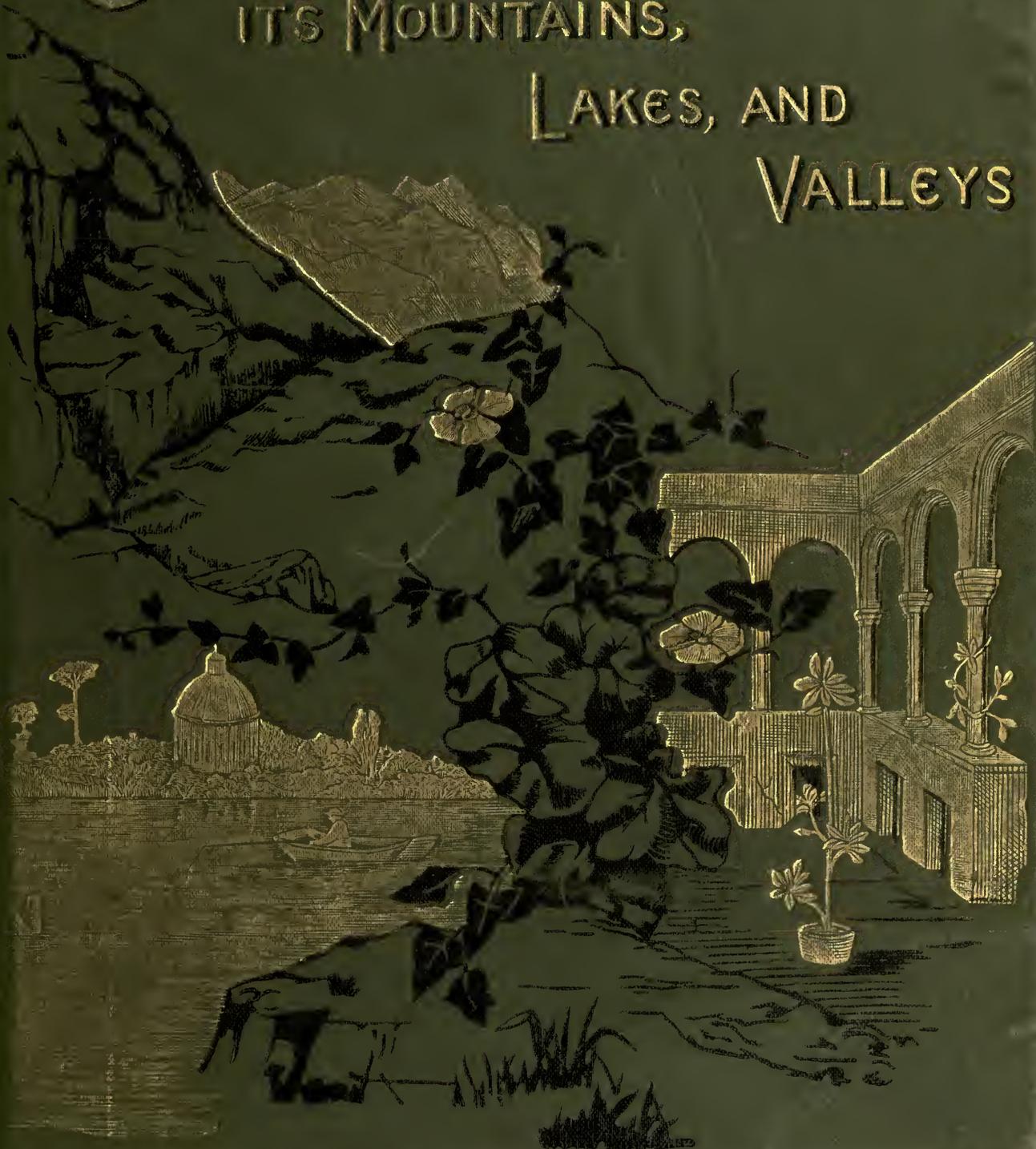


SWITZERLAND,

ITS MOUNTAINS,

LAKES, AND

VALLEYS



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SWITZERLAND.

SWITZERLAND

Its Mountains, Valleys, Lakes, and Rivers

WITH

TWO HUNDRED AND FIFTY ILLUSTRATIONS



New and Revised Edition



LONDON
WILLIAM GLAISHER
265, HIGH HOLBORN

1903

1034
31

The Bresham Press.
UNWIN BROTHERS, LIMITED,
LONDON AND WOKING.

TO THE
MANAGER



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SWITZERLAND.

CHAPTER I.

AWAY TO THE MOUNTAINS.



CHILLER exclaims exultantly, "Liberty dwells on the mountain-tops;" and according to him earthly perfection is to be found among the mountains. This love for mountains, of which the poets Ossian, Goethe, Schiller, and Scott, and a hundred others before and since, have constituted themselves the exponents—this longing to mount upwards—is innate in all the Teutonic and Celtic tribes, and is specially and peculiarly characteristic of them; a mystery which the devout man explains with simple eloquence when he says, "The Godhead is nearer to us on the mountain-top." Moreover, the Hebrew bard and king of old has taught us to look unto the hills, from whence the ancient historian Moses descended and brought down the tables upon which were written the fundamental principles of all human law.

When Schiller was but a boy, still stammering over his own dialect, he visited Switzerland, and listening to the legends, his eyes sparkling with admiring wonder, he imbibed the information which afterwards, like Sir Walter Scott's similar experience with the "tales of the Border," yielded so much pleasure to readers of all nations. Young Schiller would ask for the recitation of traditional legends and stories of the lives of the villagers. Then would follow many more questions and answers, until a whole panorama of Switzerland and Swiss life was unfolded by degrees; and when this was finished, poetry was not forgotten, and the willing Switzers would by turns relate the most wonderful tales and legends about the Felsenjungfrau

in the Simmenthal, and the burning heap at Zofingen, the Müseri-



GLACIER DES BOSSONS AND MONT BLANC.

fraeli in the Maiengrün, or the Heumütterli at Niederwil—from all



of which it was very evident that the people were bound up heart and



VALLEY OF ROSENLAUI, AND VIEW OF THE ENGELHOERNER AND WETTERHORN.

soul with their mighty mountains, and glaciers, and tall forests, and

that their senses had been brightened and sharpened by the contact. Then there were songs—some merry, some sad; and children's ditties, with such a lovely, charming jingle about them that little ears speedily caught them up, and the little boy would try, amid much laughter, to repeat them. But childhood is soon past and over! The boy left for his home, and the Switzers returned to theirs. And the result of these pleasant evenings was Schiller's play of *William Tell*. The fame of Switzerland's beauty has penetrated far and wide, and has been proclaimed aloud by enthusiastic poets and painters; from every quarter of the inhabited world, from every island, and from the other side of the ocean, they came, the confiding youths! And they found what they sought for—a land teeming with natural beauty of all sorts, in richest abundance and most glorious variety, a land where strength and sweetness are combined in a way not to be found elsewhere. Thus, for many a year past, Switzerland has been the Mecca of all lovers of nature, and will become so more and more, as long as the lakes sparkle and the meadows are green, and the everlasting mountains rear their snow-white heads to the clouds. Those who have never been there, long and struggle to go; but whoever has once breathed the air of the mountains, thenceforward feels his heart swell with home-sickness, and will return again and again to sojourn by the still waters or ascend the majestic heights where the heart is invigorated as well as cheered and refreshed by the pure charms and pleasures of nature. When the hard, dreary winter has come to an end, as soon as ever the last dirty snow has melted in the streets of the gloomy northern city, and the first primrose has been seen in the meadows without the gates, and the cherry-tree has put forth its first blossoms, then the invalid begins to breathe more freely. He hopes that the awakening zephyrs will bring some change to him as well as to the rest of the world; and then suddenly all the newspapers seem to speak words of comfort and encouragement to him, as they mention the names of all the beautiful places in Switzerland, which begin to put forth their attractions with the first spring birds. In the course of the new year now begun, he hopes that the use of their baths, the drinking of their medicinal waters, and the breathing of their pure air will help him to regain his health. His eye will probably fall first on Ragatz and Pfäfers, lovely places stationed beside the rushing Tamina, and fully worthy of the praise so freely bestowed on them. He may choose between St. Moritz, a verdant and charming lake-idyl in the Engadine,

and Tarasp-Schuls, the pearl of the River Inn, which lies magnifi-



GROUP OF SIBERIAN PINES.

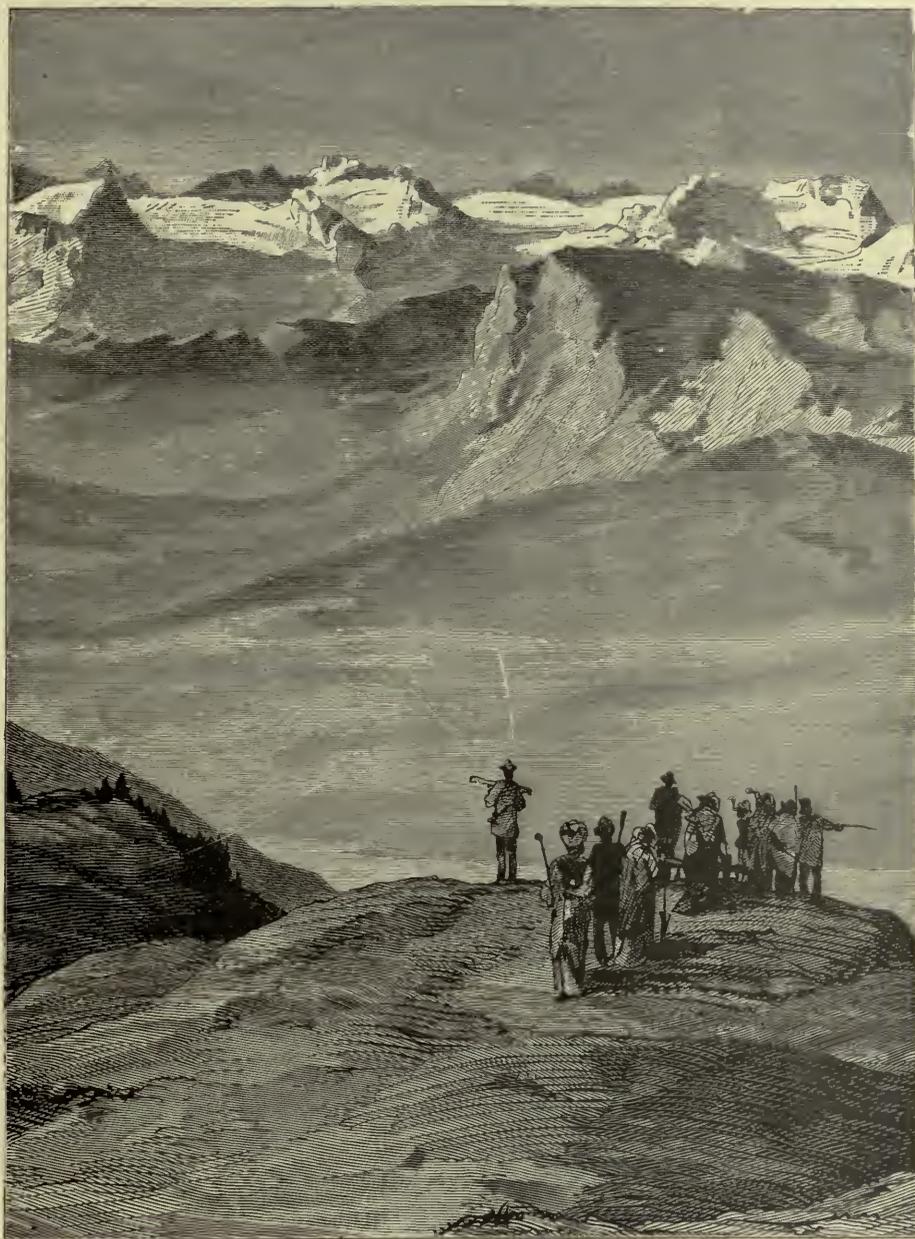
cently set between Alveneu and Leuk. Breaths of delicious air,

bringing promises of restored health, seem to be wafted to him from far-away Samaden, Davos, Klosters, Bellaggio, and Lugano. Or, if he does not wish to go so far, there are baths in pleasant proximity, which were famous in the time of the old Romans, such as Riedbad, which overflows with sociable gaiety, and Weissenburg, and the baths on the beautiful Lake Constance. But after all there is no place which surpasses the old Rigi; and the difficulty is how to choose when a hundred places beckon us in different directions. However, a learned medical adviser comes to the rescue, and, after carefully weighing the pros and cons, issues orders which the hopeful invalid is glad to obey, although they restrict him to some particular locality. But to the traveller, whose mind and body are both strong and healthy, "belongs the world in all its broad extent." Wherever he can find a footing, there is his kingdom; every road, every mountain, every lark in the air belongs to him. The farther he goes the farther he wishes to go; and when, at the end of a happy summer, he is brought to an unwelcome halt, it is only because time fails him and the purse has been gradually exhausted by hotel bills.

Long ages ago, the neighbouring Germans, Italians, and Frenchmen appointed certain members of their own respective races to be warders, and here at its foot they still dwell together like friends and brothers, and all alike claim ancient fellowship with Switzerland.

Gazing eastward from its glittering turrets, you can look far into Austrian territory and see how the Tyrolese mountains advance close to the very portal; but between Switzerland and Tyrol there is a rampart formed by the mighty torrent of the young Rhine. From this point the frontier line is coincident with the river, and passes through the lovely Bodensee, or Lake Constance; and if you look across its blue surface northwards you have German territory before you; while still farther on, the river Rhine again forms the northern boundary. Peaceable German and Swiss towns stand opposite one another on its banks; German tones and German songs resound equally from both sides of the river; nor do they die away until we reach the west, where the French tongue reigns predominant; for to the west lies that region, most favoured of the gods, which lies about the Lake of Geneva; and French is to be heard in all the neighbouring districts, though the inhabitants are all members of the Republic. Beautiful as a garden is the land into which the watchman on the frontier here gazes; but southwards, towards Italy, the towering peaks are again piled higher

and higher till they threaten to storm the heights of heaven. There



VIEW FROM THE RIGI.

the eternal glaciers gird the land closely in an indissoluble coat of mail; and the sentry points the gazer in one direction to the giant

battlements of the St. Bernard, the Dent d'Herens, the Matterhorn, and Monte Rosa ; and, in the other, to the proud walls of the Engadine highland, the wild beauty of the Bernina group, and on to the Peak of Ciavalatsch, the most advanced outpost on the eastern side.



CASTLE OF VUFFLENS, MORGES, ON THE LAKE OF GENEVA.

Many a messenger from the siren-land comes laden with greetings and caresses from sun and flowers, and strives to penetrate the rocky fortress in his desire to embroider the inflexible stone walls with the charming verdure and blossoms of the south. Italy tries to open the iron gates with the golden key of lovely Chiavenna : and soft, lulling

breezes, are wafted up to the watchmen from Mendrisio, Lugano,



THE ALTMANN.

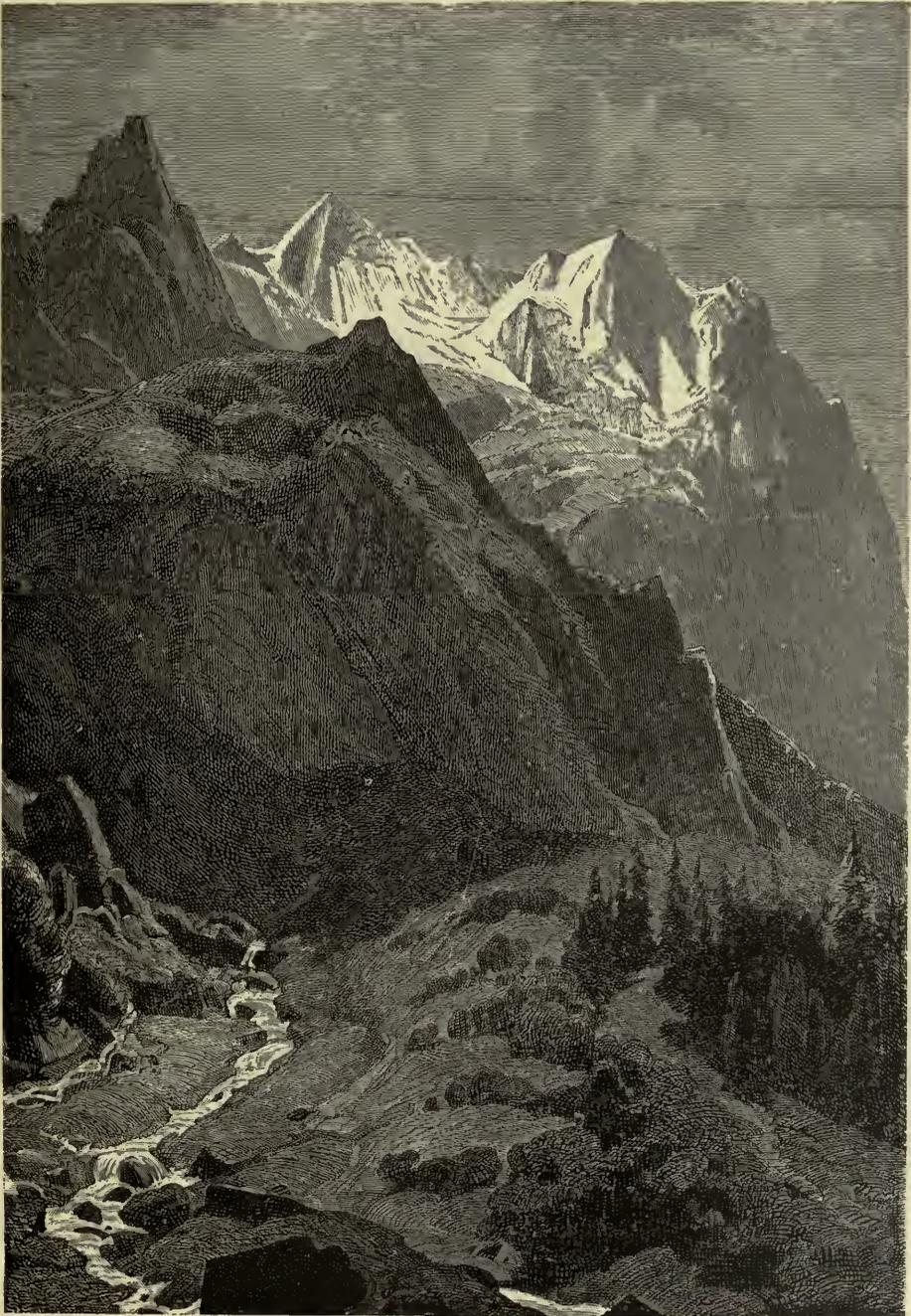
Locarno, and Bellinzona. But they are never off their guard ; and

although Italian is the language of the district, people are as glad here as they are on the borders of France to belong to the Confederation and to be free citizens of Switzerland.

Switzerland is about 230 English miles long from east to west. The green Jura constitute her less lofty bulwarks to the north, and extend from the borders of France to Lake Constance in several parallel lines; and her principal rampart is formed by the Central Alps opposite, which spring from French and Italian territory, and, after crossing the battlements of the Bernina and the mighty watch-tower of the St. Gotthard, where they tie themselves up into huge knots, they pass over into the Tyrol.

Between these two mountain-ranges—the Jura and the Central Alps—lies the largest valley to be found in the whole continent of Europe. It rises gently from the southern foot of the Jura to the northern foot of the Alps, and is as large as a small kingdom, but as highly cultivated as a lovely garden. In ancient times the waters rushed violently through it from the north side of the Alps, and the glaciers ploughed it up; and between them they shaped the furrow-like valleys we see at the present day, they piled up the hills, made the entire soil, and left behind them a legacy of wonderful fertility. The great valley is still intersected by innumerable streams and rivers; and these, together with its lovely lakes, have turned it into a *terra incantata*, an enchanted land, than which there is none more bewitching to be found in any quarter of the globe.

Nowhere else in the world does water assume such enchanting forms, and whether we see it in the shape of glaciers or eternal snow, fresh, gladsome springs, tumultuous rivers, dashing waterfalls, or quiet lakes, we feel that combined as it is with the fresh verdure of the meadows and the varied hues of the rocks, its charms are certainly more powerful here than anywhere else. To the west of this blooming region lies the Lake of Geneva, towards which hurry the mighty waters of the Rhone system. Then, in the east, we have Lake Constance, reposing in calm, grave beauty between her well-wooded pastoral shores, and surrounded by a hard-working, busy population. But, between these two, and winding in and out of the mountains and valleys, lie the lakes of Zurich and Zug and the Lake of the Four Forest Cantons, and perhaps best known as the Lake of Lucerne, the glorious Walensee, and farther west, Thun, Bienne and Neuchâtel. There they lie like a set of gems, sometimes looking dark, at others gleaming with blue and greenish gold; lending themselves in one



THE WETTERHORN AND WELHORN FROM ROSENLAUI.

place to the requirements of active trade, and in another setting

themselves to control the wild floods to which Alpine streams are subject in the spring-time. But about them all, one seems to hear the rustle of old, heroic legends, and the whisper of sweet woodland poetry; and if these fail, their place is occupied by various flourishing branches of industry, which look forth from smiling windows in many a pleasant spot. Far away from here, on the other side of the towering wall of Alps which seem to kiss the clouds, the waters of Lugano and Maggiore lie rippling at the base of the mountains on the frontier, and their shores are adorned with all the bewitching charms of the south.

But the great father of the whole, the primeval founder and originator of the Alps and of the whole country, is, beyond question, the vast mass of the St. Gotthard. The Bernese and Rhenish Alps to the north, the ranges of Valais and the Grisons to the south, lean against and spring from him, after the manner of colossal buttresses; and besides this they form the grand aqueducts through which his waters flow down into the surrounding country, and to all points of the compass, where they are known by the several names of the Ticino, the Reuss, the Rhone, and the Rhine. "This is the birth-place of rivers;" here these wild infants are nursed at the white bosom of the glaciers, and then leap down the fissured sides of the Alpine precipices to prove their strength and bring blessings, and sometimes ruin, upon the men who dwell in the plain below.

And thus, as we take a bird's-eye view of it, Switzerland lies beneath us, a wonderfully organized, self-contained whole, fortified on all sides; and if the contrast between it and all the surrounding countries seems to need explanation, we can only account for it on the principles which explain the presence of an island-mountain in the midst of the ocean.

The suitable clothing of the giant structure which Vulcan and Neptune had combined to rear was undertaken by Nature; and accordingly she and Death had a struggle for the mastery, which they pursued even up into the regions of everlasting ice; the one forever trying to quicken into life, the other forever seeking to destroy. Her success was, however, speedy enough in the hilly district in the centre, where the soft, well-watered soil soon brought forth magnificent trees and clothed itself with plants and shrubs. The meadows at once bloomed forth into rare beauty and luxuriance; and when man came upon the stage at a later period, it was mere sport for him to substitute the golden grain of Ceres for the wild grasses. The

thick, leafy woods gave place to orchards of fruit-trees, which now



THE REICHENBACH, ON THE WAY TO ROSENLAUI.

cover large surfaces of the country ; the wild brushwood sacred to Pan

gave way to the gladsome vine of Bacchus, and places which in ancient times produced nothing but dismal bog-weeds, are now converted into fragrant, blooming gardens, whose bright blossoms rejoice the traveller's eye.

Higher up among the mountains, where the more tender plants could not follow her, Nature was accompanied yet some distance farther on her way by the beautiful maple, the beech, the holly, the ivy, and the hawthorn; but, after that, she apportioned this region to the more hardy pines, which boldly and bravely struck their roots into the rocks, and pressed onward victoriously, till they reached an elevation of some 6,000 feet.

Life is a solemn matter to these trees, and their vesture is dark and solemn too in colour, like the rocks they are intended to clothe. Life with them is a solemn matter indeed, for the icy powers of destruction, which make a mock of life, have conspired together against them. Down from the heights above swoops the storm on its iron pinions, breaking their heads or tearing them to pieces in fierce delight, though their roots hold fast to their stony anchorage. In the spring, the avalanches dash down into their midst; a whole mountain-side slips down and subsides into a valley; wild torrents of water from melting snow and glaciers tear and tug at their stems, but they defy them all for many a century, and afford shelter to the human beings who dwell in the valleys below, while they send out the brave Siberian pine and the larch as their pioneers higher up the Alps. The poor, cowering dwarf-fir, which looks as if it were crawling upon all fours, makes its way to still greater heights, and is met with on the very verge of the empire of snow.

But these hardy climbers are not without charming and winsome little companions in the flowers which gladden their ruinous way, and exhibit a splendour and brilliant sweetness such as the degenerate blossoms of the lowlands know nothing of. Short is their spring and short, too, is their participation in the fair joys of existence; and therefore is it that they adorn themselves with all the beauty of the sun while they bathe their tiny leaves and roots in the cool snow-water. Look at the tufted blossoms which the gnarled, weather-beaten stem of the Alpine rose has put forth in honour of lovely spring, the gala season of the Alpine world; what a glorious veil of purple they have cast over the dark rock! Which of us gathered them for the first time to adorn his travelling-cap, without a thrill of triumphant delight?

The Alpine tourist loves the Alpine rose as dearly as the Alpine violet, with its lilac blossoms, and the gleaming white fairy-flowers of the edelweiss, which are in such great request. But though these three may be the best known, they are lost amid a profusion of other mountain flowers. In a life which is solitary to an almost pathetic degree, they come before us with a special charm; and as they grow on their lonely heights, are quite calculated to captivate the heart,



ALPINE FLOWERS.

not merely of the professional botanist, but of every true friend of Nature.

The lichen which grows on the bare peaks of the Jungfrau, in the kingdom of eternal frost, nearly 13,000 feet above the level of the sea, is called by the botanist, *Umbilicaria virginis*, and is the last sign of organic life to be met with.

Two powers are for ever wrestling with one another among the

Alps. Life struggles up from the green valleys beneath, and Death,



THE OBER-AAR GLACIER.

comes down from the heights above. Light and warmth are the

weapons of the one, and he fights by day and in the summer; the other wars by night and in the winter, and brings cold and darkness in his train. The kingdom of light has won a thousand victories, as is testified by the crumbling stones which lie, like the bleaching bones of the fallen, in the valleys and on the slopes, which were once ancient battle-fields, but are now clothed with kindly vegetation.



CLOUDS OF MIST IN THE MOUNTAINS.

Fresh victories are recorded every year, but the struggle will never cease.

The climate of Switzerland is most unfortunately variable. The spirits who manage matters in the clefts and hollows of the mountains up above are busy enough brewing *something* in the mist and darkness. What it is no one knows, but they make a wild piece of work sometimes—such, indeed, as none but the patient man can bear with equanimity. Those who forget to provide themselves with patience as well as with easy walking shoes, will have an uncomfortable journey; they will go on their way with downcast faces and gloomy thoughts, and will find nothing to please them even in the cheer-



A STORM IN THE MOUNTAINS.

ful bow-windowed room over the bean-garden. Oftentimes even Goethe's apparently true adage turns out to be false: "And when there has been rain enough, why; then it leaves off raining;" for often when there has been rain enough and to spare for weeks past, it still will not leave off.

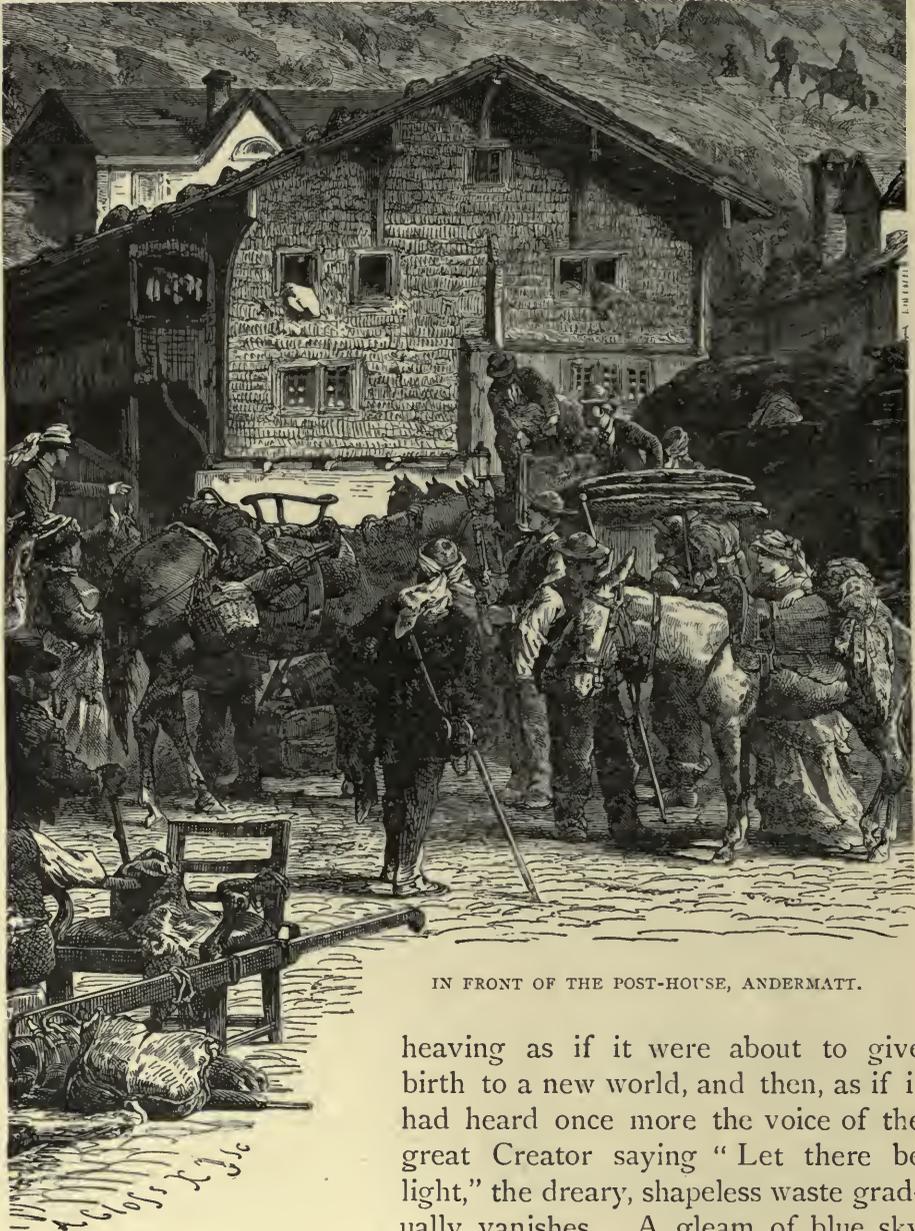
With the rain, too, comes a pale, leaden-coloured fog, rolling down the slopes and into the streets, and trailing its long, weary grave-clothes up and down before your window. There is nothing but a blank in place of the lakes, forests, pastures, towns, and illuminated mountain-tops which you expected to see. And besides the fog there is cold; the very children laugh at your summer clothing, and it makes you feel ridiculous in your own eyes. You may pull your hat down over your eyes, wrap your plaid more closely round you, drink desperate quantities of Kirschwasser, or the still more famous Engadine Iva, smoke one cigar after another, turn over the Bernese *Bund*, take up the *Journal de Genève*, or try to amuse yourself with descriptions of sunny expeditions among the mountains in the entertaining *Zürich Alpenpost*; but your mind is absent, and your eyes wander away from the page before you to the window in the hope of seeing some dove with an olive-branch in her mouth announcing the termination of the deluge. And lo, she comes! The landlord has just returned from some expedition, and as he stands dripping on the threshold, he announces his good news, which comes like an angel's message: "Ladies and gentlemen, we may look for fine weather to-morrow. There's a change in the wind, and it is blowing sharp from the north. I think the barometer must be rising. Cheer up!"

At length, early one cold foggy morning, we start from Andermatt for the mountains; our cheeks are wetted by the wings of the wind as it blows down the valley, and we hear the sound of the mountain torrents as they rush along rejoicing in their life, the rustle of the pines as they shake large heavy drops of mist down on our hats, and the song of the thrush as he whistles a merry greeting to us from some rocky perch.

On we go, up some steep ascent, higher and higher, over loose, slippery stones and paths flooded with rain; or perhaps our way lies through marshy Alpine meadows, where there is no path at all, where the beautiful cattle stand close together in groups, and seem to welcome us by the tinkling of their bells. We have long since left the trees behind us, and the silver streams which issue like spun

threads from the flower-strewn rocks become thinner and thinner as we mount upwards.

The grey foggy chaos beneath rolls over and over, seething and



IN FRONT OF THE POST-HOUSE, ANDERMATT.

heaving as if it were about to give birth to a new world, and then, as if it had heard once more the voice of the great Creator saying "Let there be light," the dreary, shapeless waste gradually vanishes. A gleam of blue sky appears overhead, and is followed by a ray of golden sunshine; and then, behold! there is a new, beautiful world before us, and the grand

separation between moist and dry is accomplished. What look at first like little islands rising from out the seething flood, speedily assume the form of mountains and chains of mountains. The towering masses presently exchange their dark hues for shimmering silver, and at last are flooded with the golden light of the setting sun, while around their heads float cloudlets of pearly white and softest rose colour, looking like doves and Cupids. Outspread beneath us lie the green valleys, twining wreath-like among the mountains; and the sparkling lakes, the eyes of the landscape, shine brightly up into the clear sky.

Man, puny man, gazes in rapture at the fulness of beauty here at his feet, or allows his eye to follow the eagle in his flight upwards to those snow-clad peaks which crown the landscape so solemnly with their majestic beauty. Like kings they sit enthroned above, joining in the heavenly anthem and ever declaring the glory of God.



ASCENDING A MOUNTAIN IN THE RAIN.

But the sublimest sight of all yet remains to be seen. Down sinks



THE WELLHORN AND WETTERHORN.

the sun, and darkness covers the valleys ; darkness creeps gradually up the sides of the mountains and night throws her mantle over them,

and then, just when we fancy that the light has quite died away, it flames out again with fiery glow upon the topmost summits. Once more and for the last time, the sacred fires are kindled upon the mountain-altars by the far-reaching rays sent forth by the departed sun. There is a momentary blaze of glory, and for a short space we watch the Alpine glow in a rapture of delight. Then night begins her reign, sending forth the moon to glorify the silvery peaks, while she sets upon the brow of every mountain a gem-like coronet of stars.

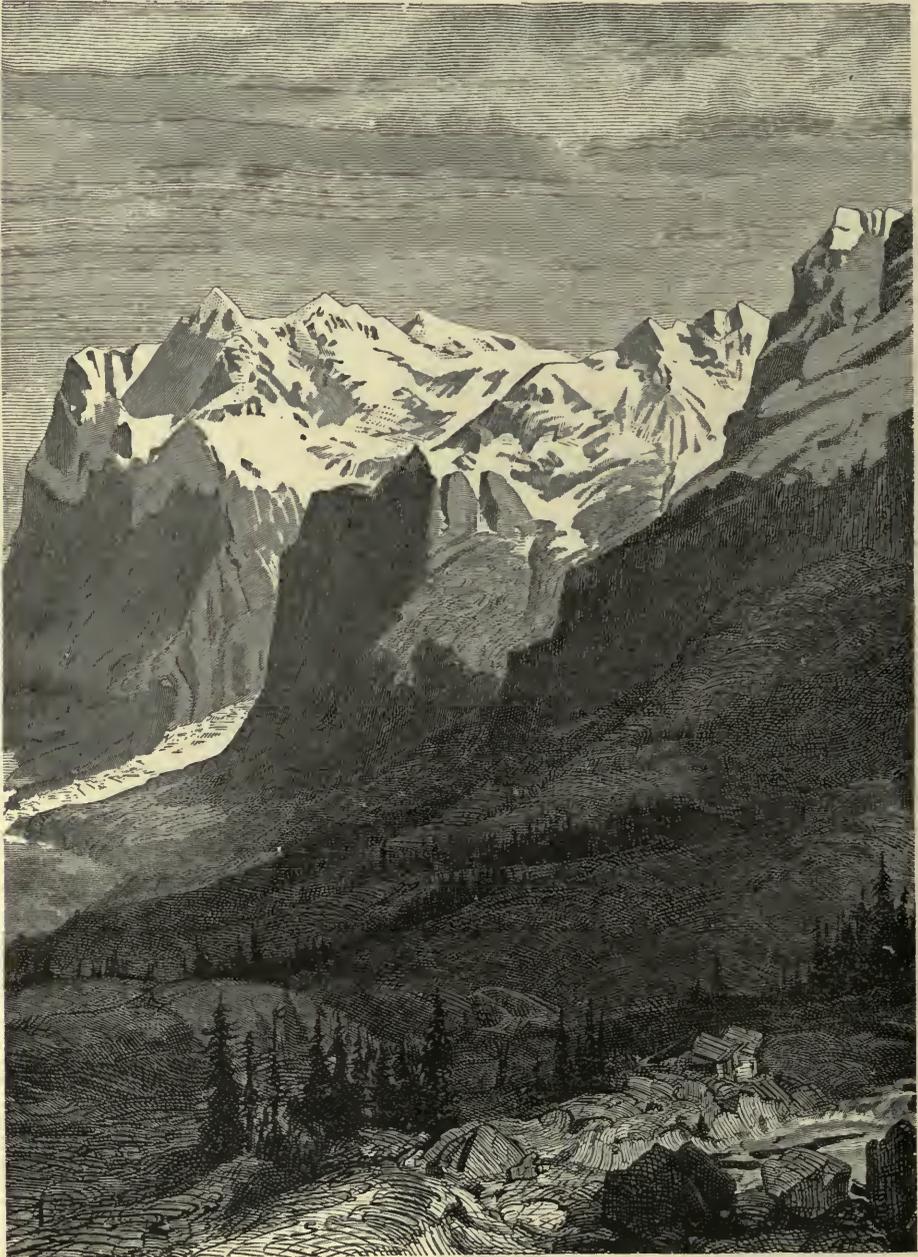
Man, however wraps his mantle about him with a shiver, for the wind blows keen and icy cold from the glaciers. He and his companions draw closer together over the hospitable fire in the snug little mountain inn, where they are joined by many a belated traveller in the course of the evening. Those who have missed the sunset hope to see the sunrise; while those who have seen both to perfection are quite divided as to which of the two ought to receive the palm.

For thou art ever sublime and beautiful, thou glorious land of the Alps! whether seen in the purple light of the setting sun, or in the chaste, golden beauty of early dawn, ever sublime and beautiful!

The wind whistles keenly over the plateau; and as the evening clouds drift across the sky, the whole scene is lonely and desolate in the extreme. Among the Alpine roses stands the weather-beaten herdsman calling home his scattered cattle, which come hurrying over the rocks or plashing through the black waters of the little mountain lake, till they gradually emerge from the fog with much bleating and bellowing. Higher up the slope wanders the botanist, laden with rare plants of all sorts, and pursued by a flock of agile goats anxious to relieve him of his spoils. Perhaps he stops for a moment to talk to the gaunt, ragged goatherd, or sits down to warm himself at the fire which flickers before the entrance of some cave in the rock. On the highest pastures of all may be seen the silent, picturesque Bergamasque shepherd, with his flocks of beautiful sheep lying perhaps close to the snow and ice and surrounded by great shaggy wolf-dogs. An eagle with outspread wings is hovering in the blue sky overhead, watching for any possible prey; and the timid defenceless sheep press close up to the pens in their terror.

A little farther off you may see a herd of slender chamois darting at wild speed across the shining glacier. They are out of sight in an instant, but soon after there is the report of a gun, which is caught up and repeated with crashing reverberations until it sounds like the

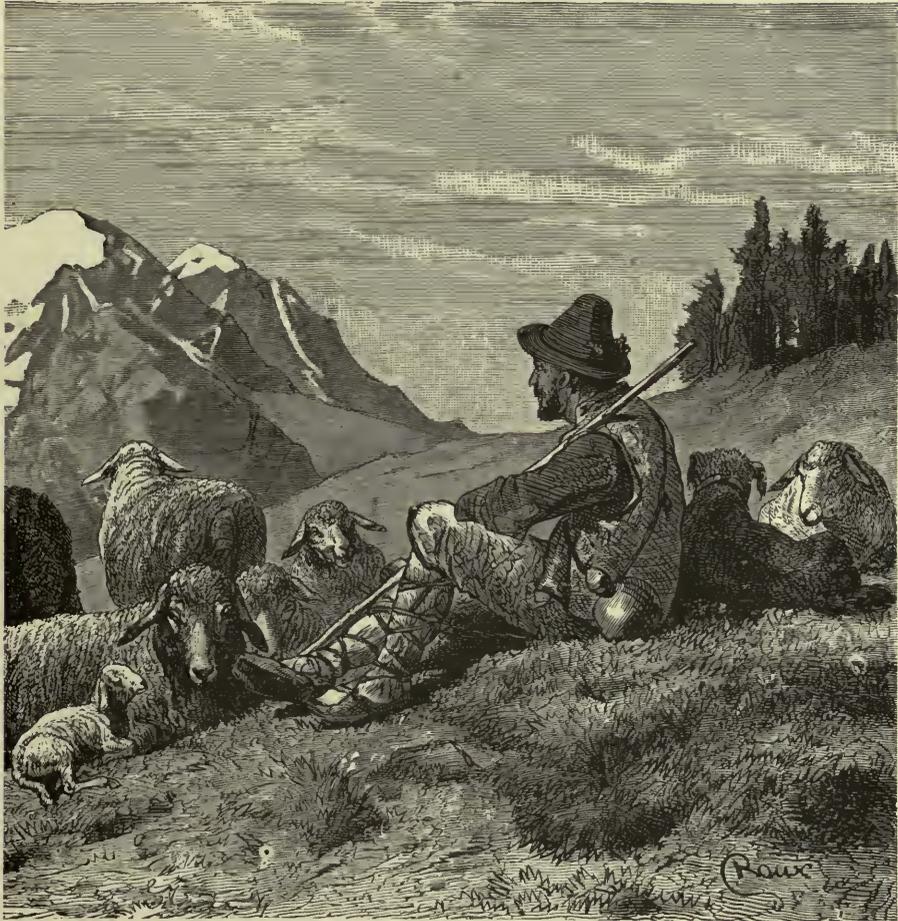
roar of an avalanche. We encounter the huntsman a few minutes



WENGERNALP, WETTERHORN, SCHRECKHORN, GRINDELWALD GLACIER, SCHEIDEGG, GREAT EIGER.

later, carrying his booty across his shoulders and gliding at a rapid

pace over the firm snow or along the narrow path on his way to the valley. There is nothing in the least showy about his sombre costume, but his figure is as sturdy as an oak and as tough as a fir-



BÈRGAMASQUE SHEPHERD, NEAR THE MORTERATSCH GLACIER.

tree. Down he goes with a swinging step, holding his strong alpenstock firmly in his hand ; and soon he too has disappeared from our view.



IN THE BERNINA PASS.

CHAPTER II.

ALPINE ROADS AND PASSES.



SWITZERLAND and the Alps are the central point of mid-Europe, and form the natural barrier between France in the west and Austria in the east, while at the same time they make a clear line of demarcation between Germany and Italy.

In ancient times, there were but two important passages across the Alps from Gaul into Italy: one was the pass over the Cottian Alps by Mont Genève, which led to the region occupied by the Taurini; the other was by the Little St. Bernard across the Graian Alps, and turned off to Aosta and Ivrea, the district occupied by the Salassi. This latter was Hannibal's route. The Romans, however, being masters in the art of road-making, and being moreover constantly on the march, in consequence of their many warlike enterprises, were not satisfied with the existing passes, but exerted themselves to discover fresh ones which they might adapt to their military purposes. The City of the Seven Hills was immediately connected with Milan by the Flaminian and Emilian ways; and from

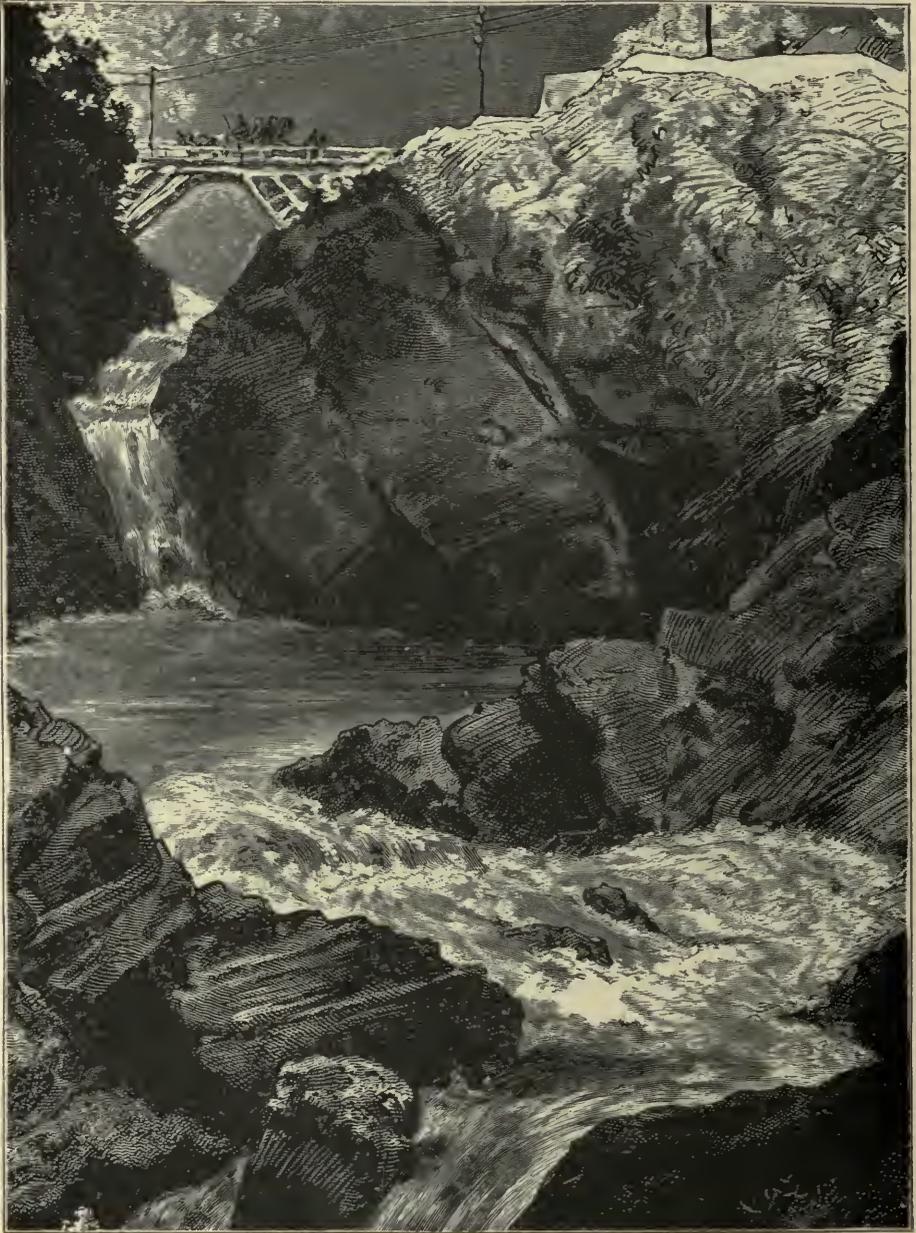
Milan there were five roads leading east and west, and across the Alps



IN THE FLUELA PASS.

as well. The Romans did not use the one over the St. Gotthard, which is now the most important of them all; nor those across the

Simplon and Mont Cenis, which latter did not come into fashion as a



THE PIOTTA GORGE AT FAIDO, ON THE ST. GOTTHARD ROAD.

military road till the Middle Ages, and all their roads were inferior to the modern ones.

Switzerland has long ceased to be a mere thoroughfare, and has become the bright and beautiful object of the traveller's journey. Crossing the Alps is now a pleasure in which delicate women and young children can participate with the greatest ease. The passage



PASS OF THE FURKA.

of the Alps by way of the well-made artificial roads across the Simplon, St. Gotthard, Splügen, and St. Bernard has long lost its terrors, for Nature has been subdued by the strong arm and powerful mind of man.

There is one peculiarity about the Swiss Alps, which is not seen to the same perfection in any other mountain-country. It is this; the crests of her mountain-ranges are not of uniform height all along, but are interrupted by numerous great gaps or depressions, through which it is easy to cross from one side of the chain to the other. Another peculiarity is the shape of the valleys, which, though often many thousand feet above the level of the sea to start with, slope gradually upwards till they reach the most elevated regions. Here, instead of losing themselves or terminating in an impassable wall of rock, they offer a means of communication with the other side of the ridge by leading up to those mountain-gates or portals which we call Passes, Cols, or Forks. The roads through these passes sometimes serve to connect merely two neighbouring districts, while in other cases they may lead diagonally across a whole range of mountains and unite different nations, such as the German and Italian. Their value for purposes of traffic varies, the most important being those splendid artificial roads, to construct which much money has been expended and the science of the engineer taxed to the utmost.

The narrower roads, along which vehicles of small size are continually rattling from one Alpine valley to another, are of considerable importance so far as the lighter traffic is concerned; so too are the bridle-paths, where there is only just room for the sure-footed beast of burden to make his way with his pack; others, being mere mountain-paths, made irrespective of obstacles, and leading across difficult and dangerous glaciers, are of no use to any but the herdsman, hunter, smuggler, or other such like fleet and nimble folk.

Lastly, many a road has been swallowed up by the glaciers or has fallen into disuse; nevertheless, the number of mountain-passes open at the present day must amount to nearly seventy, and along some of the most important of these we will now take our way.

Communication along the Alpine chain, east and west, is maintained by the beautiful Valais road, which runs along the valley of the Rhône, crosses the celebrated Furka Pass, traverses the Urserenthal, climbs the Oberalp Pass, skirts the Oberalp Lake, whose waters form one of the sources of the Reuss, and so enters the Grisons. Another road, also bearing east and west, starts from Chiavenna, and, after crossing the wild Maloja Pass, from which there is an extensive view of the Beautiful Val Bregaglia, runs by the side of the lovely green Inn, which intersects the Upper and Lower Engadine, and turns off

at the defile of Finstermünz, through which the river passes from Switzerland into Tyrol. On the other side the frontier, both road and river continue their course through Imperial territory under the mighty protection of Austrian fortresses, old and new.

Throughout her luxuriant spring and rich summer, beautiful Valais is pervaded by breezes from Italy, and many a road leads down



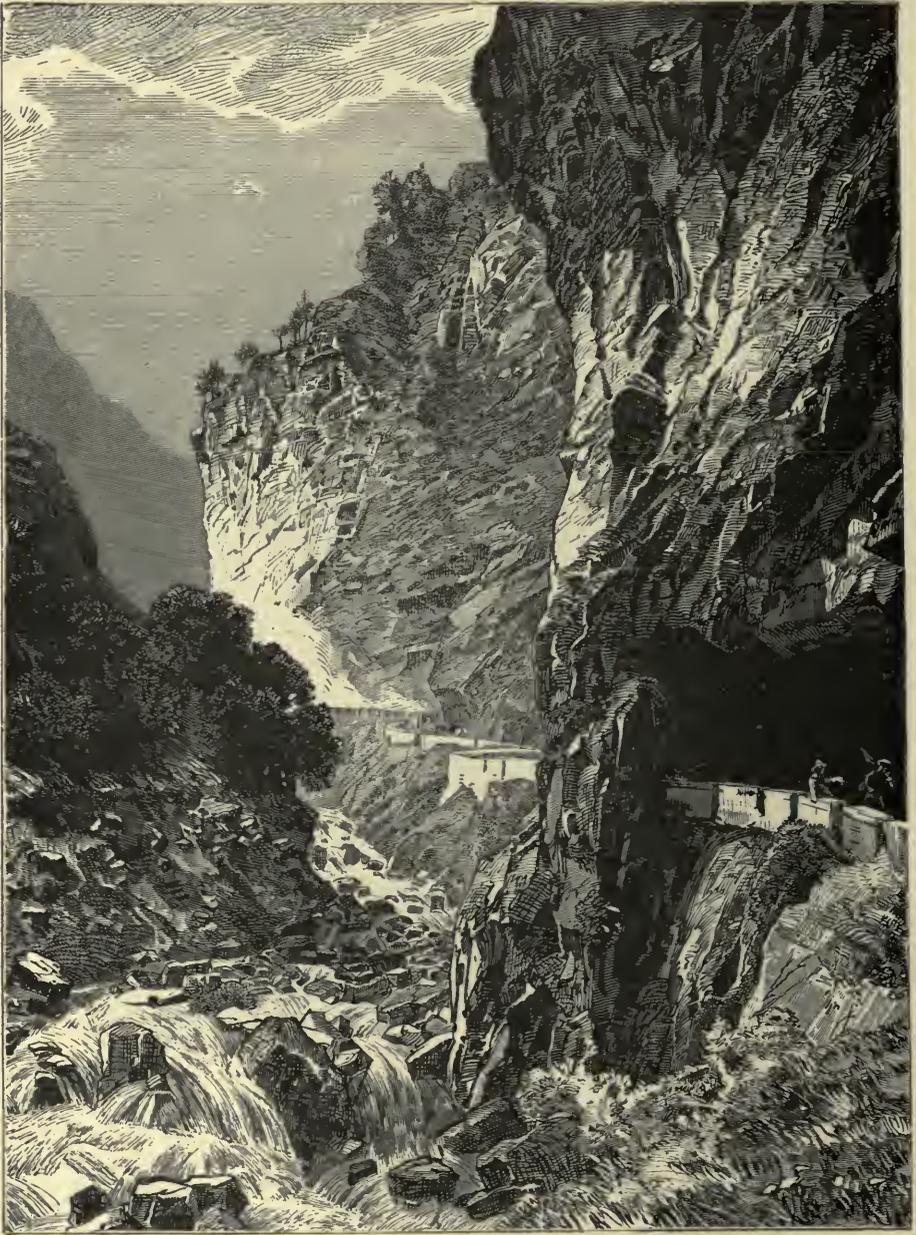
SIMPLON.

into the latter country; as, for instance, the bridle-way across Col Ferrex, the Pass of the Great St. Bernard, that of the Matterjoch or St. Théodule,* which is the highest in Europe and not passable at all times, the Griespass, and a road turning off from it to the ridge of the Nüfenen,† the pass of St. Giacomo, and the splendid artificial road across the Simplon.

* Also called Mont Cervin.

† Called Passo di Novena on the Italian side.

The Simplon comes next, and of it we may say, "All who have



SIMPLON ROAD.

crossed it have had their cup of joy filled to overflowing." Planted exactly between Piedmont and La Valais, it bears aloft upon its mighty

back one of the finest of all the Alpine roads; that, namely, which starts in the valley of the Rhone from the pleasant little town of



GLACIER OF THE RHONE.

Brieg, whose tin cupolas are so conspicuous. Like the road over the Gries, just described, it leads to Domo d'Ossola; but this is the

queen of Alpine roads, and strides like a Titaness over the cliffs and through the cliffs, across the slopes, by the side of waterfalls, along the edge of precipices, and over nearly three hundred bridges, larger and smaller. The grand idea of constructing this colossal road sprang from the fertile brain of the first Napoleon, who, like a second Hannibal, wanted a way by which his guns and guards could pass over into Lombardy. Like many another Alpine pass, it has been watered with blood, and ambition and lust of conquest have many a time made it a scene of strife. It is much frequented, owing to its grand and picturesque scenery; and, in the height of summer, foreigners of all nations pour across it in troops on their way to Italy.

On leaving Interlaken, where you can see the proud Jungfrau beckoning you enticingly southwards, you turn either east, along the beautiful lake of Brienz, past the soft loveliness of Meiringen, up the valley of Hasli, with its rustling pines and the wild Aar rushing through its midst, and ascend higher and higher till you reach the dreary pass of the Grimsel; or, turning to the west along the lake of Thun, you pass through the quiet and pleasant Kandergrund, by Kandersteg, and so up to the Gemmi, whence you make a precipitous descent to Leuk, and proceed along the broad valley of the Rhône past Brieg to the Rhône glacier.

