air is combined with the softer breezes of a southern aspect, and all the comforts of an excellent hotel; while the beauties of the Pratigau and Davos Thal are within an easy drive from Ragatz.

From the end of July to the second week in September is probably the best time for excursions among the high valleys around the Bernina. With

a season favourable for such wanderings, and a determination to make light of all minor miseries, I cannot imagine greater enjoyment than awaits the true lover of Alpine nature in this secluded, but most lovely district, of which I will say in conclusion

„Das Land ist schön, und gütig wie der Himmel.“

THE END.

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