Uri and Unterwalden are approached from the Bernese Oberland by two bridle-paths and one carriage-road, that over the Brünig, the loveliest of all the Alps. Those who have crossed it in the middle of summer and in bright weather will surely never forget the pleasant impression made upon their minds by the various tints of the wood which clothes the mountain right and left, and the villages nestling amid shady orchards by the side of lakes or streams. The Brünig Pass leads the traveller by the easiest possible route from Interlaken or Meiringen into the lovely district about the Lake of Lucerne, or *vice versa*. The bridle-paths before mentioned are those across the Engstlenjoch, the pass of the Susten, and that of the Surenen, which are covered with snow all the year round.

Proceeding from west to east, the grand St. Gotthard road leads across another pass which is only second in importance to the Simplon. The broad mass of the St. Gotthard is set in the very midst of the other great mountains, as if it were the heart and core of the Alps, a sort of mysterious sanctuary, the foundation and corner-stone originally laid by the hands of Titans. Towards this

point, as if it were some magnetic centre, the numerous ray-like chains of mountains converge from all sides like gathering crystals.

It took usually from five to six days to get from the Swiss lake to Lago Maggiore, but, in bad weather, or at an unfavourable time of year, these days were multiplied indefinitely. This state of things, of course, could not meet the requirements of modern times and con-



ON THE WAY TO THE GRIMSEL.

stantly increasing traffic, and accordingly the cantons of Uri and Tessin, having the wit to see what was to their own interest, joined hands towards the year 1820. After nearly ten years of gigantic labour, they constructed a broad and beautiful road; and carriages may now accomplish the distance between Urschweiz and North Italy in from sixteen to eighteen hours.

In these days of hurry and bustle, however, sixteen or eighteen



DEVIL'S BRIDGE, ON THE ST. GOTTHARD ROAD.

hours are far too much for travellers and merchandise to spend upon

the passage; and besides this, the road is damaged and blocked every autumn by snowstorms, avalanches, and land-slips. This will have to be obviated, and the peaceful intercourse of the different nations will have to be carried on under the auspices of the locomotive



IN THE FLUELA PASS.

engine, which will carry them along the smoothest of roads, unhindered by the snow, ice, and fog which sit enthroned on yonder heights. Accordingly the ancient spirit of the mountain, as he sat listening in the depths below, could hear the human moles at work in his sub-

terranean dominions, cutting, boring, blasting, and burrowing in order to construct a tunnel ten miles in length, through which, by means of the steam-engine, people and goods are now despatched in a few short hours from the north to the brighter south, without being exposed to the inclemency of the weather, by the railway through the St. Gotthard Tunnel.

The venerable pass across the ancient Mons Avium is well known to us by its name of Bernardino. The old narrow road was made by Roman cohorts, the modern one was constructed shortly before that of the St. Gotthard. Then there is the equally venerable road across the Splügen. Both run from Chur (Coire) into the gloomily beautiful defile of the Via Mala, and divide to right and left as soon as they reach the little village of Splügen.

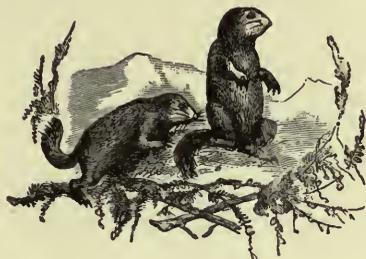
The one which strikes off to the left is the splendid Splügen road, which, after ascending uninterruptedly to the summit of the pass, leads us abruptly down from the bleak, bare mountains to lovely Chiavenna, with its luxuriant groves, and to Colico on the margin of Lake Como. The sister road winds to the right, across the Bernardino, and terminates south of Lago Maggiore.

The Septimer Pass too was formerly of the utmost importance, being the ancestor of all the roads among the Rhætian Alps, and owing its origin to the Romans; so, too, was the mysterious Julier Pass, which at different periods of its history has seen both the Roman toga, the habit of the Crusader, and the purple mantle of the German emperor; neither must the Albula and Flüela Passes be forgotten. Their first and immediate use is to connect one valley with another; but some of the roads are carried far on into the lovely south.

That of Flüela, for instance, joins the highway which leads through the Prättigau and Davos-Dörfli, and so brings the Schien road, which runs from Lake Constance, and, in fact, the whole of North Switzerland, into communication with Chiavenna and other places in Italy. The lovely valleys of the Rhine, the districts of Prättigau, Davos, and Montafun, are connected one with the other by various passes across the mountains which separate them.

As fresh and shorter roads are discovered, the old and inconvenient ones are abandoned as a matter of course, at least so far as commerce is concerned; and so it may be that many passes get completely lost in the course of ages. But, besides this, the glaciers have covered or swallowed up some of them, and the advance of the ice has prevented their being of any further use. Huntsmen or tourists may occasion-

ally cross these ruined paths, just for the wonder of the thing, but they are utterly valueless for purposes of general traffic. Many, such as the pass between Grindelwald and Valais, from Evolena to Zermatt, and from Gadmenthal across the glacier of the Rhône, have become altogether traditionary; but all these roads and passes once presented living pictures of great interest





CHAPTER III.

THE LAKES OF EAST SWITZERLAND.

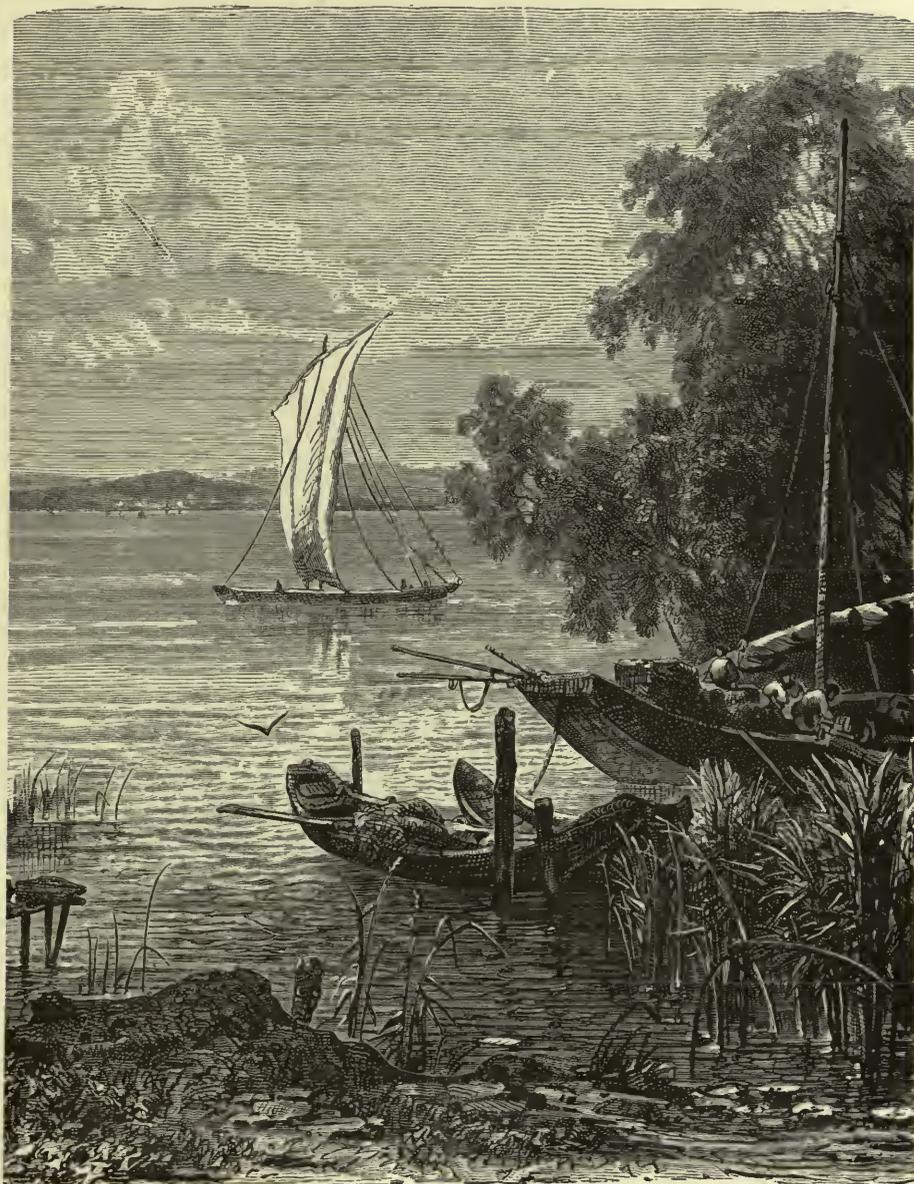
LAKE CONSTANCE.

LAKE Constance has many times changed its name but never its colour. It sparkled, as now, in all its blue-green splendour when the Romans called it Lake Brigantinus, and their cheerful old town of Brigantia, the modern Bregenz, still lies hidden by the bay at the eastern corner of the lake. They gave the names of Venetus and Acronius to different parts of it; but in the Middle Ages it was called Lacus Podamicus and Mare Podamus, which the German tongue modified first into Bodam and then into Bodmensee. The "Swabian Sea" was another of its names, and we, of modern times, know it as the lovely "Bodensee."

We are now standing on the shore of the lake, beneath the fragrant shady trees belonging to the hotel of Friedrichshafen. It is a calm, still night, and the moon—"sleeping sunshine," as some one has called her—is dreaming upon the waters. The air which blows across the gently heaving surface from the Thurgau shore feels softer and more summer-like, and the dark boats as they rock to and fro on the water look like cradles in a dream. There is what looks like a thin, pale mist rising along the opposite horizon; but to-morrow, when we see it in bright daylight, we shall find that it has turned into a chain of mountains which rise gently from the lower level about Zürich in the west, and culminate in the Glärnisch, the glorious Säntis, Altmann, and the heights of Kasten and Kamor. Looking south and east, we see the three sister-peaks of Mittagspitze, Widderstein, and Rhætikon, together with the mighty Scesa Plana of the Grisons, which is the loftiest summit to be seen from the Bodensee.

As we listen to the murmur of the waters we muse upon the

ancient days when the shore was bordered by thick forests, and the lake-dweller raised his habitation upon piles sunk in the water, and



LAKE CONSTANCE.

the bear and the primæval stag dwelt in the neighbouring thicket. Then followed the time when the Romans invaded the wilderness. Tiberius launched a fleet upon the lake, and forts were built upon the

rocks along the shore as a defence against warlike, liberty-loving Alemanni and Rhæti. Later still, in the fourth century, the waters of the lake extended to where Rheineck now stands. But a great deal of water has passed through the lake since then, and the Rhine and Bregenzer Ach have together formed such an extensive deposit of slimy, reed-covered soil in the eastern corner, that Rheineck now stands inland an hour's distance from the shore. Christianity came



RHEINECK.

and settled on the Rhine when the Romans were gone; and, strong in their faith, the foreign apostles Gallus and Columban entered the forests cross and axe in hand. St. Gall, the gentle Evangelist of the Alemanni, it was who, like St. Benedict in Italy, had the chief share in causing the light of the Gospel to be shed abroad upon the whole surrounding neighbourhood, where the people had hitherto lived in the darkness of heathenism. The echo of his name still remains and may be heard in the name of the canton which borders a part of the

lake close to Arbon, where the Apostle took refuge in his last illness with Willimar, his companion in the faith. One monastery arose after another under the protection of the bold Merovingians and Carolingians. The Merovingians, indeed, were masters of almost the whole of Switzerland, and however much the Alemanni might



RORSCHACH.

kick, they could not shake off the Frankish yoke. After a time, castles rose above the monasteries, and the dark old ruined towers, which are still to be seen on the mountain-slopes of Thurgau and St. Gall, seem to speak to us in the language of the Middle Ages.

Rorschach is a busy manufacturing town, built out upon the lake

as a sort of outpost of the canton of St. Gall; and, in spite of all the bustle, it makes a wonderfully pleasant and refreshing impression upon us. Properly speaking, the passing traveller sees nothing but a few large buildings, belonging to the harbour and railway station, but he cannot fail to be impressed by the comfort and cheerful prosperity of the place, if, from his boat or the window of his carriage,



ROMANSHORN.

he gets a glimpse of the bright, often palatial-looking houses, with their gay gardens and orchards and shining windows; and this impression will be confirmed if he walks through the broad streets which will take him to the clean hotel upon the market-place.

“Rorscahun,” as it was called in the Middle Ages, was then and has ever since continued to be the corn market of Switzerland and the station of her custom-house officers. In this, the granary of

Helvetia, the golden corn was stored in gigantic magazines built on the shores of the lake.

The place has become of more importance still in these days, having grown to be the centre of a brisk export trade. There are



THE UNTERSEE, FROM ARENENBERG.

three lines of railway starting from it: one which passes along the shore by Arbon and Romanshorn to Constance; another which crosses the green, pine covered heights to St. Gall; while a third enters the valley of the Rhine and proceeds as far as Chur, from

which place it has every inclination to cross the Splügen. Then, too, there are the ships, many of which daily put into the port, or leave it on their way to Schaffhausen, Constance, Ueberlingen, Meersburg, Lindau, Friedrichshafen, and Bregenz.

Romanshorn is a second Rorschach, and who can tell whether the two flourishing towns may not look across at one another from their



WAREHOUSE IN STECKBORN.

moles with something of envy? Like the sister-town, Romanshorn is growing up amid the driving smoke of railways and steamboats, and its flashing windows seem to beam with confidence in the future.

Steam alters the course of everything. To be sure the fisherman's boat still floats on the lake, net and hook are still busy in its depths; and, though it may diminish year by year, the catching of the "famous

fish of the Bodensee," bream, pike, shad-fish, grayling, lake-trout, &c., will never entirely cease; but, of late years, many a fisherman has allowed his nets to rot and his hooks to rust, while he himself has turned into an inn-keeper, guide, driver, or owner of a bathing establishment, and finds his new business much more profitable.

Following the course of the Rhine, we pass under the bridge and into the Untersee, the second division of the lake. The German shore is on our right, and the Swiss town of Gottlieben on our left. Helvetia and Germania seem for a short time to have changed places. Constance has crossed over to the Swiss bank on the left, while Schaffhausen, both town and canton, are on the right.

But for the danger of getting rheumatism by remaining too long upon the lake, the traveller might profitably spend more time in exploring the Untersee and the Ueberlingensee. The name of Untersee is given to the wonderful expanse of water between Constance and Stein, but it is also called Zellersee, from the charming town of Radolfzell on its northern bank. It can hardly be said to have a right to the name of Bodensee; but at least it is the lovely daughter of a lovely mother, "And many a fair and lovely pearl within its depths doth rest," the most beautiful of them all being the island-garden of Reichenau. But Reichenau belongs to Baden, and we are not to go beyond Switzerland. Here, too, nature has been lavish of her charms, and the left bank of the Untersee is adorned with villages, castles, and villas, some picturesque, some celebrated, which, with a background of wooded hills, combine to form such a landscape as cannot fail to excite our liveliest admiration.

The whole shore of the lake was once occupied by lacustrine habitations built upon piles, and the bed of the Untersee has already yielded some remarkable information; but the peasants of the neighbourhood have more to say about the wonderful events connected with some of the châteaux which lie surrounded by gardens and park-like grounds.

Ancient history, church history, and modern history repeat themselves all along the coast like the refrain of some song. We have now reached Steckborn, which, like the rest, has had its lacustrine habitations and its lordly abbots with whom it fought and struggled; and now, like its neighbours, it joins in the general march forward. It was formerly called Steckbären, and still boasts the "tower" belonging to the time when the abbots before mentioned girded on their swords over their stoles and were quite capable of therewith collecting

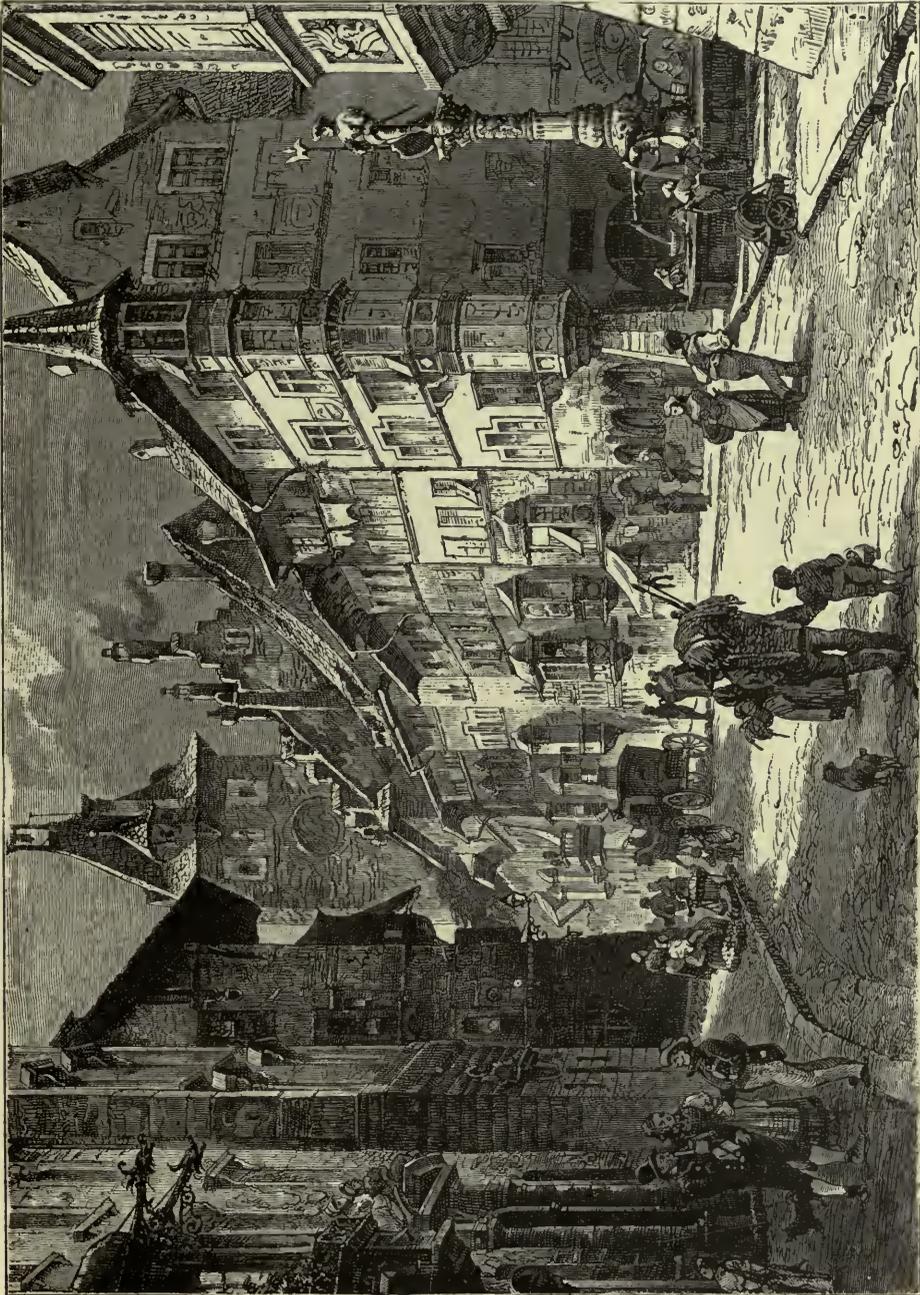
and defending their *jura stola*. The tower is now used for a general



STEIN, ON THE RHINE.

warehouse. As our little vessel glides down the lovely Rhine, whether we look to the Swiss or to the Swabian side, our attention is constantly

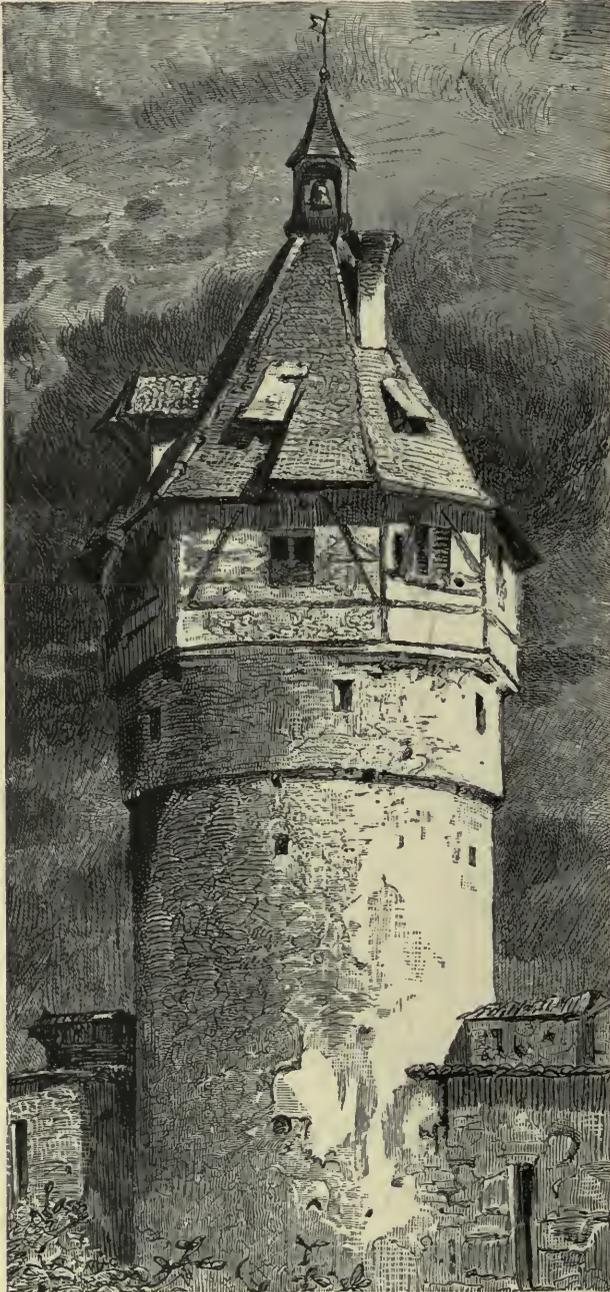
arrested by fresh picturesque views, and by the "castles on the moun-



STREET IN SCHAFFHAUSEN.

tains," of which there is a grand series between Gaienhofen and

Oberstaad on the one hand, and Glarisegg and Freudenfels on the



TOWER IN SCHAFFHAUSEN.

other. The excursion down the river and through the Untersee to Stein and thence to Schaffhausen, is unquestionably one of the most beautiful which North Switzerland affords. The artist will find an abundant supply of dainty subjects for his pencil, all compressed within a small space, and it is to be regretted that the district should so generally escape the notice of tourists. But, little known as it is, and unfamiliar as most of the names are to the ear, every one has at least heard of old "Stein am Rhein." A picturesque old nook it is, with much to remind us of the Middle Ages, in its solemn, ancient houses, with their broad gables, weather-beaten coats-of-arms, snug oriel-windows, and walls covered with faded frescoes and long-forgotten

names, and in the groining of the old roof of the court-house, which

was once the guildhall, "Zum Klee." To complete the picture, the



A STREET IN SCHAFFHAUSEN.

rocky height at the back of the town is crowned by an old ruined

castle belonging to the Von Hohenklingen, which looks far and wide over lake, shore, and river, as if it were a mounted sentinel.

Small as it is, Stein has a long history, beginning with the Romans, who had a camp on the little Rhenish island of Werd or



COSTUME IN THE CANTON OF SCHAFFHAUSEN.

Wörd, from which there is said to have been a bridge to the shore of the Alemanni. Traces of this bridge are, it is said, still to be seen in the bed of the Rhine at low water. Burg, on the left bank of the river, a suburb of Stein, with which it is connected by a bridge, was anciently called Gaunodurum, and was in existence

before the Romans came to the spot. In the Middle Ages, Stein



FALLS OF THE RHINE AT SCHAFFHAUSEN.

was turned into a sort of stronghold by the Dukes of Swabia,

and the convent of Hohentwiel was removed thither from Singen.

Switzerland does not always look like Switzerland, at least not like what the generality of tourists imagine it to be, and there is little that is Swiss about the scenery of Schaffhausen. There are no striking or romantic features in the landscape throughout the whole of the canton, which presents a very matter-of-fact aspect to the eye. The population, however, is extremely active and industrious, and quite independent of all foreign assistance, for the products of their own soil are amply sufficient for all their bodily wants. The arms of Schaffhausen are a black ram on a field of gold, and aptly symbolise both its strength and wealth. The Reformation found a ready entrance here, and the flag of liberty waved from every tower.

There is something indescribable about the good town. It is like some grave, able, yet jovial man, who prides himself in a dignified sort of way on his family-tree and on the punctual discharge of his duty as a citizen. With all this there is moreover a certain mediæval rudeness and roughness about it; and any one who looks up from the steamer at the pyramid of grey walls, roofs, and pointed gables, which culminate in the old tower, or wanders through the lonely street and alleys in the dim twilight, gazing at the projecting oriels, will be inclined to think he has stepped backwards a few centuries into the Middle Ages.

There are two old churches belonging to the twelfth century in Schaffhausen—namely, the venerable old Minster and the church of St. John, which have for centuries past been the burying-places of the patrician families of the town.

Schiffhausen (Skiff-houses), or Scaphusae, as it was formerly called, was founded by boatmen; but its importance was greatly increased by the monks of All Saints, a monastery built by the pious Count Eberhart von Nellenburg in 1052. Towards the end of the thirteenth century it fought for and obtained the rank of a free Imperial city.

The noblest of her sons was Johannes von Müller; but the most original was the famous preacher Geiler von Kaiserberg, who was born here in 1445. Johannes von Müller attended the Gymnasium in 1760, when he was a boy of seven years old, and passed thence to the *Collegium Humanitatis*. He bequeathed his fame to his native city; and to his native land he gave his splendid "History of Switzerland." He may indeed be called the father of Swiss history.

Müller's writings seem to reflect some of the peculiarities of Schaffhausen itself, and throughout he has remained faithful to the dialect of his native place.

But all the summer travellers who come to Schaffhausen nowadays want to see the waterfall, the largest if not the highest in Europe. They will look for it in vain at Schaffhausen, however.

The Rhine begins to be troubled as soon as it has passed the town. It seems to have some foreboding of its fate, and to shudder as it rushes over its uneven bed between the steep rocks; but for all that you must go as far as Neuhausen, about three miles farther down before you come to the falls.

“Keep, O traveller! a firm and powerful hand on thy heart now:
Mine well-nigh slipped from my hold as I stood here trembling with rapture.
Mass upon mass is hurled with ceaseless roar as of thunder,
Till both the ear and the eye are deafened and dazed by the tumult;
And, should a giant be cast upon yonder rock out of heaven,
Truly he would not hear his own cry of rage and of fury!
Steeds of the gods they are, in headlong career rushing downwards—
One o'er the other they dash, and scatter their silver mares round them.”



CHAPTER IV.

THE REALM OF THE SÄNTIS.

IN the village of Appenzell there stands a green linden-tree; under the green lime-tree sit fresh-coloured, well-knit lads, and neat maidens in snow-white sleeves, decked with gay kerchiefs and ribbons. How they laugh in the summer sunshine! As for the boys they are perfectly wild, and sing their lusty songs at the top of their voices, making the air ring again.

The old men, who are mostly thin and sunburnt, stand leaning against the bean-covered garden-fence, puffing away at their short wooden pipes, and sending the smoke of their strong tobacco into the fresh, hay-scented air. The married women sit at the oriel windows, with glittering necklaces round their throats and red silk hoods on their heads, either looking out over their bouquet of Sunday flowers, or else gossiping busily, in their broad, kindly patois, with any of the companions of their week's toil who may happen to be passing.

Shrieking swallows are sailing about the dark-brown wooden

roofs, and from the soft green meadows which rise behind the



THE SÄNTIS.

houses are to be heard the merry shouts of the young people, the

bleating of the goats, and, farther off, the rumble of carriages full of tourists or visitors, who are coming to undergo the whey cure.

St. Gall presents a different scene at this same hour. Here the well-dressed, fashionable citizens are either walking or driving comfortably out of all the gates of the town on their way to the Freudenberg, to Bernegg, Fröhlichsegg, and Vöglissegg, to enjoy their



APPENZELL.

Sunday view of the green realm of the Säntis, which extends as far down as the Glärnisch. The factory chimneys stare smokeless into the air, as if they were astonished at themselves; and the long rows of windows in the mills where cotton is spun and muslin woven look at the Sunday sky as if they found the time tedious.

St. Gall encloses the little district of Appenzell as the nut-shell

encloses the kernel ; and, on looking at it in the map, one is disposed to think Appenzell must be something very special to be so carefully guarded. But those who expect to carry out the comparison of the nut and the shell will find themselves mistaken ; unless, indeed, they be thinking of a silver nut in a golden shell, then they will be right enough.

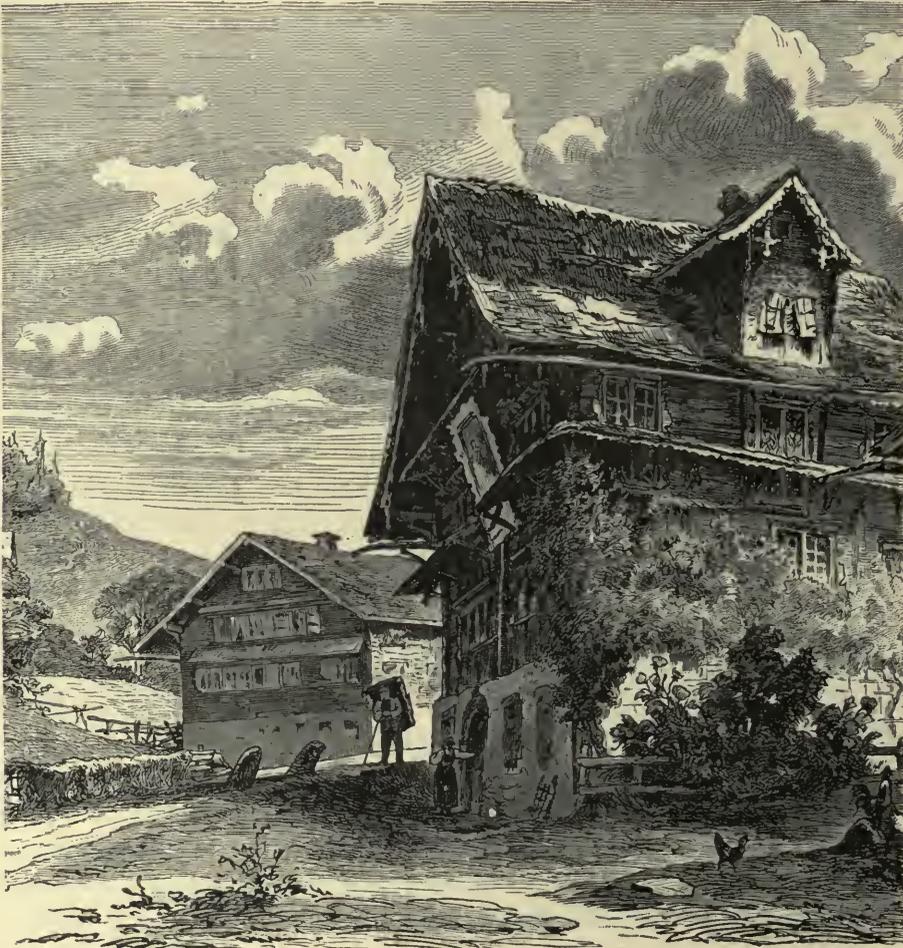
The lofty Säntis shines out over the whole surrounding country, and can be seen by the Germans on the other side of Lake Constance and by the Tyrolese in the Vorarlberg. It is like some knight of the olden time, or a patriarchal shepherd-king, looking down with calm dignity from his lofty throne upon the meadows which unroll their bright green carpet at his feet. The service of his court is performed by the shepherds who feed their flocks on the mountains and by the peasants who occupy the pleasant cottages in the neighbouring valleys and spend their days in laborious toil.

The Säntis has no geological connection with the Alps, inasmuch as it belongs to the chalk formation, which in ancient days extended over the whole plain. The several ranges of the Säntis stand one behind the other, looking like the waves of a lake which are being driven along by the föhn. Three of them are clearly distinguishable. They run from south-west to north-east and are defined by two valley-like depressions, the Seealp on the one side, and the Fählen and Säntiser pastures on the other. The most prominent peaks beside the Säntis, which is some seven thousand seven hundred feet high, are the Gyrenspitz, the rugged Altmann, the Schafberg, and the much-frequented Kamor and Hohe Kasten. The most northerly chain ends in the delightful Alpine pasture of the Ebenalp.

The whole face of the country presents a most diversified appearance. The rounded dome-like height is followed closely by a hollow ravine, furrows and ridges are studded with peaks and inequalities ; and yet it looks as though the sculptor had no sooner finished his work than he dashed it to pieces again. Numerous brooks and streamlets trickle thread-like through the many cracks in the limestone and reappear lower down foaming through stony gulleys and ditch-like channels.

The whole country between the Lakes of Zürich, Wallenstadt, and Constance is remarkably fertile, and the fertility extends to the cantons of Appenzell and St. Gall, especially to the hilly district in the northern half, while the southern portion is more mountainous in character.

Truly there is no lack of vigour or of love of labour either in St. Gall or Appenzell, and both alike take part in the pastoral pursuits which are carried on upon the green mountain-slopes, and in the silk-weaving, embroidery, and linen and cotton manufactures which employ the inhabitants of the valleys : in fact, trade is in a most flourishing con-



THE OLD PARSONAGE AT PETERZELL.

dition. There is nothing to enervate the people in the climate, and nature renders them all the assistance in her power by giving them a good supply of water. The rivers Sitter and Saar, Seetz and Linth, Tamina and Thur, Glatt, Neckar and Steinach, all flow through their territory, which includes the Lake of Wallenstadt and is bordered by the Bodensee and the Lake of Zürich.

In a deep valley among the mountains, where three streams rush



MARKET STREET IN ST. GALL.

forth from three valleys deeply furrowed in the rugged sides of the

Säntis, Abbot Nortbert founded a church on a spot of ground which had only recently been cleared. There may very likely have been a chapel previously for the use and benefit of the shepherds and others belonging to the monastery who might have business here; and very probably, too, it may already have been known by the name of "Abtes Zelle" (*abbatis cella*, abbot's cell), but there is no mention of it until now.

Another "Zelle" also took its rise about the same date, namely, Peterzell. It lies in a deep valley not far from the source of the Neckar, and owes its origin to the Abbey of St. Gall, and its endowment to the lords of Rorschach and the counts of Toggenburg. It is chiefly noticeable for the old buildings once occupied by the Capitular of St. Gall, which are now used as a parsonage. In the other parsonage lives the pastor of the Reformed Church, for half the community are Romanists, the other half Protestants.

And the town yonder, see what a beautiful photograph it makes with the sun shining upon it! That town is St. Gall. There is a look of the utmost contentment, comfort, and prosperity on its countenance; and it is evident at the first glance that the blood courses vigorously through its veins, and that its muscles have all the strength of ripe manhood.

"St. Gall is putting on city airs and graces!" is the exclamation which rises involuntarily to the lips of the stranger as he passes through the grand west-end on his way from the railway station to the heart of the town. The confined and crowded quarter of the old monastic town, after having been inhabited for many a long year, was found altogether insufficient for the requirements of modern times, and has been supplemented accordingly by the massive and tasteful buildings which advance close up to the terminus. This new district lies on the north, and owes its existence to the flourishing state of the town's trade, which is now of world-wide extent, and is still increasing; as is also the population, which, from being eight thousand at the end of the last century, is now reckoned at nearly eighteen thousand.

In these modern times people do not care to hide behind walls and towers, or cling to an abbot's robe, or nestle close to a monastery. Their motto is "Liberty, Space, and Light" for all; and thus the hoary walls and towers have fallen, and the ditches have been filled up, and their place is occupied by cheerful summer-houses and rows of bright flowers, where the citizen takes his pleasure on holidays, and the children disport themselves in their play-hours. The green

meadows slope down almost into the very streets; or perhaps, we should rather say that the town stretches up to them, reaching as far



ST. GALL.

as Rosenberg on the west and Freudenberg on the east. The altered names of these two mountains show what progress has been made;

for in the Middle Ages they were called Waltramsberg and Notker-



OLD HOUSES IN ST. GALL.

berg, after the governor and the monk. A few steps lead us away from

the modern buildings into the midst of the venerable old houses which date from the Middle Ages, with their projecting turrets, charming oriels and gables, oddly-shaped doors and windows, and often very artistic iron scroll-work. What with these and the ancient statues and family arms, we shall find many a really beautiful old house to admire ;



LACEMAKER OF THE CANTON ST. GALL.

and as for the artist, he must feel his heart swell within him. In the principal street, however, we again come upon a succession of large modern shops, which make a grand appearance too in their way.

Streets and houses are swarming with people, all of them as busy as bees ; and if the old monks were still here, they would feel as if they were the drones in the hive. The buildings belonging to

the monastery are now diverted to a different use, and the court of the abbot's palace is only a large open space. Adjoining this latter stands the cathedral, an imposing-looking building, dating from the second half of the last century. It has two immense bell-towers, and belongs to the Roman Catholics, who form about a third part of the population. Close by stands what was once the monastery, which is now divided into the old and new palace. The old palace contains the grand old convent library already noticed as containing so many enviable treasures; the Roman Catholic school of the canton occupies another portion of the building, and the remainder serves as a residence for the Roman Catholic clergy and the bishop who was given them in 1847. The new palace affords accommodation to the various public offices connected with the government of the canton. The Protestants possess four churches, St. Leonhard, Linsenbühl, St. Mangen, and St. Laurenz, the latter of which is a fine edifice in the Gothic style, and is built upon the venerable remains of the ancient church.

The most ancient part of St. Gall is to be found about the market-place and the old town-hall; and the market on a Saturday presents the busiest of scenes. Carts and waggons begin rattling over the pavement early in the morning, and by the middle of the day they form a sort of waggon-rampart, while in addition to these the hotel omnibuses are perpetually passing and repassing with loads of passengers from the railway station. There are crowds of country people carrying baskets and pitchers; there are dealers in fish from Lake Constance, and dealers in fruit and vegetables, all exhibiting their goods. You see the greatest possible variety of faces, some most original ones, originality being indeed characteristic of the people in general; here and there you may see a strange costume worn by some woman or girl from Thurgau or more distant parts of the canton, such as Appenzell-Inner-Rhoden; and you cannot have a better opportunity of studying varieties of dialect, as well as varieties of countenance.

The town stands higher than almost any other in Europe, and an easy ascent leads the traveller to the top of one of its natural watch-towers, whence he may obtain an extensive view of the country round. The Freudenburg, as this height is called, is a very favourite resort of old and young, and is much frequented on bright Sundays and holidays. There is a lovely panorama to be seen from the wooded summit. Immediately beneath lie the roofs and church-towers of St.

Gall, and the citizen sees with pride that his beloved town is spreading in every direction. If you are a German you may look across the green fields of Thurgau and away over the mirror-like Lake of Constance to the Swabian land; and then you must look at the heights around. We are in the realm of the lofty Säntis, and the monarch himself and all his court rise before us to the south; but his dominions are overlooked by other distant mountains, and on bright evenings you may distinctly see the peaks of the Tödi and Glärnisch, the mountains of Schwyz, Mont Pilat and the Rigi, and may receive a short, gentleman-like salutation from the glistening Eiger of the Bernese Oberland.

But there are more attractions for us in the immediate neighbourhood, and we want to make closer acquaintance with the cheerful green meadows of Appenzell.

We pack our knapsack, and the following day finds us at the Hecht or Löwen in Appenzell. If we had come merely to reconnoitre the place itself, we should soon have had enough of it, for there is nothing remarkable about its architecture; and as it lies in a cauldron-like valley, intersected by the Sitter, it cannot be said to be romantically situated. In the Bernese Oberland you have one or more giant mountains facing your hotel window, and you hear the constant sound of grand waterfalls, whereas here you will find only monotonous, gently swelling green hills, not overlooked by a single neighbouring peak, not even by the Säntis. There will be nothing, except perhaps a few little picturesque bits, to attract those who remember the beautiful timber-houses of the Prättigau, or the mediæval architecture of the interior of St. Gall.

The town is crowded, angular, mean-looking, and irregular; and the houses seem to be getting in one another's way. To be sure we have wood-work all brown with age and projecting eaves and oriels; but the houses look as if they had been put together by persons who had no love for or pleasure in them, and they have little in common with the clean, neat, you may almost say shining, and certainly well-lighted dwellings of Outer-Rhoden. Somebody calls Appenzell "a grey speck on the face of the bright green."

The only buildings worth mentioning are the parish church, which is rather pretty, and two convents.

But the light of modern times is beginning to penetrate even such places as this; and, as Appenzell is very well to do, we may expect to see her exchanging the unsightly garb of the shepherd or weaver

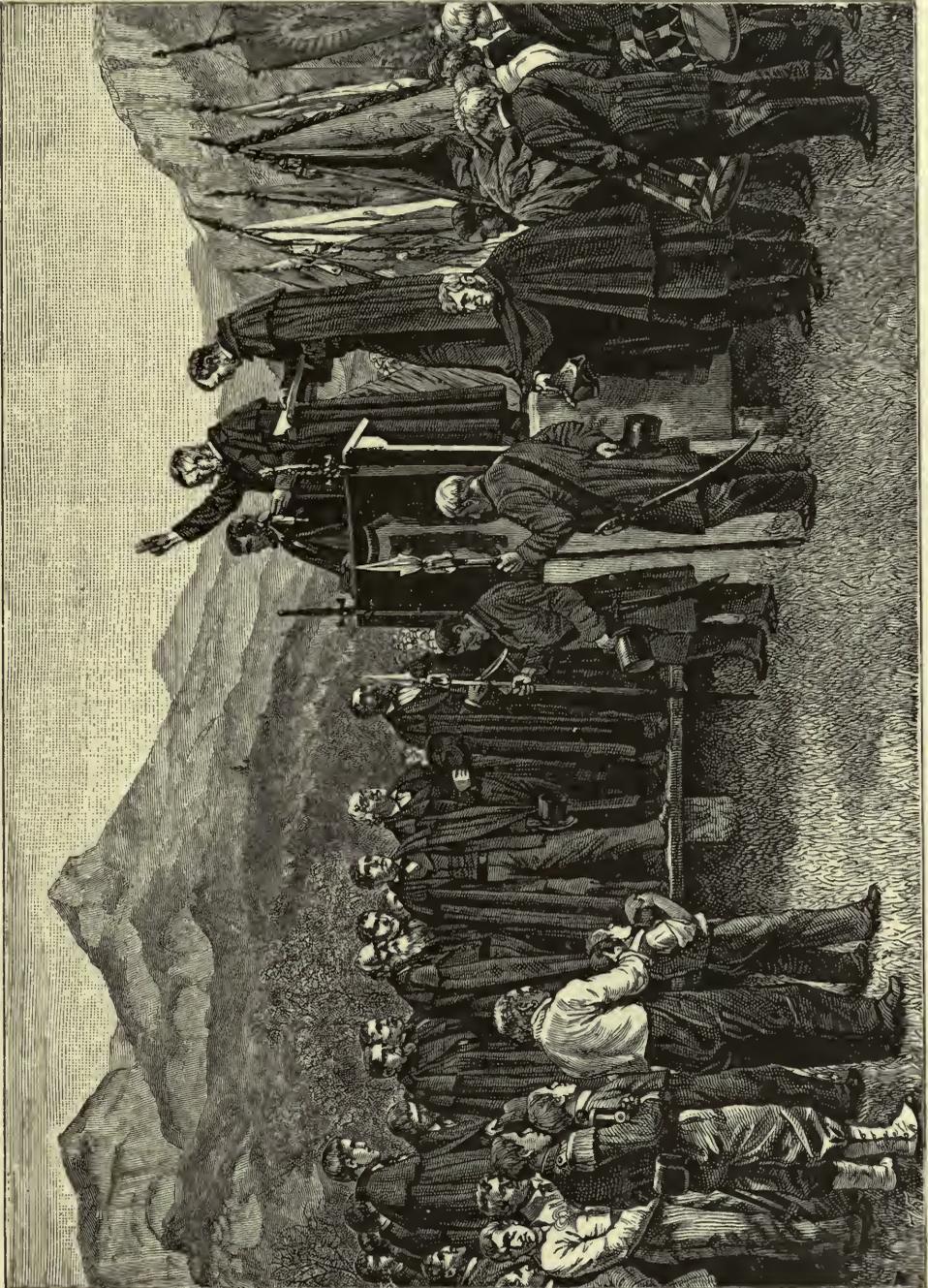
for something more becoming, as soon as the railway comes up to her convent walls.

The annual meeting of the Assembly of the canton is hardly to be called a festival, though regarded as such as soon as the serious business is despatched. It is a glorious institution ; but it now survives only in Inner- and Outer-Rhoden, and the cantons of Obwalden, Nidwalden, Glarus, and Uri, its ancient character being most thoroughly maintained in Inner-Rhoden. The sovereign people come together in the open air ; they are their own judges and law-givers, and they still administer and exercise in this primitive and direct fashion the ancient rights which their forefathers won with their blood, and they have themselves since vigorously maintained.

The General Assembly reminds one of the ancient " Thing " of the German races, where the freemen met armed at the place of sacrifice beneath the sacred tree to choose their district counts and judges, and to make their laws ; or it recalls the Campus Martius and Magicampus, the March and May meetings of the Franks, which were attended by all those capable of bearing arms out of every district, and consisted of a review of the forces and a free discussion of the question of peace or war.

The Extraordinary Assembly meets only on special occasions. The Ordinary Assembly comes together on a certain Sunday in spring, when all the inhabitants of Inner-Rhoden go up to Appenzell like one man ; those of Outer-Rhoden go up one year to Hundswyl and the next to Trojen. The custom is a very ancient one ; for the people of Appenzell—and, indeed, each separate parish—were in the habit of assembling as early as the sixteenth century for an annual inspection of arms, those being times when the sword needed to be always sharp and the halberd always bright. Towards the end of the seventeenth century, it was again impressed upon the people that every respectable man who was capable of wearing arms should carry magnificent long side-arms ; and even at the present day, though the persons of most distinction wear decent modern swords, you may still see the Appenzeller striding along to the Assembly with some bent, rusty, often very curious weapon which has belonged to his ancestors, and has slumbered peacefully all the year round under the bed. He probably knows no more of its use than what he has learnt from the history of his native province, whose inhabitants were only too often obliged to defend their lives. The sight of an old man bent with years and toil, weather-beaten and white-haired, marching along to

the Assembly, with his sword under his arm, and his well-starched



GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN EAST SWITZERLAND.

Sunday collar standing up so stiffly above his short green frock, may

seem absurd ; indeed, the whole procession looks somewhat as if it belonged to the carnival, as it moves on to the "chair," preceded by the band wearing impossible uniforms, half white and half black, and crashing out the strange "Assembly March" on their drums and fifes. Some people might be disposed to laugh at the whole proceeding, but they will soon be serious enough if they turn to the history of Appenzell, or glance at its constitutions.

Hats off ! These are the descendants of the brave heroes of Speicher, Häuptlingsberg and Wolfshalde, who, undismayed by the superior numbers of the foe, wielded sword and battle-axe to such good effect that the yoke of the tyrannical masters who had so long oppressed them was shivered to atoms. This was the time of which the old chronicler spoke with admiring wonder, saying, "It should also be known that the most strange and wonderful thing happened with regard to the Appenzellers that ever occurred in this land—in a short time they became so powerful as to drive away all the nobility."

And then throughout the whole land there was "one staff, one court of justice, one assembly, and one standard;" and to this present day, the only earthly superior they recognise is their own constituted authority as embodied in the person of the "Landammann," or chief magistrate. Those here assembled are the main-stay and bulwark of the country ; they feel themselves to be one homogeneous whole, and none are excluded from their ranks save those who can boast neither arms nor respectability.

And now the Landammann, as being the leader of the people and president of the council, mounts the platform, which is draped with the national colours of white and black, and has two mighty, ancient-looking swords crossed in front of it. On his right hand stands the apparitor or herald, who puts the questions under discussion to the vote, and on the left stands the clerk of the council.

The Landammann takes off his hat, and every one present follows his example. A profound silence falls upon the assembled thousands, which shows that the people look upon the meeting as a very serious affair. Then comes the greeting to "our trusty, faithful, and beloved fellow-countrymen," which is heard far and wide by all the many spectators gathered around the large circle of voters. Thanks are offered to Heaven for having preserved them to meet together once more, and mention is made of the heroic deeds of their homely ancestors. This introductory act closes with general, silent prayer

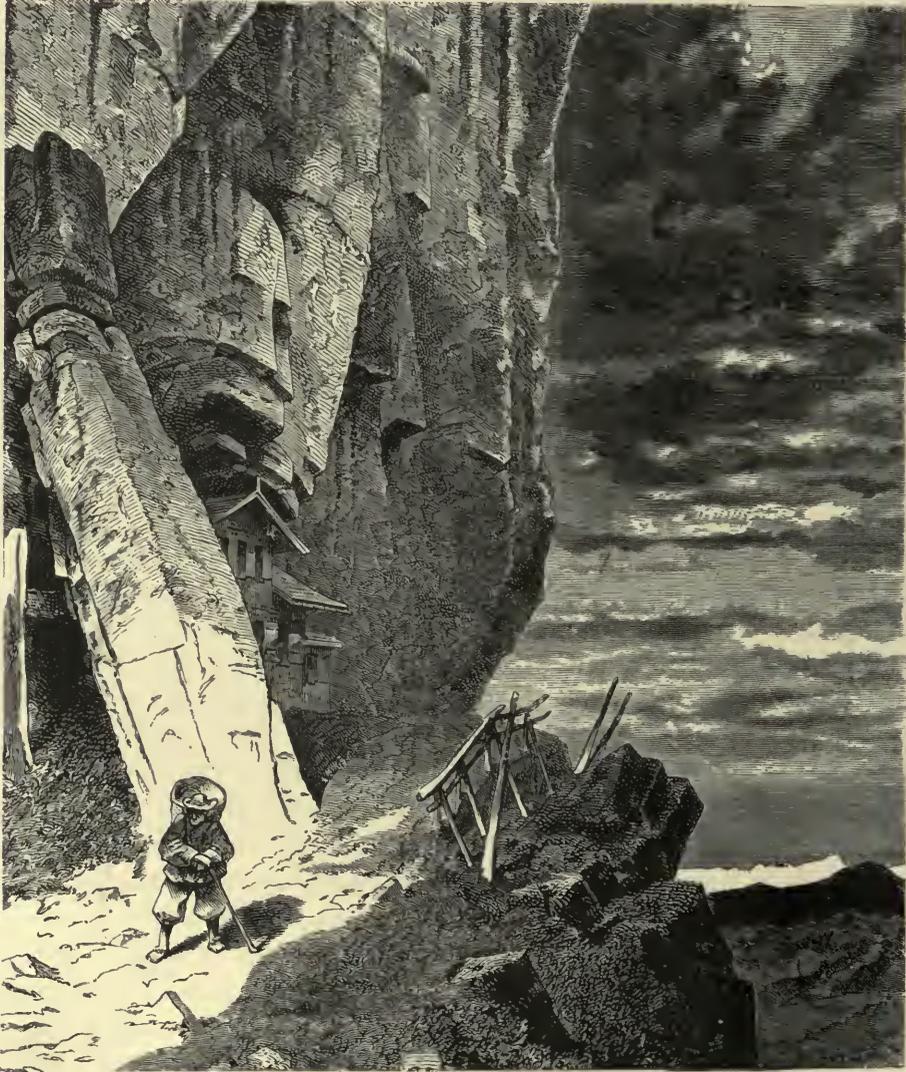
which never fails to make a deep impression upon strangers unaccustomed to the practice, such as the inhabitants of Outer-Rhoden, where the whole proceedings are conducted in a much more calm and dignified manner.

Then follows the business of the day, the rendering of accounts, and the elections or the voting upon important matters; and here one characteristic of the people, namely, their political ability and parliamentary tact, are most conspicuous. Almost everything goes on as well as in a well-ordered parliament-house, and often a great deal better.

The object of the General Assembly of course is to insure the common weal, and the officers there elected have to do with the whole state; but each separate parish or community is also at liberty to take measures for its own exclusive well-being. Each is its own master, and as each has been permitted to pursue the path of progress without interference from its neighbours, a noble spirit of emulation has been evoked. All are ready to make sacrifices for the public good, and the working of the whole system has been such as to bring in little or nothing, so that they offer no temptation to those who are greedy of gain, and many occasions of strife are thereby avoided. The administration of justice—and, in fact, everything—is ordered, settled, and arranged as in a family, and a meeting of the authorities is like a family-council. Every nation and every Swiss citizen who may have settled in the canton is eligible for office, provided he have attained the age of eighteen, and have received regular religious instruction. None are excluded but the disreputable and those who do not bear arms; but there are certain patriarchal laws which provide that father and son, brothers, father-in-law and son-in-law, uncle and nephew, may not both have a seat and vote in the administration of the community or in the communal court of justice, at the same time.

The manner of life led by the people resembles in many respects their own lovely canton, and we shall not understand it aright unless, before taking our final leave of it, we turn away from the singing and dancing, from the Assembly and the Fools' Parliament, and make one more expedition into the most characteristic part of the district. We ought to go to charming Wildkirchli, and the fine elevated pasturage of the Ebenalp, and to—— but, alas! we may well sigh—it is impossible to see everything, and there is very much to which we can but point with longing eyes. Fortunate and much to be envied are those persons, provided they be not confirmed invalids, who have

spent the beautiful summer months at some of the baths or places famous for the goats'-whey cure, drinking in strength with the warm whey, and health with the fresh mountain air, till they became so



INN "ZUM AESCHER," AT WILDKIRCHLI, WITH VIEW OF HOHE KASTEN AND KAMOR.

invigorated as to be able to enjoy the varied beauty around them. One pretty spot is called Freundschaftsitz, "the friends' seat," and other noteworthy places in the neighbourhood are Klausenbühl Hohe Kelle, and Guggei. These walks are within the reach even of

the invalid ; but those who are more robust will don their elegant Alpine costumes, and ascend the Kamor and Hohe Kasten Wildkirchli and the elevated pastures of the Eben- and See-alp, and will return home in the evening bringing with them lovely bouquets of



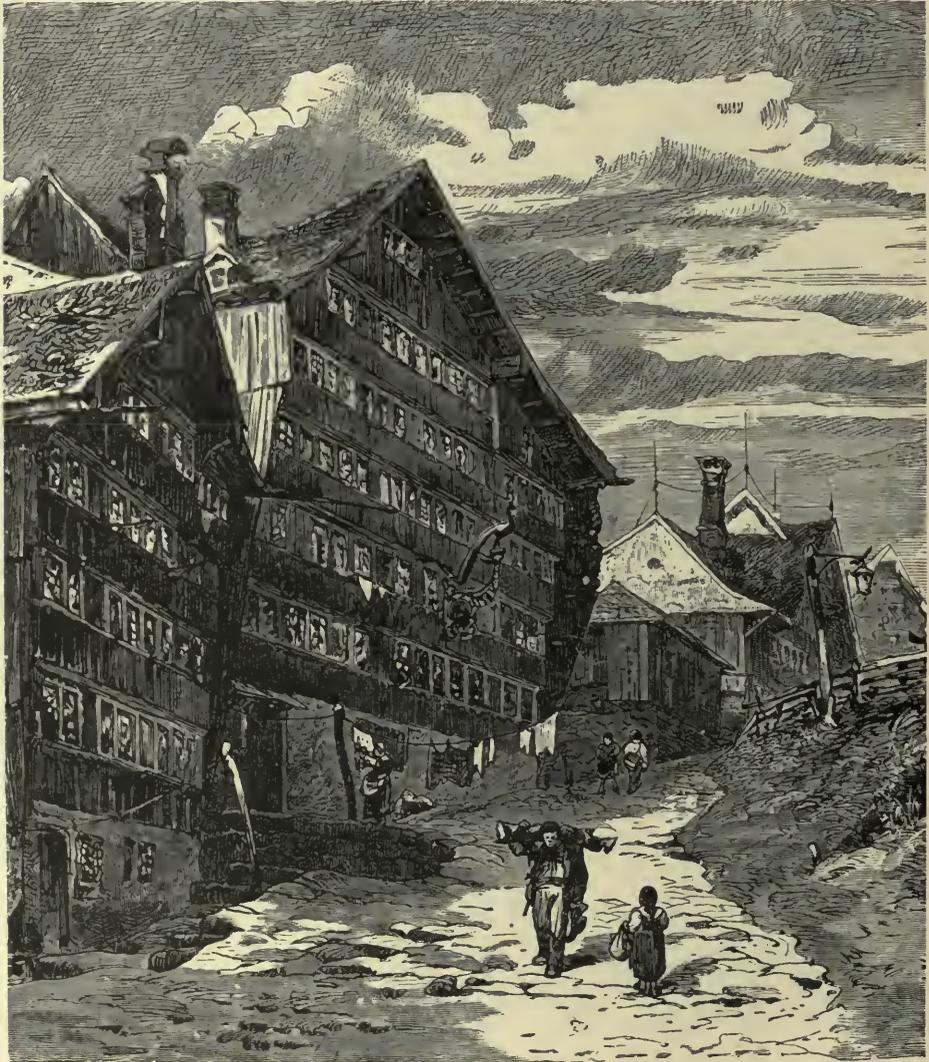
WILDKIRCHLEIN.

Alpine flowers for the ladies—unless, indeed, the latter have preferred to gather them for themselves.

It is a very lovely spot, surrounded by green meadows, clumps and rows of shady trees, wooded hills and grand mountains at various distances, which shield the valley from the north and temper the warmth of the south wind. Numerous easy paths lead across the Alpine meadows and into the mountains, and they always afford

abundance of pleasure and entertainment, being much frequented by healthy tourists as well as invalids.

But we must not forget Heiden. Its pleasant, calm, rather imposing-looking houses may be seen from the other side of Lake Con-



TIMBER HOUSES IN HEIDEN.

stance ; and, when we have reached the elevated plateau upon which the village stands, we may let our delighted eyes wander at will over the lake, among the mountains of Tyrol, and the ranges of the Liechtenstein and Vorarlberg, over the forest of Bregenz, in and out the

mountains of Glarus, and on to the distant Rigi and Mont Pilat.



LAKE OF THE SEEALP.

Immediately round about everything looks green and pleasant, and

the hilly canton of Appenzell lies outspread beneath us, dotted all over with its white houses, either standing singly or together in clusters and villages. These scattered cottages seem to justify the tradition that the devil was once flying over this neighbourhood with a sackful of houses, and, when he had reached the top of the Säntis, he tore a hole in the sack, and so by degrees dropped all the houses in the canton of Appenzell, where they have ever since remained, scattered one here and another there without the least order or design. The "Wild Chapel," or Wildkirchlein, as it is called, must surely have dropped out of the sack at the same time. How else could it have got into its present position, in the midst of a thicket of Alpine roses on the face of a steep precipice?

Leaving Weissbad, we wend our way across the sloping green meadows of the Valley of Schwendi, and ascend the fragrant mountain pastures where the snow-white goats are feeding; and, as we gaze from the Bodmen Alp at the steep and ever steeper wall of rock which rises perpendicularly to such a tremendous height before us, we may well wonder how we shall ever reach the top. But up we must go, for on the face of this wall hangs the Wildkirchlein, the object of our expedition, and upon it or behind it stretches the famous pasturage called the Ebenalp. This precipitous and inaccessible ridge of rock is the most easterly outpost of that one of the three ranges of the Säntis which lies farthest to the north, and forms the throne of the hoary monarch. It stands in an isolated position, being completely cut off from the "realms of the Säntis" by an abrupt precipice. As we wander on among the trees and shrubs, enjoying the calm beauty of the scene, and looking at the sweet Alpine flowers which grow among the fallen débris, we hardly notice the height to which we have ascended, until, on halting for a moment and turning round, we see, to our astonishment, that the wood on our left has disappeared in a deep hollow, and the houses at the bottom of the valley look like the dwellings of pigmies, while above them rises a towering line of rocky cliffs, similar to that which we are ascending. These heights, called the Sigleten, are the gigantic advanced guard of the middle Säntis range, which culminates in the Altmann peak in the west. Between them and the Ebenalp block, deep down at the bottom of the valley, lies a calm, dark-green lake called the Seealpsee, which reflects the tops of the trees which clothe the mountains on either side, and the bright green meadows of the Meglisalp.

The view to the left is so grand and lovely at the same time, that

it would almost lead us to forget the object of our excursion, which is beckoning to us exactly overhead. And yet we shall see something still more grand and sublime when we reach the Ebenalp. As we mount the narrow pathway scratched in the rocks, we ask involuntarily, "Who was the first man who trod this path, and who conceived the bold idea of building a chapel up yonder?"



EVENING ON THE EBENALP.

There is no path of any kind beyond the last little wooden house near the chapel. How, then, are we to arrive at the Ebenalp? The herdsmen will tell you, in their own peculiar dialect, the tradition of the cow-boy who saved the neighbourhood from the witches and warlocks who scared every one approaching the place. He invoked the name of the Holy Trinity, whereupon "the Evil One slunk away in

despair into the rocky cavern, followed by the cow-boy, who kept on repeating the three Most Holy Names. The devil, of course, could not stand this ; so he went on farther and farther right through the rock, till he came out upon the Ebenalp on the other side." And we, at this distance of time, may venture to follow him without fear of harm. The tavern-keeper's torch will show us the way through the dark grotto, with its gigantic arched dome, where the spirits of darkness seem to dwell, and where, as our footing becomes more and more uncertain, and the red torch gleams more and more dimly, we are seized with a great longing for the light from which we have been so short a time shut out.

A small door is opened, a breath of most delicious air comes towards us, and suddenly we are in the midst of brilliant sunshine, with all the signs of joyous life once more around us. We are surrounded by flowers and fragrance, by the whirr of wings and the hum of insects ; and when we are able quite to open our eyes, we see the fair land of East Switzerland spread out before us. There, too, gleams Lake Constance, and far, far away in the purple horizon, we catch a glimpse of Germany. The mountain-pasture upon which we are standing is the wonderful Ebenalp, which is so deservedly famous.





CHAPTER V.

THE LAKE OF WALENSTAD.

“Onward my spirit floats, till from giddy depths glimmer faintly
Walenstad’s pale green waves, shut within barriers of rock.
Darkened its lonely shores are by tall black fir-trees and ashes,
And, in the gloomy ravine, legend has built her a nest.”

SALIS.



SEE! there is a lake, gleaming darkly from out its rocky bed. Something in its glance seems to remind us of the old spirit of Nature; and surely lakes are the eyes of the mountain, powerful eyes, which attract us irresistibly, and allure us to try and learn from them something of the mysteries of the lonely wood. We feel drawn towards them, and their smooth, mirror-like surface stirs a thousand thoughts within our breast. Like the fisherman, we let down our net into their dreamy depths, and draw thence treasures which are to us as precious pearls.

Here legends and fairy-tales have their habitation and rule supreme, and poetry wanders meditative along the shore, at one time smiling, at another weeping. The colours of the surface change with the different hours of the day and with the varying seasons of the year; it is now blue, now green, now dark-green, now grey of so dark a hue as to be almost black; and, as the colours change and vary, so the impressions which the lake produces vary too, from the profoundest melancholy to the brightest, most sunshiny joy, such as causes the shepherd and the wanderer upon the mountains to shout for very lightheartedness.

The lake lies on the threshold of the region of the Alps, and

receives the waters of many a swift-flowing stream. The Seez flows



LAKE OF WALENSTAD.

into it on the east, close by the little town of Walenstad; on the west

near Wesen, it receives the Linth, and on the south the Murg, all of which lead, if we will follow them, to the glorious Alps of Glarus and the lower part of St. Gall, to the snowy peaks of the Glärnisch,



VIEW OF THE TÖDI.

Clariden, Tödi, Hausstock, and Saurenstock, among whose glaciers they have their source.

We are now in the river-territory of the Rhine, and in the mountain-territory of the Tödi. The latter is monarch of the whole region

and a very splendid kingdom he has. Wishing to be an independent sovereign, he separated himself, just where the Oberalpstock rears itself on high, from the ancient monarch of monarchs, St. Gotthard, and drew away with him a numerous following of stately princes, such as the Windgälle, Scheerhorn, Clariden, and Bifertenstock and many others, whom he brought into the lake district, into the midst of the lakes of Lucerne, Eger, Zürich, and Walen. Here he drew up his troops in order of battle, ranging them in three divisions. On the borders of Uri, Glarus, and Schwyz, looking towards the Muotta valley, he placed the range which have the Glärnisch for their chief and leader. The Schild, Mürtschenstock, and Mageren reared their heads between the Rieseten Pass and the Walensee, farther to the east; and the bold peaks of the Seven Churfürsten formed the vanguard in the north, where they joined the precipitous cliffs on the north side of the lake, and sent forth outposts to the east as far as the Rhine, and even beyond it.

In the days when Churwalen was a separate Gau, or "district, there was still a sharp line of demarcation between the territory of the Germans and that of the Italians or "Welshmen," as they were called—the term *Wälsch* being applied by the Germans to all foreigners without distinction. The Germans had settled themselves at Wesen on the Limmat, and along the Rhine as far as the right bank of the Iller, while the Walgau, or "Foreigners' District," reached up to the left bank of the same river. Between the Germans on the Limmat and the foreigners in Churwalen lay a lake to which the former gave the name of Walensee, *i.e.* "Foreigners' Lake," while they called the opposite shore Walenstad, the "Foreigners' Shore," a name which has clung to it up to the present day. The foreigners themselves call the southern shore Riva, the lake itself Lacus Rivanus, and its chief port Portus Rivanus. The place in those days was just on the borders of the ancient Bishopric of Chur, and was the starting-point for an important road which led from Curia (Chur) to Turicum and thence to Vindonissa, connecting Rhætia with Gaul. The lake was then a very important link in the chain, and Portus Rivanus was of great consequence both as a landing and lading place and as a strategical point.

But long before the Roman cohorts or German hosts passed along the road from Sargans and across the lake, a prince far more mighty than either of them, a free-born son of the mountains, chose this route for himself. This was no other than the young Rhine. We

have no document to show in proof of this, and many people no doubt will shrug their shoulders and put the idea aside as a fable; and yet, how very easy it would have been for him, before he had broken through the rocks between Gonzen and Fläscherberg, to turn aside to the left, and to flow from Sargans along the bed of the modern Seez into the Walensee. Thence he might have passed by way of the now reformed Linth across the marshes and into the lake of Zürich whence he might easily have found his way to Waldshut, along the bed of the Limmat and the Aar, which is much too broad for the volume of water which flows along it at the present day.

If the sun should happen to be shining brightly when the traveller reaches Wesen from Zürich or Sargans, his first glance at the lake is sure to make him close his eyes, overpowered by its dazzling brilliancy. But after that he will be seized with a perfect passion for looking and gazing, and the glorious view presented to him will fill his soul with a rapture of delight. To the north he sees a wall of yellowish grey, deeply-fissured rock, rising straight up from out the golden blue-green waters to a height of from four to six thousand feet; many a foaming mountain-torrent flutters down some dark rent in its side, looking as though it was the silvery veil of a water-nymph; in the chasm up above are some bright white houses, looking down upon the few little huts and cottages which cower below close to the waters of the lake; the southern shore is crowned with luxuriant flowers and foliage; the distant sound of the cow-bells and the shout of the herdsmen is borne down from above, and over the ragged peaks of the Churfürsten an osprey hovers on outspread wings.

The wild mountains on the opposite side seem to look with defiance not unmingled with envy at the gentle slopes on the southern shore, and very often, in their dark moods, they will beckon the black clouds to come to them from far and near.

Dark shadows flit across the lake, the waves of which are crested with glittering white foam; a hollow roar is heard in the recesses of the Churfürsten-chain, the sun is blotted out, and the north wind sweeps fiercely down upon the terrified waters. The angry, foaming billows rise higher and higher, struggling one with the other, and looking in their rage and terror as if they would fain clamber up the cliffs and get out of the way.

This sort of tempest is what the natives call "Blättliser," a most unwelcome visitor to the beautiful Walensee, but one which never leaves it altogether in peace. Many a fisherman has fallen a victim

to it; and one wild night in winter a steamer went down with every soul on board, and perished in the raging waters. In fact, this storm-wind renders the Lake of Walenstad one of the most dreaded in all Switzerland, notwithstanding its great beauty.

Most of the places on the southern shore are now railway stations, among which we may notice Müllihorn or Mühlehorn, and Murg, which lie at the mouth of ravine-like valleys, and under the shade of a perfect forest of fruit-trees. You may see them reflected in the lake and half buried in greenery, as you walk along the delightful road which leads from the Kerenzer mountains through Geissegg to the beautiful glen of Murgthal, and you will then have the old "Fifth Station" immediately opposite you.

In later times, when these military stations fell into the hands of peaceful herdsmen, they all ceased to be of any consequence, with the exception of Wesen and Walenstad, which continued to play an important part in connection with the navigation of the lake, and the constant transit of Italian and German merchandise. At one time during the present century, there were steamers constantly passing to and fro upon the lake, but they have been entirely superseded of late years by the railway which makes its way from Wesen to Walenstad, along the southern shore, with the help of tunnels and bridges.

South of Wesen, at the entrance of the beautiful valley of Glarus lies Näfels, the Roman Navalia, at the foot of the threatening-looking Rautiberg, and with the market-town of Mollis lying just opposite, under the precipitous wall of cliff on the east. The wild river Linth flows between the two.

The Austrians were thoroughly put to the route at Näfels in 1352, and their defeat sealed the union of Glarus with the young Confederation. But the eleven great stones still to be seen in the meadow of Rauti commemorate another great deed, and recall the memory of the Swiss Thermopylæ and the Leonidas of Glarus with his following of heroic peasants.

At early dawn on the 9th of April, Counts Bonstelleu, Klingenberg, Sax, and Thorberg, advanced from Wesen at the head of 15,000 well-armed troops. Count Werdenberg, with 1,500 men, was to march from Kerenz and fall upon the rear of the handful of shepherds whom they expected to encounter at Näfels. But at the defences of Letzi, at the mouth of the valley of Glarus, lay the "Captain" Mathias Ambüel, with just two hundred peasants clad in

the homely garments usually worn by herdsmen. They were ill-provided with arms, but they were prepared to fight to the death.

As the sun rose they caught sight of the enemy's overwhelming



COSTUME IN THE CANTON OF GLARUS.

numbers, and Mathias Ambüel ordered the little alarm-bell of Näfels to be rung.

The summons was echoed onward from place to place, and one bell after another caught it up and repeated it until it was heard far up the valley of the Linth, and had penetrated to the foot of the

Tödi, where the cow-herds dwell, and even into the ice-covered mountains of the Sernfthal. And all who heard it, whether men or boys, threw away their crooks and their sickles, caught up axes and morgensterns in their horny hands, and in their linen blouses, with their sinewy chests bared, they dashed down to the scene of danger, ready to meet death if need were. Ambüel's little handful of men was thus increased to five hundred. But the enemy had already broken through the defences of Letzi, and had advanced to Glarus, wasting and plundering as he went. Näfels was in flames, and Ambüel, raising his standard on high, called his little scattered troop of peasants to follow him to the Rautiberg, whence he determined to make the first attack.

"Call upon God!" cried the powerful voice of Albrecht Vogel, the Landammann. "He is merciful; He is a defender of the orphan; He can raise the dead, and He is able also to deliver us!"

And then a mighty storm burst upon the assailants, who were first received with a heavy shower of stones, and then were attacked with clubs and morgensterns. Great was the confusion of horses and their riders; but the assault was renewed over and over again. Ten times it was repeated, and the peasants were in sore distress, when suddenly was heard the loud battle-cry, "Schwyzerland here!" "Schwyzerland here!" they shouted in answer. The men of Schwyz were coming! and the little hard-pressed band felt imbued with fresh courage. The new arrivals were but thirty in number, but their strength was fresh.

A shepherd had set off to Schwyz on the Tuesday night, crossed the dreary Pragel-pass, descended into the valley of Muotta, and reached his destination early on Wednesday morning. Fifty men were ready to start, and thirty of them set out at once, reaching the scene of action by Thursday.

The contest was renewed with the greatest fury, amid the battle-cries of the shepherds, the shouts of the knights and their followers, and the thunder of great blocks of rock which were rolled down from the heights above and brought great destruction into the ranks of the enemy. At last, finding themselves assailed on all sides, the Austrians were seized with a panic and fled in the wildest confusion. It was only nine o'clock in the morning, but on they dashed without stopping, until they reached the bridge of Wesen, closely pursued by the men of Glarus. The bridge broke beneath their weight, and many of the nobles in their steel armour sank and perished in the waters of the Linth.

The men of Glarus turned back from the pursuit, and, falling down on their knees, gave thanks to the Lord of power and might for that, "through His mercy and succour they had been enabled to save their houses and homes, and had preserved their fatherland, their goods, and their honour." About three thousand of the enemy were



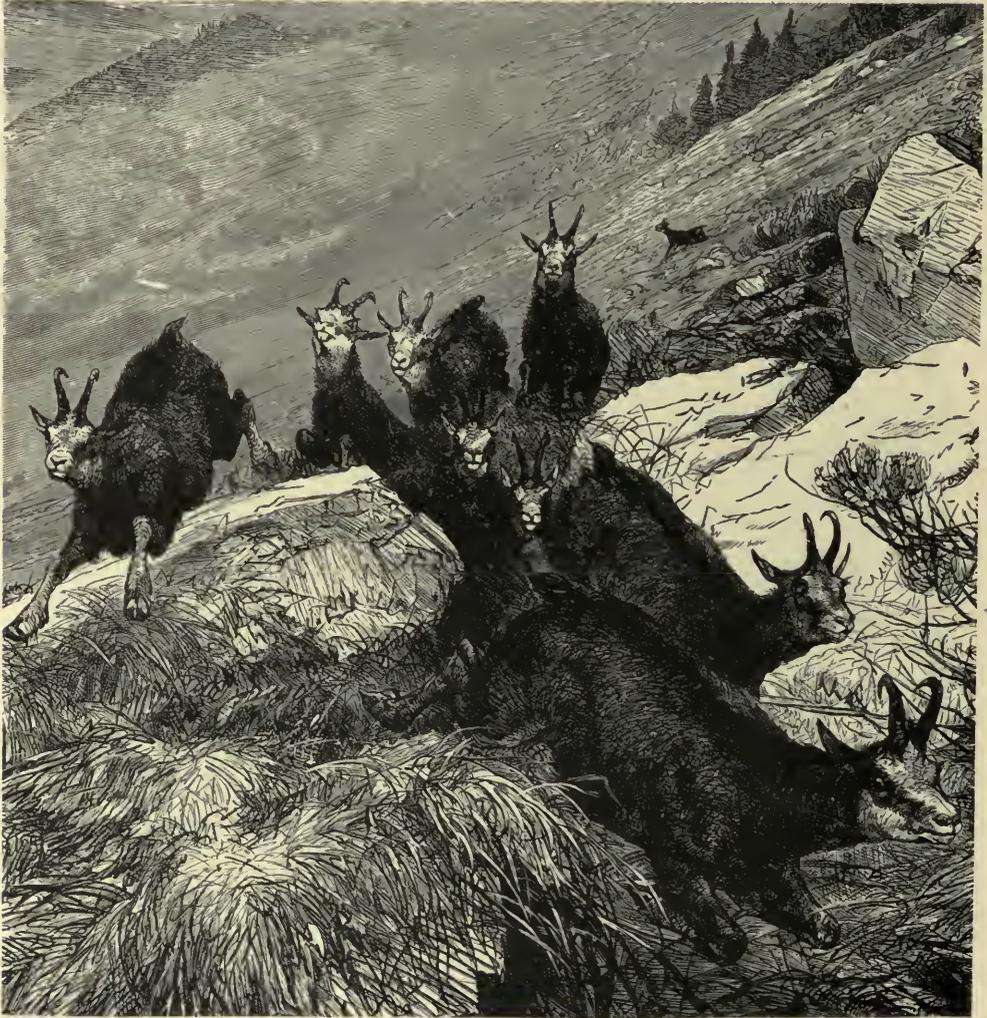
CHURCH ON THE BERGLI, NEAR GLARUS.

found dead upon the field, and the Swiss possessed themselves of eighteen hundred suits of armour and eleven banners. Fifty-five of their own men had died the hero's death.

The peasants still keep this glorious day in memory, and every year they go in solemn procession to the eleven memorial stones set

up upon the ancient battle-field, to keep the love of the fatherland alive in the hearts of all generations.

Glarus was originally a pastoral canton, and is now one of the busiest in Switzerland. Until the sixteenth century its population



CHAMOIS.

lived altogether on the produce of their pastures, on what they earned by cow-keeping and cheese-making. One ancient product of its dairies is the green Glarus cheese, often called herb cheese, which is well known throughout the whole civilised world, and is still despatched to all parts, being everywhere considered a great delicacy. It is

peculiar to the Canton of Glarus and its immediate neighbourhood, and owes its colour and smell to a strongly aromatic blue melilot which grows here, and here only.

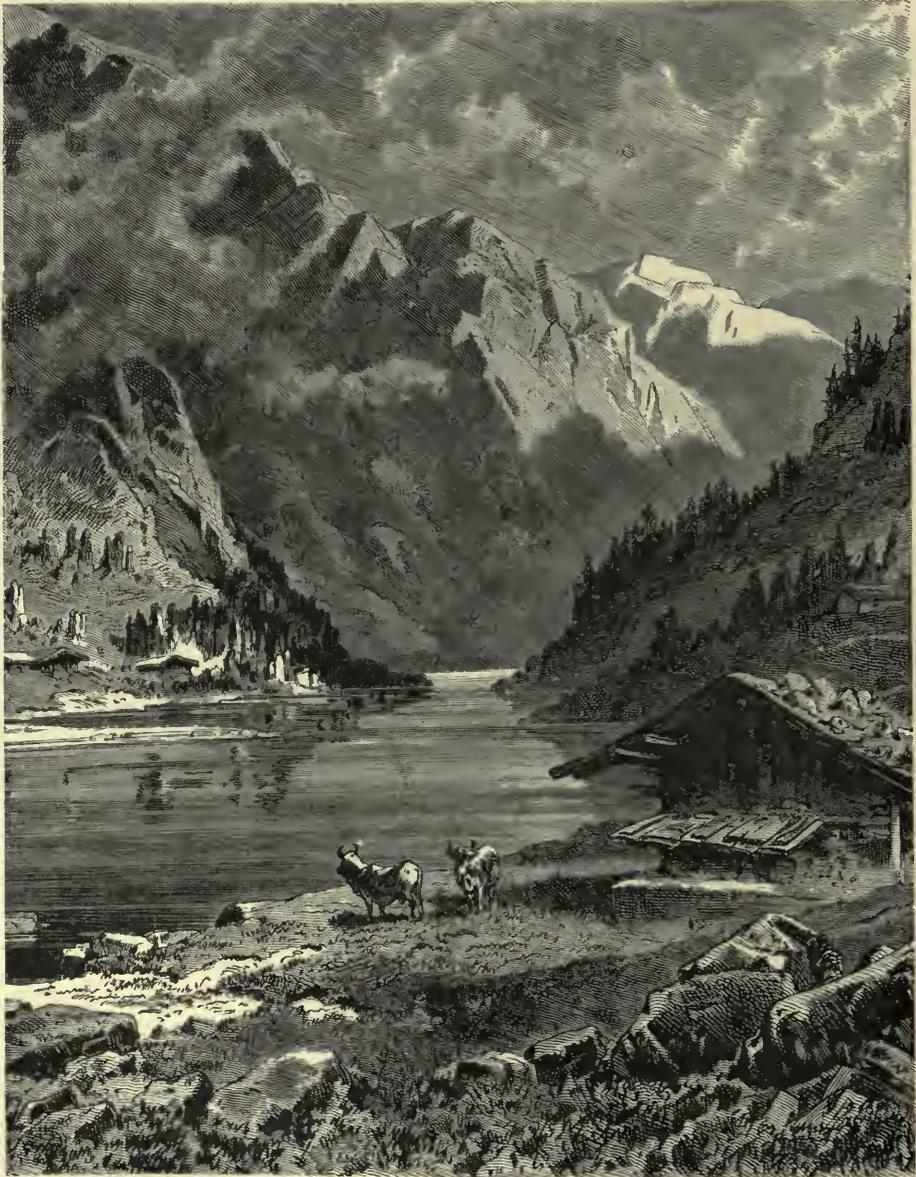
Glarus used to be renowned for its chamois hunters, when the chamois was more plentiful than it now is; and three of these men, each of whom had over thirteen hundred head, are held in especial remembrance, owing to their tragic fate. Their names are Heinrich Heitz, Kaspar Blumer, and David Zwicky, the latter belonging to Mollis, the two former to Glarus. Zwicky met his death on the precipitous mountain meadows of the Wiggis, where his skeleton was discovered after he had been for some time missing; Blumer perished on the Vorder-Glärnisch. The people of Glarus are still very fond of sport—too fond indeed, for the game with which the canton once abounded is gradually disappearing here as elsewhere. The last bear was shot in 1816, the last bearded vulture in 1820; foxes, badgers, and mountain-hares are very scarce, and lynxes have not even been heard of for some time past, the most that is seen being an occasional wild cat.

In Switzerland the eagle's rocky throne is now almost everywhere vacant; for, like the Redskins in the West, he has grudgingly given up his territory to his mortal foes. Now and then he may be seen in the Grisons, Tessin, Valais, and the Bernese Alps; but it would be difficult to prove that he builds his eyrie even there, for he seems now to wander through the sky like a strange and lonely pilgrim. Those who want to look at him must go to the museums, where, in Switzerland alone they will find some half-hundred specimens, most of them old and moth-eaten.

The chamois have been somewhat more fortunate, having had a refuge assigned to them in what are called the "free mountains," between the Grisons and the valleys of Sernf and Linth, where none but certain qualified huntsmen are allowed to shoot them, on pain of a fine not exceeding three hundred francs. The prohibition is, however, constantly evaded, owing to the want of keepers, and the gazelles of the Alps are becoming more and more scarce here, as elsewhere. A singular custom prevailed formerly, according to which whenever a native of Glarus was married, the huntsmen of the Freiberge were expected to furnish a couple of chamois, in return for which the bridegroom gave them sundry presents. This, with many another patriarchal habit and custom, has vanished from the valleys of Glarus, together with the ancient costumes, and even the dialect has

lost many of its original peculiarities—a natural result of much contact with the outer world.

Those who wish to go up to Stachelberg had better choose the



LAKE OF KLOENTHAL.

middle one of the three Glarus roads—that, namely, which leads up the Linth or Grossthal. There are two other valleys running

parallel with it on the left and right—namely, the wonderful Kloenthal, with its lovely lake, on the east, and the slate-producing Sernfthal, or Kleinthal, on the right.

It is not far from here to the Uelalp and Sandalp, and when you have reached these you have a whole panorama of mountains and glaciers before you. The great plateau of Urnerboden must not be forgotten, and when there, those who have a mind to do so, can descend into the Schächenthal, in the canton of Uri, which is so full of historical reminiscences. The excursion to the Kloenthal, with its lake, is however far pleasanter, and is indeed well worth making. The valley is shut in on the one side by the stern cliffs of the Glärnisch, as well as by the Ruchen, Milchblankenstock, Nebelkäpplez, Feuerberg, and Brenelisgärtli, and on the other by the Wiggis and his train. The cliffs rise immediately and precipitously out of the lake, which is fed by the numerous streams of snow-water which trickle from their hollows. The valley, with its alternations of meadow-land, copse-wood, rock, and water, is a perfect pastoral poem, and the monumental stone erected to the poet Gessner could not have been more happily placed in any other spot.



CHAPTER VI.

THE LAKE OF ZURICH.

AND now the sun had suddenly ceased to shine, for the frost-giant Hymir had made his appearance upon the world's silent stage. With the crown of his ice-bound head he touched the clouds, and at his approach the glaciers began to crack and the water of the earth froze and fled from before his advancing footsteps. All the luxuriant forms of life which had decked the meadows, the green grass and the rosy blossoms, fled from his presence or died away at the sound of his heavy tread; and then followed what we call the Glacial Age.

Who can tell how many thousand years have passed away since then! In course of time, the ice melted again and retreated to the loftiest mountains, the land reappeared, and the waters formed themselves into lakes, streams, and rivers. As we see it now, the land looks smiling and radiant as the Garden of Eden, with its wealth of trees and flowers, its golden cornfields, and its purple vineyards; and amid all this natural beauty, we see evidence of what cheerful industry and grave science have accomplished in the development and utilisation of all the resources both of hill and valley.

If the shores of the Walensee, as well as of many another little



ZURICH.

lake, are sacred to the dreams and meditations of the Muse of Poetry, the neighbourhood of the Lake of Zürich is surely the domain of

the Muse of Science. Science has here been busily employed in investigating the secret of ancient times, and in deciphering the inscription which mighty Nature has left not only on blocks of stone at the bottom of seas or lakes, but on many another grand and imperishable monument. Nor has she been unsuccessful; the secret has been disclosed; one veil after another has been removed from the past; and we, who already knew a good deal about the old age of our ancient Mother, may now read and wonder at the four great books, which tell of her early life. These books are entitled respectively the "Glacial Age," "Stone Age," "Bronze Age," and "Iron Age."

These great solitary boulders, "erratic blocks," as they are called, are often huge masses many thousand cubic feet in size, which have been brought down from their birthplace among the high alps on the broad backs of the glaciers, and have been deposited on the hills and lowlands of Switzerland, or have been carried even as far as Upper Swabia. Other monuments too there are, in the shape of heaps of stones and débris, called, according to their position, either terminal, lateral, or medial "moraines," which the glacier pushes before it or carries with it as it creeps onward. Rubbish of this kind is scattered over the whole district of Zürich and throughout the canton of Aargau, and the well-known "moraine of Zürich" alone measures more than twelve miles at Richterswyl.

Those were very ancient and remote times, when civilisation still lay enveloped in the shadowy mists which precede the dawn. And yet, in spite of the thousands of years which have elapsed since then, our scientific men know something about those ancient days, and have already filled many a volume with the information they have managed to collect upon the subject. Hoary relics belonging to that prehistoric period have been conjured up from their muddy beds at the bottom of the lake, and may now be seen standing in museums to be wondered at by the highly cultivated of the nineteenth century. Just as the vine-dressers dwelling at the foot of Mount Vesuvius knew of the existence of Pompeii long before it was suspected by the scientific world, so the fishermen of the Swiss lakes were long ago acquainted with the fact that there was a world buried beneath the waters.

In the winter of 1853, it happened that the waters of the lake of Zürich sank lower than they had ever been known to do before; and the people of Meilen, who had seized this opportunity of completing

some building along the shore, made the discovery that here, too,



A LACUSTRINE VILLAGE.

there were numerous old sharpened stakes, as well as pottery and

articles made of stone and bone. The news soon reached the ears of the scientific world, and much zeal was shown in exploring the bottom of this and the other lakes of Switzerland; and the result of these investigations was that much light was thrown upon the "Pile-building period," an age which dates back more than five thousand years before the dawn of history, and had until now been completely hidden from us.

More and more discoveries were made. As soon as the dwellings of that time had been reconstructed—by no means an arduous task—the domestic utensils and hunting weapons, and the remains of plants and animals, all seem to find their proper places. No doubt remained as to the manner of life led by these ancient people, and although we may have no positive assurance as to their name, we are able to divide the time of their existence into three well defined ages, called respectively the Stone Age, Bronze Age, and Iron Age, according to the materials of which their weapons and implements were successively made. The Stone Age, of course, was the earliest; the Bronze Age showed some advance in civilisation; and with the Iron Age we come to the times of the Romans. All the lakes have yielded more remains of the Stone Age than of either of the two others; but all three periods may be best studied at Neuchâtel.

Among the materials of the huts were found hearthstones and traces of beds, but there were certainly few comforts, and man's only real gratification must have consisted in feasting, to which he doubtless applied himself with all his might and main. The remains of great heaps of bones, which appear to have been gnawed and then thrown into the lake, give us some insight into the nature of his banquets, and even the bill of fare provided.

People fancy they have discovered, even in the Stone Age, some slight tokens of the existence of commerce, carried on, of course, by means of barter; there is doubt that it was practised in the later ages, and contributed greatly to the general advance of civilisation. As their weapons improved, people could venture, where the soil allowed it, to settle upon the shore; and if they still used the pile-buildings at all, it was as places of assembly, or for laying up their arms, implements, and winter store, and such like purposes. Both the earlier and later pile-buildings were at last destroyed by fire; but where the fire did not wholly consume it carbonized, and it is to this circumstance that we owe the preservation of many a sub-aqueous museum of antiquities.

The river Linth has poured a good deal of water into the Lake



A STREET IN ZÜRICH.

of Zürich since those days; times have changed since then; so, too,

has the face of the country. More and more débris was constantly brought down from the mountains; the forests grew thinner and thinner, the marshes dried up, and towns and villages were built upon the shore, or along the margin of the smiling lake. The land between the Walensee and the upper part of the Lake of Zürich was converted into one large orchard, through which the Linth flowed peacefully and beneficently. The river had a course of its own in those days, and passed the Walensee on one side, receiving its overflow but not touching it. Succeeding generations, however, sinned against the mountain-forests, and by so doing brought evil both upon the valley and upon themselves. When they had destroyed the trees which were Nature's defence against the wild mountain-torrents, these latter would in stormy seasons rush down the open gulleys, and like the legendary dragon, bring desolation and destruction upon the peaceful valleys. The bed of the Linth rose higher and higher, the waters of the Walensee accumulated, and the inhabitants both of Wesen and Walenstad suffered more and more from terrible inundations. The meadows to the right and left of the Linth suffered yet more seriously. The river left its bed, and bursting through all bounds, spread itself over the valley, which was once more converted into the stagnant marsh it had been in ancient times. Poisonous exhalations arose from the unhealthy soil, and fever settled in all the villages of the neighbourhood, where numbers fell victims to it. Where the cheerful sound of the herd-bells and the song of the reaper had once been heard, there frogs and toads croaked forth their satisfaction with the morass in their own peculiar tones, and swarms of buzzing gnats enjoyed their mazy dance.

The distress was very great, and grew greater year by year. Many complaints were uttered, but they died away unheard amid the manifold distractions of the time. To be sure, the Confederacy determined, at the beginning of the present century, to set matters straight, but a very vigorous spirit was needed to take the matter in hand. Happily for all succeeding generations, such a one was at length found in the person of a homely but energetic and scientific man named Hans Conrad Escher, of Zürich, who devoted his life to the work of setting bounds to the troublesome Linth. It was a great and bold undertaking, but it met with splendid success; for the Linth was turned into the Walensee by means of the Mollish Canal, and was then carried safely through the valley it had hitherto devastated into the upper part of the Lake of Zürich.

Then the land began to breathe again ; the marshes dried up, and the fields and meadows flourished once more beneath the fertilising influence of the sun. Prosperity returned to the valley ; the slayer of the modern dragon received for himself and descendants the honourable title of " Von der Linth ;" and the name of Escher von der Linth is held in high and deserved estimation by all his fellow-countrymen. We shall often hear him mentioned as we glide down the Linth Canal, or take the railway from Wesen and pass through richly laden orchards on our way to the pleasant and important Lake of Zürich.

Those who wish really to study such towns as Basle, Winterthur, Bern, and Zürich, must come with those aims, and they must look at them with serious eyes if they wish to be pleased. But if they do come thus prepared, Zürich is sure to fascinate them more than all the rest, and they will be likely to endorse the verdict of Horner, the circumnavigator of the globe, who thus expressed himself : " I have come back over and over again to my old opinion that Europe is the most beautiful quarter of the world, that Switzerland is the most favoured country in Europe, and that the pleasantest place in Switzerland for a man of cultivation to live in is, beyond all doubt, Zürich."

Even those who bestow but a cursory glance upon it must see that the town is the very centre and focus of a province which has a great destiny before it. It lies in the midst of one of the grand amphitheatres in which the great battle of civilization is being fought out ; and the arena comprises both the extensive basin of the lake and its immediate shores. Behind these the rich fields and meadows slope gently upwards into green hills covered with vines, among which are scattered many pleasant dwellings. Behind the hills rise dark, wooded heights, over which a torn, jagged wall of mountain looks solemnly down, and the horizon is bounded by the white glaciers of the High Alps. In the midst of this grand landscape lies the proud and commanding town of Zürich, which has attracted to herself all the life of the surrounding hills and mountains, and is the source and centre of all the strength and prosperity of which so many tokens are visible around. Zürich is the Queen of the Land, the splendid Lake-Queen !

It is to be noted that the actual town of Zürich did not crystallize around the Linden-hill, in spite of its historical associations, but grew up about the Rathhaus and Grossmünster or Cathedral, on the right

bank of the Limmat, and this part is still called the "Gross Stadt," while that on the left bank is called the "Kleine Stadt."

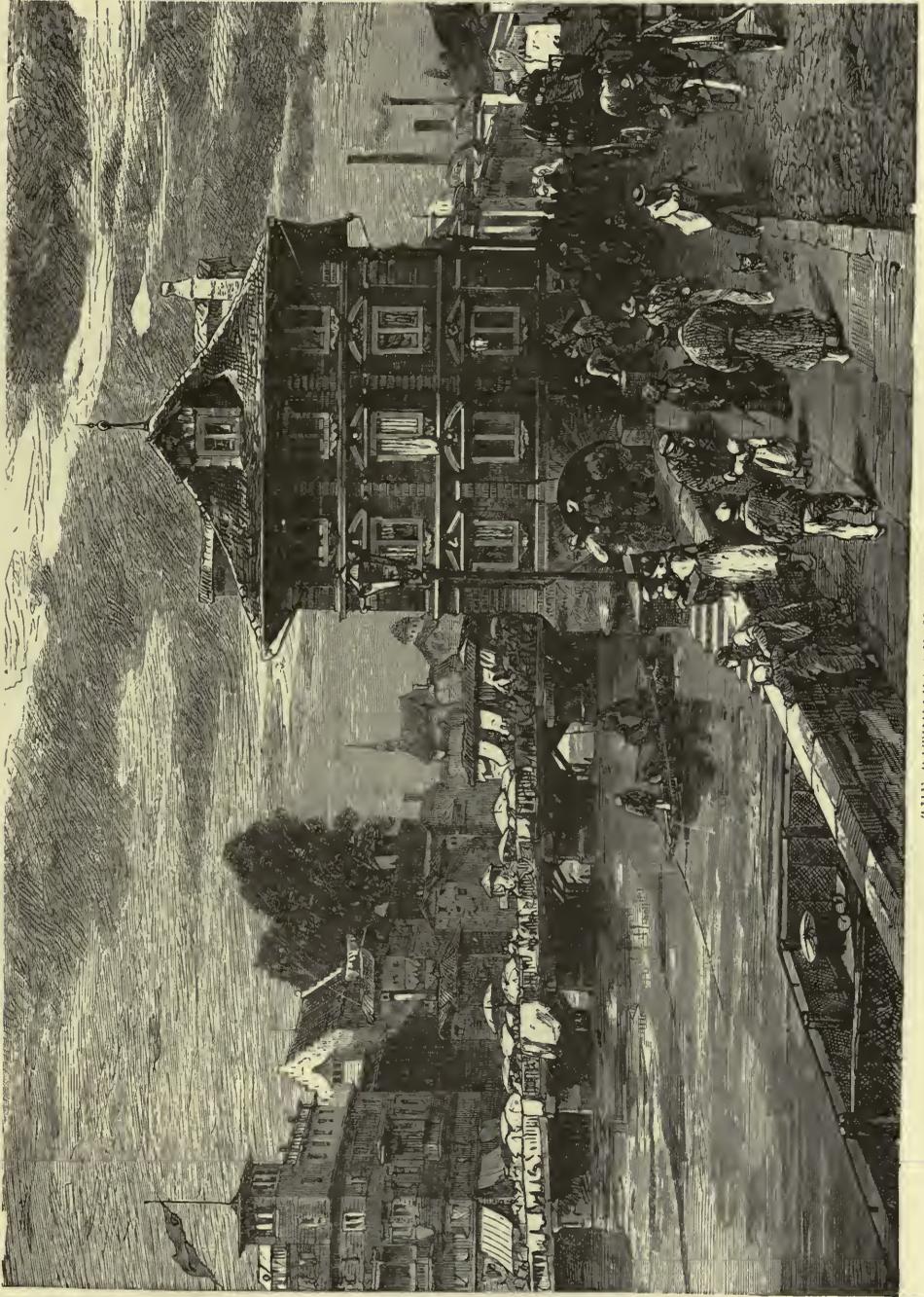
The main body of the true, genuine burghers, who knew what they were about, dwelt on the right bank; and here in their midst originated the germ of the town's subsequent history. Here were laid the foundations of that career which has won for modern Zürich the victor's wreath of myrtle, and here are still to be found the excellent Town Library, with the collection of the Antiquarian Society, the Cathedral, Rathhaus, Museum, Hospital, Court-house, Theatre, and Meat-market; higher up are the University, the canton's school, and many other important buildings, both old and new.

On the right bank of the Limmat towers the venerable cathedral called the Grossmünster, which dates from the eleventh century. It is a simple but noble structure, chiefly in the Byzantine style, through its two fine towers and much of the decoration were added at a later period. The statue on the west tower, representing an emperor with a crown on his head, is said to be intended for Charles the Great, who, as tradition says, conferred many benefits upon the town, and passed some happy days within its walls. Tradition has still many a pretty story to tell of those old times.

Opposite the Grossmünster stands its rival, the stately and splendid Frauenmünster, which is built in the form of a cross, and is of the thirteenth century. What we see in front of it is the old staple-house, where business went on briskly enough in days gone by, until it was transferred to the large buildings near the railway-station. The edifice which you see reflected in the waters opposite the staple-house is an old church, formerly called the Wasserkirche, or "church by the water," which is now used for scientific purposes. Within its walls are contained the Town Library, the Library of the Naturalists' Society, and the Museum of the Antiquarian Society. Looking up from the Wasserkirche we see a row of hotels built in the most modern style, the grandest of them all being the Hôtel du Lac; and the background of the picture is formed by the four fine arches of the Münster Bridge.

The scene along the quay from the Wasserkirche to the Rathhaus is of the very liveliest description, and any one who wishes to count the heads of the two-and-twenty thousand citizens of the inner town, cannot do better than take his stand here at certain particular seasons. The Rathhaus has retained very few marks of antiquity, and is, indeed, one of the more modern buildings. Its two predecessors served their

generation from the twelfth to the end of the seventeenth century, and



THE RATHHAUS QUAY, ZÜRICH.

the days of the present edifice are surely numbered, for if Zürich

continue to increase as it has done of late, it will certainly need a new and finer Rathhaus before long.

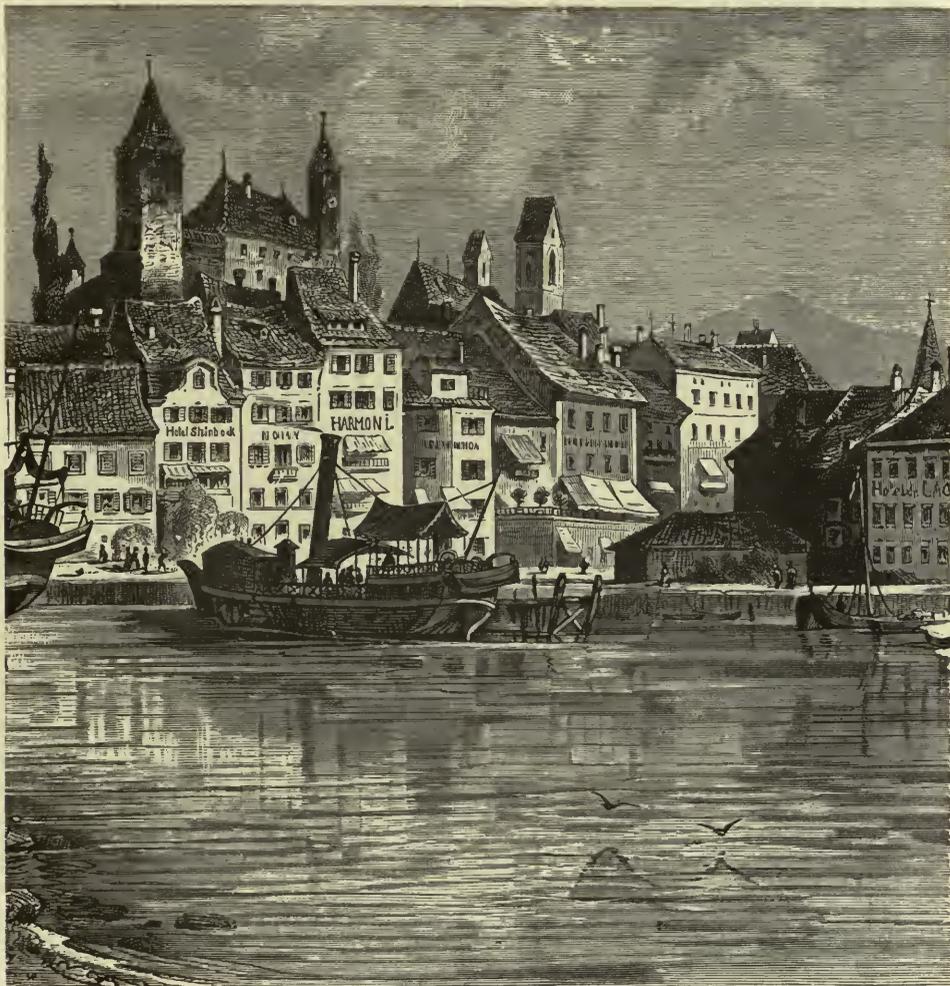
On reaching the gay harbour of Rapperschwyl the steamer comes to a halt, and the Untersee, or Lower Lake, terminates. On the



COSTUME IN THE CANTON OF AARGAU.

other side of the long bridge is the Obersee, or Upper Lake, which extends from the ancient town and castle of Rapert to Schmerikon, and has no right to call itself by the name of "Zürich," inasmuch as it is bordered by two other cantons, St. Gall in the north and Schwyz in the south.

Two tongues of land jut out here from opposite sides of the lake; and from Rapperschwyl, which stands on the northern shore, the bridge extends completely across the lake into the district of Schwyz. Rapperschwyl, the "town of roses," so called not from the fragrant flower of our gardens, but from the stone roses in its coat-of-arms, is



RAPPERSCHWYL.

a picturesque little town, built on terraces along the shore, and overshadowed by the old castle of Grafenburg, which stands upon an airy eminence, and once belonged to Rapert, the Crusader. Both town and castle have often been hard beleaguered, and shortly before the massacre of Zürich the castle was stormed and burnt. But this took place some centuries ago, and the many sieges which both have to

sustain at the present day are of a different and more peaceful character. Artists armed with pencils and paint-brushes advance upon them from all quarters and either congratulate themselves on the sketches they have made among the green hills and upon the lake, or else they poke knowingly about in the beautiful old Rathhaus, studying its antique windows, gables, and carved work.

Most towns in Switzerland, whether large or small, have an old castle attached to them, reminding one of the mediæval seals in brown cases which hang from old parchment documents and deeds of gift. Winterthur has Kyburg and the Castle of Wülflingen; Win-



CASTLE OF HABSBURG.

disch, or rather Brugg, has no less than the old ancestral Castle of Habsburg, and Laufenburg on the Rhine has the sister-castle, also called Habsburg. The thread which once united the seal to the parchment was severed by the sword of the burghers; and since the severance the town has continued to flourish, while most of the castles have fallen into decay, and if not altogether overgrown by weeds and grass, are now little more than picturesque ruins. Even the ruins, however, bear witness to the ascendancy and wild feuds of the old Empire, which stretched out her hands far across the Rhine and into the very heart of Helvetia. How often have the walls of these old castles re-

echoed with the party cries of "Welf!" and "Waiblingen!" The ruins of the Castle of Alt-Wülflingen, which crown one of the hills on the left bank of the Töss, near the beautiful baronial Castle of Wülflingen, have something to say on this subject; for here the Emperor Henry III. kept his insolent and seditious uncle, the Bishop



CASTLE OF KYBURG.

of Regensburg, closely confined, nor would he release him, in spite of the fulminations of the Pope. Until the fifteenth century, it was inhabited by Barons and Counts von Wülflingen; but after that it often changed hands. One of the strangest of its many owners was the presumably mad General Saloman Hirzel, who spent immense

sums in finishing and fitting up the interior of the castle, and lived here with his sons in a wild, fantastic fashion, until he had squandered his last farthing.

Of all the old castles, that of Kyburg is the best preserved. The rustic old building, with its six towers, still defies all weathers, and presents an appearance so imposing as to command respect even from the nineteenth century. It rises above the wood like a dream of the Middle Ages, or the very embodiment of romance; and the tiny village in front, with its quiet little church, the well-tilled fields on the open, sunny hill-side, the tall old lime-trees standing before the ancient gateway, with its coat-of-arms, which leads into the courtyard of the castle—all help to complete the strange picture. The hoary shadows of the past creep back into the twilight of the "Roman tower," or into the solemn darkness which enshrouds the chapel of the castle, which is built in the Romanesque style, and was frequented by pious worshippers as early as the eleventh century. The place was formerly inhabited by some of the mighty ones of the earth, an ancient race, whose family tree had begun to send forth branches as early as the ninth century. They were the Counts of Kyburg, and owned all the land between Kaiserstuhl and Lake Constance; but still, great as they were, it is not to them that the castle owes its historical renown. In 1264, the last Count, Hartmann der Aeltere, died, leaving the place to his nephew, the son of his sister Hedwig, who had married Albrecht von Habsburg; and this nephew, then a dashing young fellow, was afterwards known to the world as the Emperor Rudolf.

In whichever direction we wend our steps we are sure to come upon the footprints of ancient mediæval history; the whole neighbourhood abounds with them. Yonder lies Windisch, a place which is more conveniently situated than any other in Helvetia. The Romans, with their accustomed penetration, very soon perceived its advantages, and chose the triangular tongue of land formed by the confluence of the three rivers Ara, Rusa, and Limagus, as the site of their strongest and most important fortress on the German frontier, building it just in the rear of the natural rampart formed by the hills which slope up from the river-banks, and thus turning the strength of the position to the utmost possible account. A flourishing town soon sprang up about the fortress, and we may form some idea of its size from the fact that the seven modern places of Windisch, Brugg, Königsfelden, Altenburg, Fahrwindisch, Hausen, and Gebisdorf all stand within

what were its ancient bounds. In fact, the Vindonissa of those days



STREET IN AARAU.

occupied the position now held by Zürich; and if Zürich were again

called upon to fight for her life single-handed, she would have no alternative but to migrate hither. How often has it been said that this might be the site of a new capital of Switzerland! Enough of its ancient grandeur still remains to awaken our wonder and admiration, as, for instance, the traces of an amphitheatre, the ancient aqueduct extending from Brauneegg to Königsfelden, the old tower near the bridge across the Aar at Brugg, as well as numerous inscriptions, fragments of pottery, and coins. The town was entirely destroyed as a place of importance by the Huns, who ravaged it with fire and sword. The proud queen of Northern Switzerland was laid in the dust, and her place is occupied by grass and weeds.

Königsfelden tells us a bloody story of the year 1308, when the Emperor Albert was assassinated on the banks of the Aar, while on his way from the Castle of Stein, in Baden, to Rheinfelden. His daughter Agnes, the widowed Queen of Hungary, and her mother Elizabeth, after wreaking their vengeance on the friends and relations of the murderers, to the number of nearly a thousand, applied the confiscated property of their victims to the building of the Convent of Königsfelden, which was erected by their blood-stained hands on the spot where Albert fell.

The old towers and ruins in this neighbourhood could indeed tell us of many such like deeds of blood, but happily their voices are drowned by other and pleasanter sounds; and, as we listen to the cheerful hum of industry around, and note the rich beauty of the green fields and blooming orchards which abundantly repay the labour bestowed upon them by the industrious peasant, we feel that the canton of Aargau, or Argovie, well deserves to be called "The Canton of Culture." Fortune has greatly favoured it, as we may see by a glance at its pleasant little capital of Aarau; and, though poetry may have been driven away by the introduction of chain-bridges, new town-halls, barracks, school-buildings, and museums of natural history, and though all that was picturesque may have vanished before the presence of cotton and silk factories, still Aarau's prose is worthy of high esteem, since it has contributed to the formation of such a man as Zschokke, the well-known historian and novelist.

Meantime we have been wandering farther and farther away from the Lake of Zürich, and now a short excursion from Aarau to Schinznach or Brugg will take us to the small town and castle of Daufenburg, where we may gaze upon the blue-green waters of the Rhine or the shady woods by which the town is surrounded.



CHAPTER VII.

THE FOREST CANTONS.

FROM EINSIEDELN TO ALTDORF.

“And hail the chapel ! hail the platform wild,
Where Tell directed the avenging dart,
With well-strung arm that first preserved his child,
Then aimed the arrow at the tyrant’s heart !”

GEORGINA, DUCHESS OF DEVONSHIRE.



HEREVER we wander throughout the fields of Latium, the ancient history of old Rome is sure to meet us clad in the charming garb of legend and tradition ; and this is one reason why those delightful regions are so familiar to the student of antiquity, and so dear to the ordinary traveller. Tales of the past are told in their own grandly monotonous tones by the very waves of the sea, as they break on the barren, sandy shore ; they are sighed forth by the shuddering pines which stand like grave and gloomy sentinels keeping watch over the low flat coast ; they are whispered and wailed by the reeds which grow along the banks of the Anio and the Tiber ; and they come to us in the scents which are wafted from the bright and glowing Campagna.

And now we are about to wander through a fair and peaceful region, which may be called the Helvetic Latium, the classic land of Switzerland, where the seeds of her future greatness were sown. Wherever we go, from the top of Mount Etnel, which lies on the northern threshold of the little canton of Schwyz, to the mysterious region of the St. Gotthard, from the precipices of Glärnisch to the summit of the Rothhorn, which towers above the lake of Brienz, in the valley, and on the mountains, on the shores of the lakes, in the dark

pine woods, under the fruit-trees, in the narrow streets of ancient mountain-villages—everywhere we shall find ourselves accompanied not only by the grave Muse of History, but by her less serious sisters, Legend and Romance, who are just as fresh and blooming now as they were centuries ago.

Legends live and flourish everywhere—in the green forests, in the sunny meadows, among the flowers of the Alps, and in the dark recesses of the “free mountains,” whence they look forth with innocent, child-like eyes upon the quiet, devout pastoral population around. But there came a time when the wicked schoolmaster arrived with an iron rod in his hand, and learned, critical blue spectacles on his nose, and he immediately set about proving to us by means of documents, old and new, that facts and names and dates did not correspond, and that all these histories were mere fables and fairy-tales.

Yet even we, if we come with child-like hearts, shall find the whole region of the Forest Cantons alive with memories, and pervaded by the spirit of the sublime, the beautiful, and the eternally true; and, as we wander along with Schiller’s “Tell” to serve as guide-book in our hands, we may expect to derive much real pleasure from our ramble. But if any one should be disposed to laugh at us and say, “Do have done with your William Tell! Will you never give over raising that misty, mythical hero of yours aloft upon the shields of history? Has it not been conclusively proved that there never was such a person?” Well, we have our answer ready, and it is as follows: “Tell, or some man to whom the people assigned the name of Tell, must have existed and must have distinguished himself in such a way as to make an indelible impression upon the minds of the people. Popular tradition does not fetch its heroes from dream-land or cloudland, and then fashion them into living figures. Tradition takes note of those only who make themselves noticeable; and she deems those only worthy of being inscribed on her roll and handed down to posterity, whose great achievements, intellectual or political, have won for them a claim on the love and remembrance of a nation. Such as these, tradition chooses as her special darlings, adorning their memories with the fairest images of her fancy, and casting a sort of supernatural halo round all the events of their lives, only that she may thereby the better adore and marvel at the wondrous way in which Divine Providence has guided them and watched over them.”

And surely if such a man as Johannes von Müller declares the

result of his investigations to be a conviction that "our hero certainly did live in 1307, and that in those places where thanks are still offered to God for his success, he actually did perform such deeds as led to the deliverance of his country and entitled him to the grateful remembrance of posterity"—then, surely, we wandering summer birds may gladly agree with him, and own that the poet is right when



ABBAY OF EINSIEDELN.

he says, "While mountains stand and hills remain the same, the archer Tell will never be forgot."

From the blooming smiling garden which lies about the Lake of Zürich, from the land of sunshine and cornfields, we have suddenly come into an inhospitable region, where very few attempts seem to have been made to bring the soil under cultivation. It is a relief

to look back from the top of the mountain upon the bright landscape and the flourishing villages we have left behind; but the devout pilgrim will here turn aside into the chapel of St. Meinrad, who came hither a thousand years ago, and led a life of loneliness and contemplation in the depths of the wilderness. Like many of his contemporaries, he, the son of a noble race, felt impelled to withdraw from the disorders of his time, and was attracted from Bollingen, which we see yonder in the direction of St. Gall, to the wooded summit of Mount Etzel, where he built his first hut, and remained for seven years. At the end of that time even this spot was not sufficiently retired to satisfy him, and he went farther on into the depths of the gloomy Finsterwald. Here, on a rocky plateau by the side of a copious mountain-stream, and surrounded by fir-clad hills, he laid the foundation of what has since become a celebrated monastery. It stands nearly in the centre of the Alp- and Sihl-thal, and has developed into a building of such magnificence as to form a startling contrast with the wild, inhospitable region around. Meinrad was murdered by two robbers; but a pair of pet ravens, birds which have always been on good terms with the followers of St. Benedict, pursued the assassins, and eventually led to the discovery of their crime.

The hermit's cell was gradually enlarged, century by century; and now, if the saint who passed his life in voluntary poverty could see the grand monastery which occupies its site, and could gaze upon the treasures of gold and precious stones which it contains, he would think it was all some witchcraft of the Fata Morgana. A motley throng of two hundred thousand pilgrims are said to visit the grand Abbey-church of Einsiedeln year by year, accompanied by waving banners and plenty of summer dust, moving in processions to the sound of chant and prayer. The honest Protestant Swiss cannot understand these Catholic devotees; perhaps the great chemist, physician, and mystic lived a few hundred years too soon. In these days he would have set about his search for the Philosopher's Stone and Elixir of Life in quite a different way, and probably, had he lived now, despair would not have driven him mad, and his wild genius would not have been wasted in a life of debauchery and self-indulgence. In those days he cursed knowledge, for—

“ Alas! she ne'er attained her highest aim,
Sickness was not o'ercome, and Death still held
His own; no means were found to make all men
Without exception happy.”

And this is why we see mankind everywhere pressing forward with such pathetic earnestness in search of the deliverance which they need. The strong-minded find it, or profess to find it, by climbing the philosophic heights of Darwinism; the poor find it in the Gospel of Christ, and so they climb the mountains and make pilgrimages to the Black Virgin of Einsiedeln.

When next we come to ourselves we find that we have taken a



LAKE OF AEGERI.

short flight to westward, and have reached a small, peaceful, dreamy lake, bordered by sedge and rushes, and lying in the midst of a fragrant green valley surrounded by charming hills, on the slope of which the fruit is ripening in rich abundance. There are pleasant-looking dwellings round about, and to the south of the lake, which is known as the Aegerisee, rise the Kaiserstock and the Russiberg, the former of which descends so precipitously into the lake as to leave scarcely

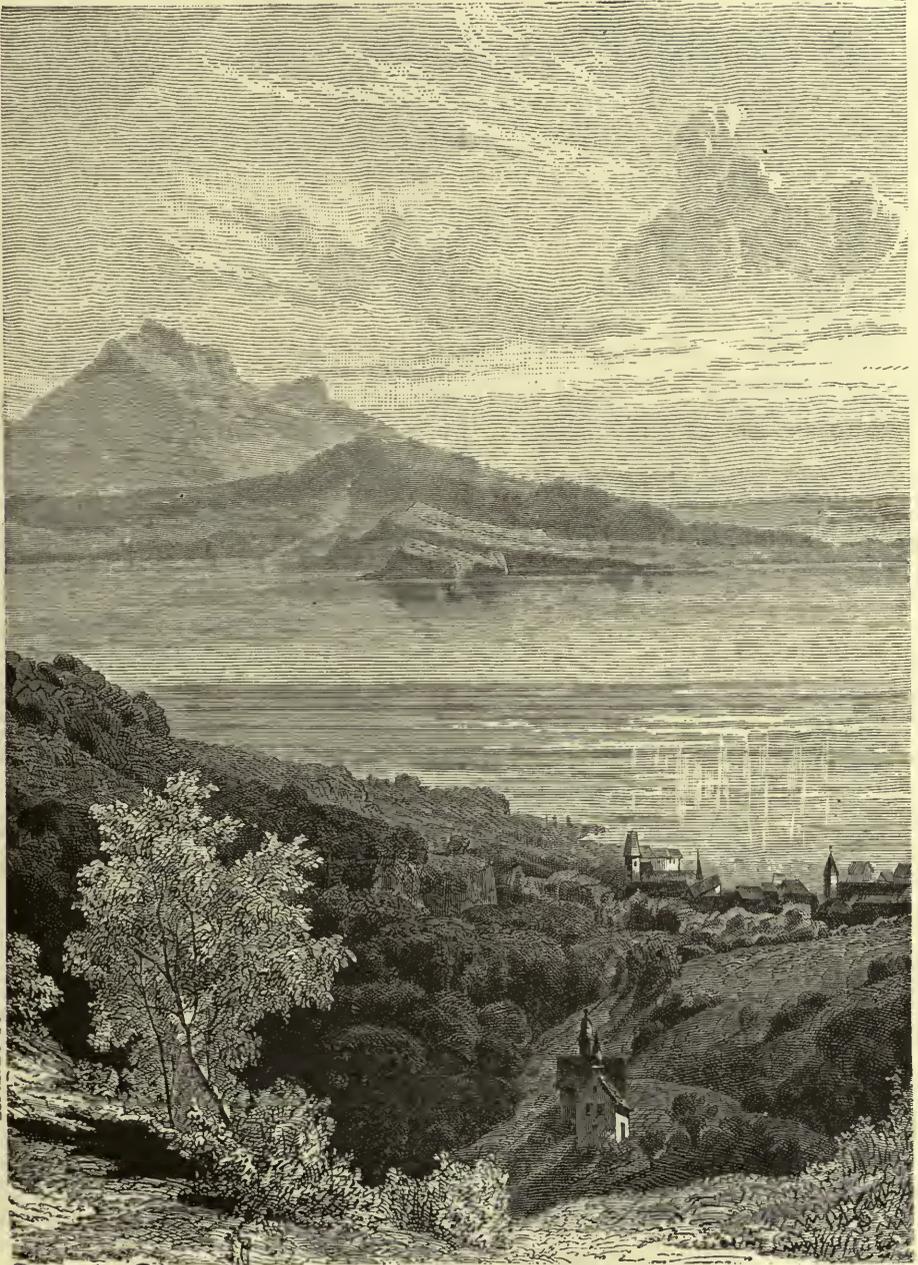
room for a road along the margin. East of it lie Morgarten and



RATHHAUS, ZUG.

Figlerflue, and upon this stage, small as it is, was played the most

important act in the ancient Swiss drama of Liberty, the principal *rôle* in which was taken by William Tell.



LAKE OF ZUG.

We are now in the canton of Zug, and a short journey will take

us from Unter-Aegeri to the little town of Zug, the principal place in the canton. It stands at the north-east corner of the Lake of Zug, and looks like an antique gem in an old-fashioned setting, a genuine example of mediævalism. No other town has so faithfully preserved all the characteristics of the Middle 'Ages, both in form and in colour, in its walls, towers, gates, and doorways. Even Lucerne is less antiquated, and the mediævalism of Schaffhausen and St. Gall is confined to a few particular streets. It looks as if Holbein or Dürer must have painted its dark colours on the bright green background formed by the hills behind; and, as it looks into the lake and beholds itself mirrored in the clear waters, it sees the self-same reflection as met its gaze centuries ago.

The town looks like some aged grandmother asleep in an arm-chair, of very, very ancient date; there is no life or cheerfulness about it; brooks run dreamingly down the streets, and above the ornamented gables floats the sound of bells coming from a dozen different churches and chapels and a couple of convents.

The Lake of Zug is often dark, even sad-looking, and then again it is calm and dreamy, a perfect poet's lake. From the Zugerberg you have also a good view of the numerous bays, headlands, and promontories which diversify the shores of the lake, and of the dark luxuriant woods in the foreground, from among the foliage of which peep forth scattered dwellings, clusters of houses, the Castle of St. Andrew and St. Buona, and, on the western shore, the hamlets of Cham and Risch. And we are on sacred soil again, almost without knowing it! We have reached Arth, in the canton of Schwyz. The ascent of the Rigi is made from this place, but we are not going to undertake that at present; like wise travellers we are going to keep the Rigi for a *bonne bouche* and turn our steps towards Schwyz in the meantime.

If we happen to have reached Arth on the 2nd of September, we may assist at the "Schuttjahrzeit," a melancholy commemoration held in memory of the terrible landslip which overwhelmed the original village of Goldau. Seventy years ago the road from Arth to Schwyz lay through a little mountain paradise, whose luxuriant garden-like meadows filled all the space between the darkly-wooded slopes of the Rigi and Rossberg and the pleasant shores of the Lake of Zug and Lowerz. The brown wooden houses, which lay half-buried among fruit-trees, were the abodes of contentment and modest prosperity, and the inhabitants of the little villages of Goldau, Busingen, Lowerz,

Oberröthen, and Unterröthen, were known everywhere for their simple manners and ways, which are still remembered and talked of.



THE LAKE OF LOWERZ, WITH VIEW OF THE MYTHEN.

But there is nothing now to be seen of these villages, and their place knows them no more. The valley is become a wilderness, a scene

of terrible ruin and confusion, frequented by the sorrowful shades of the five hundred persons who were overtaken by sudden death on that fearful September afternoon in the year 1806.

A stratum of conglomerate, a thousand feet broad, a hundred feet thick, and more than a league long, was detached from the top of the Rossberg, and fell with a thundering roar which was heard as far as Zürich. The waves of the Lake of Lowerz, lashed by the falling rocks and débris, rose so high as to completely cover its two picturesque little islands, and the lake itself was very much diminished in size. The little paradise which had smiled in all its beauty only a few minutes before was utterly destroyed, and its place occupied by ruins and masses of rock, among which the water, arising from springs which had been dammed up by fallen earth, collected here and there and formed numerous pools and bogs.

What, compared with such wholesale destruction as this, is the slight havoc wrought by the hand of man upon the works of man, of which yonder ivy-clad tower standing on the little Isle of Schwanau, in the Lake of Lowerz, is an example? An insolent noble dwelt there in times gone by, and was slain by the brothers of a damsel whom he had forcibly carried off. The castle was destroyed when the other strongholds were destroyed, in the year 1308. This date and the name of Steinen, a place on the other side of the lake, remind one of Werner Stauffacher, another of the famous three who between them founded the Confederacy; his house stood where you now see the tiny chapel adorned with inscriptions and dedicated to his memory. Fear compelled the tyrant nobles to build their castles substantially, so that many of them have been preserved to prosperity, while such a dwelling as that of Stauffacher's has necessarily perished. But in wood and field, in church and schoolroom, you may still hear grown people and children singing songs and telling tales of those bygone times; and, if a curse rests on the ruined castles, the places where nature's noblemen dwelt are hallowed for all time, while the sublime golden utterances which the poet has coined for them are still current throughout the whole land, and many of the peasants who live in this neighbourhood will willingly favour you with the recitation of long pieces from Schiller's play.

There is one very beautiful road leading from Arth across the desert of Goldau, and along the Lake of Lowerz to Brunnen; then there is the new main road running along the Hoggenberg and the Lake of Zürich to Einsiedeln; the road from Brunnen, into which the

new Axen and Gersauer roads open ; and another new road to the Muottathal, and so on. He will also discover that there is a convenient and very beautiful way up to the top of the great double-peaked mountain called the Mythenberg, where more laurels may be gained than by the ascent of the Rigi, for, in the first place, the Mythenberg is not as yet desecrated by a railway, and in the second, it is some three hundred feet higher than the Rigi.

The two peaks, called the Greater and the Lesser Mythen, rise in



THE MYTHENSTEIN.

naked beauty from the green ridge of the Hacken, at the foot of which lies the little town of Schwyz. In former days it was considered a deed of the utmost daring to climb them and to plant a cross on the summit of the loftier of the two, in token of success ; but now many people make the ascent, and it is quite within the compass of any young lady who is well shod. Moreover, side by side with the solitary cross now stands a modest little inn, on the very top of the Great Mythen, whence the view is—well, if we were to say now all that might be said about it, we should rob our old acquaintance of the

finest pearls in his crown, so we will adjourn the description for the present, and say adieu till we meet again on the Rigi.

A three-mile walk from Schwyz brings us to Brunnen on the Lake of Lucerne, where we shall find ourselves surrounded by a perfect *embarras de richesses*. One hardly knows which way to turn first. There are conveyances of all kinds passing to and fro—carriages, chaises, &c., without number; the lake is sparkling in most tempting fashion, steamers, boats, and skiffs are darting hither and thither across the smiling waters, and a multitude of places are beckoning us in different directions. There are Stoss, Treib, Seelisberg, Beckenreid, Lucerne, Schwyz, Seewen, and the Muottathal, none of them very far off; then there is the grand St. Gotthard road running southwards, and there are the wildly beautiful valleys which open into the Reussthal, among which that of Maderan stands pre-eminent. Moreover, we are close to some of the most classical spots in Switzerland, such as Rütli, Tell's Chapel, and Schiller's Memorial, the Mythenstein, a rock so called which rises like a grand natural obelisk from out the lake. The monument happens to be placed in the midst of the stage upon which Schiller's famous drama was enacted, and the letters carved out of the rock are hallowed by the touching gratitude of a plain and homely people.

The shore of the lake is swarming with foreigners, who rush this way and that, like so many ants, encumbered with all the paraphernalia which tourists and invalids seem to find indispensable. We see fluttering veils, and gay straw hats prettily adorned with Alpine flowers; spick and span new alpenstocks of untried worth are being flourished about in soft hands as yet unaccustomed to their use; and the air is filled with a confused sound of English, French, German, and Italian, reminding one very much of the Tower of Babel.

A sound of merry laughter comes up from the shore, and on bright sunny days when the wind is asleep, many are the demands made upon the boatmen for the hire of their fragile crafts. But "when the Mythenstein puts his hood on," or the wind blows chill and cold, impatient visitors are doomed to hear, sometimes for days together, the oft-repeated and depressing words with which Schiller has made them so familiar: "Don't go! There's a heavy storm coming up; you must wait!" At such times as these, however, they may console themselves by making a short expedition along the shore to the little village of Gersau. A thoroughly prosperous-looking place it is, and it owes its well-being to the diligent use it has made of the gifts

which nature has so lavishly bestowed upon it. The soil upon which Gersau stands was formed by the two wild mountain-torrents, Riese and Röhrl, which issue forth from ravines in the Rigi, and bring with them a quantity of earth and rubbish which they have deposited upon the margin of the lake. But the luxuriant vegetation, which reminds one of the neighbourhood of Chiavenna, and has caused



GERSAU.

Gersau to be styled the Swiss Nice, owes its existence to the mild and genial, almost Italian climate, which prevails here. No winds are suffered to visit Gersau but the warm Föhn and the south-east wind, for it is protected on the right by the rugged walls of rock called the Vitznauerstock, on the left by the Hochfluh, and in the rear by the precipices of the Rigi. Fig-trees will here live through the winter in

the open air, and their fruit ripens in the summer, so it is no wonder that the beautiful chestnut of Italy should thrive to perfection.



INN AND HAVEN OF TREIB.

Gersau is also interesting on several accounts, the most important of which is, that from 1359 until the end of the last century it was an entirely independent free state. In those times it was not a little

proud of being permitted to erect a tall, conspicuous gallows, as a



RUTLI.

token of its independence and of its possessing its own criminal jurisdiction.

Treib lies at the point of a promontory opposite Brunnen, where the lake, here called the Bay of Buochs, or Gersau, suddenly changes its course, and instead of running east and west, as heretofore, makes a great bend to north and south. From Brunnen to Flüelen it is called the Bay of Uri; and here the mountains reveal themselves in all their stupendous magnificence. There is a most romantic charm about the whole scene which combines savage grandeur with sweet, soft beauty, and abounds in variety of form and colour. The precipices along the shore are so steep that there is but just room for two villages at their base.

Those who wish to enjoy it all thoroughly will go up from Treib to Seelisberg, though by so doing they will miss the Lake of Seelisberg, which lies deep buried among wild masses of rock and pine woods, on the way from Beckenried to the Alpine village of Emmatten.

Far below us, at a giddy depth of some four thousand feet, gleams the green lake, while around us the mighty mountains rear their great heads on high. Yonder, most conspicuous of all, is the ice-crowned Uri-Rothstock, and beyond are the Niederbauen and the massive Bristen, while opposite, on the eastern side of the valley of the Ruess, stands the colossal Windgälle. We look straight down into the streets of Schwyz, and are almost on a level with the Mythen; Morschach, which is not visible from the lake, seems quite near us; and there is the Frohnalpstock, the village of Sisikon, and Tell's Chapel at the foot of the Axenberg, where hundreds come day by day to meditate upon the past. We can see from one end to the other of the beautifully-constructed Axen road, which runs to Altdorf along the eastern shore of the lake, close to the face of the cliff, or through tunnels pierced in its side. Immediately below Seelisberg lies the old classic meadow of Rütli, the most sacred place in Switzerland, and now national property.

The Axen road is named after the Axenberg, a mountain which rises to the north of Flüelen, along and through and at the foot of which this famous highway runs. Foreign engineers admire the masterly manner in which the costly and arduous task has been executed; while tourists, such as ourselves, are enchanted with the wild beauty of the panorama unfolded before us in never-ending variety at every step, and the artist finds subjects innumerable for his pencil. Throughout almost its whole course, the road runs close above the surface of the lake; for it is cut in the face of the mountains, which rise so perpendicularly from the water as rarely to leave

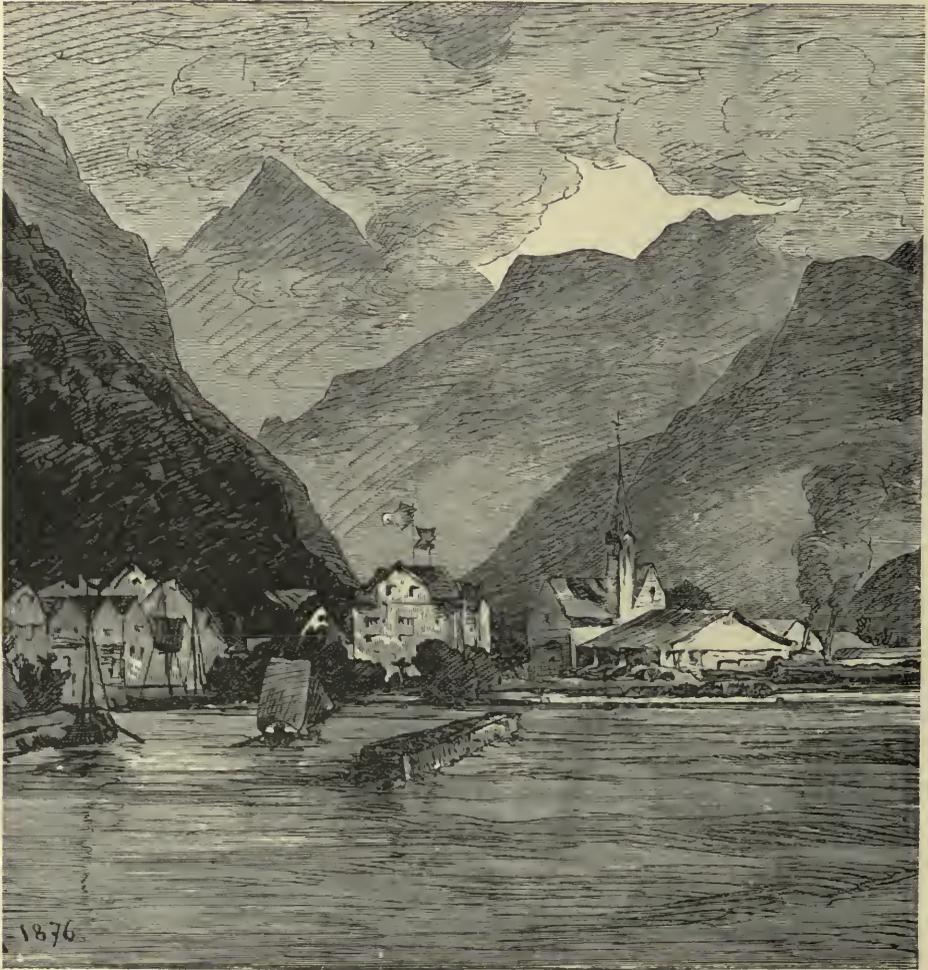
any margin whatever. Often we look through the dark tops of pine-trees directly down upon the still blue waters, and see the fissured



TELL'S CHAPEL.

cliffs of the western shore rising at apparently a very little distance from us. Then we enter one of the shady galleries which have been formed by the blasting of the rock, and see a stream of light pouring

in upon us from the landscape at the other end. Once only does the road leave the steep side of the rock, and that is where a stream from the valley of Riemenstald has forced its way through, and has thrown up a little mound of earth, upon which stands the small village of Sisikon, in a grove of walnut and chestnut-trees. After pass-



FLÜELEN.

ing Sisikon the precipices again approach the water's edge, and the road is again shut in by a wall of rock. Here, just below it, and half-buried in foliage, stands the far-famed Tell's Chaper, which may be approached by a footpath leading down to it from the Axenstrasse. Refreshments may be obtained in the hotel called "Zur Tellsplatte,"

and after partaking of them we may feel sufficiently fortified to enter



ENTRANCE TO THE CHURCH IN ALTDORF.

the great tunnel of the Axenberg. A short distance farther on the

road comes down to the lake, and we reach Flüelen, a pleasant, cheerful-looking village, and the port of the canton of Uri. The soil here is formed by the alluvial deposits of the river Reuss. Yonder dark-wooded mountains enclose the valley of the Reuss; and mighty giants they are, the most conspicuous of all being the conical peak of the Bristenstock.

In the summer, Flüelen is full of life and bustle; steamers are coming and going every hour, bringing and taking away passengers of all nations. Travellers bound for Italy can here take the diligence or private carriages, of which there are always plenty to be had. The Italian element indeed begins to be conspicuous here in the person of the *voituriers*, or coachmen, who are quite as eager for gain as, and better versed in the art of persuasion than, their Swiss colleagues. Arrangements may here be made for proceeding to Wasen, Andermatt, the Furka Pass, Rhone Glacier, Pass of the St. Gotthard, Airolo, and farther still.

Those who do not care to walk along the dusty road which leads hence to Altdorf, will find omnibuses belonging to some half-dozen hotels waiting for them on the shore of the lake, from which they will observe that more and more interest is taken in the place which more than all others is connected with the traditions of William Tell.

It was at Altdorf that the hat was raised upon the pole; at Altdorf that the famous arrow was shot from the crossbow, the story of which will be told by all future generations; at Altdorf Tell was born, and in the immediate neighbourhood stands the castle which belonged to those friends of the people, the Lords of Attinghausen. But it is a mistake to suppose that we shall find any special memorials of Tell at Altdorf; there is no monument worthy of the man or the deed, and neither the figures surmounting the stone fountain, nor the misshapen, colossal plaster statue, nor the wonderful frescoes on the ancient tower, are any of them worth half as much as the homely little rhyme which the traveller reads with a smile near the middle of the bridge called the Kapell-brücke at Lucerne:—

“ William Tell, he scorned the hat,
To death was he condemned for that,
Unless an apple on the spot
From his own child's head he shot.”

But William Tell's best monument is the constant remembrance in which his name is held by old and young.

The parish church, which stands among gardens and nut-trees on the mountain-side, is a grand-looking building, and its sacristy contains a good many costly offerings in the shape of chalices and vestments, dating from the times when the men of Altdorf, and indeed of Uri in general, were bitten with a fancy for taking service in foreign lands. Not far from the church, and keeping guard over it, as it were, stands a monastery belonging to the Capuchins, and also a convent. Altdorf possesses no manufactories or other industrial establishments; but she might as well begin to think of starting something of the kind, since the days appear to be numbered in which she is likely to make much profit out of the traffic which passes along the St. Gotthard road.

The sun of the nineteenth century will have to dissolve a good many old obstructive glaciers in this neighbourhood before much progress can be made, however.

If we stroll through the outskirts of Altdorf, or on to Bürglen and Attinghausen, we may enjoy the great and wondrous beauty of Nature to our heart's content. When we behold her enthroned among the sublime mountains, she looks like some mighty and august queen; but when we see her in the fields, in the flowery meadows and fruitful orchards, she descends from her pedestal, and becomes the tender, kindly mother, whom we are fain to address in some such words as these.

“ Thrilled with thy beauty and love, in the wooded slope of the mountain,
Here, great mother, I lie, thy child, with his head on thy bosom !
Into my being thou murmurest joy, and tenderest sadness
Shedd'st thou, like dew, on my heart, till the joy and the heavenly sadness
Pour themselves forth from my heart in tears and the hymn of thanksgiving:

COLERIDGE.



CHAPTER VIII.

THE MOUNTAINS OF URI.

“When warm from myrtle bays and tranquil seas,
Comes on, to whisper hope, the vernal breeze,
When hums the mountain-bee in May’s glad ear,
And emerald isles to spot the heights appear,
When shouts and lowing herds the valley fill,
And louder torrents stun the noontide hill,
The pastoral Swiss begin the cliffs to scale,
To silence leaving the deserted vale.”

WORDSWORTH.



THE valleys of the forest canton of Uri are still in a state of Nature, and in the highest degree wild, savage, and sterile. The landscape is composed of rocks, glaciers, forests, and waterfalls jumbled together in wild confusion, and looking as if Nature had omitted to give them the necessary finishing touches. There are materials in plenty, but the workmen have decamped; and therefore, instead of the rich green meadows, well-regulated rivers, velvety slopes and pastures, and charming natural parks which we see in other valleys in Switzerland, we have a wilderness covered with great blocks of stone, tossed hither and thither in wildest disorder, and streams and torrents running riot according to their own sweet wills.

The waterfall, which in the summer-time dashed down into the valley with a thundering roar, now hangs motionless from the cliff, numb, stiff, and dead. There is a deep silence all around, and Nature seems to be waiting for deliverance with timid misgivings. It is winter.

But the sun gains in power, and the peaks of the highest moun-

tains are beginning to glisten with the first thaw. The spirits of the air are engaged in fierce and incessant conflicts by night and by day, driving away the snow-clouds and bringing rain and fog. A gentle breeze increasing to a gale is then recognized and wel-

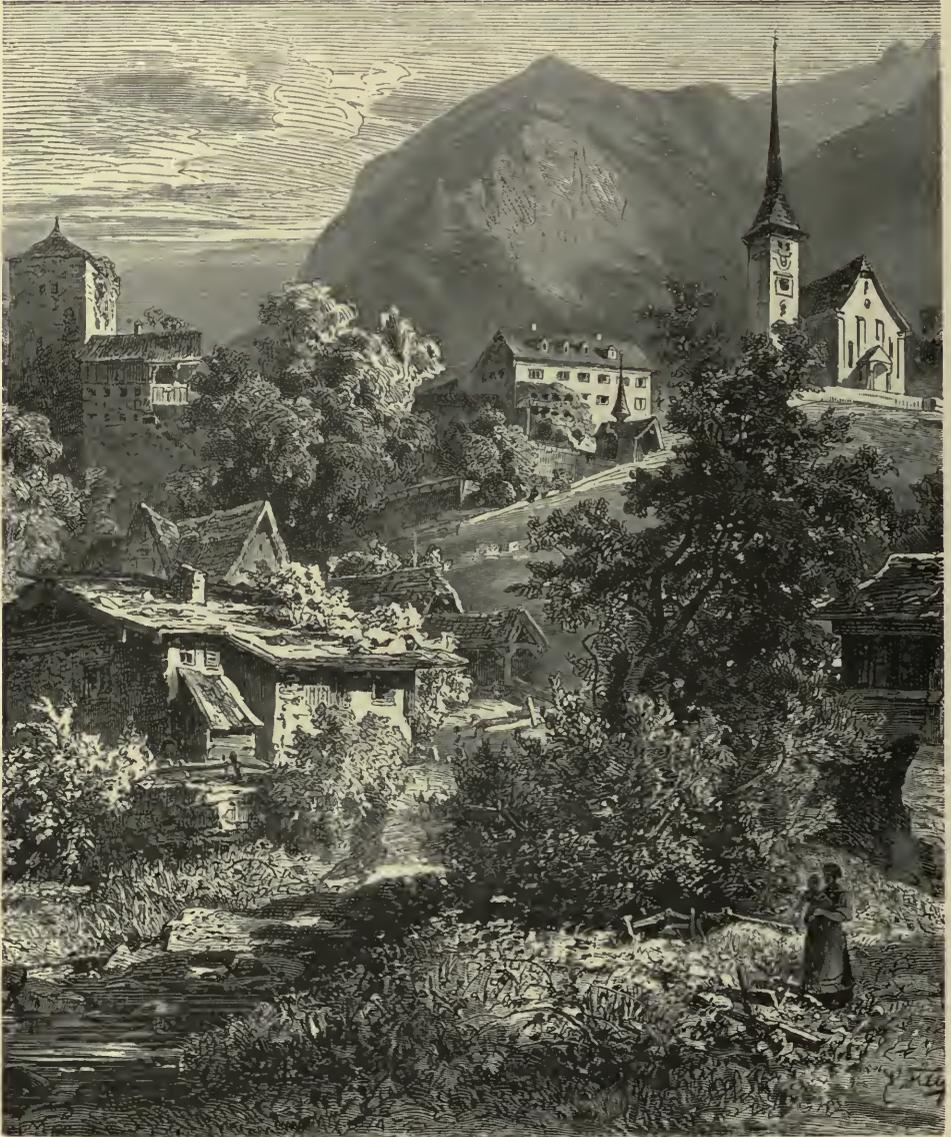


THE ST. GOTTHARD ROAD, AT WASEN.

comed as the Föhn, known throughout Switzerland as the herald of spring.

The Föhn wind is completely master in the little canton of Uri, and regulates the laws which govern the climate; which, however, is nowhere more capricious than it is here. The St. Gotthard Pass is the one by which the Föhn chiefly travels, but he reigns all the year round in the regions of the upper air, and often descends into the valleys; where, indeed, his power is chiefly displayed. Before he

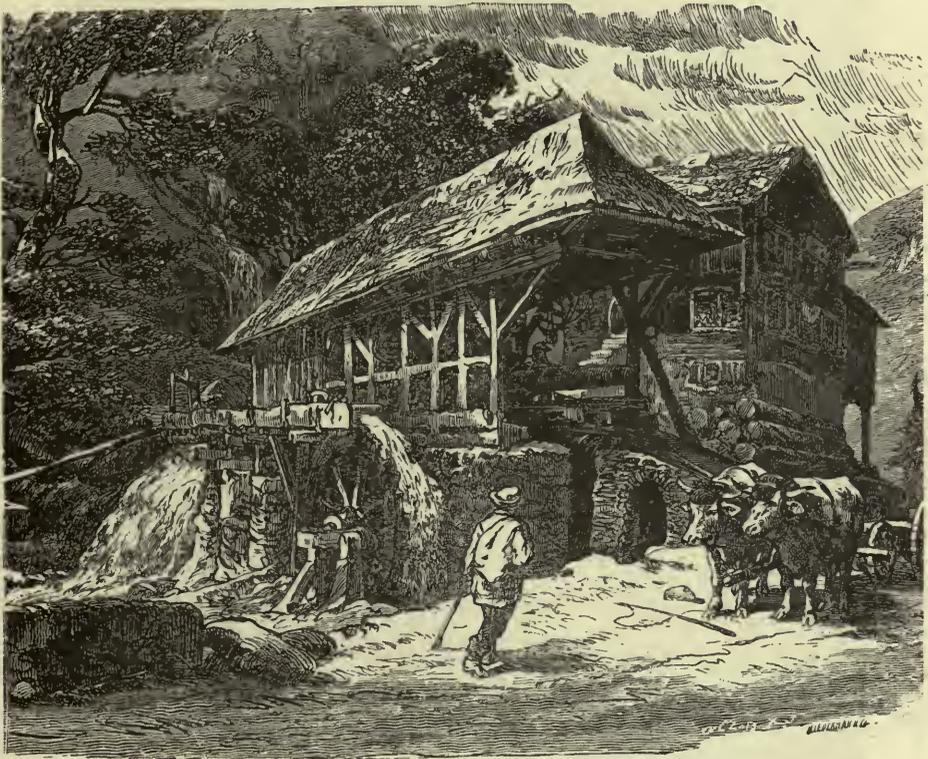
comes, thick grey mists are seen brooding over the southern horizon, and they grow denser and denser until they take the form of clouds



BÜRGLEN.

and creep up to the top of the mountains. Then the sun turns pale and sickly, and when he sets he lights up the western heavens with a sort of dull, lurid glow. At night the air is oppressive and so still

that not a leaf seems to be stirring ; there is a large halo round the moon, the stars flicker and twinkle, and numerous meteors are to be seen. When morning comes there is no dew lying on the fields, and the air is so extremely clear and transparent that the most distant mountains, which usually look like blue clouds on the horizon, seem suddenly to have come nearer. Animals are fully sensible of the state of the atmosphere ; they low and bellow restlessly, they cannot



SAW-MILL AT INSCHI.

sleep, and seem to await the approaching tempest with much nervous excitement. Human beings too feel excited, and can hardly close their eyes for restlessness and anxiety. But this state of things does not last much longer. There are two or three prodigious flaps from the mighty wings, and then there is a sudden strange calm ; but it is the calm which precedes the storm. At last it bursts forth and rushes through the valleys with all the destructive demoniacal force of a hurricane, bringing terror wherever it goes.

And yet the Föhn is truly a blessing to the land ; for, if he carry a sword in one hand, he certainly bears a horn of plenty in the other, and pours out its contents with a liberal hand upon the whole neighbourhood of Altdorf, Bürglen, and Attinghausen, where numbers of southern plants live and flourish, and those which are indigenous to the soil thrive with southern luxuriance. The Alpine pastures, too,



DEPARTURE OF THE DILIGENCE FROM FLOULEN.

share the blessing which he brings, so that the herdsmen of Uri are able to go to the mountains sooner than those of any other canton.

It is impossible to look at the ruins of the venerable Castle of Attinghausen without feeling for the moment sobered. There they stand, covered by the friendly ivy, at the top of a gently rising turf-clad eminence, and at their feet lie the cottages of the peasants, their roofs half concealed by richly-laden fruit-trees. This is the village

where lived Walter Fürst, one of the noble-hearted founders of the Confederacy. Tell used to come over hither from Bürglen to woo



GORGE OF THE SCHÄCHEN.

Fürst's daughter ; and the castle was the ancestral seat of the noble lords of Attinghausen, who governed the canton of Uri for more than

a century, and were held in great honour. The ruins seem, as we look at them, to echo the well-known words of the poet—

“The old order changeth, yielding place to new.”

Bürghen on the height opposite, stands at the entrance to the Schäch-



A GIRL FROM THE SCHÄCHENTHAL.

enthal like a sentinel, and a more attractive one it would be impossible to find. The whole surrounding landscape, the roaring stream known as the Schächen, the great dark nut-trees growing over the

houses, which are scattered here and there as far as the edge of the



FALL OF THE FAULENBACH, VALLEY OF ERSTFELD.

forest, the black tower standing by the side of the path which leads

up to the village, the village itself, small and cosy, with a sublime and extensive view of mountain and valley, the people, the children in the road, the herd-bells—everything, in fact, seems to correspond exactly with the picture our youthful fancy drew of the home and birthplace of the Swiss hero. Might not yonder tall, fine-looking man standing by the noisy saw-mill with the axe in his hand, be William Tell himself? And the boy there? One expects every moment to see him run up to his father, crying in the words of Walter Tell, “Father, my bow-string’s broken; mend it for me.”

Quite at the end of the valley lies the pasture known as the Brunnialpeli; and as we look across it we see the gloomy head of the Great Ruchen towering aloft. But the most beautiful feature in landscape is the Staubi, a wonderful cascade, whose abundant supply of water is derived from the eternal snow of the Scheerhorn and the underlying Gries glacier. From this point you may ascend to Urnerboden, which is the Arcadia of the canton of Uri, where nothing is to be heard but the lowing and bleating of cows and sheep, the tinkle of their bells, the call of the herdsmen, or the sound of the little bell belonging to the chapel in the wood, and nothing is to be seen but broad green pastures interspersed with trees, milch-cows, milkers, châlets, and dairy utensils. From Urnerboden we may either descend into the canton of Glarus, from which the hamlet is said to have been craftily purloined, or we may go back as far as the cascade of Staubi, thence proceed to the Hüfi glacier, and so make our way into the vale of Maderan; but we must be prepared for a rough scramble through a desolate region covered with broken rocks and ice, for this is a path seldom frequented by any but huntsmen and herdsmen. Those who prefer a more comfortable way of doing things will take the road from Altdorf up the valley of the Reuss. On reaching Erstfeld, you see the Joch glacier and Spannörter on the right, and before you opens out the extremely romantic valley of Erstfeld, which lies half buried mid the awild débris of the Schlossberg, Spannörter, and Krönlet. To the north it is shut in by the Geisberg, to the south by the Jacober. It is as wild and primitive as the valley of Schächen, and indeed as the valleys of Uri in general, and in the fall of the Faulenbach it can boast a sight almost as beautiful as that presented by the Staubi. It also possesses the solemn, mysterious-looking Lake of Faulensee—a pearl set in silver of the surrounding glaciers which descend from the Schlossberg and Krönlet.

The beautiful road which leads from Erstfeld or Klus to Silenen.

past the mouth of the Maderanerthal and farther still, is the St.



VALLEY OF ERSTFELD.

Gotthard road; and the broad valley through which it passes is that

of the Reuss. In point of fact it really begins at Amsteg, and if you look up the valley from Klus, it seems to be entirely shut in by the dark, gigantic, ice-crowned mass of the Bristenstock which lies across it. The view does not alter until we reach the picturesque hamlet of Silenen, where the walnut-trees appear in full beauty, and the ruins of a tower, situated on a low hill by the roadside, remind us once more of William Tell and his times. This unpretending-looking tower is said to be the remains of the Castle of Zwing-Uri, built by Hermann Gessler von Bruneck, the Austrian governor of Schwyz and Uri, who

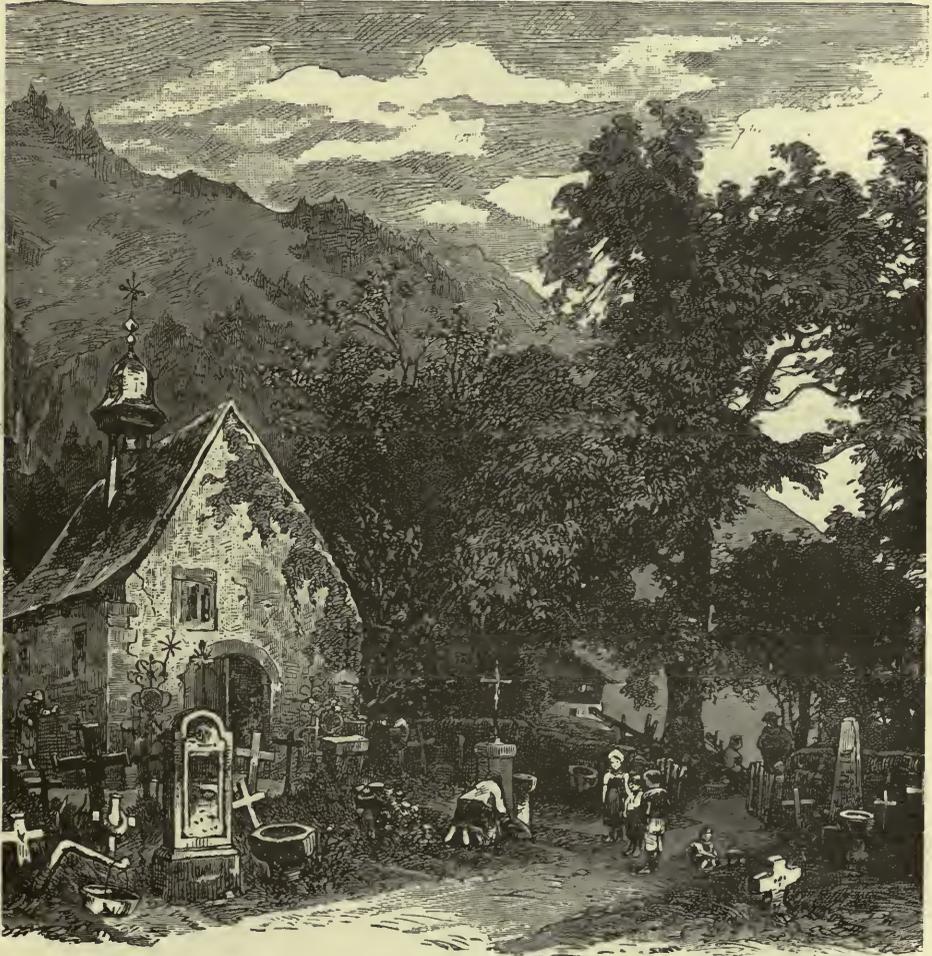


THE FAULENSEE.

thought by this means to overawe the people and bring them entirely under his own control.

We next come to Amsteg, or more properly An den Stegen ("at the foot-bridges"), which derives its name from the fact of there being two bridges here—one over the Reuss, a grand structure of stone, which has superseded the former little wooden bridge, and the other over the Kerstelenbach, a noisy torrent which rushes wildly down to join the river. Amsteg lies at the foot of the Bristenstock, and the little hamlet lying buried among orchards just a step higher up is also

called Bristen, while a little farther on still we come to Inschi and Ried. From this point the St. Gotthard road begins its toilsome ascent through the wildest scenery. At Inschi the cliffs approach close to the road, and the Reuss rushes along the deep bed it has worn for itself at the bottom of a dark ravine, while, as we look back, we see



CHURCHYARD OF SILENEN.

an extensive mountain landscape, in which the Scheerhorn, Windgälle, Ruchen, and Hüfistock are especially conspicuous.

But there is no excursion better worth making than that into the grand and wildly beautiful valley of Maderana, which here opens before us, and even at its entrance gives promise of great beauty. It received

its name from an Italian named Maderana, who set up furnaces in the village for the purpose of smelting the iron ore which he procured from the foot of the Windgälle. The people, however, still mostly call it Kerstenthal, after the brook of the same name—which, by the way, has about as much right to be called a “brook” as young Siegfried the anvil-breaker had to be called a “boy.” The Kerstelen Brook, so called, receives its wild torrent of water some few miles from the wondrously beautiful glacier of Hüfi, which lies between the Scheerhorn, Clariden, and Tödi.



AMSTEG.

The valley is still utterly primitive, and probably has a great future before it as a favourite resort of tourists, though at present the luckless traveller runs great risks of breaking his legs and neck before he succeeds in making his way through the gloomy pines, and over stocks, and stones, and thistles, and briars, to the very comfortable inn of the Swiss Alpine Club, which stands half-hidden by trees on the Balm Cliff. It is a very oasis in the desert, and is an agreeable sojourn, both as regards its external and internal attractions. There is much to be seen without, both close at hand and at a distance; there is

plenty of climbing to be done, and the great mountains are so near at hand that one can not only see them, but actually feel their icy breath.



ST. ANTHONY'S CHAPEL, AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE MADERANA VALLEY.

Great domes of ice rear themselves close above the forest, and among the many waterfalls which dash from the cliffs we may especially mention the Staüber, which flutters down the face of the terraced

Düssistock, and the Seidenbach opposite it. Lovelier glacier-maidens



THE HÜFI GLACIER, IN THE MADERANA VALLEY.

than these never wove their long tresses in lonely solitude. There is

no end to the various beauties of the Maderan Valley; but what perhaps chiefly excites the admiration of the visitor is the Hüfi glacier, which may bear comparison with many of its far-famed brethren among the Bernese Alps. Solemn and gruesome enough it looks, amid the loneliness of the ice-bound mountains which surround it; but, while it conveys to the mind a profound idea of the immense dynamic force possessed by ice, it is also remarkable for its great purity and grand perfection of development. Those who wish to obtain a full view of it must descend the desolate slope of the Hüfiälpeli, and then they will also be able to see the mountains which have pushed it down into the valley.

Nature still reigns with undiminished power over these regions, and it would be difficult to wage a successful war with her, for water, ice, snow, and storm are absolute masters of the situation. What furious games of snowballing the old giants indulge in with their avalanches is evident enough from the way in which the poor trees on the slope of the mountain have suffered, and from the rubbish which fills the bottom of the valley and the watercourse. The animal world, too, enjoys possession of almost all its ancient rights, and the chamois and eagle find themselves safer here than anywhere else. The eagle is still king of the air, and his cry is to be heard high above the glacial valley, while the shrill whistle of the marmot echoes from the rocks below. Here, too, we come across the ancient, primæval-looking tree known as the Schirmtanne or Wetterfichte, the umbrella-fir, which is a sort of outpost of the mountain forest, and is not to be seen in perfection except by those who ascend these Alpine heights.



CHAPTER IX.

EXCURSIONS IN UNTERWALDEN.

“On as we move, a softer prospect opes,
Calm huts and lawns between, and sylvan slopes ;
While mists, suspended on th’ expiring gale,
Moveless o’erhang the deep, secluded vale ;
The beams of evening, slipping soft between,
Light up of tranquil joy a sober scene ;
Winding its dark-green wood and emerald glade,
The still vale lengthens underneath the shade ;
While in soft gloom the scattering bowers recede,
Green dewy lights adorn the freshened mead,
On the low brown-wood huts delighted sleep
Along the brightened gloom reposing deep.”

WORDSWORTH.



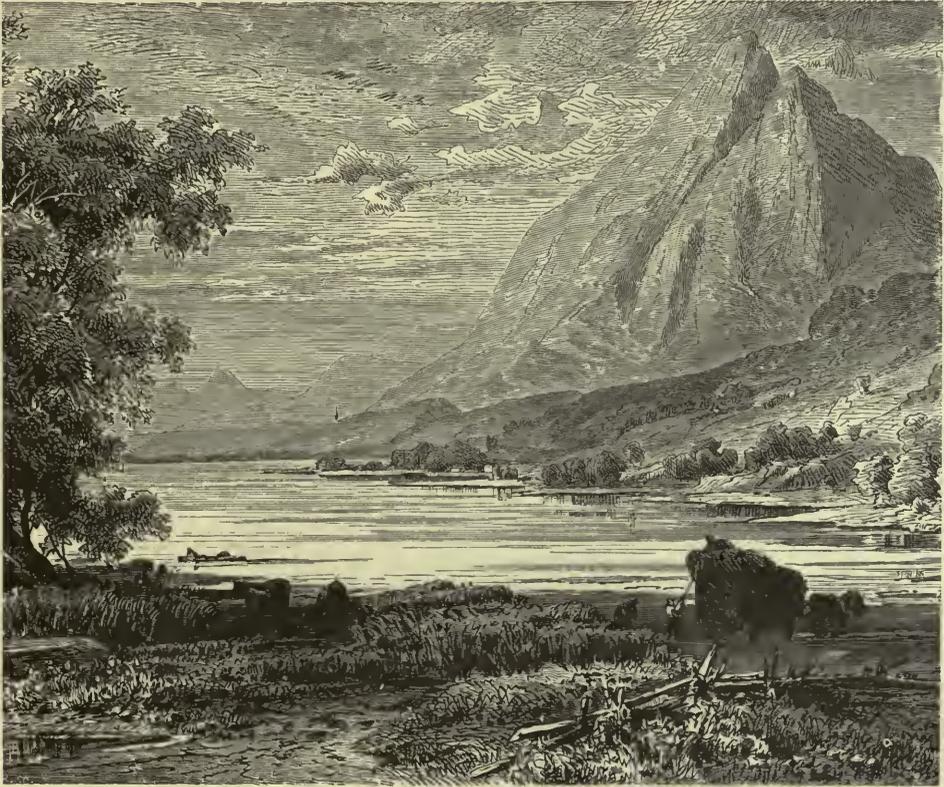
HERE are many lands which, for some reason or other, appear inhospitable, and never put the traveller at his ease or make him feel at home, no matter how gloriously beautiful the scenery may be nor how lovely the colouring of sky, sea, mountain, and valley.

But the contrary of all this meets us in Switzerland. Wood, perhaps, is in itself a more genial, more sociable, and more homely material than stone ; and it certainly is so when treated as the Swiss treat it, when it becomes embrowned with age, and is turned to account in all sorts of beautiful carvings and ornaments, and, above all, when it has the advantage of such a setting as the Swiss landscape. Swiss houses and Swiss landscapes naturally and inseparably belong one to the other.

Prättigau, no doubt, contains the finest specimens of wooden

houses, but the prettiest and most romantic are to be found in that part of the country which we are now about to explore. The Swiss *châlet* is to architecture what the popular ballad is to literature, and nowhere do its homely tones ring more true than here in this little canton of forest and meadow, water and green slopes.

Those who intend to explore the two parts called "Ob dem Wald" and "Nid dem Wald," into which the canton of Unterwalden



LAKE OF SARNEN.

is divided by its primæval forest, must not expect any of the sharp contrasts which are to be met with in the region of the High Alps, where benumbed glaciers and glowing Italian vegetation, life and death, are to be seen side by side and face to face. Here are no seas of ice coming suddenly down into blooming meadows, there is no Monte Rosa reflected in the silvery waters of a lake encircled by the luxurious garden of the Hesperides, and even the region of snow preserves a measure of the same mild and gentle character which prevails

throughout the canton. Those, however, whose weary eyes are longing for the sight of green grass and foliage will here find an



PEASANT OF UNTERWALDEN, IN HOLIDAY DRESS.

emerald carpet such as cannot be equalled anywhere, and avenues of beech-trees such as are hardly to be seen in the finest park in Europe.

This canton has always been Roman Catholic, and the population

are extremely strict in observing all their religious duties ; and yet it



LAENGALP, IN THE VALLEY OF MELCHTHAL.

looks like a Protestant country, from the entire absence of the light-

heartedness and merriment one is accustomed to see in all the high-ways and by-ways, indoors and out, in Roman Catholic lands. Perhaps the reason of this may be that Unterwalden's patron saint was a hermit and ascetic, instead of being a native of the joyous South; but, whether it be so or no, certain it is that he was no less a person than the celebrated Nicholas von der Flühe, and his effigy meets us where-



SACHSELN.

ever we go, being stuck up on either side of the road, on the houses, the chapels, and the church doors.

To show how tenaciously the herdsmen of Unterwalden cling to the customs of their forefathers, we may mention that the ancient practice of invoking a blessing on the pastures is still kept up among them. Every evening at sunset one of the cowherds takes up a large wooden milk-funnel, and, using it as a speaking-trumpet, pours forth

in a clear, ringing voice a solemn appeal for the protection of the cattle and their keepers:—

“Praise, ail praise!
May God and St. Wendel,
St. Martin, St. Blasi,
And blessed Brother Claus,
Keep us all in safety
Upon the Alp this night,” &c.

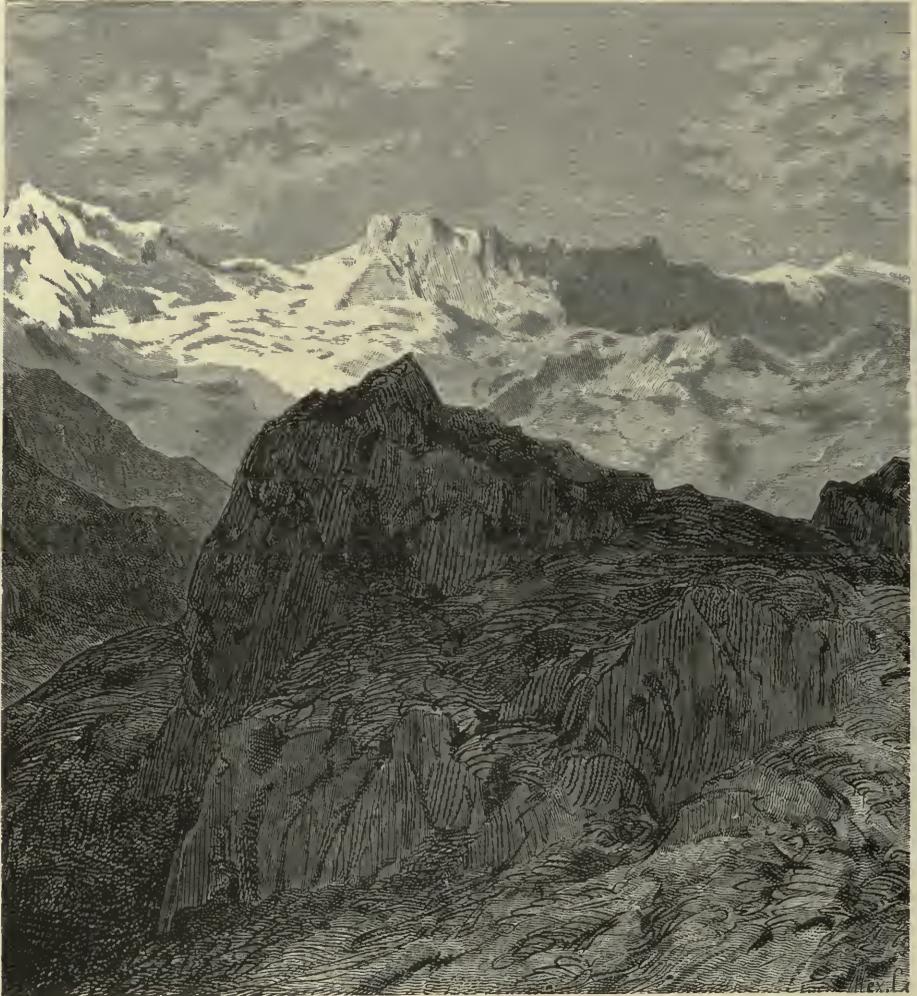
Some of these days, no doubt, Unterwalden's peculiarities will all be shorn away—she will be brought to the same level with her neighbours, and the sweet spirits of the elements will be stifled in black smoke proceeding from the chimneys of factories; but at present the people cling to the ways of their forefathers, and sing with sturdy confidence such doggerel as the following:—

“Other countries may be whatever they will,
My little old land is the place for me!
And I will do as my forefathers did,
No change in the good old customs I'll see!”

Meantime, there is no question about its beauty. What with the lake and mountains, the different views which meet us at every turn are not merely lovely but magnificent; and, whether we take up our stand upon Mount Pilatus, on the silvery throne of the Titlis, which towers above Engelberg, or on the summit of the Stanzerhorn or Buochserhorn—whichever way we look, the whole canton resembles a bouquet of flowers worn by some gay bridegroom. The canton of Unterwalden lies in the very heart and centre of the Confederation, and is bounded by the Lake of Lucerne and the cantons of Uri, Lucerne, and Berne. The lake forms its northern boundary from Beckenried to Hergiswil, from which place a chain of lakes and rivers leads directly to the Brünig Pass. The first link in this chain to the north is formed by the south-western bay of the Lake of Lucerne, called the Lake of Alpnach, which is connected with the Lake of Sarnen by the Lungern-Aa, and is succeeded, a little farther up, by the Lake of Lungern. Another portion of the chain, the Lake of Gyswil, was let off into the Lake of Sarnen a hundred years or so ago; but the chain, though broken by the Brünig, is continued on the other side of the pass by the lakes of Brienz and Thun.

To the right and left of this line of lakes lies Obwalden, the prin-

cipal division of the canton of Unterwalden containing the villages of Sarnen, Sachseln, Kerns, Alpnach, Gyswil, Lungern, and Engelberg. Stanz, Hergiswil, Oberdorf, Buochs, Beckenried, Wolfenschiessen, and Grafenort belong to Nidwalden, the other division of the canton. The Engelberg-Aa runs past the villages of Nidwalden, and the



THE ESEL PEAK, MOUNT PILATUS.

Lungern-Aa and Melch-Aa run through Obwalden, the latter stream giving its name to the well-known valley of Melchthal. Sarnen, which is situated at the confluence of the Aa and Melch, and is the capital of Obwalden, does not contain much to excite our admiration, unless we care to study the historical portraits in the Rathhaus; but

it is a clean and extremely pleasant little place, and the surrounding country abounds in scenes of pastoral beauty.

As we stand beneath the spreading nut-trees we see a sheet of water flashing and sparkling in the sunshine: this is the Lake of Sarnen, which extends southwards between gentle sloping banks for



SARNEN.

several miles, after which it is enclosed between walls of rock darkened by black, shadow-like masses of fir-trees, above which rises the beautiful form of the Gyswiler block. A few of the snowy peaks belonging to the Bernese Oberland look through the Brünig Pass, and at a little distance from the shores of the lake rise the Sachseler ridge and the slopes of the Schwändiberg. There is nothing at all

exciting in the character of the landscape, which is calm, soothing, and pleasing rather than grand and striking.

From Sarnen we may saunter along under the nut-trees to Sachseln, formerly called Saxula, or Steinen, a name still borne by the upper end of the village. Here stands the beautiful and famous church, whose interior is adorned by twenty-two pillars hewn from the black marble of the Valley of Melchthal. This is the Caaba of Unterwalden, for here in a glass case above the high altar repose the bones of "Brother Claus,"—or rather they do not repose, inasmuch as the skeleton is placed in the attitude of devotion. A little farther on, at the entrance to the Valley of Melchthal, stands the chapel of the same saint, in the midst of a verdant landscape well diversified with woods and streams, and enlivened by numerous houses and cottages. The church of St. Nicholas is the oldest in the whole canton, and recalls the time when the Gospel was first preached to the uncivilised inhabitants of these mountains. Close by is a very ancient tower, which may not improbably have stood in one of the groves which the heathen Alemanni held sacred. Here, in former days, the people gathered together in the open air to hear the preaching of the missionaries, and from this spot the Gospel-message made its way down into the valleys. The tiny village of Melchthal is nothing more than a small group of poor little houses, presided over by a church and surrounded by green meadows and precipitous wall-like cliffs. It is chiefly known as being, or claiming to be, the birthplace of Heinrich von Melchthal, or Heinrich Anderhalden, as he is also called, but the fact is not established with any certainty. From this point the grand beauty of the valley begins to disclose itself; and here, as elsewhere, the landscape is composed of steep rocks, some eight thousand feet in height, interspersed with strips of green meadowland, flowery meads, silvery purling streams, fragments of stone, and lovely woods of deciduous trees as well as firs and pines. The valley is terminated by a precipitous stone wall called the Brändlistalden, from the foot of which the Melchaa rushes forth with as much impetuosity as if it were issuing from the keyhole of the portal which leads into the higher mountain-region. We shall look in vain for the lake which is its source, as it lies high up on an elevated plateau among the mountains. Melchthal, like Urnerboden, is a perfect Arcadia, a pastoral paradise, and looks as if it were intended for dancers, being splendidly carpeted with the greenest Alpine turf, and surrounded by

a circle of noble mountains, among which we may reckon the Faulenberg, Hochstollen, Erregg, Gadmenflüh, and Titlis.

We who dwell in towns and hotels are often considerably put out by even a little rain, and at best it certainly does not add to our enjoyment of the scenery, while those who persist in proceeding in spite of it, and wade on through the wet grass, with the dripping



A VIEW OF THE TITLIS, FROM PILATUS.

boughs flapping in their faces, are sure to come home with wet feet and a cold. Natives of the mountains know no such things, and by the look of their hard, brown skins, one sees that they have undergone a thorough seasoning. The men of old who fought with dragons and braved a hundred hostile spears at once, owed their strength and powers of endurance to their long-continued struggle with the elements.

We are now in Stanz, the capital of Nidwalden, and the birthplace of one of the most honoured heroes of our youth—Arnold von Winkelried, whose ancestor slew the dragon. Those who love to dwell upon these memories can here do so to their heart's content, for the reedy haunt of the dragon is still to be seen, and there is a statue of the knight at the fountain in the market-place. A much more worthy and beautiful memorial has, however, lately been erected to his memory by the whole Confederation ; and, being the work of a Swiss sculptor, reflects double honour on the country.

An hour's journey will take us to Hergiswil, Buochs, or Beckenried, all on the Lake of Lucerne ; but before we reach Hergiswil, we have to pass through the lively little village of Stanzstad, which is in fact a suburb of Stanz, as well as the port of Nidwalden. It lies at the foot of the Bürgenstock, which, from whatever point of view one sees it, looks broad and precipitous. From Weggis and Vitznau, to which it presents its northern side, some six miles long, it looks like an enormous wall, while, if we look at it from Pilatus, it appears as a rocky island rising out of the lake which surrounds it on three sides. On the north it is steep and inhospitable, but on the south it is covered with numerous habitations. The ascent of the Bürgenstock is easy, and the view from its highest ridge, the Hammetschwand, is surprisingly beautiful. It is not more than a couple of thousand feet above the water, but you can see all the different divisions of the lake quite distinctly ; and the mountains along its shores, the towns and villages on its banks and at the ends of its valleys all stand out most clearly. There is the Bay of Lucerne, the Lake of Küssnacht, the Lake of Sempach to the north-west, and on the opposite shore the beautifully situated villages of Weggis and Vitznau, and numerous villas and cottages. But we have still to see Rozloch, a cluster of houses at the foot of the mountain on the north-eastern shore of the Lake of Alpnach, and the famous ravine and watercourse of the same name. The ravine is formed by the precipitously steep sides of the Plattiberg and Rozberg, on the latter of which once stood a castle occupied by a young noble named Von Wolfenschiessen, who was an underling of Landenberg's, and, though a native of Switzerland, was guilty of doing great injury to his fellow-countrymen. He fell beneath the axe of the valiant Conrad Baumgartner, and the castle was captured by stratagem on the New Year's night which is so memorable in Swiss history. Some considerable ruins mark the spot where it once stood.

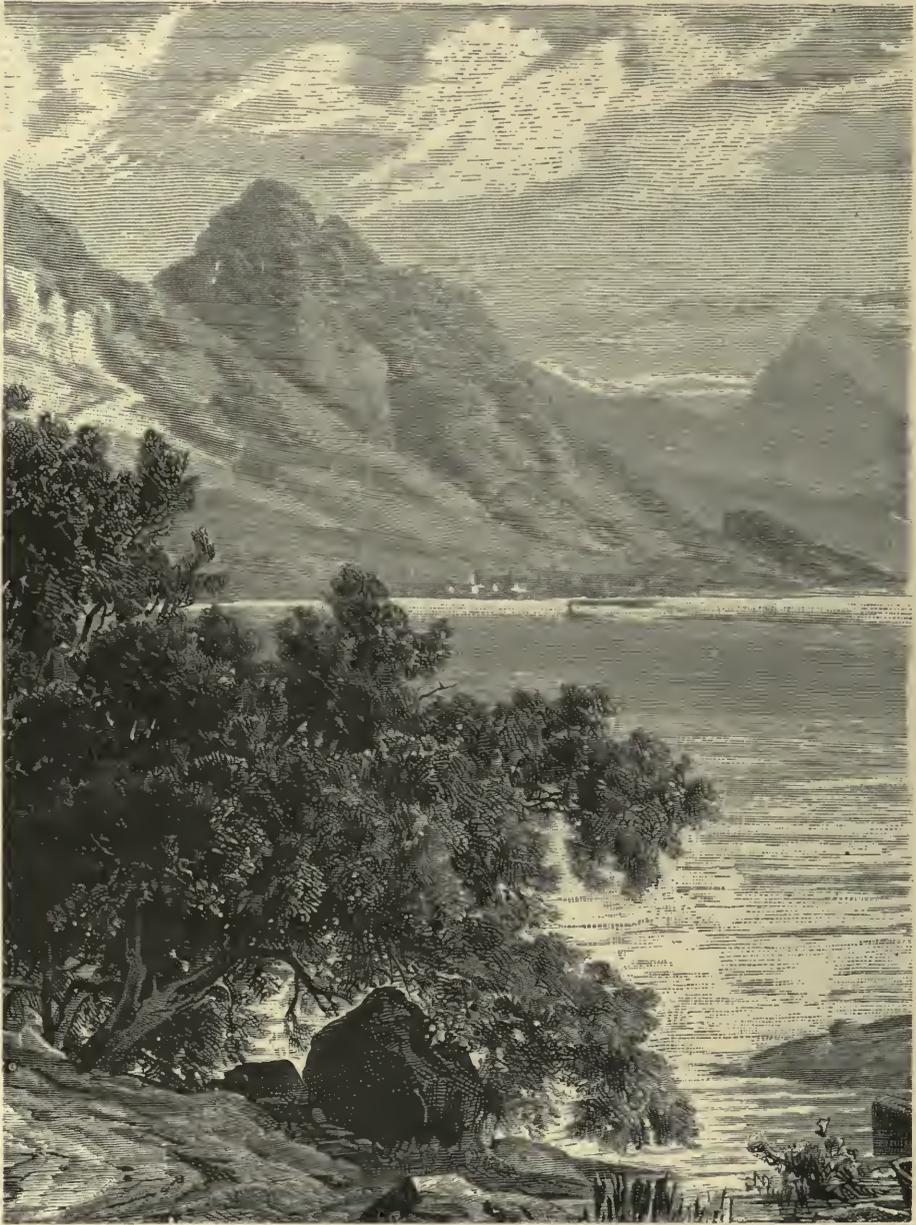
There is also an extremely enjoyable excursion to be made to Buochs and Beckenried; but the precious moments are flying fast, and we have yet to make our last expedition, which is to be to the Valley of Engelberg. Many a countenance lights up at the mere mention of the name, for it brings before the mind's eye a long series of calm,



COTTAGE IN ENGELBERG.

happy summer days. In spite of its complete isolation from the world this modest-looking and yet sublime spot has many a faithful old friend and admirer. Whether it be the freshness of the Alpine air, the grandeur of the mountains, or the brilliant verdure of the valley, there is certainly something exhilarating in the place. Whatever it be,

let us toss our caps in the air and give three cheers for the valley and mountains of Engelberg!



LAKE OF LUCERNE, NEAR WAEGGIS.

We pass through the forest and over heights, with the river foam-

ing boisterously far below on our right, and with mountains soaring boldly into the clouds above ; and so at last we reach the desired valley. It lies some three thousand feet above the sea, and yet the old mountain-giants around, chief among which is the proud Titlis, have lost nothing of their sublime grandeur. Mighty as they are, however, they bend kindly over the valley, and send down into it such



THE VALLEY OF ENGELBERG.

joyous streams and cascades that the beautiful meadows below quite re-echo with the song of the water-nymphs.

Standing in the midst of the valley, we see that it is shut in on all sides, and feel with a certain sense of delight that we are quite cut off from the world. To right and left, before and behind—everywhere, in fact—we are confronted by towering walls.

First among them all is the Titlis, who only just fails of attaining a height of ten thousand feet. He is encased in armour of shining ice, and attracts to himself many visitors every summer. His neighbours are the Grassen, Laubersgrat, Geissenspitz, Ruchenberg, Spannörter and Uratzhörner; the Gadenflüh, a serrated mountain ridge, occupies the west, while the Blackenstock, Schlossberg, Uri-Rothstock, and Engelberg-Rothstock stand on the north of the valley. Excursions without number may be made from Engelberg, with the assistance of the various passes, of which there are many. Besides the Surenen Pass there is one over the Grassen, leading to Wasen, in the canton of Uri; another, called the Joch Pass, leading into the Bernese Oberland; and two, the Juchli and Storegg, which connect Engelberg with the Valley of Melchthal and Sarnen.

Were I to add any more, I should have to describe a memorable summer night which I myself once spent in the valley of Engelberg, when meadows, streams, and mountains were all bathed in brightest moonlight. I will say no more about it now, lest I should become too romantic and fanciful; and yet, I do not think anything will ever make me forget that night of exquisitely chastened beauty:—

“All round was still and calm; the noon of night
Was fast approaching: up th’ unclouded sky
The glorious moon pursued her path of light,
And shed her silv’ry splendour far and nigh.”

BERNARD BARTON.



CHAPTER X.

LUCERNE.

“Yonder lies
The lake of the Four-Forest Town, apparelled
In light, and lingering like a village maiden,
Hid in the bosom of her native mountains,
Then pouring all her life into another's,
Changing her name and being.”

LONGFELLOW.

LUCERNE is the summer rendezvous of the fashionable world. Her brow is wreathed with roses, a seductive smile is on her lips, and she looks like some lovely siren reclining gracefully on the shores of the blue lake. Ulysses himself would find it impossible to pass her by; and, if those who woo her only come with tolerably long purses, they may be as happy as kings during their sojourn in her realm.

In primitive, homely Unterwalden we were brought near to the great spirit of Nature, and were allowed to see her lovely face with all its charms unveiled. But the enjoyment offered to us is of an altogether different description. Lucerne is a gay town, and its inhabitants have long been addicted to pleasure-seeking; while her summer visitors are, of course, inclined to follow the general example.

We bid adieu to Unterwalden, and go on board the steamer at Hergiswil, and are quickly conveyed across the transparent waters to the pleasant nook in the lake where the smiling water-sprite sits enthroned amid gentle slopes and gardens. The town very soon comes in sight, and there rise before us the old, well-known towers and pointed turrets, with villas smiling out of the green trees and along the shore, and the Rigi and Pilatus standing like twin citadels one on

either side. As we draw nearer and nearer we see grand lines of houses, magnificent edifices of various kinds, and stately-looking hotels. We are especially struck on landing by the hoary old tower called the Water Tower, which is Lucerne's badge, and which stands at the end of the equally ancient bridge known as the Kapellbrücke; then our eye



KAPPELLBRÜCKE AND WATER-TOWER, LUCERNE.

is caught by the grand-looking church of St. Leodegar, with its graceful bell towers, which stands half-way up the slope, and rears its head above all the surrounding roofs. Then there are the mediæval watch-towers, built on the remains of the old fortifications, and the beautiful new Reuss Bridge, which leads from the railway station and landing-place to the splendid quay, with its glorious avenue of chest-

nuts, where crowds of fashionable people may be seen in the summer-time. This, the first view which visitors get of Lucerne, gives the idea of a much larger place than it actually is, for the real town is hidden by the grand-looking hotels which are her especial pride and characteristic.

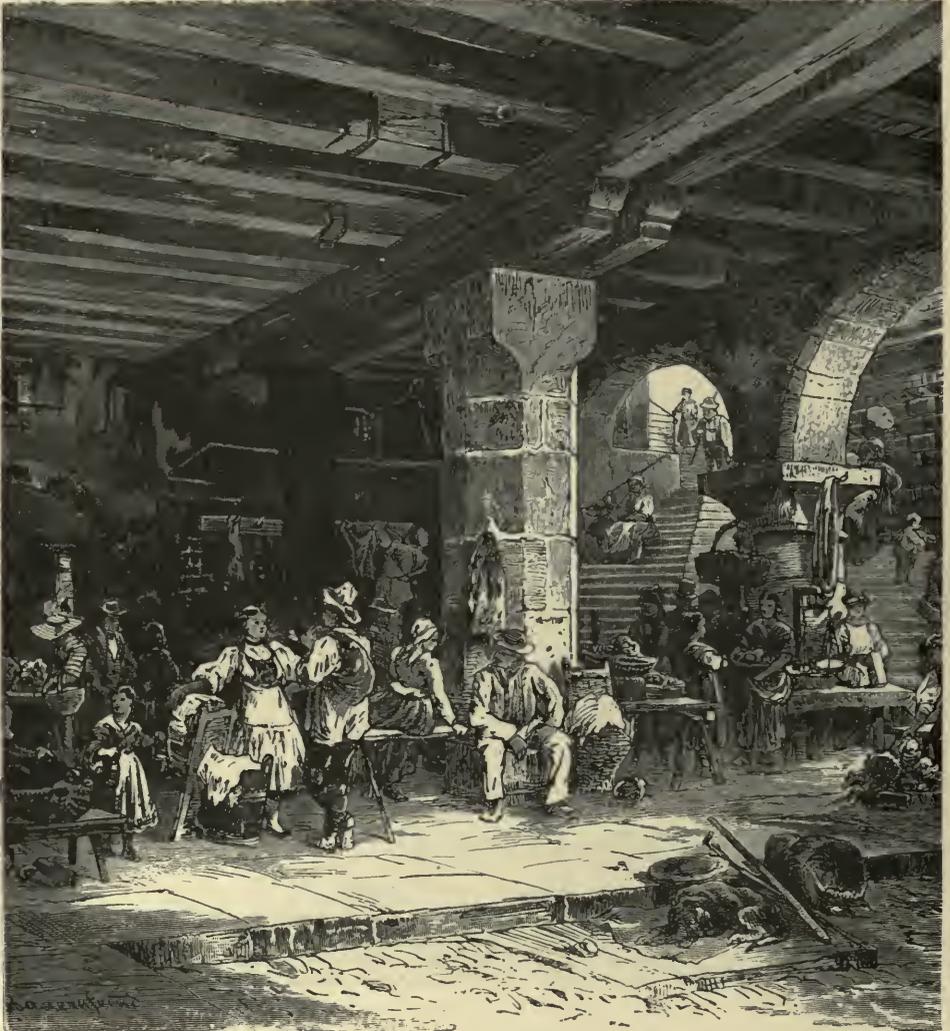
How much water must have flowed down the Reuss since the old



HÔTEL NATIONAL, LUCERNE.

times when her only foreign visitors were travelling merchants and storks! The latter made their nests on the roofs of the houses, which were of wood in those days, and so the place was called "the little wooden stork town." In other lands we have seen marble replaced by wood or falling in the course of years into decay, whereas in Lucerne wood and straw have been exchanged for marble, and

cottages have been superseded by palaces filled with every imaginable comfort and luxury. This has all been accomplished within the last four centuries, for before that time there was not a single house of stone, and even the inns were old rickety wooden buildings, with



MARKET IN LUCERNE.

rooms so small and low that no full-grown man could stand upright in them. A very dim light was all that could find its way through the small round window-panes, and the smoke was allowed to disperse itself as best it might through the joints in the rafters until it was lost in the straw or shingles of the roof.

You would look in vain for any such old stork's nest now. More



VIEW FROM THE SCHWEIZERHOF, LUCERNE.

than four dozen hotels and *pensions* of various degrees of excellence have arisen as if by magic, and in them alone there is sufficient

accommodation for the whole normal population of the town, which amounts to about eleven thousand. The well-known Schweizerhof can dine nearly four hundred guests at once in its splendid dining-room. This is, indeed, a model hotel, and would take precedence of all in the town, and maybe in the country, if there were no Hôtel National ; but it is outdone by the latter as regards both the spaciousness of its rooms and the refined and tasteful luxury of all its appointments. Everything here is done in great style, and those who are not obliged to look twice at their money before spending it, will no doubt find themselves better off in the Hôtel National than in the good "Rössli" on the Mühlenplatz, or in the "Engel" in Pfistergasse, though they would probably be able to study natural character better here than among the bored, worn-out grandees of England, Germany, Russia, and America, who congregate in the aristocratic quarter. But the grand hotels and gardens on the quay possess one great charm—one, too, which never loses its freshness or becomes wearisome, and that is, the view of the lake and the calm, beautiful mountains beyond. These, however, we may also enjoy as we stroll along the shore, or sit in the shady chestnut avenue. If we desire a wider horizon we have but to ascend the delightful slope behind the town, and at Gütsch, the heights of Allenwinden, or at the "Three Limes," we shall find ourselves in the midst of most lovely scenery.

Lucerne has often been compared with Zurich, but the resemblance between the two is merely superficial. Each stands on a lake ; each is intersected by a river, in one case the Reuss, in the other the Limmat, by which it is divided into two unequal portions ; and each has a glorious view of the distant Alps. But here the likeness ceases, and when weighed in the balances it will be found that science, industry, and manufactures cause Zürich's scale to descend heavily, while Lucerne mounts high in the air. Lucerne has no trade, and her chief occupation consists in managing her hotels and attending to her summer visitors—not a very arduous one, it must be confessed ; but this is no discredit to her, being merely a natural result of her past history, which has at times led her through dark paths under the guidance of aliens, and those who were enemies to the fatherland. But no doubt in time Lucerne will develop her many resources and become all that she ought to be.

If, as some maintain, Lucerne took her name from the Latin *lucerna*, a "light," there have been times enough in the course of her existence when the name must have seemed either a mockery, or

appropriate only on the *lucis a non lucendo* principle, for her light was extinguished and the most profound darkness brooded over the shore of the lake.

Shall we go back to the year 1531, when Lucerne and the other



SEMPACH.

forest cantons confronted Zürich on the field of battle at Kappel? or shall we tell how the Jesuits were called in in 1574, and how in 1586 the disastrous Golden League was formed, which sowed discord and dissension among the Confederates? Shall we give an account of the Peasants' War, the various bloody religious wars, and the miserable

Sonderbund war? Nay, if we want to furbish up our history, we shall do so more pleasantly by going to the Lake of Sempach, which lies between Sursee and the heights of Sempach, and recalls the sublime story of the 9th July, 1386, when the Austrian army encountered the Confederates in a fierce contest on this spot, and the day was decided in favour of the latter by the self-devotion of Arnold von Winkelried, the Knight of Unterwalden—

“ He of battle-martyrs chief,
 Who, to recall his daunted peers,
 For victory shaped an open space
 By gath’ring with a wild embrace
 Into his single heart a sheaf
 Of fatal Austrian spears! ”

Duke Leopold and the flower of the nobility fell on this occasion, together with fifty-one men of Lucerne and their general, the noble old magistrate, Peter von Gundoldingen. The only monument which posterity has raised to their memory is the small chapel near Sempach, where a few bad pictures and worse rhymes commemorate the battle and the names of those who were engaged in it.

The Swiss Guards, who fell on the fatal 10th of August, 1792, while defending the royal family of France, have had a much grander memorial erected to them. It is situated at the foot of the height of Wesemlin, in the shade of some beautiful trees, and just above a green basin shaped hollow filled with water. It is hewn out of the living rock, and, apart from its associations, is of the highest intrinsic value as a work of art. The colossal lion, modelled by the genius of Thorwaldsen, lies in a dark hollow severely wounded and at the point of death; but he is dying like a hero, and to the last gasp his strong paws defend the shield with the golden lilies. An inscription was placed over it more than fifty years ago: “*Helvetiorum fidei ac virtuti*” (“To the valour and fidelity of the Swiss”), with the names of those who fell in the defence of the Tuileries underneath.

This struggle was likened by a Frenchman to that between William Tell and the wicked governor of Küssnacht; and we promise that this shall be our last allusion to Tell; but as Küssnacht was the scene of the most important act in his life-drama, a few words must be allowed us. Near this village was the celebrated “Hollow Way,” where Schiller makes his hero utter the well-known monologue, which, on fine summer days, Tell’s unfortunate ghost is condemned to

hear repeated over and over again by the lips of juvenile collegians, bearded men, sweetly lisping young ladies, and full-grown women.

What is the picture drawn for us of the scene in our own homes



MEMORIAL TO THE SWISS GUARDS.

by fancy, and what is the actual reality as it now appears before our eyes? All that now remains to be seen of the "Hollow Way" is a good carriage road leading to Immensee and Art. There is nothing

in the least romantic about it, and it is too wide for any wedding party, and still less for a single woman, to bar the way along it. The narrow part has, indeed, well-nigh disappeared altogether, and Tell's hiding-place is reduced to a small clump of trees and bushes, near which, on the spot where Gessler fell, stands a chapel adorned with frescoes by the village painter.

All the old castles, of which there were several in the neighbourhood, have fallen by degrees, but the taste of the present day seems to incline to the resuscitation of the mediæval style of architecture; and, though Neuhabsburg, a very interesting castle belonging to the noble Count and Emperor Rudolf von Habsburg, has sunk into decay, another much grander edifice, built in the newest French style, has been erected immediately in front of it by some nineteenth-century lordling at present unknown to fame.

There is, however, one very noteworthy object of interest in Lucerne, which, though situated near the modern monument of the Swiss Guards, boasts an antiquity of more than a thousand, more than two thousand, more than six thousand years. In fact, it has lived through several ages of the world's history, and has such things to tell us as we do not hear every day.

It is the grandest memorial in Lucerne, and its foundations were laid at a time when the great Reuss glacier extended hither from the St. Gotthard, and covered the whole district. Though of small dimensions, this, the Glacier-garden of Lucerne, as it is called, is a highly interesting spot of ground. Visitors to it will find a portion of the sandstone ridge which strikes in a north-westerly direction from the town here laid bare and exposed to view, the superincumbent earth and boulder-drift having been cleared away in 1872. In this sandstone there are large holes, some basin-shaped, some funnel-like, as much as fifteen feet deep, and as cleverly rounded as if they had been constructed by the hands of man. At the bottom are a number of colossal stone balls, some of them weighing several hundredweight.

But what caused these great cauldron-like hollows? Well, similar holes are being constantly made in our day at the foot of waterfalls, and in the beds of highly inclined watercourses; in fact, the same thing may occur wherever there is running water flowing along a stone channel, if only it be rapid and impetuous enough to catch up the loose pebbles it may encounter, and whirl them round and round with sufficient force.

Not that these holes at Lucerne originated in this way, for there

are neither cliffs nor waterfalls anywhere near. They are formed by



THE HOLLOW WAY, AT KÜSSNACHT.

the glacier, as we have said before. Here and there, there were

great fissures, extending through the whole thickness of the ice, and into these would fall not only the water, as it melted, but also blocks of stone from the moraines, which the glacier had brought along with it from the Alps. These, falling on the softer sandstones beneath,



THE CASTLE OF NEUHABSBURG.

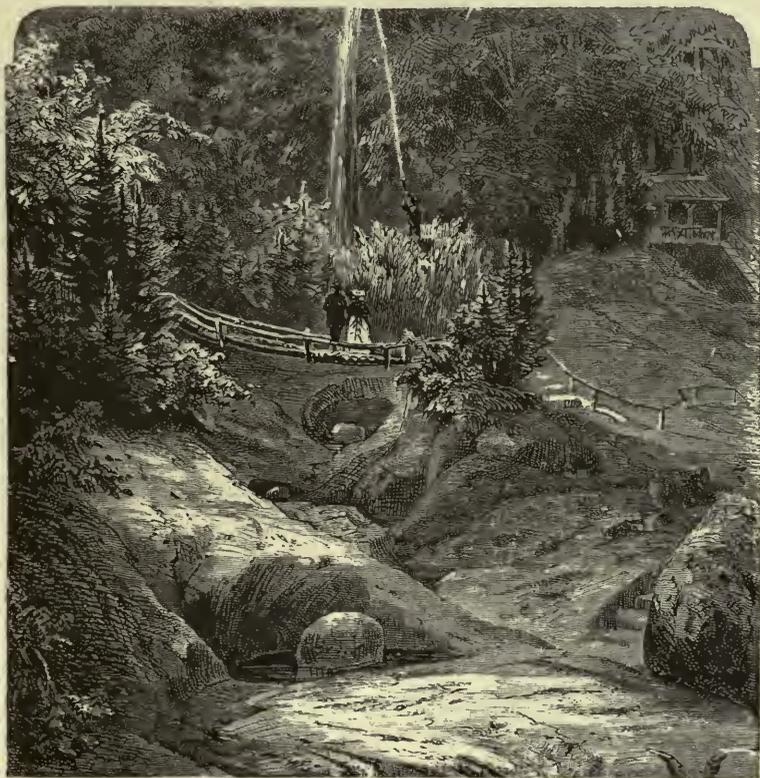
were rolled and twisted about for so long a time that at last they made the huge basin-like holes which we now see. The harder the blocks which slipped down the opening in the glacier, and the more impetuously the water rushed down upon them, so much the more wildly did

these glacier-mills work, and so much the deeper were the holes they made.

The Lucerne millstones have been brought from a great distance ; some of them from the granite-gneiss of Upper Uri, and some from the Jurassic, cretaceous, and nummulitic formations which are to be found among the Alps.

Herr Amrein-Troller, the owner of the Glacier-garden, may boast of being the possessor of the most ancient and most interesting relic in Lucerne ; and, thanks to the intelligence with which he pursues his excavations, he is constantly bringing fresh wonders to light,

Lucerne's summer visitors, however, being butterflies who delight in the sunshine, will look with something of a shiver at Nature's ancient laboratory, and will congratulate themselves that she got over most of her rough work before their day, and that her present operations are carried on in the midst of light and warmth, green trees and fragrant flowers.



GLACIER-GARDEN, LUCERNE



CHAPTER XI.

THE RIGI.

“ Look what streaks
Do lace the severing clouds in yonder east ;
Night's tapers are burnt out, and jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain tops.”

SHAKESPEARE.



ANY another mountain in Switzerland might claim to rank as high as the Rigi in the estimation of the public, if the only thing to be taken into account were the view visible from its summit.

Those, for instance, who have been undergoing the whey-cure on the Weissenstein, and have ascended to the still more elevated part of the mountain called the Hassenmatt, and those, too, who have stood on the top of the popular Seelisberg “Känzli,” or “pulpit,” gazing over a world of lake and mountain, will all discourse enthusiastically of the special advantages of their own favourite points of view, and declare that there is nothing finer, there can be nothing finer, in the world ! But no sooner is the Rigi mentioned than we feel that neither extent of prospect, nor altitude, nor beauty are of any avail unless they be combined with renown. Even a mountain cannot do without renown.

When the Rigi had taken leave of the region of Neptune, and had succeeded in lifting his dripping head and broad back out of the melancholy waves and into the light of day, he seems to have made up his mind to become famous at any cost. But people who propose to themselves such an aim as this must be wise enough to separate from the multitude, for it is only by taking up an isolated position that it is possible to attract much attention or to be interesting, unless one happens to be a head taller than the rest of the world. The Rigi

accordingly soon severed all connections with his neighbours in the south ; and, while they reared their heads to heaven in jealous emulation one of another, he waited quietly until the waters had dispersed and everything was reduced to geographical order. That which at first had been an island soon became a continent ; and when the mountain looked round, he found himself standing alone and solitary, with



THE RIGI, FROM LUCERNE.

lowlands on one side and highlands on the other, and the lakes of Lucerne, Zug, Lowerz, and Aeger in his immediate neighbourhood.

In 1729 Haller had written his poem called "The Alps," and although involved and pedantic in style, it did not fail of its object, which was to draw attention to the Alps, and to induce people to visit Switzerland. But the effect produced by Rousseau's romance, "*La nouvelle Héloïse*," which appeared in 1761, was far more powerful, for from it people learnt something of the pure and elevated enjoyment to

be derived from intercourse with Nature as she is to be found among the Alps, and cultivated minds throughout Europe were profoundly impressed. Thenceforth, Western Switzerland became a favourite resort with sentimental souls, but the rest of the country remained an almost unknown land, until it was discovered by Saussure and Ebel. The first of these won and opened up the region of the High Alps,



VIEW FROM KALTBAD, ON THE RIGI.

with its peaks and glaciers and icy deserts; the second, a German physician and naturalist belonging to Neumark, explored and wrote descriptions of the whole of Switzerland, including both the country and its inhabitants in his researches, and thereby induced thousands to visit it and judge for themselves of its attractions.

Ebel's name is, moreover, intimately connected with the history of

the Rigi; for, besides assisting in the preparation of numerous maps



RAILWAY-BRIDGE OVER THE SCHNURTOBEL.

and panoramas of Switzerland, he took the first panorama of the Rigi under his especial surveillance. He, too, was the first to recognise

the importance of the Rigi-Culm, or culminating point of the Rigi, and the future in store for it ; and it was he who advised the innkeeper of Klösterli, Martin Bürgi, whose family are now millionaires, to build an inn on the summit. A cottage was first of all built there in 1815, and the next year an uncomfortable little mountain-inn with about a dozen beds in it was erected by the aid of contributions from various places, more especially Zürich.

The next great impression was produced by Schiller's grand poem "William Tell." Every one was anxious to see the place in which the scene was laid, and as soon as peace was restored after the battle of Waterloo, visitors began to arrive in shoals. People wanted to see and admire the grand beauty of the landscape, and to refresh their spirits by the contemplation of the sublime and mighty mountains. Then, too, they joyfully recognised the fact that lungs which had been choked with the dust of cities and poisoned with the vapours which are bred in the plains, might derive great benefit from the fresh, pure air of the Alps ; and so the signal was given, and from the north of Europe to the shores of the Mediterranean "Switzerland and the Rigi" became the general watchwords.

Such being the case, of course it was necessary to make arrangements for the proper reception and accommodation of these numerous visitors, and the old mountain became the scene of energetic preparations. One inn arose after another ; Swiss speculators were not slow in making the most of the wealth which the foreigners brought with them into the country ; and the two together set a crown of gold on the head of the old Rigi. What people long for when they are young, they sometimes get in superabundance when they are old. Fame had come to the Rigi at last ; and, perhaps, the spirit of the mountain had a little too much of it ; but he could not rid himself of his guests, now that he had once summoned them, and so, leaving them in undisputed possession of his dominions, he crept away into one of his huge caverns, perhaps the Stigelfattbalm, where he still remains, and is said to play all sorts of tricks such as gnomes delight in.

But people became more importunate than ever ; and they began to gird the mountain's decaying body with iron rails. The panting steam-engine now climbs up its southern side, whistling shrilly as it goes, and there is a railway-station on the spot where the three sisters once dwelt, far apart from the world, in their little bark hut. A telegraph wire, too, winds round the rocks to warn the proud hotel-keepers on the summit of the approach of visitors from all quarters of the world.

But even this was found not to be enough, and since another railway has been constructed along the northern slope, beginning at Art and



AN ALPINE INN IN THE SNOW.

terminating at Rigi-Culm. Starting from Art at mid-day, the traveller may reach the Hotel Schreiber, have his dinner, and be ready by two o'clock to begin studying the panorama.

If we open any of our old guide-books,—Lutz's "Handbook to Switzerland for the year 1822," for example,—several inns are mentioned, particularly the Ox and the White Horse; and we see from good old Bädiker that, even so lately as twenty years ago, there were no such grand hotels as there are at present, neither were the charges at all extravagant. The number of the hotels is now doubled, and the charges have doubled too.

In 1856, at the Rigi-Culm Hotel, you could have a bedroom for a franc and a half, or two francs; breakfast, a franc and a half; table d'hôte, without wine, three francs; wine, two to three francs; but now you have to pay three to six francs for a room, four to five francs for table d'hôte without wine; three to five francs for wine. In those days about fifteen or twenty thousand visitors would ascend the mountain in the course of the summer, but in 1875 the numbers amounted to eighty thousand, and that in an unfavourable season. The hotel-proprietors hope that the numbers will increase yet more, and if they do it is a question whether the two thousand beds, which is the aggregate number furnished by all the hotels on the Rigi, will be sufficient to supply the needs of the great army of admirers.

But the mountain is in good hands, and he shows his gratitude by fi ling these same hands with gold. In fact, the Rigi is a mine of gold and silver. In other places people have to dig for the precious metals with shovel and pickaxe, and are forced to toil in the sweat of their brow; but here the treasure lies upon the surface. The pure silvery atmosphere is coined into five-franc pieces, and the golden glow of sunrise and sunset into napoleons: a species of minting which has lately been taken in hand by a large company calling itself the "Regina Montium," an appellation which they justify by going back to the fifteenth century and quoting Dekan von Bonstetten, who placed the Rigi in the centre of the eight old cantons, called it the heart of Switzerland and Europe, and bestowed upon it the grand surname of "Mons Regina." According to some people, Rigi is indeed a corruption of *regina*; but others, not satisfied with this, have dug still further, and because the Rigi is a mountain of particularly mild aspect, they try to derive its name from *Mons Rigidus*, "the iron-sided mountain." With an equal amount of reason, Gemmi has been derived from *gemitus*, "a sigh," because the traveller generally sighs with weariness while crossing the pass; according to which idea, a good many mountains in Switzerland might justly share the same appellation. Other persons, again, timidly suggest that the name may be

derived from the old word *rihe* or *rige*, "a row," in allusion to the way in which the strata are deposited; and so on, and so on, *ad infinitum*.

It is a matter of some difficulty to decide how we shall make the ascent. Shall it be on foot, or on horseback? by way of Weggis,



SUNSET ON THE RIGI.

Greppen, Immensee, Art, or Gersau? Shall it be by railway? and if so, by which railway?—by the one which commences the ascent from Vitznau, or by the new one, which calls itself the Art-Rigi railway? Both have their own peculiar beauties. The Vitznau railway has the wonderful views towards the south and west and the famous

Schnurtoberl bridge, which spans the wild-looking bed of a mountain-torrent, and besides this, it skirts precipices enough to make the traveller shudder pleasantly. The line from Art runs across the desert of Goldau, and as it winds its way upwards it affords many a lovely peep into the classic little canton of Schwyz. Then, too, it passes the celebrated Kräbelwand, a precipitous wall of rock past which the train creeps very cautiously, and it goes through the Red-rock tunnel and over the wonderful bridges which span the stream of the Dossenbach, while a succession of lovely views are to be seen from its windows.

The effect would, no doubt, be heightened if we were to keep our eyes closed until we reach the Staffel station, and were then to open them and take in the whole beauty of the scene in one rapid survey. The train winds upwards in a spiral between the Rigi-Culm and Rigi-Rothstock, and when it reaches the top the panorama of northern and north-eastern Switzerland opens suddenly out before us as if by magic, and not even the most prosaic individual in the world can help feeling some emotion.

A wide extent of hills and valleys lies bathed in sunshine at our feet, and dotted with innumerable white towns and villages. Yonder is the German Black Forest looming blue in the distance. There is the Feldberg, and there are the Suabin Alps, and the mountains of the Jura and Vosges are lost in the purple haze which shrouds the far horizon. At the foot of the precipice below lies the sparkling and ever-beautiful Lake of Lucerne; the village yonder is Küssnacht; the bright town at the corner of the lake, which is reflected so clearly in the waters, is Lucerne; and close by stands Pilatus, keeping guard over her; one hill rises behind another, with numerous lakes lying glistening in between, and over all is the clear blue sky flecked with golden clouds.

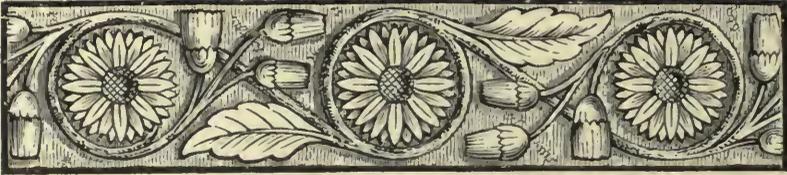
But from the Rigi-Culm, which is the highest point of the mountain, the panorama extends over three hundred miles in circumference, and the eye may wander like the eagle without let or hindrance, from east to west, from north to south, from the lowlands to the High Alps, to the snow-capped glittering peaks of the Jungfrau, Eiger, Monk, Wetterhorn, Finsteraarhorn, and Schreekhorn, or may survey the Alpine valleys of Uri and Glarus, and the lake-valleys which lie close at hand, smiling out of the dark, mysterious forests which enshroud them. On one side, the view extends upwards of a hundred and eighty miles, La Dôle in the Jura being its extreme limit. But all

this should be seen under various aspects and in various lights—when the mists fill the valley, making it look like a billowy sea, and the mountains like dark, floating islands ; when the dawning light, as it gains more and more power, touches first the Bernese Alps, then drives away the mist and wakens the earth to the joy of another day ; when the glow of sunset lights up all the mountains in the east, from the Säntis to the Bristenstock, and when the blue moonlight glimmers on the surface of the numerous lakes, and the mountains stand round in a circle, looking like so many shivering blue shadows.

But the Rigi is of a very nervous temperament, and depends much upon the state of the weather. A good many thousands, after ascending the mountain full of eager expectation, have found nothing but a grey veil spread before their eyes, which often not even the most patient waiting will suffice to remove.

Those who have visited the Rigi on a clear frosty day in winter, when all the world around is slumbering beneath the quiet snow, speak with astonishment of the rapture and wonder excited by the startling novelty of the scene—a scene which those who come only in the summer, and are accustomed to see nothing but blue skies, golden cornfields, and emerald meadows bedecked with flowers, cannot have any idea of.





CHAPTER XII.

FROM BASEL TO BERN.

“**B**ASEL? Oh, don't let us have anything to do with Basel! It is the dullest town upon the face of the earth!”

That is one side of the question; but, on the other hand, all through our Swiss tour, wherever we have been, even in the most remote little mountain inn, we have been accompanied by the sweetest possible souvenirs of Basel, which have regularly appeared towards the end of dinner in the shape of sweetmeats. If you ask Swiss boys or girls, “What is the town of Basel famous for?” a sugary smile will overspread their faces, and, with a finger in their mouths, they will whisper bashfully, “You mean Basel sweetstuff!”

If anyone, wishing to know more, should turn over the pages of the little school geography which he may see peeping out of any boy's pocket, he will there read that “Basel stands on the Rhine, has forty-four thousand inhabitants, is one of the most important manufacturing and commercial towns in Switzerland, and possesses a university and missionary institute.” If this be not enough, we may consult Gutzkow's “Traveller's Impressions,” and read therein as follows: “With regard to staying in Swiss towns, I have felt for years past that, with the exception of Zürich, they are endurable only until the next diligence starts. In Basel, you just look at the frescoes in the town-hall, stroll for half an hour through the weather-beaten sandstone cloisters of the cathedral, pay a visit to the dépôt for tracts and missionary publications, and then take your departure.” That is all the information we get about Basel, and it certainly does not tend to make us more anxious to see the town.

We take up another book, and there we read: “Basel is a flourishing commercial town; but it does not bestow its attention upon trade

alone. It has been for ages past the home of art and science. In



BASEL.

1859, the University of Basel kept a jubilee in honour of the four

hundredth year of its existence, and the town has good right to be proud of the fête then held ; for the many visitors from other parts of Switzerland, and from all the German universities, went away delighted with the handsome and liberal manner in which they had been entertained. Strangers also were much impressed by the devotion displayed by the little republic, and the service it was capable of rendering to the cause of science."

Basel on the Rhine is an interesting and beautiful and also a prosperous town ; and, but for Zürich—which is, however, a place of totally different character—it would rank as the first town in Switzerland. But, in any case, Basel is the principal commercial town in Switzerland, and the wealthiest.

An advantageous situation and good fortune have also contributed their share towards raising Basel to its present position. Standing in an angle on the frontiers of Switzerland, France, and Germany, close to the spot where the Rhine first becomes navigable, and, turning decidedly northwards, affords the town every facility for extending her trade in this direction, the "Golden Gate of Helvetia," as it is called, is surrounded by a wide and fertile plain which stretches along both banks of the river, and occupies the space between the Jura, the Black Forest, and the Vosges. Then, too, the railways for all the places in East and West Switzerland, the Alsace-Lorraine lines, which are the chief means of communication with Paris and the north of France, as well as the Baden lines, which place the town in direct communication with the towns of Germany—all converge in Basel. About thirty years ago steamboats used to run to Strasburg, Mannheim, and Mayence ; and though these have been quite superseded by the railways, the town owes much to the river, which in former times was of still greater advantage to her. In those days both passengers and merchandise travelled by way of the Rhine, and the river still brings extremely distinguished guests to the Basel banquets, in the shape of splendid salmon, which are far more famous than their cousins in the Elbe and Oder. The fish come up the river in shoals in the month of May ; and, when they get beyond the town, before they can pass the Laufenburg rapids, they fall a prey to the nets and traps of the Rhine fisherman ; and, in fact, they form the most valuable gift the river-god has to bestow.

Basel looks like a well-fortified mediæval town, with its stone walls guarding the sloping hills, and the grand minster crowning the whole like a castle or stronghold. It is not likely that there will ever

be many changes in the part of the town which fronts the river ; and



THE SPAHLENTHOR AND HOLBEIN'S FOUNTAIN, BASEL.

the houses from the suburb of St. John to the suburb of St. Alban

look just as they always have done, black and ancient, and jostled together in most irregular fashion.

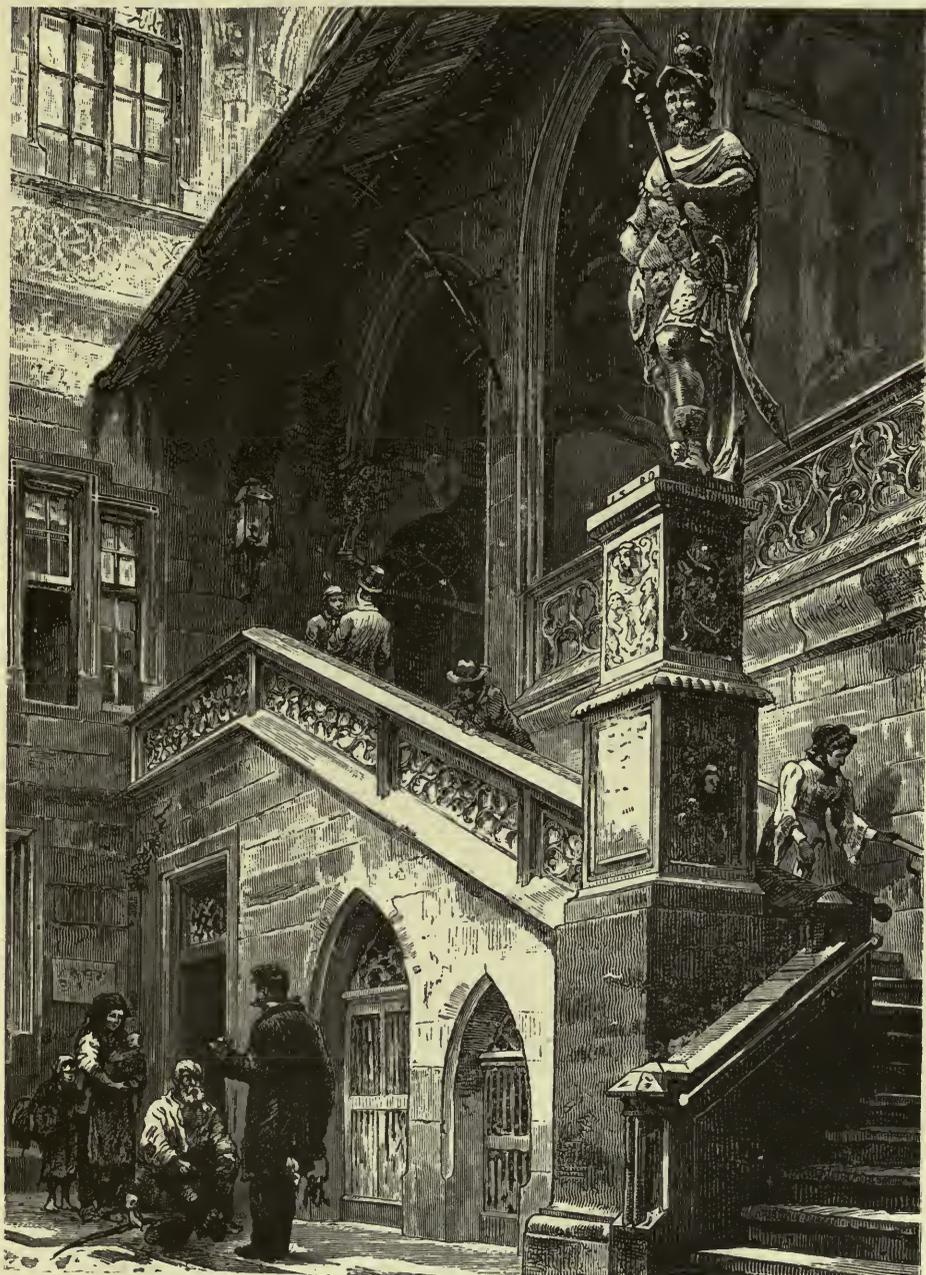
Basel overleapt the narrow limits of the fortifications and overflowed through the gates; and, even while the ramparts were still standing, spread itself over the country in the direction of Birsfeld, St. Jacob, Gundeldingen, and other places in the south, east, and west. It has long since passed the old boundaries, for the great semicircle of ditches and ramparts now lies in the middle of the town—or, rather, what was once its site does, for nothing but the old names remain to show where it was; and it is just the same with the gates, none of which, not even the strong gate called the Spahlenthor, was strong enough to resist the pressure from within. The younger generation of buildings passed it by, and it remains a hoary monument of bygone days, standing amid the broad new streets, well-kept pleasure grounds, modern villas, and tidy, cheerful villa residences, which go to make up the new Basel. The inhabitants have great things in contemplation, and there is no doubt they will accomplish them easily and well—easily, because their purses are well-filled; and well, because they are fortunately endowed with good taste.

The town will have to grow larger yet. Its further extension is imperatively demanded by the growth of the population, which from being sixteen thousand at the beginning of the seventeenth century, has now risen to nearly forty-five thousand. Indeed, the old tree seems to have blossomed twice, for there is a tradition that the population of Basel amounted to nearly forty thousand once before, namely, at the time of the Great Council, when its material power was at its height, and it was often able to send five thousand men into the field.

Basilia, a small and very unpretending place, which the common people are said to have called Robur, was also originally a Roman outpost on the Rhine. Little is known of its early history, and but little of the time when the district passed under the dominion of the Franks. One thing, however, is certain, namely, that of the town as it was before the year 900 nothing remained, for the Huns burnt it down and destroyed it utterly in A.D. 918.

A new town was built by the year 1004 and was taken under the protection of the Germans, whose king, Heinrich II., greatly befriended it. He entirely rebuilt the Cathedral, and was present at its consecration in 1019. On Heinrich's death the succession was disputed by his son Heinrich, Conrad II. of Franconia, and Rudolf III. of Burgundy; and there is a house in Basel whose name still serves to

remind the passer-by of the visit paid to the town by the three kings



COURTYARD OF THE RATHHAUS, BASEL.

on the conclusion of peace. The humble little inn in which they are said to have met is now a magnificent first-class hotel, well known to

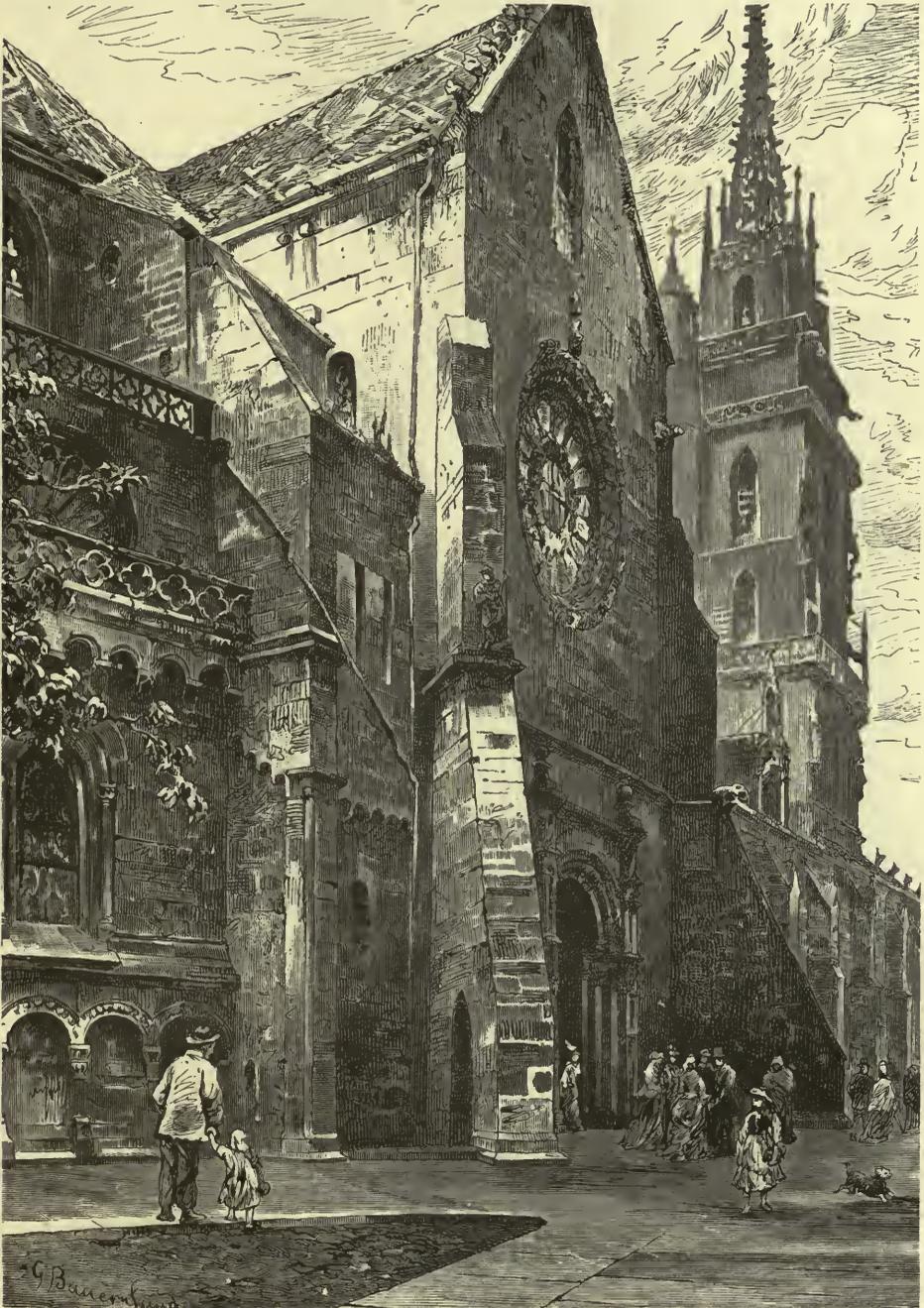
European fame as the *Hôtel des Trois Rois*. It is a large, handsome building, and stands well on the bank of the river, just below the Rhine bridge.

Early in the sixteenth century Basel received a great accession of strength, both material and moral, the former through her entrance into the Confederacy, which took place in 1501, the latter through her acceptance of the doctrines of the Reformers. Thenceforward Basel altered greatly, and much to her own advantage, for she became the shining light of her generation. The most prominent genius of the time was Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam, who came to Basel in 1513, and gathered around him a set of distinguished scientific men.

But Art, too, was highly cherished in Basel, and her citizens take a proud delight in mentioning the name of Holbein, whose great fame has been a valuable legacy to the town. Hans Holbein the Elder had been summoned to Basel on the occasion of the building of the new town-hall, and settled there with his family in 1507. His son, who is known to all the world as Hans Holbein the Younger, worked in Basel till 1526, when he came to England, and all hope of the establishment of a Basel School of Painting under his superintendence fell to the ground. But still Basel need not complain, for her museum contains more of the master's works, both paintings and sketches, than any other in Europe. Every one knows, by reputation at least, that famous "Passion of Christ," the "Family Group" representing the artist's wife and children, the "Last Supper," the "Dead Christ," and the portraits of Bonifacius Amerbach, Froben, and Erasmus, all of which, besides many others, are to be seen in the Basel Museum, and form a collection for which the town is much envied.

One of the fountains in the town, too, bears the name of Holbein, and represents a piper playing to a group of dancing peasants. It is said to be from designs of Holbein the Younger, and stands in the Spahlen suburb. Close by is the venerable relic of the past known as the Spahlenthor, or St. Paul's Gate, which is the most interesting of all the seven gates, and is in the style of the fourteenth century. The structure consists of a square tower with a pointed hipped roof, flanked by a round tower on each side. There are three figures above the archway, representing the Blessed Virgin and two apostles, which escaped the iconoclasts of 1529. The gate, like the rest of the fortifications, has ceased to be of any use; but though it has withdrawn into private life, it has been restored and is preserved as a memorial of ancient times. Nor is it, happily, the sole surviving relic

of the past, for there are several interesting buildings and portions of



BASEL MINSTER.

buildings scattered about the town, chief among which is the Rathhaus,

or town-hall. The oldest parts of this edifice belong to the fourteenth century, but at a later period an adjoining building was incorporated with it, and then the whole was rebuilt and so patched at different times that it has no very decided character, though the style is more Burgundian-Gothic than anything else. The last restoration took place some fifty years ago. The frescoes on the exterior and in the courtyard are not worth anything; but, taken as a whole, the building, with its open-air staircase leading up to the interesting rooms on the first floor, looks thoroughly mediæval.

At the foot of the stairs is a statue of the Roman general already mentioned, Munatius Plancus, the founder of Augusta Rauracorum: it was executed some three hundred years ago, by the sculptor Hans Michel. There are many other interesting buildings to be seen, and there is no difficulty in filling up the time "till the next diligence starts;" and those who can manage to spend a few days in Basel are sure to become attached to it.

Our chief attention, however, is due to the cathedral, a venerable, well-proportioned edifice of red sandstone, with two towers more than a couple of hundred feet high, dedicated respectively to St. George and St. Martin. It stands well on the highest ground in the town, and commands an extensive view over the surrounding country. In its present shape it has existed only since 1500. Before that time it was a low, narrow building in the Romanesque style; but now it is Gothic, and thoroughly German in character, in spite of the many alterations and disfigurements perpetrated at different times and by different hands. The interior has been much improved since 1873, by the removal of the worthless additions made to it, and now its quiet grandeur and pure beauty challenge the admiration of all who understand and appreciate old German art. The exterior is less handsome than that of other cathedrals, owing to the hasty way in which it was rebuilt after the earthquake. The front entrance is adorned with half-columns, foliated arches, figures of saints and kings, figures under canopies, the statues of the first founder, the Emperor Heinrich, and, his wife; while at the foot of the towers, on either side the portal, stand equestrian statues of St. Martin and St. George: these are all of the fourteenth century. The north entrance, called the Portal of St. Gallus, is especially rich in quaint sculptures, the subjects of which are chiefly taken from the New Testament, and represent Christ, the Evangelists, the Wise and Foolish Virgins, &c. These are said to be the work of sculptors of the twelfth century.

In executing the mouldings of the east gallery, the sculptor, whoever he was, seems to have indulged to the utmost the taste for grotesque symbolical figures, which was so eminently characteristic of the Middle Ages. Passing on, we come to the cloisters which surround the old churchyard, in which many a distinguished Basel citizen lies buried. The cathedral, however, ought to have a chapter to itself, for there is a great deal in it which is worthy of our notice; and besides the cathedral there are museums, libraries, and other treasures, all waiting for their share of attention. Meantime the summer is passing



OLTEN.

rapidly, and we have still much ground to travel over; so we bid adieu to Basel, and on our way to Bern we pay a hasty visit to the charming Canton of Solothurn, or Soleure, with its sunny mountain slopes and pleasant old towns, and should feel very much inclined to linger there if the snowy Alps were not beckoning to us from the distance.

There is nothing to detain us in Olten, which is a busy little town filled from morning to night with the sound of hammers, the roar of machinery, and the rush and rattle of steam-engines. So many lines of railway radiate from Olten that it is constantly in a state of restless bustle, especially in the summer, when thousands of travellers pass

through on their way to all the points of the compass. The town stands on the left bank of the Aar, but is spreading rapidly on all sides, and is doing its best to keep up with the requirements of modern times.

Solothurn, the sister-town, is also a stirring place, and, like Basel, is outgrowing the ancient walls which once confined it. Its streets are



THE OLD TOWER GATES, SOLOTHURN.

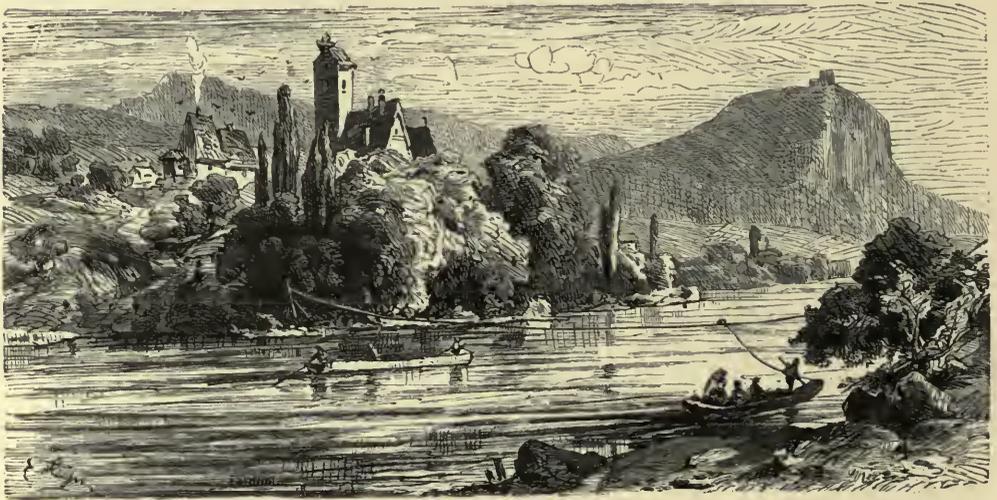
broad, clean, and handsome; and, with its grand squares, plashing fountains, well-kept gardens, shady avenues, and numerous fine buildings, Solothurn has a comfortable air of prosperity. The grey towers, gates, and battlements which still remain, look like old brocade on a new dress, and serve to remind us of ancient times;

but the ramparts have long since been covered with trees and turned into a promenade for the benefit of the townspeople and their children.

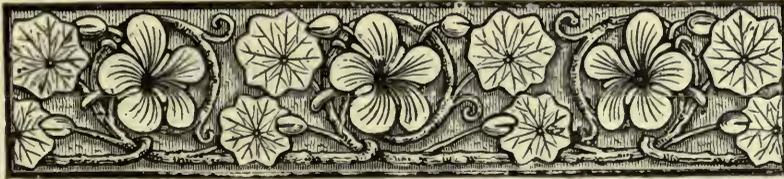
The most ancient relic of the past is the clock-tower, from which, according to some credulous writers, the name of Solothurn is derived. They call the town *Solodurum* or *Solam turrin*, from the isolated position of the tower, whose stones are said to be so firmly cemented together with wine and eggs that it would be a work of great difficulty to demolish it. It is attributed to the Romans; and, whether it was actually built by them or not, it is at least certain that Solothurn and Trier, or Treves, share the honour of being the most ancient town on this side of the Alps. This, one would think, might have satisfied the good people, but apparently it did not, for they had a picture painted in which they, the burghers of Solothurn, were represented as standing upon the walls of their town and looking calmly on while Eve was being fashioned from the rib taken out of the side of the sleeping Adam. There are numerous Roman remains both here and in the surrounding neighbourhood. The pleasant bathing establishment of Attisholz, a very favourite resort of the townspeople, situated in the midst of a wood, is particularly rich in remains of ancient buildings and aqueducts. People talk of there having been temples here dedicated to Apis and Atys, and their sites are even pointed out; but as to who Atys was, and whether he was the same with Adonis, the beloved by Venus, whose *cultus* was introduced here by Heliogabalus, nobody knows, and nobody at the present day very much cares, while he can enjoy such a sunny, smiling, wildly romantic landscape as that through which the Aar rushes. We might even get a view of the Alps from the hill here; but it will be better to go on to the Weissenstein, or White Rock, which, next to the Hasenmatt, is the most lofty elevation of the Eastern Jura, on the slopes of which Solothurn is situated. The Weissenstein is four thousand, the Hasenmatt four thousand one hundred feet high; and on the brow of the former is situated the hotel and bath-house, an establishment famous not only for its wonderful view, but for the good effects produced upon invalids by its pure air and the *cure de petit lait*, or course of goats' whey, which is recommended in certain complaints. The Weissenstein would be a worthy rival of the Rigi if it had an equal reputation, for there is a very extensive view of the Alps to be seen from the windows of the hotel. The whole grand chain of snowy peaks may be seen spread out along the horizon, stretching without break from east to west, and

comprehending the Säntis, Mont Blanc, and Mont Salève ; but, besides this distant view, there is one nearer and equally charming, over a wide extent of country diversified by villages, towns, rivers, roads, mountains, castles, and towers.

The Weissenstein ought to make more noise in the world ; but, perhaps, like its neighbours of Solothurn, it is too quiet and modest. It might not be a bad advertisement of its attractions, if it were to commission one of the pretty girls of the canton to put on her gay holiday costume, not forgetting the red ribbon in her fair hair, and to go out into the world, carrying with her a bouquet of fresh flowers gathered on the summit of the mountain.



THE RHINE ABOVE BASEL.



CHAPTER XIII.

THE TOWN OF BERN.

“Grand the distant view before us,
From the grey old Minster here ;
At our feet the proud bright waters
Of the Aar flow broad and clear.
And far off, in purest radiance,
Rise the Alps with silver crown.
Where, 'mid snow and ice, the river
Springs, then leaps and rushes down.
Hitherward she flows with tribute
Brought from torrent, lake, and stream,
And in accents fresh and joyous,
Makes the Oberland her theme.”



HIGH among glittering peaks of ice, far beyond the Schreckhorn, Wetterhorn, Wellhorn, amid the lonely mountains of the Grimsel Pass, stands the silver cradle of the Aar, flanked on either side by the enormous glaciers of the Upper and Lower Aar. The stream no sooner issues forth from its retreat than it begins, like a young giant, to play with huge blocks of stone, and to roll them along before it in its course. Then it rushes into the savage, rocky wilderness of the Grimsel Pass, and like a true-born child of the Alps, leaps madly down the first precipice it meets with, in all the pride of its youthful strength. These Falls of the Aar, or falls of Handeck, as they are called, are close to the chalet of Handeck, which is surrounded by a dark forest of fir-trees, and right and left of the cataract stand the Gelmenhorn, the Aelplistock, Thierälplistock, and other heights which overlook the wildly romantic valley of Oberhaslithil. One leap after another brings the Aar, “foaming and rushing,” down into the pleasant region of Guttannen. Short as its course has been, it has made a descent of

two thousand feet, and now it begins to look round for companions, who speedily come from all quarters, with noise of tinkling and singing as they issue forth from beneath the glaciers, and join their waters with those of the Aar.

Yonder is the pleasing valley of Meiringen, and down the great Scheidegg leaps the torrent of the Reichenbach, while the Alpbach another mountain torrent, rushes down from the Hasleberg. After receiving these two tributaries, the Aar, which has now become a river of importance, leaves the Haslethal, in which its early life was spent, and when it has passed by the antiquated village of Thun, and



FRUIT-MARKET, BERN.

beneath the walls of the castle of Zähringen, the river proceeds straight to Bern, flowing now between high rocky banks and thick woods, and now through meadows and copses.

And so at last it reaches Bern, the "Venice of the Alps," where it suddenly resumes its wild impetuosity of character. It begins to hesitate and to struggle, and persistently refuses to go forward. Five times does it twist and turn to the west, six times to the north, and three times to the south and east, thus forming the various promontories of Kerchenfeld, Bremgarten, and Engi, as well as the one upon which the town of Bern is built. But soon



BERN FROM THE NORTH.

after this it is joined by the sister river from Freiburg, the lively Saane, and from the north comes the irresistible voice of old Father Rhine, calling them to meet him at Waldshut, whence he carries them in his strong arms down to the great ocean. And so, farewell to the beautiful Aar! Bern has the river to thank for her proud position, for it was the Aar which converted the solid sandstone rock upon which the town stands into a promontory, and made



THE ENGI PROMENADE, BERN.

it such a peculiarly favourable site for the central stronghold of a growing power.

Zürich, which is a shining light to the whole Confederacy, has taken the arts and sciences under her especial protection; golden Basel has devoted herself to commerce; and Bern is the heart and core of Switzerland, the stronghold of unity, and the trusty defender of the whole country. Bern was born to be a ruler and its citizens were born to be lords.

Though gloomy and defiant-looking when seen from without, the town is pleasant enough within, for she keeps her best and most

amiable side for her own people and for visitors, while she presents a rough front to her enemies. Indeed, it would be hard to find another place so thoroughly homelike, comfortable, and generally pleasant to live in, as this good old town, with its neat, uniform houses, bright



THE KESSLERGASSE, BERN.

flower-trimmed, white-curtained windows, broad, overhanging eaves, and quaint archways, belonging to the arcades which run down each side of the street. The arcades are lined with shops and stalls, where business is quietly and unobtrusively carried on every day, and where

the weekly market is also held. Then there are the oddly shaped towers, the plashing fountains adorned with statues, the beautiful Gothic cathedral, and the shady squares, from which one sees not only the familiar green hills opposite, but also a grand and extensive view of the distant Alps. Taking all this into account, it must be admitted both that the old free town keeps up her character, and that former generations understood better how to secure comfort in their domestic architecture than the builders of modern times, who pile five or six storeys one on the top of the other, and thereby succeed in producing large, formal-looking masses of brick and mortar which are anything but snug and cosy.

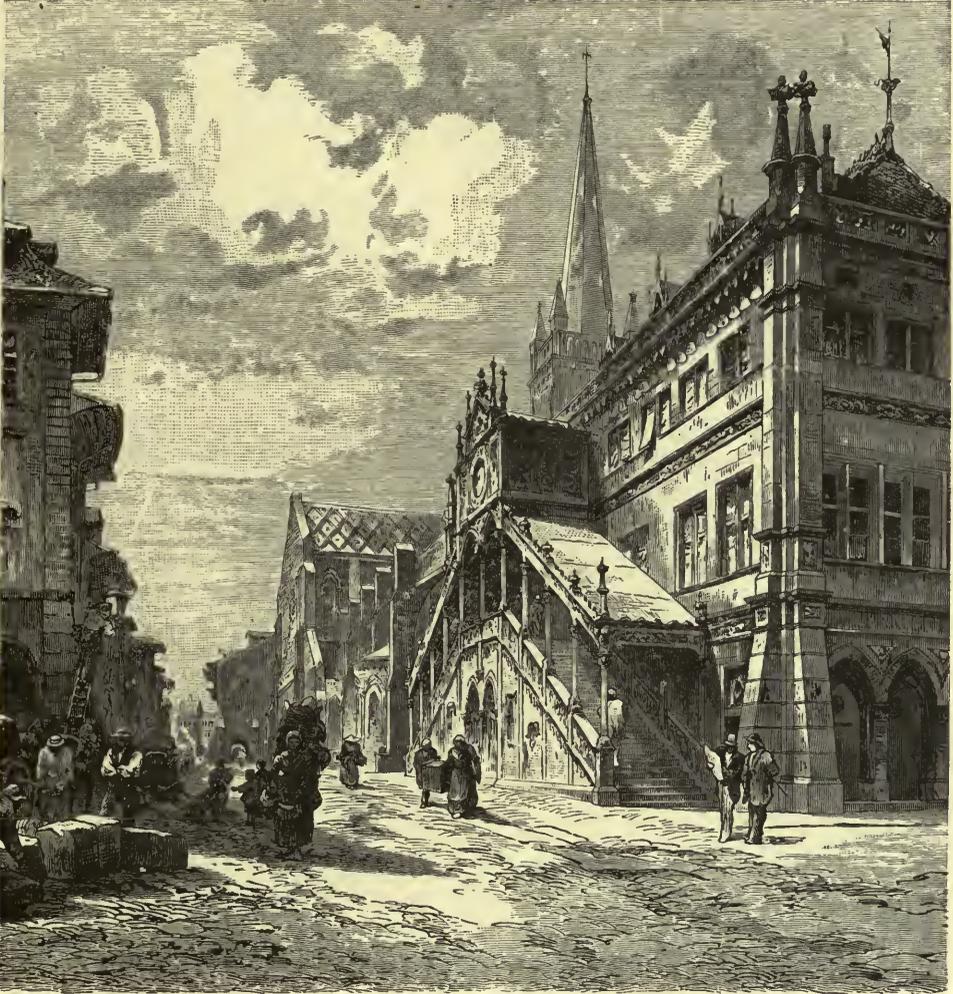
Truly the bear of Bern is no empty myth, for wherever a house, fountain, gateway, or monument is erected, Bruin's effigy is sure to make part of the design. Whether the founders of the town floated down the Aar till they came to the famous wood "Im Sack," near the spot where the river is now spanned by the Unter-Thor Bridge, and whether they were here found and nursed by a she-bear after the fashion of Romulus and Remus, tradition does not say; but one thing is certain, namely, that what the wolf and the Capitoline geese are to Rome, that the noble Bruin, the kindest of all the wild animals of Germany, is to Bern. Rome has fallen, and a single bronze figure is the sole memorial remaining of the celebrated wolf; but if Bern were to fall, every museum in Europe might be stocked with bears from her collection for thousands of years to come, and even the very smallest of them might have a cub at least. The people maintain that Bern is derived from Bear, and in proof of their assertion they will take you to see an old weather-beaten stone which is built into one of the bridges, and bears the following enigmatical inscription:—

E R S T B A E R
H I E F A M.

This stone is said to have stood on the spot where the bear, from which the town took its name, was captured. The story is told by the good old Conrad Justinger, who was recorder of Bern till the end of the fourteenth century, and was commissioned by the town-council to write a chronicle of the past history of Bern and the most remarkable facts relating to the town. In his simple yet stately way he writes as follows:—"How the town was called Bern! There were a great many wild animals in the oak forest, and Duke Berchtold and his councillors determined that the town should be called after the

first animal that was caught there; and the first that was caught happened to be a bear, so the town was called Bern; and he gave the burghers a shield and armorial bearings, namely, a black bear on a white field."

Bern is not confined within any walls in these days; building goes



THE RATHHAUS, BERN.

on merrily in the open country without the gates, and the gloomy ramparts and bastions have been turned into pleasant promenades. But the old burghers were well aware of their town's value and high destiny, and it was this proud consciousness which made them strong. Whether, however, they at all appreciated the sublime scenery which

surrounded them is quite another question. But strangers who visit Bern, even if they find nothing to their taste in the town itself, will hurry to the lofty terrace at the back of the minster, and will gaze with longing hearts at the world of glittering mountains which is thence visible. The Platform, as this terrace with its rows of shady chestnut-trees is called, is a sublimely beautiful spot, a perfect elysium of delight—for, besides the ordinary view of the Alps, which you may enjoy when the atmosphere is clear at any and every hour of the day, you have such sunrises and sunsets as are hardly to be seen anywhere except from the Rigi or some equally famous height.

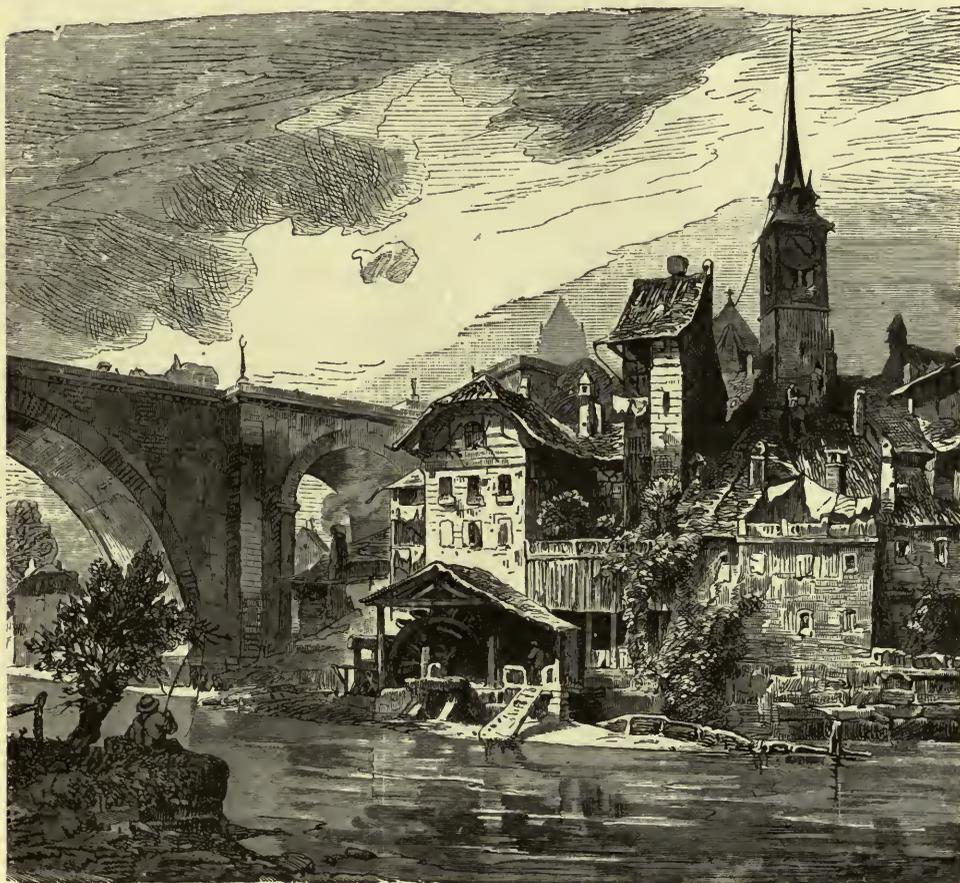
Another evening we may vary our walk by going to the Engi Terrace, outside the Aarberg Gate. This is a much less secluded spot than the Platform, for it is a very favourite resort, and as it is provided with a restaurant, colonnades, tables, and benches, the scene which goes on here under the spreading trees in summer evenings is a very lively one. With Reichenbach beer, good coffee, and seed cakes, some people will find the sunset view of the Alps doubly enjoyable. The great Bremgarten Wood begins close by here. Many people, however, consider that both the Platform and the Engi Terrace are surpassed by the Schänzli, or Bastion, on the right bank of the Aar, to the north of the town, whence you have a good view of Bern as well as of the distant prospect.

But Bern contains a good many other antiquities, besides its streets, which are well worthy of notice. Chief among these is the Rathhaus, or town-hall, a truly ancient, but stumpy and heavy-looking building, something like a castle, which formerly regulated all the thoughts and opinions of the town. The staircase, sculptures, rooms, and some of the pictures recall to our minds the date at which it was founded, namely, about the year 1416.

Those who have any time and attention to spare may like to go a few steps farther and look at the Nydeck Bridge, which is a splendid specimen of engineering skill, spanning the river Aar with a single colossal arch nearly a hundred and fifty feet wide. It leads out of the town into the high road which goes to Aargau, Emmenthal, and Thun;—but things of this sort possess little interest for those who just wander through the streets thinking all the while how soon they shall be able to get to the Oberland. Most tourists, however, wish to see the Ogre's Fountain, on the Corn-house Place; the Clock Tower, which is just round the corner, close by; the Stork's Fountain, with the bagpiper on the top, and the Goliath Tower, and they will perhaps

also inquire for St. David's Fountain, which is unfortunately no longer in existence. The Clock Tower is a favourite rendezvous for children of all sizes and ages, especially about eleven or twelve o'clock in the day, when the machinery has most to do.

But there is something more worthy of our attention than the Clock Tower, namely, the Cathedral, also called the "Great Church,"



THE NYDECK BRIDGE, BERN.

and, in more ancient times, the *Leutkirche*, or People's Church. In the first instance, that is, in the year 1224, it was built of wood; and the first stone of the present edifice was laid two hundred years later, the first architect being Matthias Ensinger, son of the architect of Ulm. It was the last erected of all the cathedral churches, and the style is late Gothic; but it was a hundred and fifty years in building,

and in consequence many alterations were made in the original design,



BERN CATHEDRAL.

and neither the Reformation nor the hard times which followed were

favourable to its completion. On the place in front is the equestrian statue of Rudolf von Erlach, the hero of Laupen.

There are innumerable walks, drives, and excursions to be made in the neighbourhood, and it is difficult to choose between them; but artists would perhaps prefer going to Burgdorf, called on the French



SMITHY OF LANGNAU, IN THE EMMENTAL.

side Berthoud, probably after the founder Berchtold, the same who built Bern. By the lower orders it is generally called Burtlef. This little town, which is situated on the Emme, is a miniature Bern, built in the same style, with similar arcades and colonnades, and inhabited by a similar class of people. It is very flourishing, and its storehouses are filled with such articles as delight the heart of the Swiss housewife,

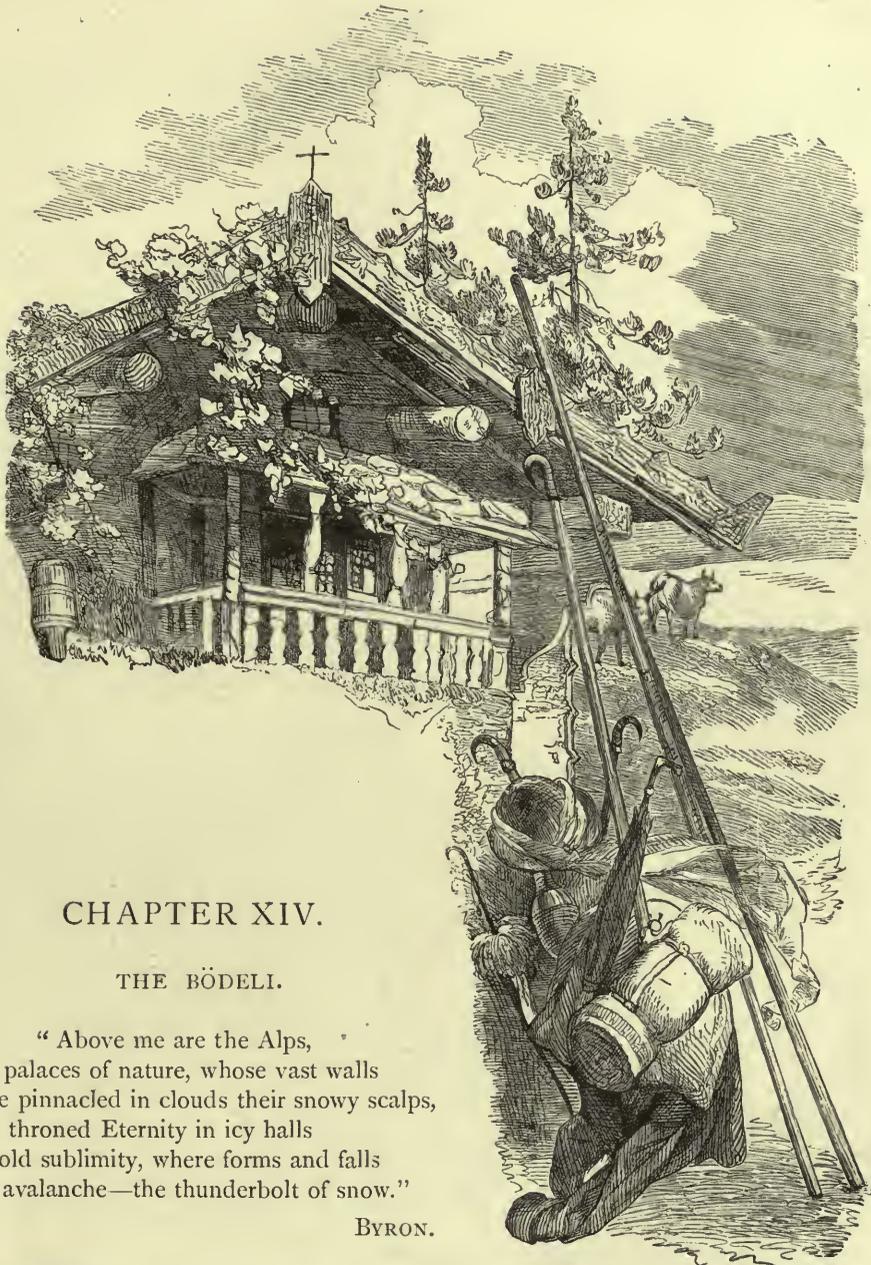
namely, flax, yarn, honey, butter, cheese, and linen, from the fertile valley of Emmenthal close by.

The weekly and yearly markets held here give one a very good idea of the ways of the herdsmen and agricultural population of Bern. Those who love history, which has some story to tell concerning a dragon of Burgdorf, will be interested by the many memorials of ancient times here to be met with.

Philanthropists will like to dwell on the memory of the noble Pestalozzi, who had a school in the castle of Burgdorf; and the German will probably like to pay a visit to the tomb of Schneckemburger, who wrote the heroic songs sung by the German armies as they marched into France.

As we wander on, we presently find ourselves in the charming valley of Emmenthal, and perhaps see before us one of the pretty Bernese houses, of which fancy has drawn us so many pictures at our own fireside. Imagination has not played us false, in this instance at least; and certainly, if people in the Bernese towns understand what "home" and "home comfort" mean, people in the country seem to understand them equally well. Indeed, judging from the specimen before us, we can understand that it might be almost dangerous for the traveller to venture inside one of these attractive-looking dwellings, and we feel that there may be a good deal of truth in the familiar distich which declares that—

"Those that come within this door
Will never wish to leave it more."



CHAPTER XIV.

THE BÖDELI.

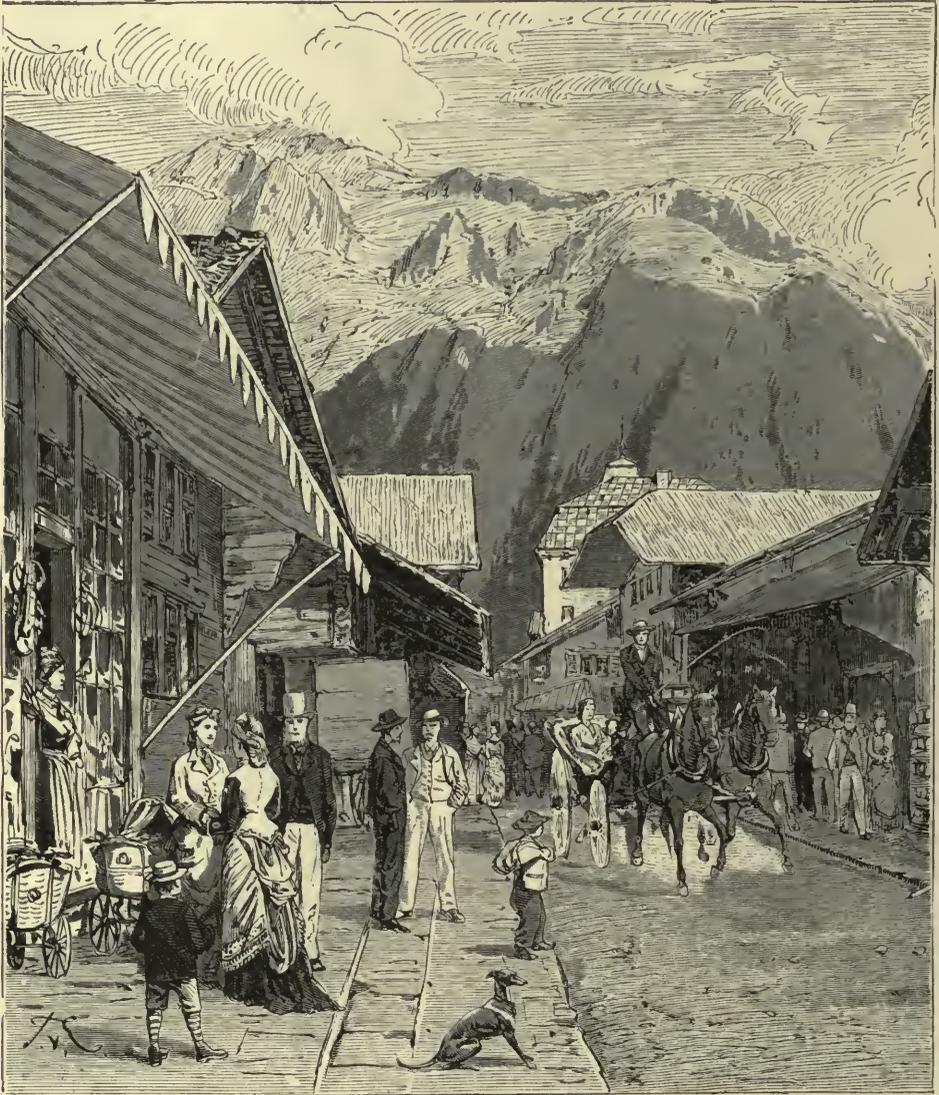
“ Above me are the Alps, *
 The palaces of nature, whose vast walls
 Have pinnaced in clouds their snowy scalps,
 And throned Eternity in icy halls
 Of cold sublimity, where forms and falls
 The avalanche—the thunderbolt of snow.”

BYRON.



WHAT is this “ Bödéli ” ? It sounds very simple and innocent, and not particularly promising ; and yet it is very important ground, as we are reminded by the mention of Interlaken. Then the Bödéli is Interlaken ? No, not that ; but Interlaken is situated in the midst of the Bödéli, the district, namely, which forms the threshold and entrance of the great theatre towards which we have so long looked with longing eyes, and at which we last gazed

from the Cathedral Terrace in Bern. This theatre is the Bernese Oberland, and many thousands go hence every year to secure their places in the stalls, or in the boxes in the first, second, and third tiers,



A STREET IN INTERLAKEN.

nearly all of which are reserved for foreigners. Then Interlaken is in the Oberland? Yes, and no. It is not in the actual Oberland, meaning by that the Swiss High'ands, which still look down upon us

from a considerable distance. Indeed, the Interlaken public are nearly eleven miles away from the Jungfrau, who must be regarded as undisputed prima donna of the Bernese Alps.

Now that we are so very close to the goal of our desires, to the region whose very name sends a thrill through our souls, we must for a few moments imagine that we are following the eagle in his



A STREET IN THUN.

flight, and take a rapid bird's-eye view of the scene outspread beneath us, so that we may have some idea how the land lies, and how the valleys, mountains, glaciers, rivers, and lakes are disposed one with regard to the other. For although earnest desires and a vivid imagination might be excellent guides if we were going on a voyage to the moon, a journey among the mountains is a very different matter; and

if we are to go through the Bernese Oberland, we must have trustworthy maps, and guides who know thoroughly what they are about.

Interlaken lies at the entrance of that especially favourite valley, the Lauterbrunnenthal; and the number of delightful excursions which may be made from thence is simply unlimited. Moreover, they have the recommendation of being within easy reach, none of the expeditions in the valley occupying more than a day each. Those usually made are to the far-famed waterfalls of the Staubbach, Trümletenbach, Schmadribach, to the grand Wengernalp, to Mürren, Grindelwald, and to the Faulhorn, which is a sort of Bernese Rigi. Interlaken itself possesses many charms and attractions, though Bädeker thinks it necessary to qualify his praises by remarking: "Interlaken is a good halting-place for such as are not obliged to economise their time and money, and they will find it pleasant to take a few days' rest here between their expeditions to the valleys and heights of the Oberland."

Interlaken is entirely modern; or, rather, the tottering old cottages and convent which used to form the village of Interlaken have gone to sleep, as it were, and the place has passed into other hands; for when we speak of Interlaken, we generally mean the grand new quarter about the Höheweg, being perhaps hardly aware of the existence of the few little houses which stand behind the convent, all brown with age; and unless we study our map very carefully, we shall not know whether we are in Unterseen, Aarmühle, or Matten, for these different suburbs of the town all run one into the other.

Every one who has been to Interlaken knows the Höheweg, which is as famous as the Boulevards of Paris and Hyde Park in London, though it is not like either, and possesses a peculiar charm of its own. Fashionable loungers in the most brilliant toilets may be seen disporting themselves in the pleasant green shade, having on the one side a row of palace-like hotels with blooming gardens, fountains, and shrubberies, and all the tokens of luxury; and, on the other, the soft green meadows which stretch up to the mouth of the valley of Lauterbrunnen, while behind them rises the glistening form of the Jungfrau. On the one hand, there are the intoxicating strains of Strauss, Beethoven, Gounod, and Mozart played by the band, and on the other there is the soft tinkle of the herd-bells and the lowing of the cattle.

The climate of Interlaken is considered very beneficial to invalids, being warm and damp, and it early acquired some reputation on this

account, though it did not reach its highest fame until the latter half of the present century.

When it comes to describing the Jungfrau, one may as well throw



THE JUNGFRAU, SEEN FROM INTERLAKEN.

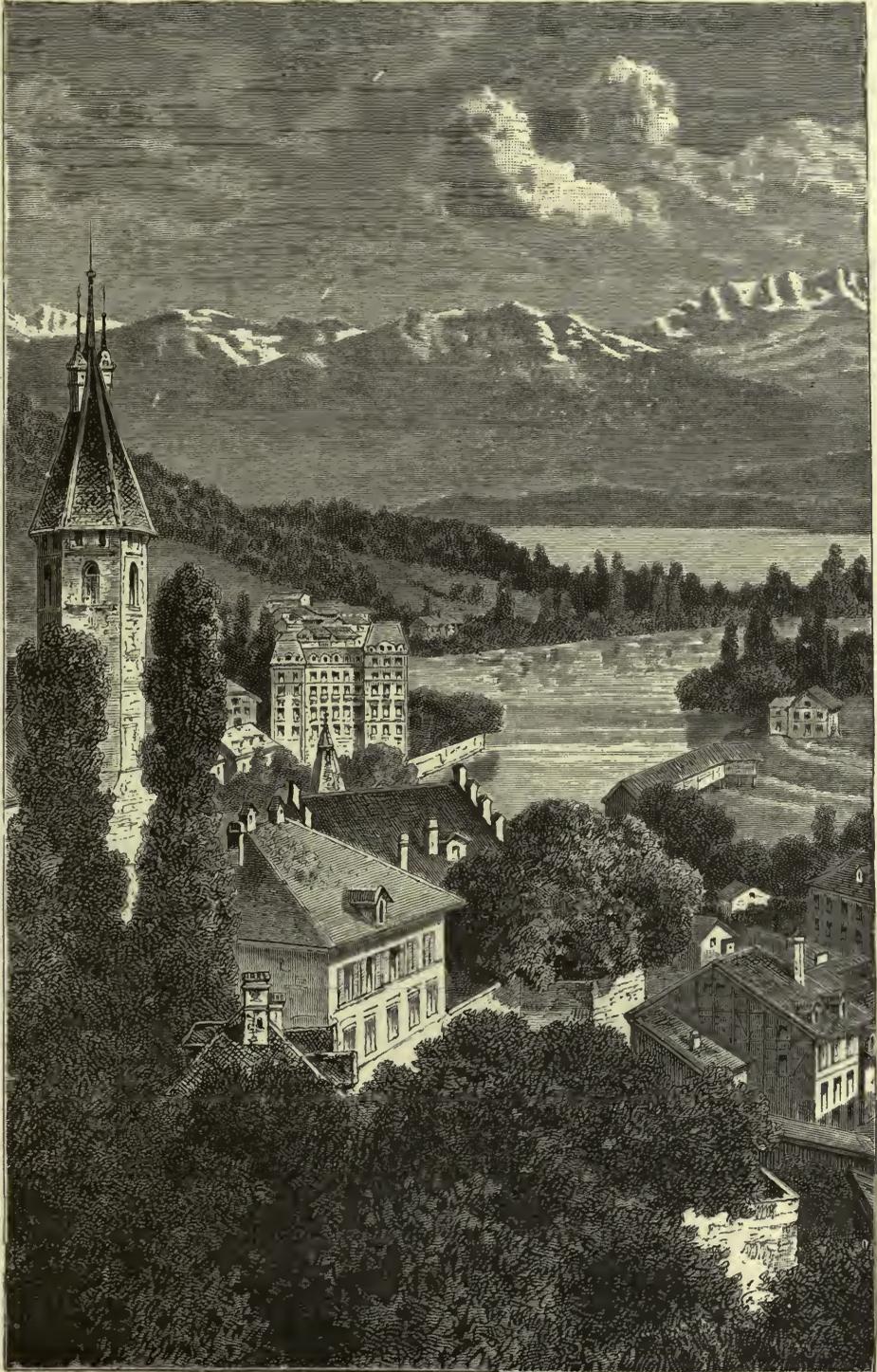
down one's pen in despair. It is possible to write an enthusiastic description of a hundred brown-eyed or blue-eyed girls, and to give a fair idea of them, but it is hopeless to attempt to portray such silvery splendour and radiant beauty as the Jungfrau's with anything so dull

as common black ink: not even the artist can succeed in giving an idea of her glory without the aid of his colour-box. Rambert's description is, however, perhaps the best: "Sublime and exalted as she is, the people have certainly bestowed an appropriate name upon her. Yes, she is the *Jungfrau*, the Maiden, not the timid girl who is afraid of her own shadow, not the coquette who flaunts her virtue in your face, but the unapproachable Virgin, whose very repose inspires awe and reverence, who cannot be hurt by any rude look, simply because the region in which she is enthroned is so pure that nothing common and vulgar can reach her. The Jungfrau is an image of the inaccessible; and great and noble souls consider her to be unsurpassed in beauty by any other mountain."

Seen from Interlaken, she looks like some noble queen wrapped in a royal mantle of dazzling whiteness, which flows down from her shoulders in magnificent folds until it reaches the green carpet at her feet, while the glaciers form broad bands of heavy silver brocade which adapt themselves stiffly to the shape of her beautiful limbs. Her silent, stony majesty and the grand flow of her draperies call to one's mind the statue of Niobe; and cynics perhaps may be disposed to add that Art cannot produce such marble statuary nowadays, any more than Nature can produce such mountains.

Perhaps there is no place in which we may more thoroughly enjoy these charms than in the lovely little Bodeli village of Bönigen. There is something idyllic about it, as it lies among the orchards on the shore of the lake; and we feel as if we really were in the Bernese Oberland, such as we imagined it before we came hither. There is something extremely homelike in the aspect both of the landscape and the houses, something too which makes us at once feel at home.

Railway and steamboat will convey us without the least trouble to the pretty neighbouring town of Thun, which has been struggling and striving for years past to rival Interlaken. Leaving the carriage, from which we have enjoyed such glorious views, at Därligen, on the southern shore of the lake of Thun, we next have a delightful trip over the water in the steamboat. It has often been a matter of discussion whether the palm of beauty should be given to the Lake of Brienz or the Lake of Thun, and the question yet remains an open one, for both are lovely. The Lake of Brienz, however, has hitherto had more assiduous court paid to it by speculators, and its attractions have been more loudly proclaimed, while the shores of the Lake of



THUN.

Thun have been more sought by persons of a poetical temperament. Both are genuine Swiss pearls, differing perhaps in colour, but of equal value in the eyes of the connoisseur.

If, as people say, civilisation moves from east to west, it seems probable, since speculation is sure to move hand in hand with it, that

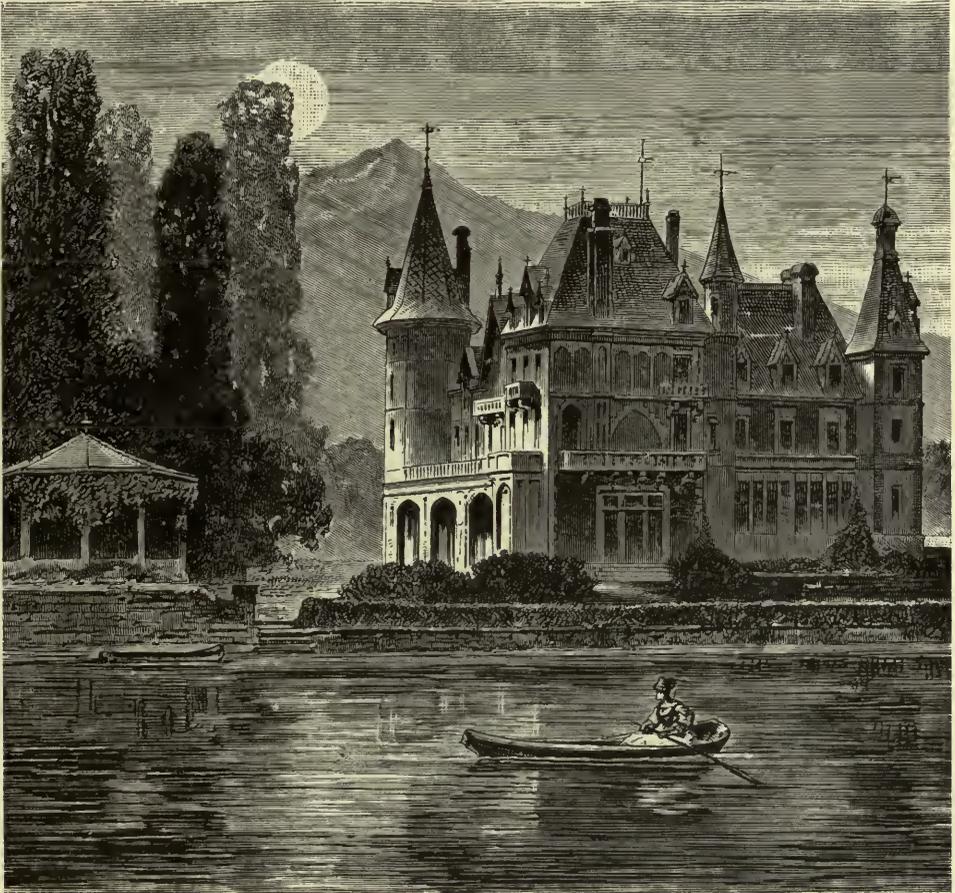


A SAWMILL ON THE LAKE OF THUN.

the Lake of Thun will one day be as busy as the Lake of Brienz, and that the town of Thun will become a second Interlaken.

The architecture of Thun is of a striking and picturesque character; though, as nineteenth-century ideas are in favour of plenty of light and air, the broad-eaved roofs have been long since swept away. Still, it is surprising to see that the mediæval and modern styles of building harmonize so well together, that there is nothing incon-

gruous in the turreted castle which rises above the town, nor in the little sharp-pointed towers which are dotted about everywhere, nor in the ancient-looking arcades which run along the front of the houses. Thun has, moreover, been more liberally dealt with by Nature than most towns. What with lake, river, hill, mountains, scenery around, distant prospects, climate, and fertility of the soil, the *tout ensemble*



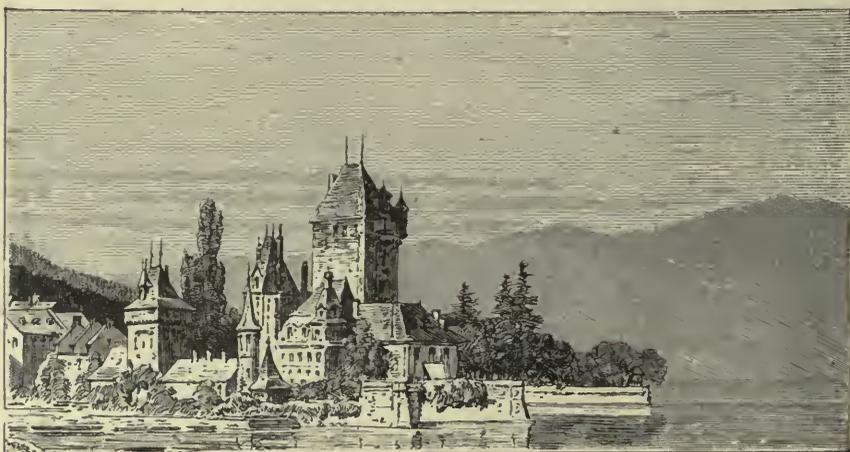
CHÂTEAU OF SCHADAU.

may be regarded as entirely charming; and Humboldt must have considered it perfect, for he called it the most lovely spot in Switzerland.

You may explore the lake in a hurried sort of way by means of the steamboat; but if you would really appreciate its beauties, it is better either to hire a boat or to make a walking tour round it. A good many people think that when they have visited Schadau they have exhausted all that is to be seen; and certainly Schadau is

wondrously beautiful, for Art and Nature have combined to do their utmost for it. It stands on a tongue of land on the left bank of the river Aar, just where the river rushes out of the lake; and, even in old times, the view of river, lake, and mountains must needs have possessed many attractions. Schadau has been the seat of several noble families in succession. The von Strätlingen, von Bubenberg, von Erlach, von Scharnachthal, have all resided here, and the present owner is M. de Rougemont-Pourtalés, who has made his pet residence into as perfect a place as possible. The grand, cheerful-looking château is surrounded by flowers, trees, mountains, and the flashing, sparkling waters of lake and river; but, beautiful as it undoubtedly is, we have not exhausted all the charms of the Lake of Thun when we have seen it.

After passing Oberhofen, which stretches down to the water's edge,



OBERHOFEN, ON THE LAKE OF THUN.

and possesses an old castle with thick walls and a square tower, our attention is next attracted by a small, well-fortified place called Spietz, which is beautifully situated on a promontory, and deserves attention on account of its historical associations.

The mountains belonging to the Faulhorn chain which border on the southern shore of the Lake of Brienz, now come into sight, and shortly afterwards we reach Därligen, where we leave the steamboat, cross the Bödeli, and take ship again on the Lake of Brienz, on our way to pay a hurried visit to lovely Meiringen. Meiringen! the very name seems to conjure up a host of pleasant reminiscences, and we are almost tempted to indulge in a panegyric in its honour; and yet,

strange to say, it is difficult to define exactly in what its charms consist, and many people never find them out at all. What, indeed, are the special attractions of Meiringen? There are beautiful brown wooden houses, built in the old Bernese style, there are meadows, streams, waterfalls, green slopes, snowy peaks, sweet-smelling hay and good-humoured villagers; there are smart lads and merry lasses,



MEIRINGEN.

and there are inns and foreigners whichever way you turn—but all of these are to be met with in various other places, and yet somehow they never seem so charming and delightful anywhere else as they do here.

The Stadtalp or Balisalp and the Mägisalp are pastures on the Hasleberg, a broad mountain of very cheerful aspect which towers above Meiringen on the east, and attains a height of more than three

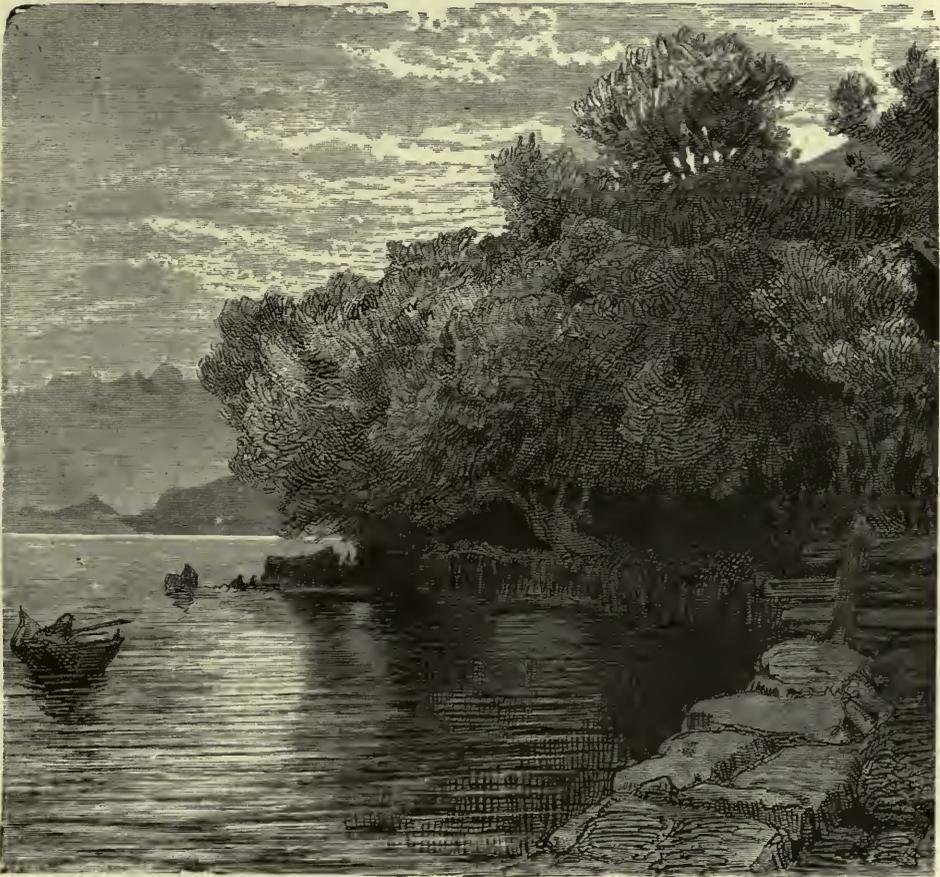
thousand feet. The ascent is made tolerably easy for visitors, and



STREET IN MEIRINGEN.

those who achieve it will find the mountain covered with rich, sunny-

looking meadows and pastures, intersected by numerous sparkling rivulets and threads of water. It is surrounded and overtopped by the heads of the Hohenstollen, Glockhaus, Rothhorn, Grosslaubenstein, and Kleinlaubenstein, behind which are the boundaries of Unterwalden; and there are numerous little pastoral villages and clusters of houses scattered about upon the level expanse on its



THE LAKE OF BRIENZ.

summit. Hohfluh, Unterfluh, Goldern, Reuti, and Wyssenfluh, are some of the most important of these little highland places, whose picturesque brown houses, which have been sketched over and over again, are occupied by a most cheerful-minded set of people. Looking away to the south-west we see the giant forms and ice-crowned peaks of the Wellhorn and Wetterhorn, and catch a glimpse of the Rosenlauri glacier, whose marvellous beauty is such that no one who

passes through the Bernese Oberland will be satisfied without trying to obtain a nearer view of it.

And now we must return to the Lake of Brienz. Whether or no it ever extended as far as Meiringen in bygone times, it is certain that we have a long bit of dusty road to travel over before we can reach the water's edge nowadays. The Aar shows us the way thither and rushes merrily along before us, through flat meadows, until it reaches Kienholz, where it casts itself into the lake to undergo a last process of purification.

There are a good many points of resemblance between the Lake of Brienz and that of Walensee, both as regards its position, the nature of the shores which enclose it, and the features of the surrounding landscape. But the Lake of Brienz is, on the whole, of a wilder, sterner character, and those who prefer scenery of a soft and smiling aspect must go to the neighbouring Lake of Thun.

Nevertheless, the fir-wood on the southern shore boasts one pearl of world-wide notoriety, which would of itself be quite enough to ensure the Lake of Brienz a good measure of honour and consideration. Crossing over from the pleasant town of Brienz in a rowing boat or the steamer, we see a wild mountain-torrent leaping over the rocks, and surrounded by the loveliest verdure; but, if we did not know that it was called the Giessbach, it would probably not attract our attention in any great degree, as we have seen a good many much finer waterfalls.

The lovely glen of Wiesenthal with its nut-trees, the beloved seclusion of the dark fir-woods, which are fragrant with delicious odours and melodious with the song of birds, the moss-covered blocks of stone strewn all around, the sunny hills and bright flowers, the view of the two lakes sparkling below and the menacing-looking precipices opposite, the luxurious comfort of this the best of all hotels, and the gay parties of people whom one encounters in the wood and on the terrace—all these things combine to make this a very delightful resting-place; and then, in addition, we have the beauty of the cascade and the sound of its falling waters, which soothes us like soft, distant fairy music, and leads us into the golden dreamland of peace even in our waking hours.

The Giessbach is a thoroughly vigorous torrent, and where there is vigour there is health and attachment to life. It is only human beings who are so morbid as to drag their miseries about with them wherever they go, thus destroying, at least so far as they themselves

are concerned, all the beautiful harmony and perfection of nature. Such a place as this is like Paradise restored ; but most people enter



THE GIESSBACH HOTEL.

it with a sigh, or some such melancholy reflection as is embodied in the following well-known lines of Burns :—

“Pleasures are like poppies spread—
 You seize the flower, its bloom is shed ;
 Or like the snow-falls in the river—
 A moment white, then melt for ever ;

“Or like the borealis race,
 That flit ere you can point their place ;
 Or like the rainbow’s lovely form,
 Evanishing amid the storm.”

The cradle of the Giessbach stands high up behind the Faulhorn, in the midst of the blue glacier of the Schwarzhorn ; thence it takes its first bold leap down the steep precipice to the Tschingelfeld, and after two more descents it falls in with the companion streams which rush down from the Faulhorn and the Battenalp. Then follow a fresh plunge and a furious struggle in the narrow, rocky gorge of the Bottenklemme, which would have swallowed the torrent up altogether at one time, if human hands had not come to the rescue and filled up the yawning gulf. After this follows a short period of repose, while it makes its way quietly through the peaceful valley of Wiesenthal ; and then it stands, startled and hesitating, on the edge of the mountain, which towers some eleven hundred feet above the lake, into which it at last precipitates itself by a succession of giant strides, fourteen in number, which bring its gay career to a close.

As we pass by Brienz, with its hospitable lights, it looks so inviting that we determine to see it and its tranquil lake by daylight ; and the next morning accordingly we take a boat, and, steered by the hand of some sturdy maiden or skilful boatman, we glide pleasantly through the clear blue heavens which smile at us from the water, and contemplate the village quite at our ease.

It is rather hard to go straight from the woodlands back to the crowded gardens of Interlaken, back to the brilliant gas-light, the well-dressed multitudes, the noisy, exciting music of the bands, and last, but not least, the troop of waiters with their flying coat-tails and fluttering white napkins, who effectually put all the small remains of our poetry to flight. To console ourselves, therefore, we will make a morning excursion to the valley of Lauterbrunnen ; but we must admit that, if all the poetry has not been driven away thence also, no thanks are due to anybody, for every effort seems to have been made to render the expedition as prosaic as possible, and, in spite of what awaits us at the end, we shall find our patience not a little exercised by the way. Those come off the best who have learnt to require no

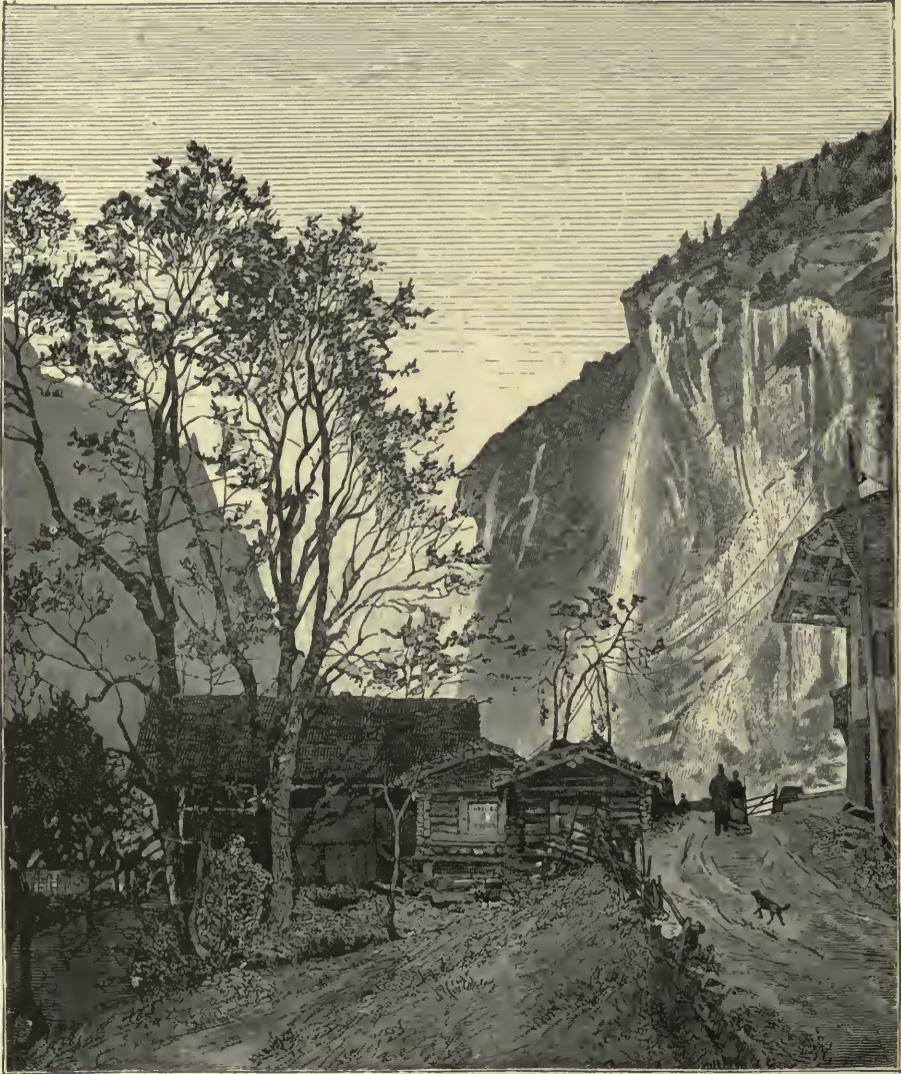
other assistance but that of their stick and their feet, and who can carry their own knapsack without grumbling. Under such circumstances as these, it is very delightful to set off in the early dewy morning and make our way past charming villas and through groves of fruit-trees into the "valley full of nothing but clear, pure fountains." That is the meaning of the name of Lauterbrunnen, given to the valley which is traversed by the rapid White Lütchine, and is adorned right and left by some twenty clear, silvery cascades. The beautiful Staubbach ranks first both in fame and loveliness; but the Lauibach, Sausbach, Flubach, Mürrenbach, and Sesilütschenenbach, on the right of the valley, and the Wengenbach, Schiltwaldbach, Trümletenbach, Mattenbach, and Staldenbach on the left, which enliven the upper valley chiefly, all claim some attention. The valley is very contracted, being nowhere so much as a mile in width, and it winds along between steep precipices of rock which are so lofty as seldom to allow us a glimpse of the Jungfrau, though we are drawing nearer and nearer to her. Most of the visitors who come hither in swarms on fine days go no farther up the valley than the Staubbach, which is close to the village of Lauterbrunnen.



THE UPPER FALL OF THE GIESSBACH.

Opposite the Staubbach, but still unapproachable, stands the Jungfrau, unchangeable as ever in her sublime repose; and to the poet it may seem as if the shining waterfall were her veil, which the wind has carried off from her exalted brow and has left fluttering from the fir-clad rocks. It floats and waves above the dark valley

like silver lace or gauze, and the scattered drops sparkle like a blaze of diamonds in the summer sunshine. A great deal has been written



THE VALLEY OF LAUTERBRUNNEN AND THE STAUBBACH.

and printed about the Staubbach, but it is of too nervous and restless a temperament to be photographed.

The finest description of it, both in prose and verse, is unquestionably that of our own Byron:—

“It is not noon—the sunbow’s rays still arch
The torrent with the many hues of heaven,
And roll the sheeted silver’s waving column
O’er the crags headlong perpendicular,



THE TRUEMLETEN TO RENT.

And fling its lines of foaming light along,
And to and fro, like the pale courser’s tail,
The giant steed to be bestrode by Death,
As told in the Apocalypse.”

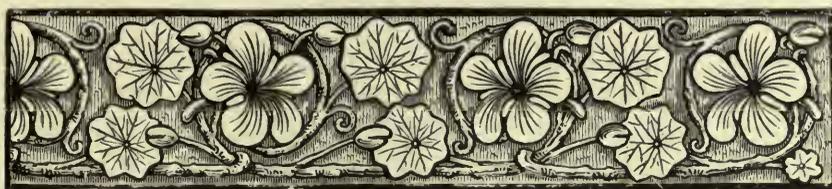
Many other poets have written the usual commonplaces about the

“Nymph with silver locks, robed in sunlight, and glorified with the resplendent colours of the iris,” but with these we need not now concern ourselves. Sometimes, when she finds the crowd down below too troublesome, the Nymph will indulge in a practical joke, and



MILK-SELLERS.

shake the bright drops from her silver locks right in the faces of the assembled tourists, just as the menagerie lion will get up and shake his mane at the spectators who press too close up to the bars of his cage.



CHAPTER XV.

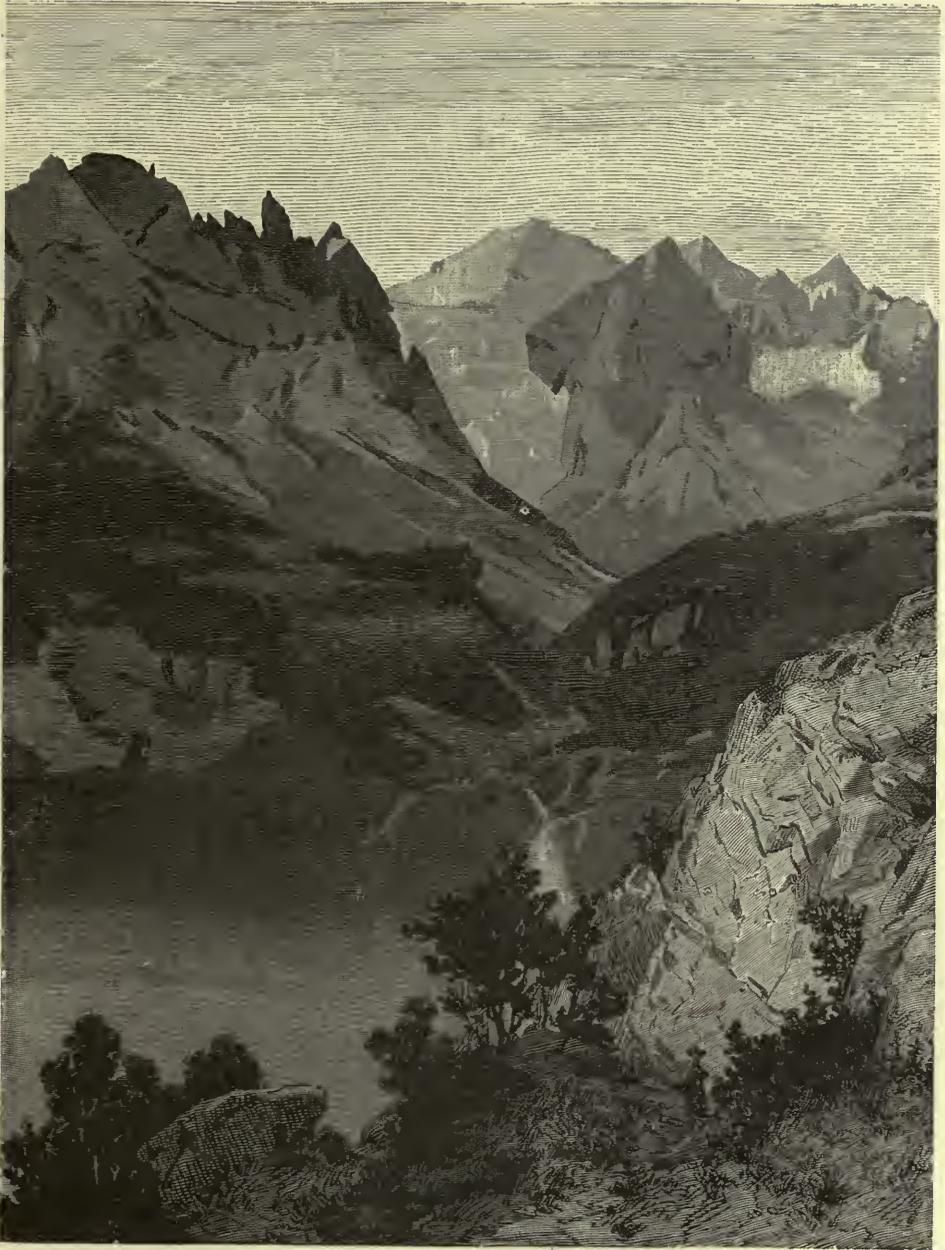
HIGHER UP.

WE are reminded of the butterfly's cradle on the Finsteraarhorn, as we toil upwards in the bright sunshine through shady fragrant woods, and past whole caravans of merry tourists on foot and on horseback, on our way to the inn on the summit of the Faulhorn, which stands higher than almost any other human habitation in Europe, being raised more than eight thousand feet above the level of the sea. What can have driven the lazy caterpillar to these lonely heights? This is a question which it is hard to answer—far harder, in fact, than to say why Samuel Blatter formerly host of the Adler, of Grindelwald, should have persisted, in spite of all difficulties, in building a house up here, which he did in 1830, in the firm belief that he should have plenty of visitors. His confidence has been abundantly justified and his guests have been numerous; for, though it cannot compete with the Jungfrau, Monk, Eiger, and other magnates of the Alpine world, the Faulhorn is celebrated too in its way, and is an especial favourite with those who have a refined taste in mountains, and like to do things comfortably. It is not every one who possesses Weilenmann's powers of description, nor is it every one who finds his chief holiday amusement in risking his life; and so yonder elderly gentleman and his wife, with their two charming daughters, come hither to enjoy the Alps, and the newly married pair come hither for their wedding trip, for these and such-like persons cannot be dragged up to a height of twelve thousand feet for the sake of making themselves famous. The Faulhorn, with its eight thousand and odd feet, stands only half-way up the pinnacle of fame, so far as its height is concerned, but it may be said to stand quite at the top, in respect of the view to be seen from its summit—and

this, after all, is the matter of chief importance. Those who have ascended the Faulhorn may hold up their heads with those who have ascended the Rigi; indeed, they may boast of having viewed the world from a standpoint two thousand five hundred feet higher than the Rigi-Culm, without the assistance of a railway, and may add that, from the window of the inn, they have had quite a near view of mountains which can be seen only in the far distance from the summit of the Rigi. From the Faulhorn one may look down with calm contempt upon the Rigi and all his kindred, for both he and the ostentatious Pilatus, the haughty Stockhorn, and the pert Nieson look almost like pigmies when seen from this height. The great magnates of the Bernese Oberland, on the other hand, stand forth in all their overwhelming majesty, and display the inmost recesses of their boundless, silent realm before our wondering gaze. What looked like a silvery mountain-peak when seen from a distance, here assumes the proportions of a mighty pyramid whose head reaches to the heavens; while the glistening spots and streaks we notice from below now turn into snow-fields many miles in extent, or into seas of ice which pour through the valleys in vast floods. Our heart faints within us as we find ourselves face to face with these giant forms; we feel half-frightened and yet elevated, and we can find no words at all adequate to express either the depth or passion of the various emotions by which we are possessed.

What a grand and glorious evening we travellers had after our long silent waiting by the fire in the inn on the top of the Faulhorn. We had had a weary, miserable journey through pouring rain, along boggy paths, and through such dense clouds of mist that we almost despaired of ever reaching the light; and then when our patience was well-nigh exhausted, there occurred one of those sudden magical transformations which are peculiar to the Alpine world—it was like the awakening of a giant. First came a mighty wind from the west, heralding the approach of the swift-winged angel of light who followed close behind; then the misty curtain was suddenly torn asunder, the shadows fled away, and the silvery heights appeared bathed in a flood of radiance. One by one, crowned with diadems of heavenly gold, were revealed the glistening heads of the Wetterhorn, Schreckhorn, Finsteraarhorn, Viescherhörner, Eiger, Monk, the royal Jungfrau, the Briethorn, and the Blümlisalp, one group after another rising before us in apparently endless succession. We could see the hem of their garments fluttering in the valleys below and growing whiter.

and whiter every moment, while the golden crowns on their heads



ENGELHOERNER, WETTERHORN, AND ROSENLAUI GLACIER.

glowed with a deeper and ruddier lustre as the departing sun showered his burning kisses upon them. Then small rosy clouds began to

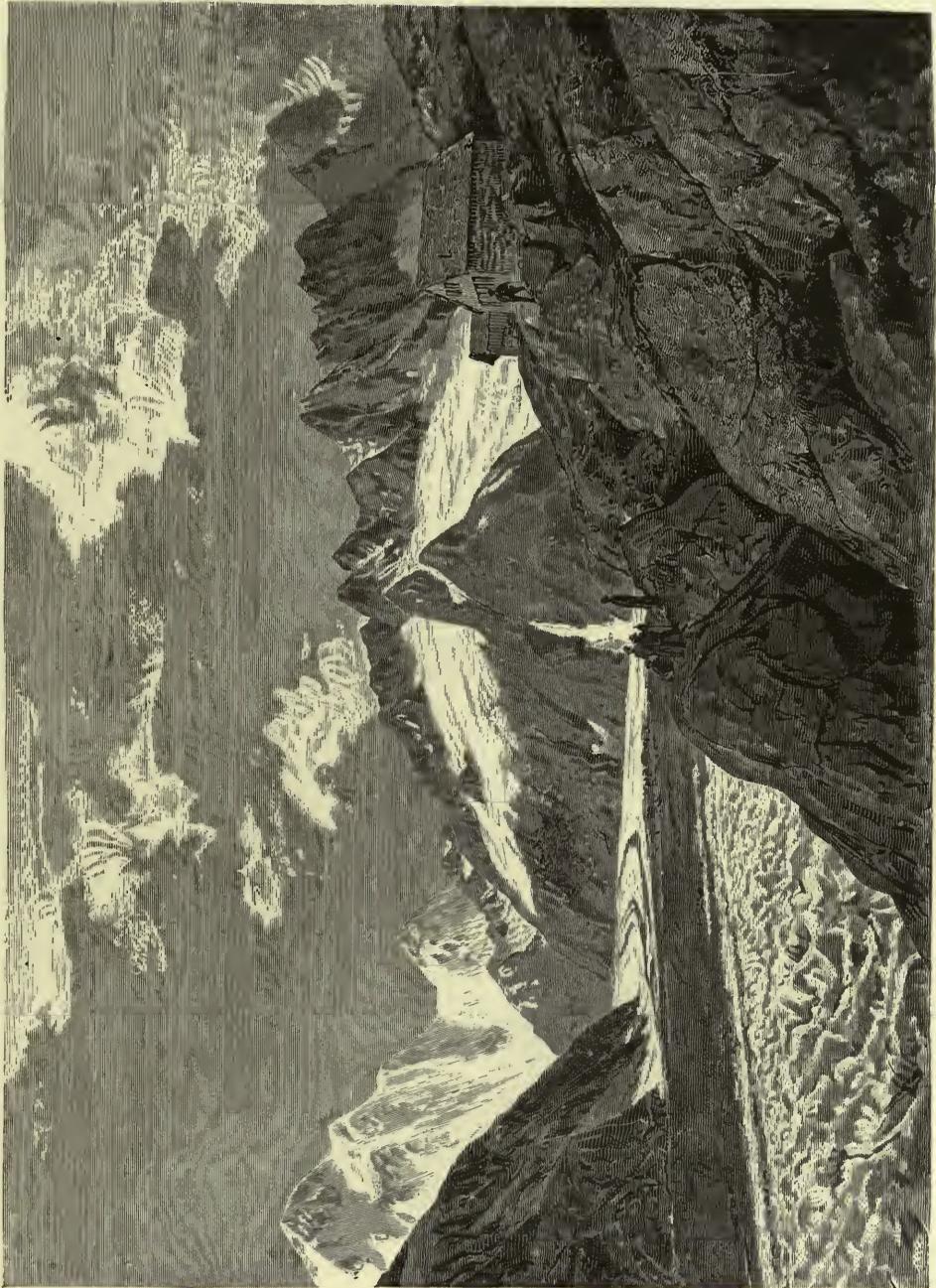
appear; and wherever they settled the altar-fires were kindled into a flame, until at length every peak was illuminated with a blaze of divine splendour. After a while the mists rolled back again from the east, filling the world below and covering the valleys with the dark shades of night. One more brilliant flash of light irradiated the world of glaciers opposite, the last purple cloudlet died away, like the last leaf shed from an overblown rose, and then the beautiful world turned pale, as if frightened by some unpleasant dream. The bright form of the moon rose up behind the Silberhorn, and the mysterious reign of night began. In the west, above the mountains which border the Lake of Thun, hung a heavy black cloud, which ever and anon sent forth red flashes of lightning:—

“ Far along,
From peak to peak, the rattling crags among,
Leaps the live thunder—not from one lone cloud,
But every mountain now hath found a tongue.”

The “monarch of mountains” here is the gloomy, menacing, precipitous pyramid of rock known as the Finsteraarhorn, to which the eye reverts again and again with increasing respect. The massive proportions of the Bernese Alps attain their culminating point in the Finsteraarhorn, which rises to a height of fourteen thousand one hundred and six feet above the sea level. But though it ranks as the fourth in height of all the mountains of Europe, it owes its importance less to the fact of its size than to its central position, from which it dominates the whole surrounding world of mountains. It rises up like a huge tower from the various ice-filled valleys and depressions around, from the Aletsch glacier, Viescher glacier, Grindelwald and Finsteraar glaciers, and looks as if in rising it had dragged part of them up with it, for there are pillars and buttresses of ice reaching to its very topmost summit, and connecting it with its neighbours on the east and west, the fair Jungfrau, the round-headed Monk, the sharp-pointed Eiger and gloomy Schreckhorn, the Wetterhorn, Hangendgletscherhorn, Schneehorn, Oberaarhorn, Wannehorn, Aletschhorn, Grünhorn, and Viescherhorn, which stand on either side of the monarch and form his court.

The Finsteraarhorn, indeed, presents fewer difficulties than the Schreckhorn, or Peak of Terror, as it is appropriately called, whose extreme summit was reached only within recent years, after many vain attempts. As we stand upon the Faulhorn, we see it rising to the left of the Finsteraarhorn, its form being that of a slender,

beautifully shaped pyramid. It is the highest peak in the group of



THE FINSTERRAARHORN AND AAR GLACIER.

mountains which descend precipitously into the valley of Grindelwald

and to the glacier of the Finsteraar, forming an uninterupted series of torn, wild-looking shapes, above which the Schreckhorn proudly



GRINDELWALD GLACIER.

rears its head. Its height is thirteen thousand three hundred and eighty-six feet, and we shall best appreciate the meaning of these



THE EIGER AND MONK, SEEN FROM MURREN.

figures if we look at the two patches of snow near the summit. As

seen even from the Faulhorn, they look like spots or patches, and nothing more, and yet the one nearest the top is a snow-field more than sixty feet long, and capable of affording standing-room for several hundred persons. The highest point of the Schreckhorn was attained by a well-known member of the English Alpine Club in 1861; and he was followed in 1864 by Professor Aeby, Herr Edmund von Fellenberg, a man of much daring and enterprise, and Herr Gerwer. The view from the summit is described as incomparably grand, and as affecting profoundly those who see it. The spectator seems to be hovering in mid-air over the two neighbouring groups of mountains, namely, the three beautiful pyramids of the Wetterhorn, which rise up out of the basin of a large glacier, and the chain of the Viescherhorn, which looks like a wall of glittering crystal uniting the two corner buttresses formed by the Finsteraarhorn and the Eiger. The eye looks down with fascination mingled with horror upon the Grindelwald Mer de Glace, more than five thousand feet below, and then returns to lose itself once more among the confused mass of peaks and ridges formed by the Grünhorn, the Viescherhorn of Valais, the Aletschhorn, and other mountains in the vicinity.

The scenery in the neighbourhood also is of a grand and varied character. In ascending to the glacier from the Baths of Rosenloui, the traveller passes through a dark forest of firs and large masses of Alpine roses; and, if he glances downwards, he will see on his left hand a gloomy, wild-looking chasm, along the bottom of which rush the boiling waters of the Weissbach, a torrent which issues from the glacier. The whole vale of the Reichenbach, from the upper falls of the Reichenbach as far as the Baths of Rosenloui, is so exceedingly rich in beauty of all kinds that it is no marvel if artists return hither again and again as to an inexhaustible treasury, though the whole of Switzerland is now included within their range. Most of the Alpine scenes which adorn the walls of our exhibitions are taken in this neighbourhood; and one is never tired of looking at them, not only because of their intrinsic beauty, but because they portray just that part of Switzerland with which the travelling public is best acquainted.

The most frequented route through this district is that leading from the falls of the Reichenbach through the valley of Reichenbach, past Rosenloui, up to the Great Scheidegg and thence to Grindelwald, or *vice versâ*. All other excursions—as, for example, that over the Lesser Scheidegg to the Wengernalp or to Mürren and Grimmelwald in the upper valley of Lauterbrunnen—are only like so many revolu-

tions of the kaleidoscope, the objects remaining the same, but the



MURREN, FROM GRIMMELWALD.

lines being shifted, and their relative positions being altered according to the different points of view from which they are regarded.

The Great Scheidegg, or Haslescheidegg, which we have now reached, which is also known by the extremely unpoetic name of the Ass's Back, is a narrow sloping mountain, having the Wetterhorn on the south and the Schwarzhorn on the north. The pass which connects the valley of Grindelwald with that of Haslethal runs across its grassy summit at a height of some six thousand seven hundred feet above the sea-level, and has long been known and frequented by all the world. At the highest point stands a good inn, which is a favourite place of refreshment, and affords an extensive view in all directions. Overhead, in threatening proximity, are the snow-crowned, heads of the mountains, and down below is the charming valley of Grindelwald.

The glaciers advance to the traveller's very feet, but he is obliged to strain his neck considerably if he wishes to see the summit of the Viescherhorn, the Eiger, or the Wetterhorn. The glaciers, which are here so accessible that he can even touch them with his hands, proceed from the Eiger, the Schreckhorn, and the Viescherhörner, and descend almost to the bottom of the valley, forming the Upper and Lower Glaciers of Grindelwald, the former issuing out between the Mettenberg and the Wetterhorn, and the latter between the Mettenberg and Eiger. They are so easy of access that they are constantly beset by visitors.

The Lower Glacier, which is the more considerable of the two, is some twelve or more miles long; its middle part, at the back of the Mettenberg, is known as the Grindelwald Glacier, while the upper part is called the Eiger Mer de Glace. Ordinary travellers, however, do not usually proceed as far as this, and are wont to content themselves with inspecting the lower end of the glacier, which does not now advance so far into the valley as formerly. Though the Lower Glacier is the more instructive, the Upper Glacier is more satisfactory to mere sightseers, on account of the greater purity of its ice and the famous grottoes hollowed out in its mysterious interior—which, when seen with the sunlight streaming through the pale-green masses of ice, call up reminiscences of the crystal palaces described in northern fairy-tales as the abode of dwarfs and gnomes.

Mürren is the name given to the cluster of old brown huts, which look as if they had been blown up from Lauterbrunnen by a strong north wind, and deposited on the lonely pastures at the upper extremity of the valley. Here they stand, looking very forlorn, and are occasionally visited by tourists, who climb up hither with some



André Dreyer 75.

FALLS OF THE SCHMADRIEACH, FROM THE CHÂLET OF BOHNENMOOS.

little difficulty, in order that they may survey the Alps from a fresh

point of view. Mountains which, seen from the Faulhorn, appeared as stars of the second magnitude only, gain much in majesty and importance when viewed from Mürren. The Silberhorn, for instance, which looked merely like a satellite of the Jungfrau before, has turned into a mighty independent lord, and might be a duke or herald, introducing the Monk, Eiger, Tschuggen, Lauberhorn, Männlichen, Gletscherhorn, Eberfluh, Grosshorn, Mittagshorn, Breithorn, and Tschingelhorn—in fact, the whole bevy of courtiers—into the august presence of their maiden queen. Mürren itself, with its three dozen houses scattered over the meadows, its gloomy firs and rocks, and the entire absence of all deciduous trees, makes but a dismal figure; but the exquisite mixture of golden-green and silvery-white, afforded by the meadows and glaciers, is both delightful and refreshing to the eye.

Those who feel great reluctance in saying farewell to the snow-fields, glaciers, mountain torrents, and waterfalls, may be consoled to hear that there is still one more waterfall to be seen—one, too, whose name resounds like a trumpet-call in our ears. This cataract is the famous one known as the Falls of Handeck, or the falls of our old acquaintance the Aar, which chooses the gloomy, lonely woods of the savage valley of Haslethal as the scene of its plunge into the depths of an awful abyss. A dozen other celebrated falls would be reduced to silence in its presence, and yet its grandeur does not make it popular. It is as great a recluse as genius—it is the Beethoven of waterfalls, an epic poet among lyrics; but people always prefer the gilt edges of the lyric to the glittering steel of the epic.

The Handeck Falls are extremely grand and imposing; the sound of the waters, as they rage against the narrow bounds within which they are confined, may be heard at a great distance, and the white, misty foam which boils up from below rises far above the tops of the surrounding trees. The Aar does not take this tremendous leap alone—the Aerenbach pours in from the right, mingles its waters midway with the more powerful column of the Aar, and after a short struggle the two plunge together into their dark, rocky bed. A brightly hued rainbow may be seen hovering high above the fall at certain hours.

Many of the chamois-hunters meet their deaths by accidents, as do also many of the poor crystal-seekers, or “strahlers,” as they are called, who toil wearily for even less profit. We may very likely have seen some of these latter in the desolate, rock-strewn region of the Upper

Haslethal, on our way up to the dreary Grimsel Pass. The stony



FALLS OF THE HANDECK.

ground on the right bank of the Upper Aar cannot be turned to any

account either by the haymaker, cowkeeper or other herdsmen, though one may sometimes see an eager botanist or a herb-gatherer creeping about the small patches of vegetation; but where all other industry ceases, there that of the "strahler" begins. Opticians in Berlin, Vienna, Paris, and other great cities down below require crystals for their lenses, lapidaries want them for brooches, rings, earrings, &c., and to satisfy the demand which thus arises, the hardy mountaineer provides himself with a scanty supply of food, a stick four feet in length, a sort of pickaxe, a hammer and rope, and knapsack or basket, armed with which he proceeds up to the slate, granite, and gneiss cliffs, in search of the sparkling symmetrical crystals which are to be found in the caves, especially in the famous one in the Zinkenbergl, near the Aar glacier. Rogers thus describes his labours :—

"To his feet he bound
The iron crampons, and, ascending, trod
The Upper Realms of Frost; then, by a cord
Let half-way down, entered a grot star-bright,
And gathered from above, below, around,
The pointed crystals."

The work is very laborious and full of peril; the results are often small and the actual profits smaller still, for such large crystals as those found in the caves of the Zinkenbergl, and now exhibited in the museum of Bern, are of very rare occurrence.

To the dried Alpine roses, everlasting edelweiss, lace, carvings, and other treasures collected during our rambles, we must now add a specimen, but a very small one, of this mountain crystal, the very embodiment of one of the many sunbeams which have gladdened our hearts and eyes during our happy sojourn in the Bernese Oberland; and as we do so, we can hardly fail to be reminded of Moore's bright little song of the crystal-hunters :—

"O'er mountains bright
With snow and light
We crystal-hunters speed along,
While rocks and caves
And icy waves
Each instance echo to our song;
And when we meet with stores of gems,
We grudge not kings their diamonds."



CHAPTER XVI.

THE WESTERN LAKES.



THE wildly beautiful harmonies of the Alpine landscape, consisting of ice-clad rocks and frozen lakes, are repeated in softer tones and calmer strains in West Switzerland, which is indeed like a gentle echo of the Oberland. Here all harsh and discordant notes have been softened and harmonized, and the earth has been reclaimed to the use of man,

if not altogether without a struggle, yet with most satisfactory and beneficial results.

The district which we have described as being a softer echo of the Oberland both as to its outlines, climate, waters, flora, inhabitants, and even language, is grouped around the Lake of Geneva or Lemman, the Lake of Neuchâtel or Neuenburg, and the slopes and valleys of the Jura. For though the "Black mountains" of the Jura may possess many terrors, still they are far less mighty than the Alps; and Nature's sovereign power is controlled by milder laws here, where she lies close to the warm heart of the earth, than where she sits aloft enthroned on inaccessible heights.

The Jura rises abruptly and precipitously on the Swiss side, and attains its greatest height in Switzerland, whereas on the French side

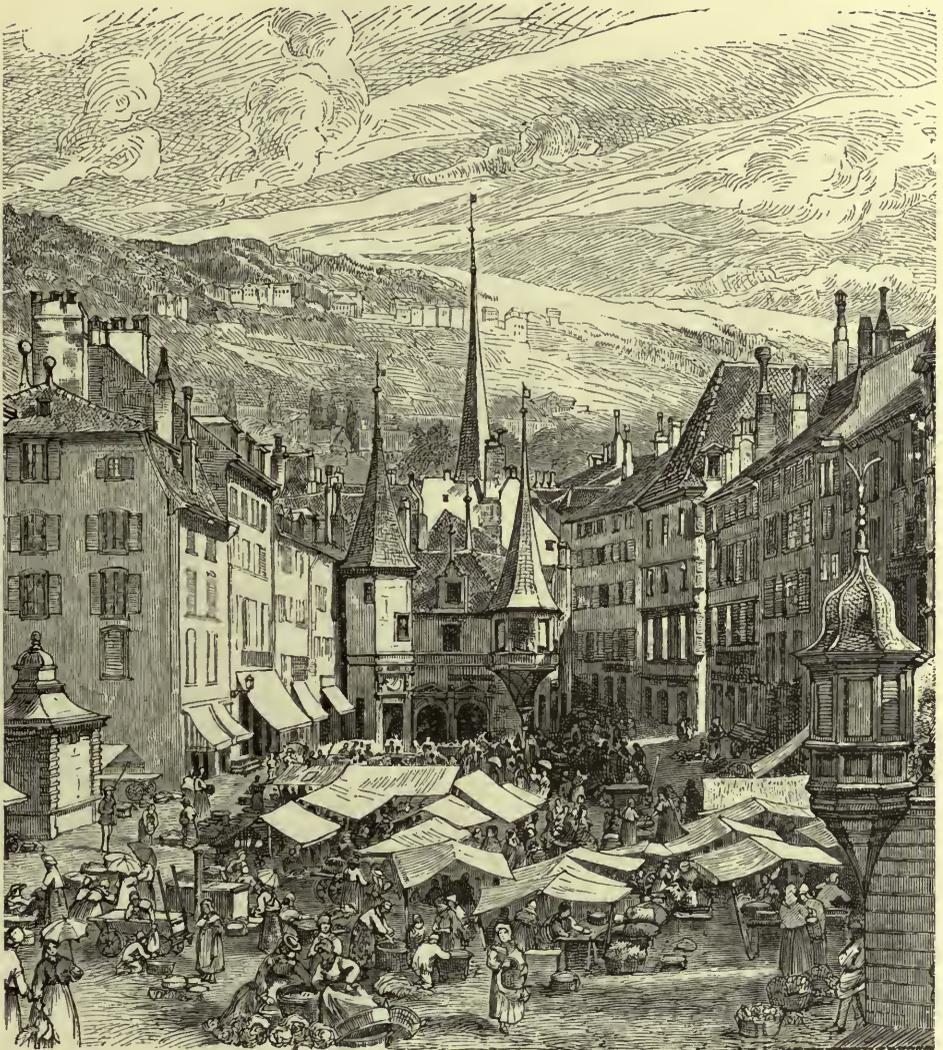
the chain sinks lower and lower, subsiding at last into gentle undulations which are finally merged in the plain of Burgundy. The Jura cannot be called a fine range, and it is too monotonous in character to be a favourite with tourists. It is a sort of stage whence one may



NEUCHATEL.

survey the Alps; and this is well-nigh the sole attraction it possesses for the traveller. As a belvedere it is certainly unique in this way, and some of the views from it may even be considered as rivalling those of the Rigi. From the Dôle the panorama includes

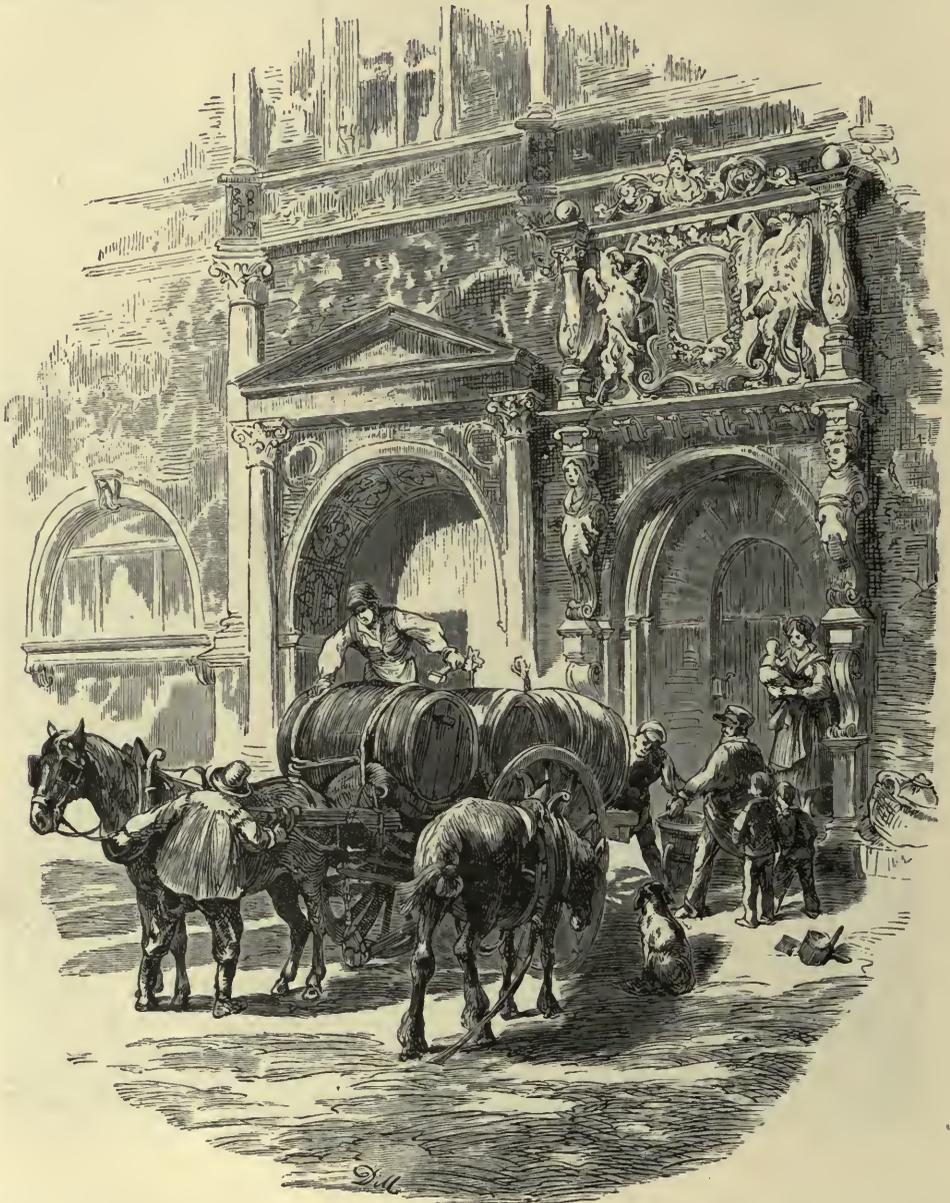
the whole region of the Alps from Mont Blanc to the Grimsel, Dauphiné, the Lake of Geneva, and the hills and valleys of the Jura. Mont Tourne, with its table and numerous grottos, is likewise cele-



MARKET-PLACE, NEUCHATEL.

brated; and so, too, is the richly-wooded Chaumont, from the summit of which one may see the whole range of Alps extending from the Säntis to Savoy, while the lakes of Neuchâtel, Bienne, and Morat sparkle brightly below.

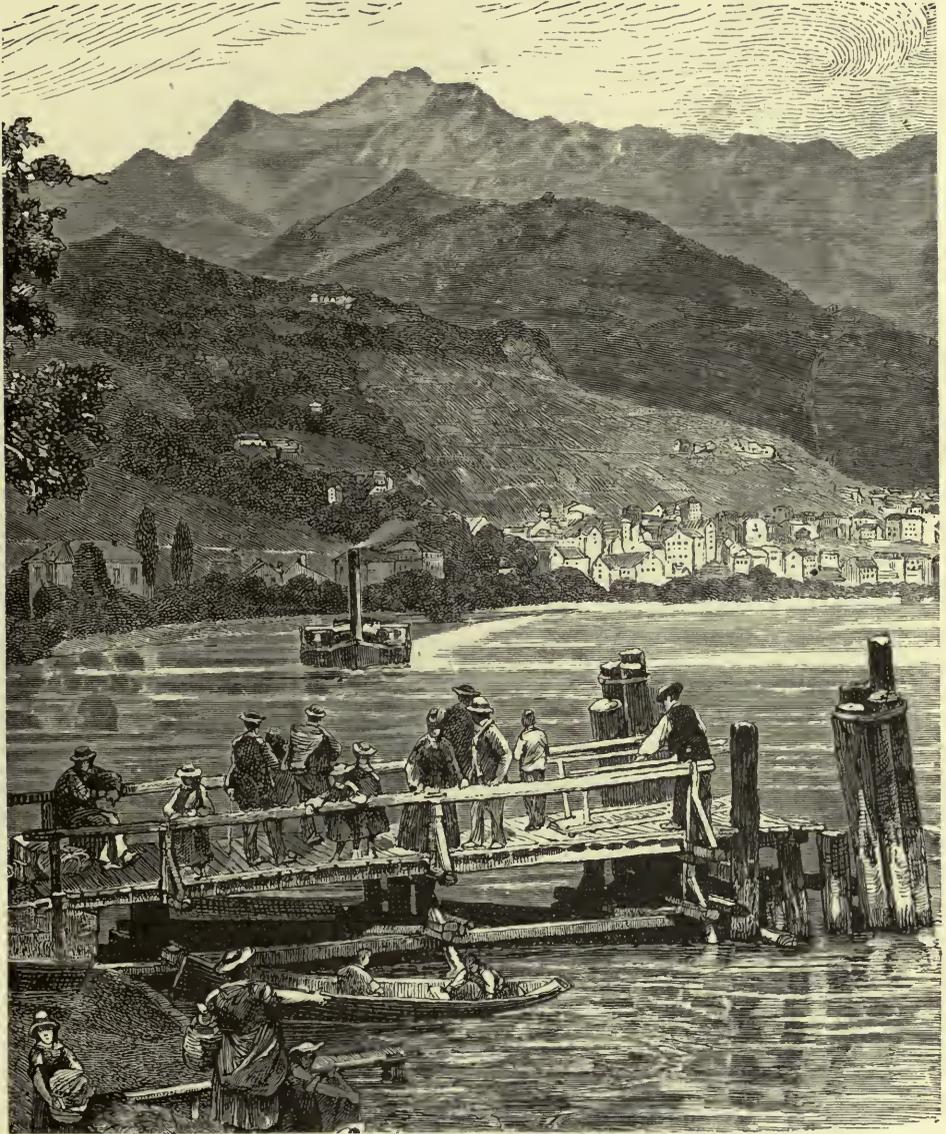
In the upper valleys of the Jura district the population is a hard-



SCENE IN NEUCHATEL.

working one, the chief industry being that of watchmaking. Nearly thirty thousand workmen are employed about this manufacture in the

villages of Neuchâtel alone, Geneva employs eight thousand, the Bernese Jura three-and-twenty thousand, and the same number are employed by Lausanne and the valley of Joux; so that altogether



LANDING-PLACE AT MONTREUX.

some eighty thousand persons, dwelling for the most part in lonely mountain villages, are engaged day by day in dictating the time to the rest of the world.

The history of the introduction of the first watch to Chaux-de-Fonds is interesting enough. It was brought thither, towards the end of the seventeenth century, by a cattle-dealer, and excited much wonder among the herdsmen and charcoal-burners. But alas! it had not the gift of perpetual motion, and one day there was great distress, for the wheels had stopped. Thereupon a young smith named Danel Jean Richard, who was of an inquiring turn of mind, set himself to take the little machine to pieces. He succeeded perfectly, restored it to life, and thenceforward was possessed with the desire of making watches himself. After a thousand trials and difficulties success crowned his labours, and in the end he became the father and founder of what is now a most important manufacture.

After scampering over other parts of Switzerland with much restless enjoyment, one is glad to settle down near these smiling lakes—the Lake of Geneva especially—and revel in the calmer delights of perfect repose and tranquillity; and certainly both earth and sky, climate and vegetation, towns and villages, seem to vie with one another in their endeavour to make our sojourn as pleasant as possible. • How many invalids, whether their ailments were mental or physical, have here been happily restored to health! Owing to the great variety in the character of its scenery, West Switzerland unites within its own borders all the advantages, and of course many of the disadvantages, of very various climates. Many a rude blast of wind comes down from the mountains and finds its way through the valleys; but then, on the other hand, the sloping green hills, which rise in all directions, catch every warm ray of sunshine that is to be had; and, thanks to the genial heat thus concentrated, grapes ripen to perfection, and the climate of those delightful places, Clarens and Montreux, reminds one of Provence and Italy.

Even before they reach Geneva, natives of Northern Europe will find much to delight them in Neuchâtel and its lake—and, indeed, in the entire neighbourhood, with its villages, green mountain slopes, and valleys.

The town of Neuchâtel is not only neat and clean, but rich and handsome; and its aspect, like that of its citizens, betokens cheerfulness, contentment, ready sociability, and much confidence in its own powers. The inhabitants were determined that their town should present a handsome appearance, and have accordingly vied with one another in their endeavours to beautify it. The necessary funds have

always been forthcoming when wanted, nor has there been any lack of public spirit, or indeed of noble acts of generosity.

With Tradition for our guide, we will now proceed to Freiburg. We are in what was anciently called Uechtland—the Desert—for such it seemed to the Romans settled at what was then known as Aventicum, but is now Avenches. They did not like it at all. Dense forests, waste lands, rugged mountains, and uncultivated valleys found very few admirers among the children of Italy, in spite of the



DENT DU MIDI, FROM VEVEY.

attractive character of the lake and its shores. In after years the district fell under the dominion of the German Emperor, and was governed by the powerful Dukes of Zähringen, one of whom, Berchtold IV., took it into his head to imitate his uncle, who had built a town of Freiburg on the Dreisam, in Breisgau, and so built one of the same name about the fortress of Thira, on the river Saane.

The town of Bern had been built for much the same reasons as Freiburg, and common interests supplied a strong bond of union between the two, which was further cemented by repeated leagues and

covenants. The alliance was the more singular because, after the decline of the Dukes of Zähringen, Freiburg was allied with the Lords of Kyburg, and Bern with the Emperor. There is an old song of the thirteenth century which compares these two sister towns with a couple of fine oxen sharing the same meadow, and the Justinger chronicle observes that "people who are desirous of understanding the various leagues between the two cannot do better than read these masterly verses written on the subject in ancient times."

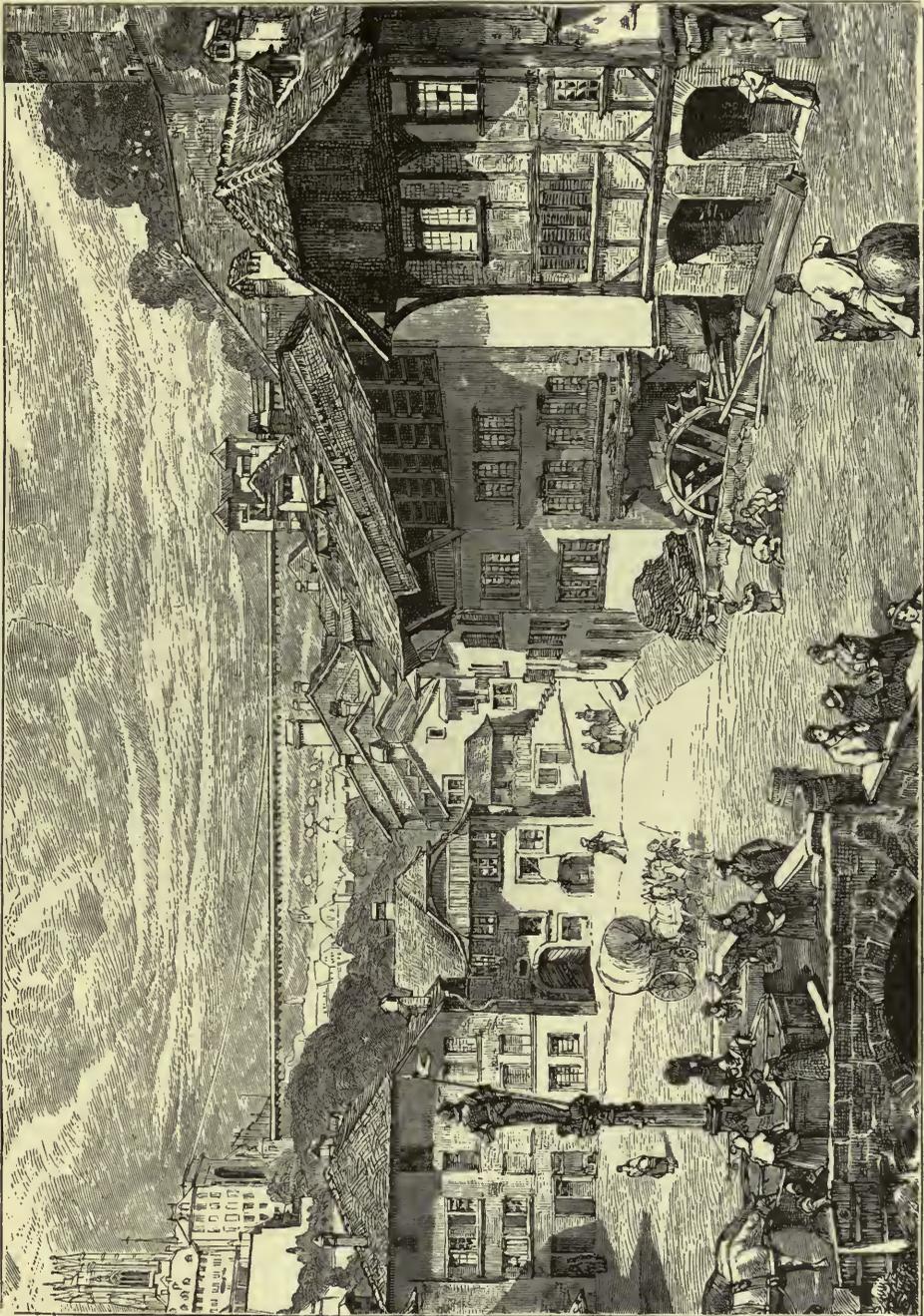
Bern and Freiburg together threatened many a foe with their formidable horns in later times; and, more than this, they used them so effectually on the field of Murten as completely to drive the Burgundians out of the country.

In these days war news is comfortably transmitted to the ends of the earth by means of the telegraph wire, and people build schools, factories, barracks, and chain bridges, instead of castles and cathedrals. But if, after a dream of the past, called up by the sight of the old lime-tree, we open our eyes and look upon the present state of things, we shall find that Freiburg has grown into a handsome modern town. The castle of the Von Zähringen has long disappeared, and its site is occupied by the town hall; and the minster has lost its spire—or rather it never had one, for people's aspirations have been curtailed in the interval since it was originally designed.

But the wire bridge—or rather bridges, for there are more than one—brings us to modern times. Besides the large suspension bridge, which stretches from one bank of the Saane to the other, at an elevation of one hundred and eighty feet, there is a second suspended across the gorge of Gotteron, and a third, called the Viaduc de Grandsey, at Düdingen, or Guin, which we pass in the railway on our way from Bern, just before we enter Freiburg. Guin, by the way, is a large well-built village, with a parish church, and recalls the old times and picturesque fashions which have been driven farther and farther away by railways and modern manufactures.

These bridges, however, were simply indispensable; for although, in the Middle Ages, it might be extremely pleasant and convenient to build one's nest on a rock, where an enemy would have great difficulty in getting at it, still, now that modern times have taught us that time is money, we find that level roads are better adapted for purposes of traffic, and our forefathers' love of elevated situations involves us in the expenditure of a good deal of money and trouble, and obliges us here and there to erect bridges such as those we have

been describing. The fine large edifice on the top of the hill is not a

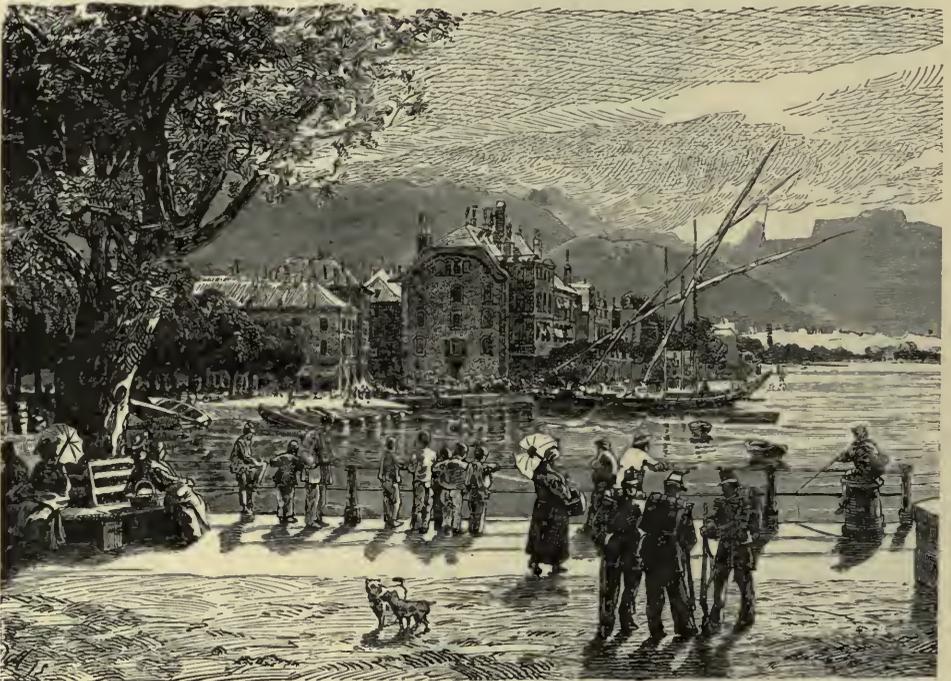


FREIBURG.

government building, as might be supposed, but a college dedicated

to St. Michael. It formerly belonged to the jesuits, but was closed after the miserable war of the league of Sonderbund. Its first founder, Father Canisius, who lived in the sixteenth century, was canonised with much pomp in 1865. It was in this same year also that Vevey witnessed the last celebration of the *fête des vigneronns*, or "festival of the vine-dressers ;" and the mention of Vevey brings us to the shores of the proud Lake of Geneva, the most beautiful of all the lakes of Switzerland.

Its name lives in the poetry of all nations, and its praises, like

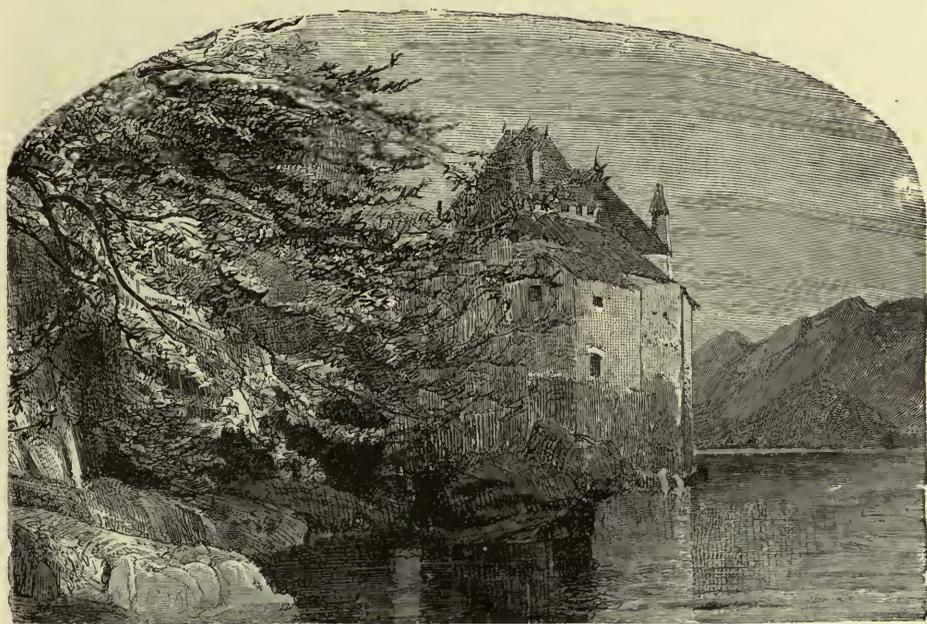


LANDING-PLACE, VEVEY.

those of Italy, have been sung by a hundred voices. Many great men have found a home upon its shores, and history and poetry have adorned its towns and villages with undying wreaths of love and fame. But, there is a name which seems to re-echo from every part of the lake. Who can forget the author of "Childe Harold" and the "Prisoner of Chillon," when—

"Lake Lemman woos him with its crystal face,
The mirror where the stars and mountains view
The stillness of their aspect in each trace
Its clear depth yields of their far height and hue"?

We have extolled the Lake of Zürich, and have lavished warm and well-deserved praise on the Lake of Lucerne, but nowhere else is there such a wonderful combination of grandeur and sublimity with soft beauty and loveliness as here, where all things speak to us in tones of cheerful earnestness or earnest cheerfulness, just as we please. The massive but beautiful forms of the Alps of Savoy, with their shining ice-crowned heads, bound the horizon to the south; beneath them rise dark forests and green Alpine pastures, enlivened by numberless flocks and herds; and sprinkled with cottages and houses; and below these again the sunny landscape slopes gently



CHILLON.

downwards to the lake, like some flower-crowned, vine-wreathed goddess preparing to bathe in the blue waters.

Of all the places along its margin, Montreux and its pleasant neighbour Vevey deserve to be first mentioned. Victor Hugo, indeed, finds only three *choses charmantes* for which to praise Vevey—namely, its cleanliness, climate, and church, all of which Montreux can boast equally; but therewith he has by no means exhausted the list of charms peculiar to either place. No; that which distinguishes Vevey and Montreux in such an especial manner is the fact that they command an extensive view of the sublime world of Alps, and that

the beauty of their position upon the lake is enhanced by the charms of the surrounding scenery, and the luxuriance of the vegetation, as well as by the traces of man's care and labour which abound on all sides. In fact, it is no one thing in particular which constitutes the charm of the place: neither the sight of the blue lake gleaming through the green trees, and constantly varying in tint with the changes of the sky; nor the view of the savage, mist-veiled cliffs of the Rhone and the spires of Lausanne; nor, again, the distant Dent du Midi, which rears its ice-crowned head to meet the kisses showered upon it by the sun. It is all these things together: the air and the light, the vines and the glaciers, the earth and the sky, which



MEILLERIE.

combine to produce a whole of such indescribable, fascinating beauty as must always strike one with wonderment.

Montreux, the Swiss Nice, in one respect resembles Interlaken—that is to say, no one exactly knows where the place itself is, though the name is given to an extensive district. Montreux is, in fact, made up of the villages of Les Planches and Sales, and to these belong Veyteux, Chatelard, Verney, Clarens, Glion, Sonzier, Brie, and a number of others which dot the green slopes of the Dent de Jaman down to the edge of the lake. The space between the villages is occupied by woods, vineyards, streams, groups of trees; and everywhere you may see gardeners, vine-dressers, and boatmen busily and

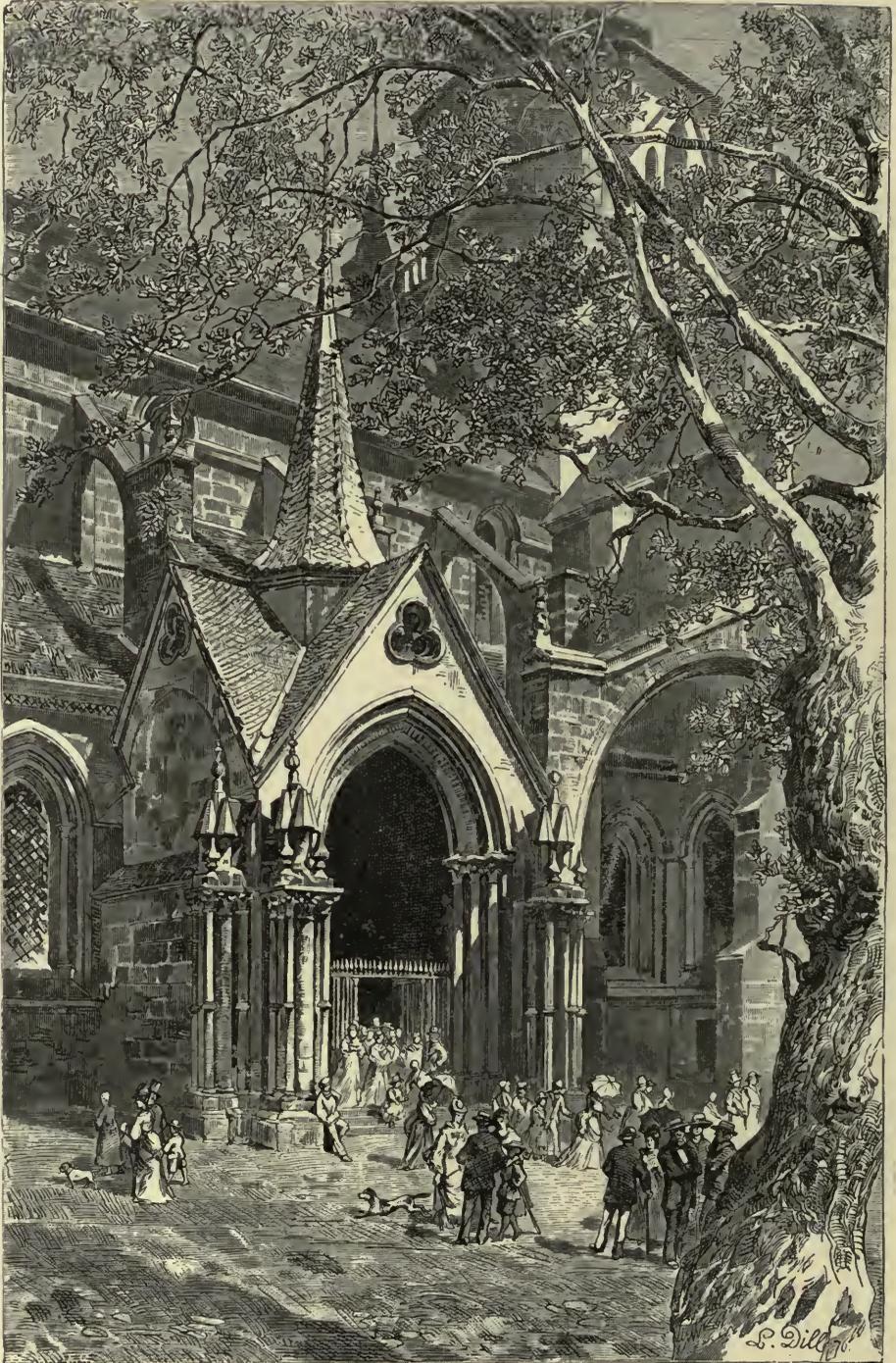
cheerfully pursuing their various avocations. Over all there is an air of blissful peace and repose, and the place is salubrious as well as lovely.

It might seem almost superfluous to say anything about Chillon.



LAUSANNE.

It is very picturesque, no doubt, but one soon gets tired of it, from the mere fact that it is perpetually obtruding itself upon one's notice. The castle and its history are, however, both very ancient; for, as early as the year 830, we are told that Louis the Pious imprisoned the



CHURCH OF ST. FRANCIS, LAUSANNE.

intriguing Abbot Wala of Corbier in a castle, whence nothing was to be seen but the Lake of Lemman, the Alps, and the sky, to punish him for having incited the princes to rebel against their father. The castle was much enlarged at a later date; and the walls, towers, battlements, and loop-holes still remain, to show what a well-appointed fortress was before gunpowder came into use. The romance of the place is, however, entirely bound up with one name—that of Bonnivard, the “Prisoner of Chillon,” the patriot who languished for six years in its subterranean dungeons, and was only released at last by the combined efforts of the Bernese and Genevese.

“Chillon! thy prison is a holy place,
 And thy sad floor an altar; for 'twas trod
 Until his very steps have left a trace,
 Worn, as if the cold pavement were a sod,
 By Bonnivard!”

When, early in the spring of 1536, the Genevese forced their way into his cell, the lonely prisoner lay, looking like a shadow, stretched out by the side of the pillar round which he had paced hopelessly for so many weary days.

“Bonnivard, arise! thou art free!” they cried, as they burst into the prison, and Bonnivard slowly rose; but his first question was “Geneva?” “Geneva, too, is free!” was the answer.

Full of these thoughts we land at Ouchy, the flourishing port of Lausanne, the town of the three hills, the capital of the canton. Unfortunately we can pay it but a hurried visit, as we are bound for Geneva, which is beckoning to us yonder. How many famous names are associated with Lausanne! It is like a dream to think of the time when Voltaire, Tissot, Rousseau, Gibbon, Constant, Fox, Mercier, Eynod, Haller, and Bonstettin, used to meet and join the brilliant circle of witty and intellectual women then assembled here.

The inhabitants of Lausanne at the present day are said to be somewhat like them in character; that is, they love life, sunshine, and gaiety, and are original, natural, and rather indolent. One feels disposed, however, to question the justice of this last imputation when one looks at the massive arches of the great granite bridge which connects St. Francis with St. Laurent. It is solid enough to be the work of the Romans, and yet these few indolent people accomplished its construction without any assistance. In some respects Lausanne resembles Freiburg, for the ground upon which it stands is very much

broken. Some parts of the town and some streets have now been connected; but in the heart of the town things have been left much as they were originally. The streets and alleys run up-hill and down-hill, and some one is wicked enough to declare that it is impossible to walk about the place without a drag on one's feet. But modern Lausanne does not live here; she has built her numerous handsome villas by the side of level roads, on wooded slopes and eminences, and



MONTREUX.

will continue to spread as far as she can without losing sight of the cathedral-tower. The cathedral, which has the reputation of being the finest in all Switzerland, will always be the centre-point and crowning glory of Lausanne, both for the sake of its venerable antiquity, its history, and its intrinsic beauty.

“Lausanne and Ferney! ye have been the abodes
Of names which unto you bequeathed a name;
Mortals who sought and found by dangerous roads
A path to perpetuity of fame.”

CHILDE HAROLD.



A RAILWAY CARRIAGE, LAKE OF GENEVA.

CHAPTER XVII.

FROM GENEVA TO THE "MER DE GLACE."

"Far, far above, piercing the infinite sky,
Mont Blanc appears—still, snowy, and serene;
Its subject mountains their unearthly forms
Pile around it, ice and rock; broad vales between
Of frozen floods, unfathomable deeps,
Blue as the overhanging heaven, that spread
And wind among the accumulated steeps."

SHELLEY.

SEEN from the bridges, Geneva reminds one of some well-to-do watchmaker who has spent a good deal of time in Paris, and is doing his best still to live in Parisian style: but these are only first hasty impressions. Geneva is the city of thought, and serious thought does not find expression in the form of ballads. Monuments and memorial buildings must needs hold a very subordinate place in a city whose moral grandeur would dwarf the loftiest tower and the most stately pantheon; we may, therefore,

console ourselves by singing the praises of the Genevese people, who are endowed with all the noblest civic virtues. They are and have been energetic folks—energetic not for the moment, not for years, but for centuries past, and energetic they will be for centuries to come. But they are not selfish: their activity is not for themselves alone but for the general good; and though gain is their object, though they speculate and calculate to an amusing extent, they never do it in the niggardly, cut-and-dried style natural to some commercial souls. The character of the people is not a product of yesterday, but was tempered in the fiery oven of Calvin, and has been not only tried but strengthened by several years of eventful experience. Every true Genevese had in his veins something of the genius of Calvin, the hard, inflexible man—inflexible even to the extent of tyranny—who was more logical than even a Luther or Melancthon in the way in which he carried out his ideas. The record of his private life shows him to have been a man of grand self-denial and of firm loyalty to his avowed principles.

It is not to be denied that Calvin's puritanism had its melancholy and even gloomy side, and was as different as possible both from the light-hearted *cultus* of the old Greek divinities and from the worship of the Roman Church, with its powerful appeals to the senses. Its exaggerated austerity and penitential Ash-Wednesday-like colouring divested life of all its charm, and entirely ignored youth and beauty. Nevertheless, Calvinism is the religion of duty and labour—the religion of the strong-minded—the religion of those who are reasonable, sensible and conscientious; and, in fine, it is the religion of Geneva. Thus Geneva became a sort of Protestant Rome, and is so to this day, though in a modified sense, for much of its old hardness was rubbed off and forgotten when the city became an asylum for political refugees from every country in Europe.

But as Geneva became more and more *en rapport* with foreign lands, and the number of her visitors increased, she became ashamed of her old garb and began to make improvements, and even to indulge in decorations. The people went to work in a very economical fashion, however, spending exactly as much as they had to spend and no more; and they thought that they had done a great deal when they had built the two quays, the Pont des Bergues, and a harbour. The subsequent adornment of the little island in which Rousseau's statue has been placed, the removal of the shops and heavy, black, round roofs of the Rues Basses, and the taking down of the arcades

which obstructed the way into the upper town, all did much to improve the place ; but the ugly old fortifications were still spared, and the work of destroying them, and creating the new Geneva was left to the radical administration which came into power in 1848. Thanks to their vigorous action the ramparts were razed ; the new quays, which now look so handsome and imposing, were built ; large



STATUE OF ROUSSEAU, GENEVA.

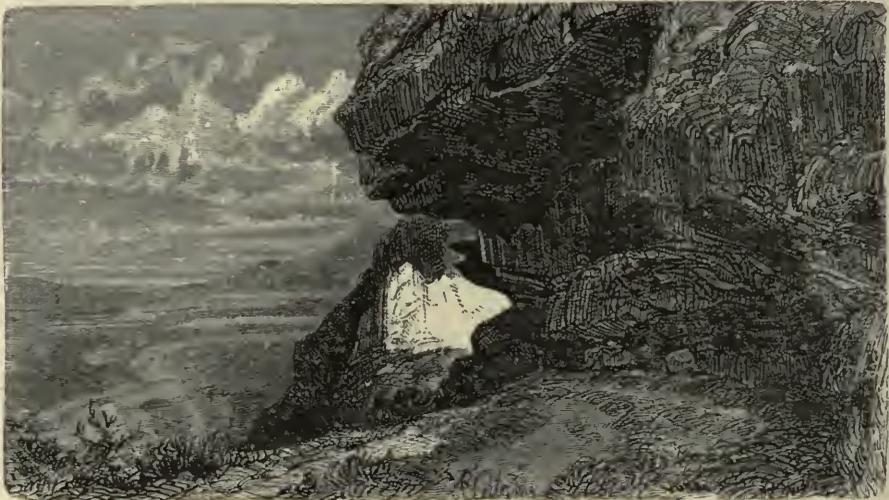
new regular streets were planned, gardens laid out, and boulevards and squares made after the Parisian fashion.

The scenery of Geneva is extremely soft and lovely in character, and has a soothing, cheering effect upon the spirits. The combination of shrubs and trees, meadows and gardens, woods and orchards, is very pleasing, diversified and enlivened as it is by the presence of numerous

châteaux and villas; and the beauty of the scene is, of course, greatly enhanced by the lake and its reflections, as well as by the Alps, which form the framework of the picture, and seem to make it quite complete in itself.

The town is divided by the Rhone into two parts: the district called St. Gervais and the town proper, which contains all the public buildings, collections, palaces, and other noteworthy objects. St. Gervais was for a long time nothing but a suburb; but it is building its new houses in a grand and luxurious style.

To the right is Coligny, with its villages surrounded by a circle of villas and bright green vineyards, which contrast well with the



SKETCH ON MOUNT SALEVE.

dark handsome foliage of the beautiful chestnut woods. There, too, lie the Villa Diodati, in which Byron composed some of his poems; and, somewhat nearer the town, the luxurious Villa Favre, where lived Merle d'Aubigné, the famous historian of the Reformation.

From the Pont du Mont Blanc, as well as from the island of Rousseau, one looks far away into the sublime distance, where, high above the rocks of the little Salève, Mont Blanc rears his silvery head, surrounded by a stately train of other glacier-mountains, whose domes and peaks rise on either side of him.

Some one says that the Lake of Zürich should be seen by daylight and the Lake of Geneva by moonlight, and the Genevese

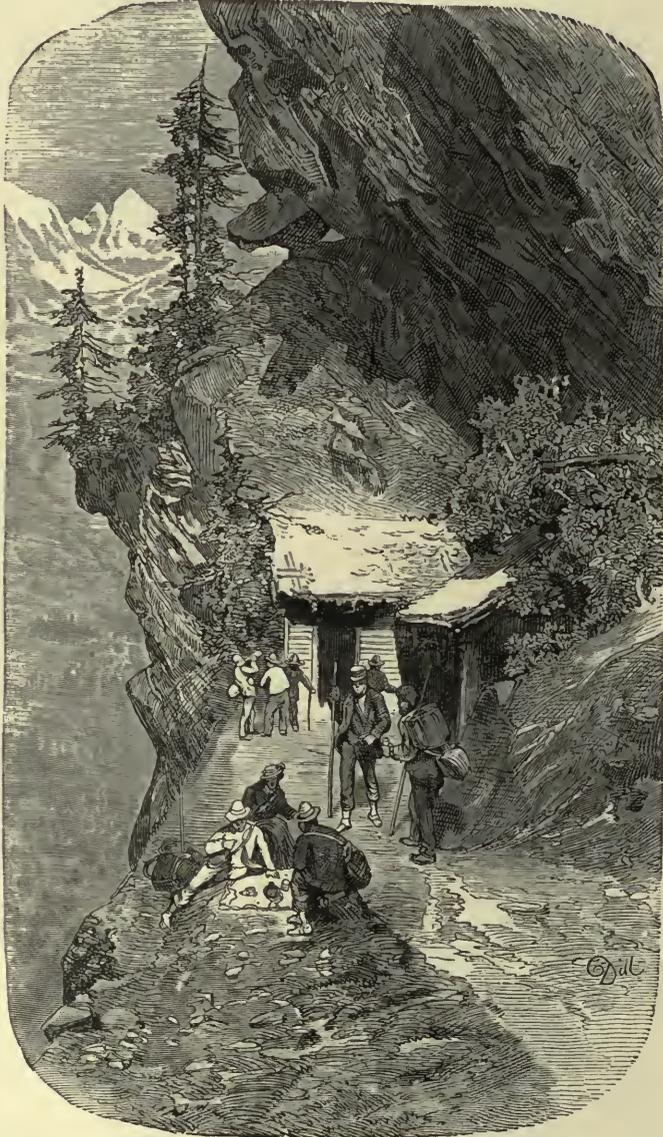
themselves declare that no one knows what their lake really is until



“MER DE GLACE,” MONT BLANC.

he has seen it at midnight, when the moon is at the full. Certain it is

that evening is the time when the real life of Geneva begins; for the whole of the day is devoted to the serious business of buying and selling, and the manufacture of watches and jewellery. In the evening



LE CHAPEAU.

the shores of the lake are crowded with foreigners from all parts of Europe; and, under these circumstances, modern Geneva is often pronounced to be one of the finest towns in the world.

We are just going up to the summit of the Salève, to have a general view of the town and canton, and then we must hurry on to Chamounix and the "Mer de Glace." We must, however, first give notice that this will take us out of Switzerland, for both Mont Salève and Chamounix are in Savoy; so we must smuggle ourselves surreptitiously across the frontier, and make our expedition rather a hurried one, though Mont Salève ought scarcely to be mentioned in the same breath with the giants of the Vale of Chamounix; but still it has its own peculiar attractions, and affords us a good opportunity—the best we shall have—of waving our last farewells to Geneva.



THE ARVE.

Seen from the town, the Salève looks like a bare precipitous wall of limestone, and its aspect does not improve much on a closer acquaintance.

The Arve shows us the way up to the great vale of Chamounix—a way which it has made for itself in its own wild, impetuous fashion, heedless alike of cliffs and caverns, cultivated fields and human habitations. Bridges, whether of wood or stone, have no chance here, for the river will not submit to any yoke, and if we look carefully from the Grand Salève, we shall see that its course is marred by such tokens of devastation and destruction as mud-banks, islands of débris and beds of sand. Still it is very beautiful, and the valley—

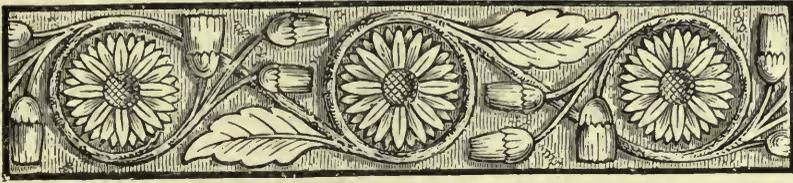
beginning high above Chamounix, at the foot of the famous Col de Balme, and then descending past the mountain terraces of the Aiguilles Rouges, La Flegère, and farther still—is full of all the charms belonging to Alpine and river scenery.

We have now left the lively shores of the lake, with its vineyards and bowers of roses, far behind us, and have mounted up through the quiet green valley to a new world of ice, where we are surrounded by numbness and silence, and where man again becomes a wrestler with the ancient powers of nature.

“Voilà la Mer de Glace !” (“There is the Sea of Ice !”) cries the guide when we have ascended the Flegère or Montanvert, as if he were calling our attention to some quite ordinary spectacle. Three rivers of ice combine to form the enormous Glacier du Bois, to the middle part of which the French give the high-sounding name of “sea.” From the Aiguille de Lechaud descends the glacier of the same name and the Glacier Taléfre, and from the Col du Géant comes the Glacier du Tacul. The name of “Mer de Glace” is by no means inappropriate, for, seen above, it looks just like a sea frozen while its mighty waves were in full career ; seen, however, from the nearer point of view called the Chapeau, a cliff opposite Montanvert, the icy waves take the form of pyramids and obelisks of such gigantic size as to make human beings and their ships look like children’s toys in comparison.



SKETCH AT GALLENCHES.



CHAPTER XVIII.

VALAIS. THE VALLEY OF THE RHONE.

“Now, where the swift Rhone cleaves his way between
Heights which appear as lovers who have parted
In hate, whose mining depths so intervene
That they can meet no more, though broken-hearted.”

CHILDE HAROLD.



IF the traveller wishes to see the wildest and most gigantic mountains in Switzerland, and at the same time the largest of its valleys—if he wish to enjoy the soft air and luxurious vegetation of Italy at the same time that he beholds the most extensive glaciers and the most wonderful mountain passes and roads, scenes of primitive civilisation and desert-places far removed from all humanising influence and never trodden by a human foot—let him wander through the Canton of Valais, for he will there see all the varied forms of nature developed to the utmost, and will meet with contrasts sharper than occur in almost any other region.

Yes, Valais is truly a wonder-land; but it has had to wait some time for its Columbus, and has only lately been admitted to a place in the programme of the Alpine tourist. Monte Rosa and the dome of the Mischabel, mountains which rear their heads to some fifteen thousand feet or more above the level of the sea, and cast even the Finsteraarhorn and Jungfrau into the shade; the Lyskamm, or Mont Cervin, Weisshorn, Dent Blanche, Grand Combin, Les Jumeaux, or Castor and Pollux, all of which attain a height of more than thirteen thousand feet; and the Dent d'Hérens, Alphubel, Breithorn and Grand Cornier, which are more than twelve thousand feet high—these, whose names are so familiar to us, are all to be found in Valais. Among these mountains lie the largest glaciers of the

Alps, namely, the Gorner and Aletsch glaciers, with which more than a hundred others are associated. The principal elements, indeed, which go to make up the Canton of Valais are rock, snow,



ST. MAURICE.

and glaciers; and, as these occupy nearly nine-tenths of its area, there is but little space left for the population or for the cultivation of corn and wine; and as, in addition to this, one is constantly meeting with traces of the havoc wrought by the elements, one is

apt to go away with the impression that the whole canton is more or less like a desert.

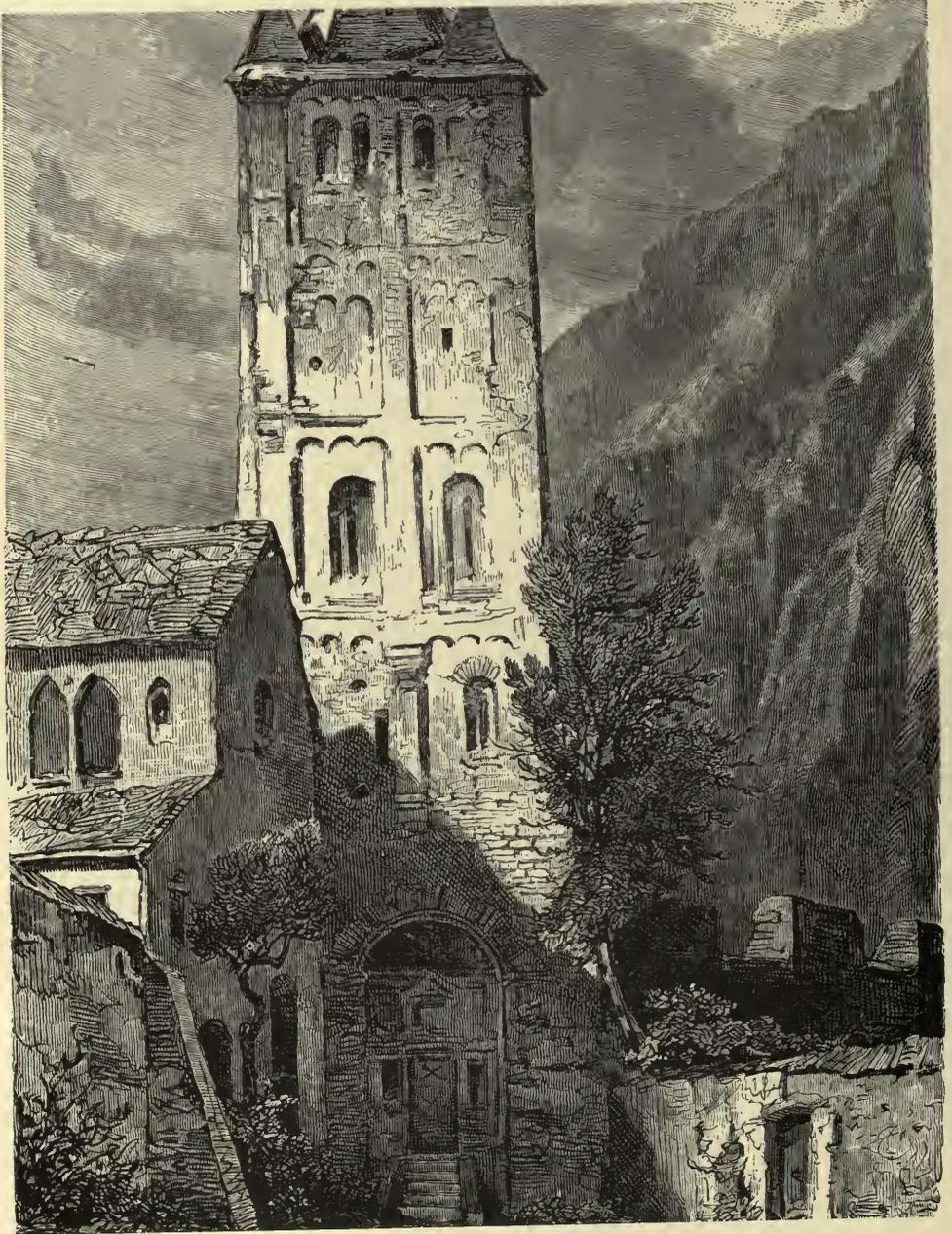
Valais was called Vallis Pennina under the Romans, and is even now very much what it was when the invaders entered by the gate of Octodurum and made their way up the Rhone. The valley runs north-east and south-west, and is three days' journey or about sixty miles in length, and here and there as much as three miles in width. Through this valley flows the river Rhone—the Rhodanus of the Romans—from its source at the foot of the Maienwand, on the west side of the St. Gotthard. Close to its right bank rise the precipitous Bernese Alps, while the Pennine Alps follow its course on the left, but at a greater distance. At St. Maurice, on the lower Rhone, these mountain chains approach so close together that there is but a narrow passage left for the river between the Dent de Morcles and the Dent du Midi; and, in former times, this being the only easy entrance into Valais, it was closed every evening by two strong gates placed to the right and left of the river. It is to this circumstance that Rogers alludes in his well-known lines:—

“Journeying upward by the Rhone,
That there came down a torrent from the Alps,
I entered where a key unlocks a kingdom:
The mountains closing, and the road, the river,
Filling the narrow space.”

We will begin fairly by starting from St. Maurice, at the western end of the valley. Any one who comes hither from Villeneuve, near the mouth of the Rhone, will be disappointed in his expectations of beautiful scenery by the flat marshy district of the Grand Marais, which forms the entrance into the valley of the Rhone, and is notorious for its evil odours, bushy shrubs, and harsh, scanty herbage. It is no wonder that about Vouvry and Vionnaz there should be lingering traditions of ancient dragons, for these no doubt represent the poisonous exhalations that proceed from the marshes.

The people of the neighbouring town of Vionnaz also have a marsh, so of course they must also have a dragon and a hero. Their dragon lived in the jagged-looking mountain of Inseny, near the village, and the knight who was the dragon-slayer was named Finam Mario. He made very little fuss about the matter, and simply shattered the dragon's head with a stone. Unfortunately, however, this dragon still lives, and has developed seven heads. His name is the Rhone, and he crawls along through the low country, bringing

destruction in his train. Nor would one stone or many be enough to



CONVENT, MARTIGNY.

crush his head. In fact, as many would be required as would suffice to build a respectable embankment.

In Bex—which, however, is in the Canton of Vaud—things begin to look better, and the guests who flock hither for the sake of the baths will find many a lovely bit of scenery in the vicinity. Next to Bex, on the opposite or left side of the river, in Valais, lies the large village of Monthey, which almost deserves to be called a little town. Persons visiting it from Bex will get into the ferry-boat at Massonger,



MASSONGER.

which is situated at the junction of the Avençon with the Rhone. Massonger, too, with its old church standing on a wooded mountain slope immediately above the river, possesses many attractions for the landscape-artist; but this is still more the case with Monthey, a place higher up the valley, built at the mouth of the Val d'Illiez, which runs north and south among the mountains, and is watered by the Viège, the last tributary which the Rhone receives from the left side of the valley.

Passing by the lovely hamlet of Chouex, we come to St. Moritz (or St. Maurice), which has entrenched itself in a position of much natural strength between the cliff and the river, whence its castle



PASS OF THE GREAT ST. BERNARD.

dominates both the bridge and the road which runs along the right bank of the Rhone to the Lake of Geneva and Savoy. The scene here is familiar to every one, and possesses many peculiar features. There is the boisterous river, which is here confined between steep

cliffs, and spanned by a bold-looking bridge; then the dark castle, which towers aloft like a petrified Leonidas, and guards the defile of the Valais Thermopylæ; the weird, gloomy old town, which already reminds one of Italy, and is decidedly unlovely, in spite of a few fine houses; the wildly romantic mouth of the valley; the flashing threads of water which cling to the face of the cliff; and finally, there are the various bastions and the little Church of Notre-Dame du Scex.

Continuing our way up the Rhone from St. Moritz, past Evionnaz, the ancient Epaona, we next come to the little villages of Balme and Mieville, and the famous Fall of the Sallena, or Cascade de la Sallenche, which the shepherds call by another and less refined name. This waterfall, which is fed by the glacier of the Dent du Midi, flings itself down the



CASCADE DE LA SALLENCHE.

high black cliffs in a broad and mighty mass of silvery whiteness, and scatters its spray abroad as far as the high road. In former times

it was one of the most beautiful of waterfalls; but it has been spoilt by an unfortunate attempt to improve it into an imitation of the Giessbach. The idea was to arrange matters so that visitors might see and admire the waterfalls from above, and from below, and in the middle—with a view, of course, to making money by the exhibition—and the result was the ruin of the cascade.

The Great St. Bernard rears its head aloft among the clouds like some ancient monument—not, indeed, that it is distinguished for its beauty any more than are the pyramids; but it possesses considerable interest because upon its walls one may read the fate of many nations, and upon the stones by the wayside one may still trace their footprints. First there are the Roman priests, whose duty it was to minister to Jupiter Penninus in his temple on the summit of the pass, near which a castle was built and garrisoned with veteran soldiers, for the protection not only of the temple, but also of the road. To the priests succeed George the Great, Henry IV., and many, many others, until we come to those world-renouncing monks who, about the year 1800, were guarded by a body of Frenchmen, just as the priests of Jupiter had been by the warriors of Rome. The name of Aosta—a place on the Italian side of the pass—reminds us of the famous emperor after whom it was formerly called Augusta Prætoria.

Franks, Burgundians, and Longobardi garrisoned the mountain in succession after the retreat of the Romans; and then, towards the end of the ninth century, came the Normans, and they too established themselves among the clouds. To them succeeded the wild Saracens, who brought terror and destruction to all the towns and villages in the neighbourhood; and, when they had been driven away, it was still found impossible to master the band of robbers who had taken possession of the pass and held it against all comers. So shamefully did they behave that the most terrible stories were told of them in all the countries of Europe, and no one any longer cared to travel by this road. They had thrown up earthworks the whole way from the lake to the mountain, leaving but one opening, through which travellers were permitted to pass only on the payment of an exorbitant toll. Conrad II., Rudolph III., and Canute the Great had full opportunity of seeing how bad the state of affairs was when they crossed the path together in 1026, and they accordingly determined to clear the mountain.

The building of the house of refuge is ascribed to St. Bernard of

Menthon, Archbishop of Aosta, who hoped to put a stop both to the



DOGS OF ST. BERNARD.

plundering and to the horrible and superstitious rites which were still

practised there, by establishing this house and placing in it a brotherhood of regular canons, who should conduct the service of the



MARKET-PLACE, SION.

Christian Church strictly according to the prescribed rule. When Pope Leo IX. crossed the mountain he found the new institution in the best possible order, and the mountain, which up to that time had been called after *Sti Nicholas of Myra*, henceforth bore the name of *St. Bernard*, the benefactor of mankind. But there is another name besides *St. Bernard's* which is intimately connected with the mountain, namely, that of *Napoleon*. That *Hannibal* never crossed the pass is now quite an established fact, but *Napoleon* did cross it. He was clever enough to deceive the allied powers; and the assembling of his troops at *Lausanne* was but a feint to conceal his preparations for traversing the *Alps*. On the 19th of *May* he arrived at *Martigny*, and then the question was how to convey the baggage and war materials over the still snow-covered mountain. The cannon were taken to pieces, all the sledges in the neighbourhood were requisitioned, and, besides these, trunks of tree and barrows were employed as the means of transport. By the 20th of *May* the

Consul was across the pass. The people who dwelt in the vicinity declared that *Napoleon* promised them he would make the road over the *St. Bernard* into a carriage road like that of the *Simplon*. At

present carriages from Martigny can go only as far as Cantine, a little beyond St. Pierre, while on the Italian side they can go only from Aosta to Etroubles. The intermediate part of the road is a mere bridle way, and in the middle of the pass, at a height of eight thousand feet above the sea, stands the famous Hospice, one of the most exalted human habitations in Europe.

In those upper regions terrible dangers are everywhere lurking; and those who escape death at the hands of the avalanche



MARKET-PLACE, SION.

and treacherous snowstorm too often perish from hunger and fatigue.

However, the monks and their servants keep constant watch over the lives of the wayfarers, and are greatly assisted in this their arduous labour of love by the faithful St. Bernard dogs. The little band of watchers take no rest night or day; even when the sun is shining two servants are constantly pacing to and fro on the look out for travellers, and in bad weather the whole establishment turns out to search for those who have lost their way and to administer restoratives to such as have become exhausted and unconscious from exposure to the cold.

Those who desire to reach Italy by a less difficult road than that

over the St. Bernard had better proceed farther up Valais by way of Sitten until they come to Brieg, and so reach another famous pass—that of Sempronius, Cimpron, or Simplon—which will take them out of the valley of the Rhone, and through a region of snow and ice down to Domo d'Ossola, in the valley of the Tosa, whence they may be speedily conveyed to the rosy bowers which encircle the Lago Maggiore.

The Simplon road, which fills one with unfeigned admiration for the man who could conceive and carry out so stupendous a work, is far more worthy of the genius of Goethe's "Faust" than the



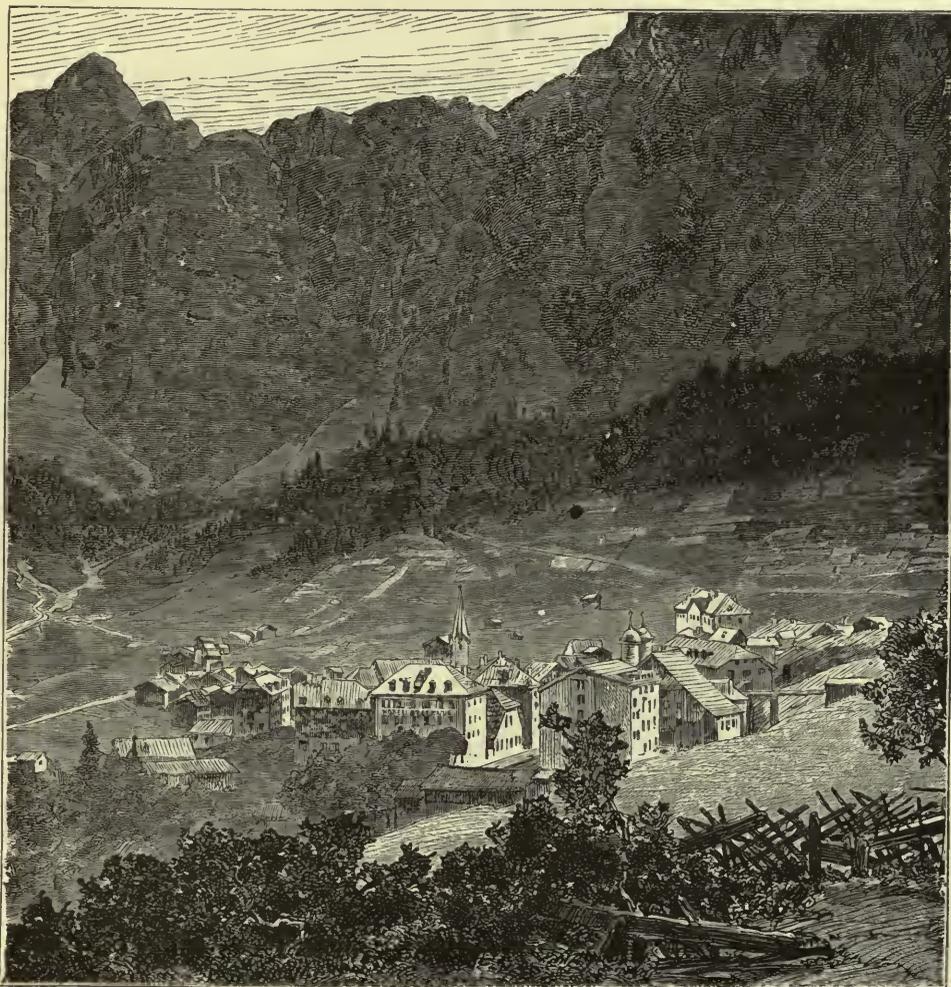
SION.

reclaiming of a bit of land from the sea—and, in fact, it owes its existence to that Faust of our century, Napoleon I., who hewed

“A pathway for his host above the cloud,
Guiding their footsteps o’er the frost-work crown
Of the throned Alps.”

In obedience to the mandates of his iron will, the whole colossal work was executed within five years—that is, between 1801 and 1806. Before this time it had been dangerous, and often impossible, to cross

the pass, owing to the wild havoc wrought by the torrents, which are nowhere more fierce and violent than they are here. The chronicles say that, at the time of the passage of the Great St. Bernard by the French troops, a thousand of them attempted to cross the Simplon.



THE GEMMI AND THE BATHS OF LEUK.

At Isella, where the Italian custom-house is now situated, they were brought to a halt by finding that a long bridge had been shattered to pieces by avalanches. The upright posts on which the planks had rested had, however, been left standing, and one of the soldiers boldly proposed to try and get across from one to the other. He succeeded

in reaching the other side, carrying with him one end of a rope, which was then made fast across the gorge, and by this means the whole body of troops, with the general at their head, managed to swing themselves over into Italy, carrying all their baggage with them.

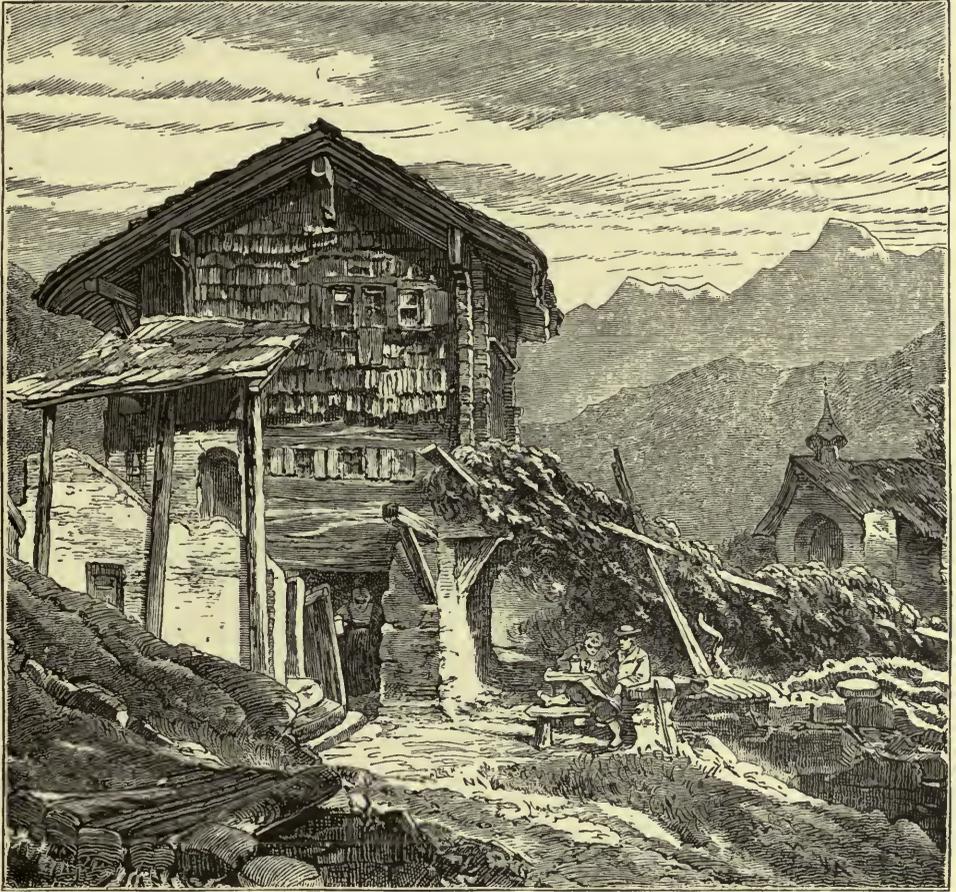
As early as 1797 Napoleon expressed in Milan his intention of constructing a military road across the Simplon, and in 1800 he gave orders for the work to be begun. France and Italy were each to contribute a hundred thousand francs a month, and Valais was compelled to furnish labourers. By the 25th September, 1805, the road was passable for carriages, and a hospice, consisting at first of but one story was erected for the reception of travellers. The cost of the whole was reckoned at about eighteen million francs.

But, indeed, we may fancy ourselves to be in Italy as soon as we reach Sitten, or Sion, for the flowers and shrubs, the fruits and the wine, all tell of a more ardent sun, and even the town itself has such a foreign, Southern aspect that at first sight we are apt to forget that we are still within the borders of Switzerland. If a pilgrimage up or down the valley of the Rhone be on the whole a



THE RATHHAUS, BRIEG.

weary business, this town, at least, is an oasis in the long, monotonous tract, for it is situated in the midst of most lovely scenery, and the view of the distant landscape to be seen from the top of the castles is very charming. But the history of Sion involves the history of the whole country, so we must reluctantly abandon any investigations at



TIMBER HOUSE, VALAIS.

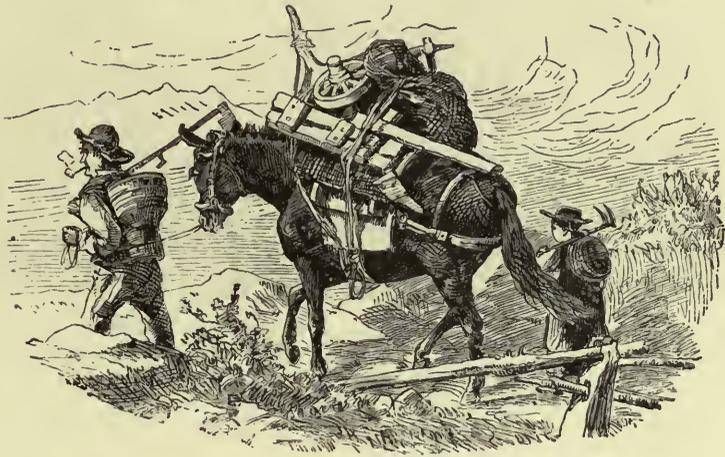
present; though, had we the time to listen, we might obtain a good deal of information and hear a good many lamentations from the ruins of the old episcopal Castle of Tourbillon which crown the northern height above the town. It was destroyed in 1798, after an existence of three hundred years. The ancient castle of Valeria, which stands on the neighbouring peak, and contains a very ancient church

dedicated to St. Catherine, has had a similar history, and the Castle of Majoria, formerly the bishop's palace, has also weathered many a storm. The number of these silent witnesses to the history of the town might be further increased by the neighbouring ruined castles of Mont d'Orge, and Sion, which stand behind the battle-field of La Planta, the present exercise-ground, and saw the army of the Duke of Savoy cut down and butchered by the inhabitants of Upper Valais and their allies. Many a castle fell a victim to the flames in those days; and the victorious Valaisans pressed on past Martigny and St. Maurice. The solitary "Witches' Tower," near the Cathedral, is all that has survived from those days in the interior of the town, for the old fortifications have been abandoned since 1831. Those who expect to find anything else that is worth seeing in Sion, or Sitten, as the Germans call it, will infallibly be disappointed. The most interesting thing about the place is its history, and the most beautiful is the view from the castles. The view from the Castle of Tourbillon, for example, embraces the whole district from Leuk to Martigny, a grand and beautiful bit of Alpine scenery, in which the most striking figure is the Bietschhorn.

Proceeding on our way, we go through the wood of Pfywald and past the little hamlet of Pfy, and then past Leuk, which lies on the other side of the Rhone to our left, and is connected with the Simplon road by an old covered wooden bridge of rather fragile appearance. Above the bridge the road mounts upwards to the ancient mountain town of Leuk, a brown-hued little place which looks nearly as frail and rickety as the bridge. The famous Leuk baths lie some nine miles higher up among the mountains, and are connected with the Dala, a torrent which dashes into the Rhone with much impetuosity at this point.

But to continue our journey, the primary object of which will be accomplished when we reach the spot where the lively Saltina pours itself into the Rhone, and the magnificent road by which we have been travelling turns off to the right in the direction of the Simplon and Italy. Here stands Brieg, or Brigue, perhaps the best-looking town in the whole of Valais. It is really quite a grand place, and excites great expectations when we first behold it embowered among the rich green trees in the distance. As we draw nearer, our attention is caught by the shining roofs of its tall white houses, and by the odd pear-shaped glittering cupolas which surmount its turrets. Brieg is more ancient than any other town in Valais but one, and is

supposed to have been the ancient Celtic Viberiga, the chief settlement of the Viberi; Briga meaning "a bridge," and Viberiga "the bridge of the Viberi." No doubt the Romans valued it for the sake of the passage which it afforded them across the river.





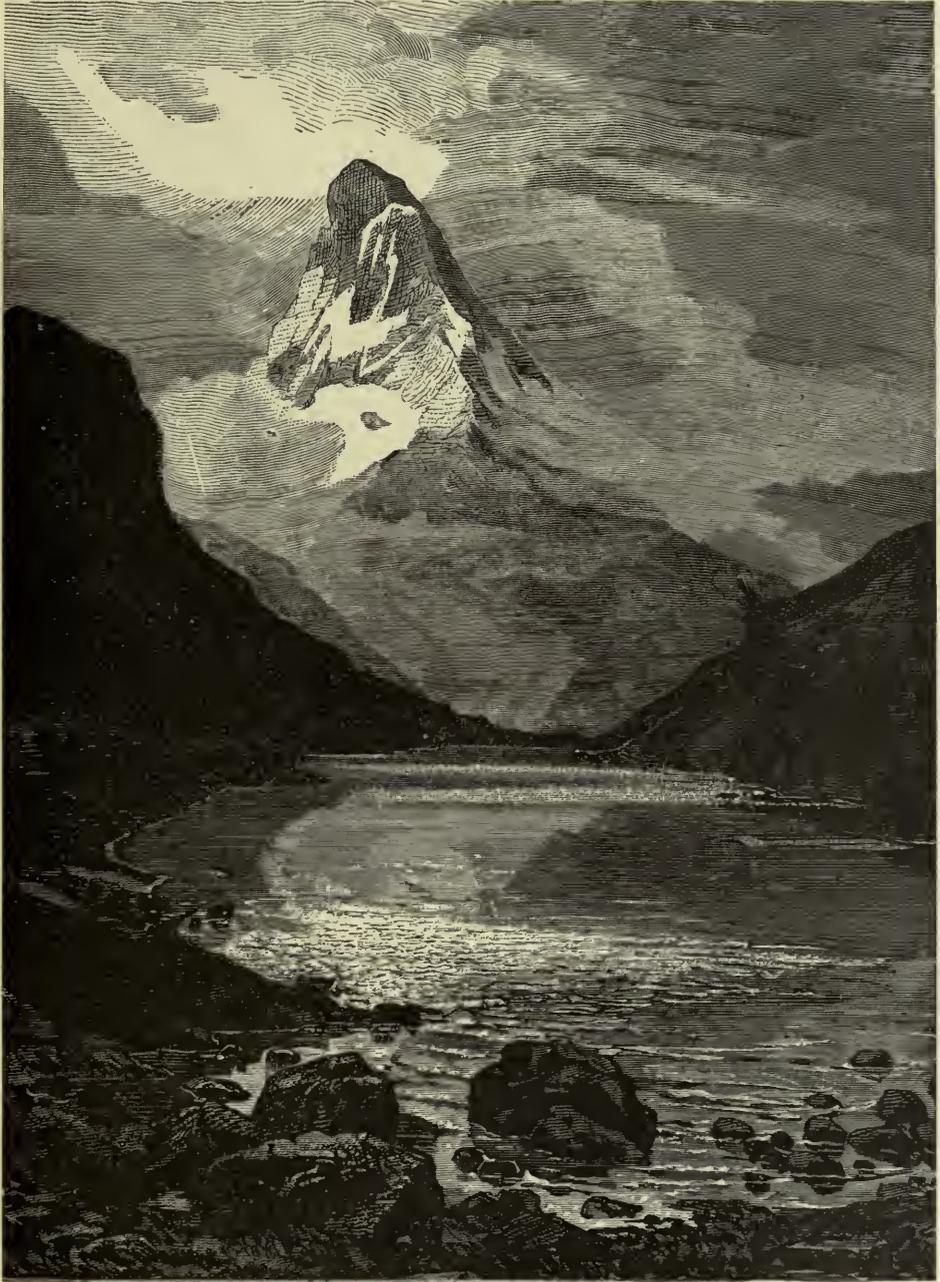
VALAIS CHILDREN GATHERING ALPINE ROSES.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE LATERAL VALLEYS.

THOSE who visit the villages of Valais cannot fail to be struck with the neglected condition of many of the fields, with the apparent laziness of the population, and the great want of cleanliness everywhere prevalent; and when they also notice, as they are sure to do, that the churches and chapels are handsomely decorated and richly endowed, they will be inclined to think that the people have been suffering for centuries under the oppression of the clergy, and so have been kept from making any

progress. This notion, however, is by no means altogether correct.



THE MATTERHORN AND LAKE OF THE RIFFELHORN.

It is true, indeed, that the Valasian mountaineers were not at all

friendly to the Reformation, and that a violent reaction set in which speedily removed all traces of it from their midst; it is true also that the Bishop of Sion, who was endowed with very important political privileges, made every effort to increase tenfold the number of the convents, churches, chapels, places of pilgrimage, and hermitages in his diocese, and that in these efforts he was greatly assisted by the Jesuits; it is also true that the Valasian's love for the mass and the rosary is one of his most marked characteristics, and that, as we have said before, you will nowhere see more wealthy churches, nowhere hear more bells ringing early and late in the mountains and in the valleys; but it must also be remembered that religion is a second nature to the Valasian and is as essential to his happiness as freedom and independence—in fact, it is the possession which he prizes before all others.

We will just open the chronicle of Valais haphazard, and read the first record which meets our eye. What a tale of woe it is! It tells of the time, at the close of the sixteenth century, when Yvorne, which then belonged to the diocese of Valais, was overwhelmed by the fall of a mountain, which occasioned the loss of a hundred and twenty lives. In the same year at Saas, the lake of Montmort burst its banks and flooded the whole neighbourhood; and the mischievous river Dranse committed great ravages in Entremont, Bagne, and Martigny, destroying fifty houses in Martigny alone. The village of Auf der Egg, above Simpeln, was swallowed up by a glacier, and the Rhone was greatly swollen by two fresh landslips; while, as if this was not enough, pestilence and earthquake added their quota to the general misery.

It is only occasionally that the Valasian hunts the wilder beasts of prey, chamois being the game he chiefly seeks. His great delight is to pursue these beautiful animals across the ice and snow, in storm and wind, and it is in these expeditions that all the natural boldness of his character shows itself—nothing is then impossible to him, he heeds no danger, and the numerous accidents which occur every year seem only to whet his appetite. Such famous chamois-hunters as Ignaz Troger, of Oberems, are by no means uncommon, though their names are not as well known as those of the Engadine. Valais is the only canton in which the hunting of the steinbock, or ibex-goat, is still carried on, and it is the most dangerous of all sport.

Better known, perhaps, is the Val d'Hérens, which lies in the heart of Valais, and possesses a glorious view of the glacial-world in

the south. It begins at Sion, but soon branches into the western



THE EVE OF THE FESTIVAL OF CORPUS CHRISTI, IN VALAIS.

valley or vale of Hérémente, and the eastern or Eringer Thal,

which is known also as the valley of Hérens. This latter divides



CHAMOIS OVERTAKEN BY AN AVALANCHE.

again some miles higher up, and the new fork is called the Val Arolla.

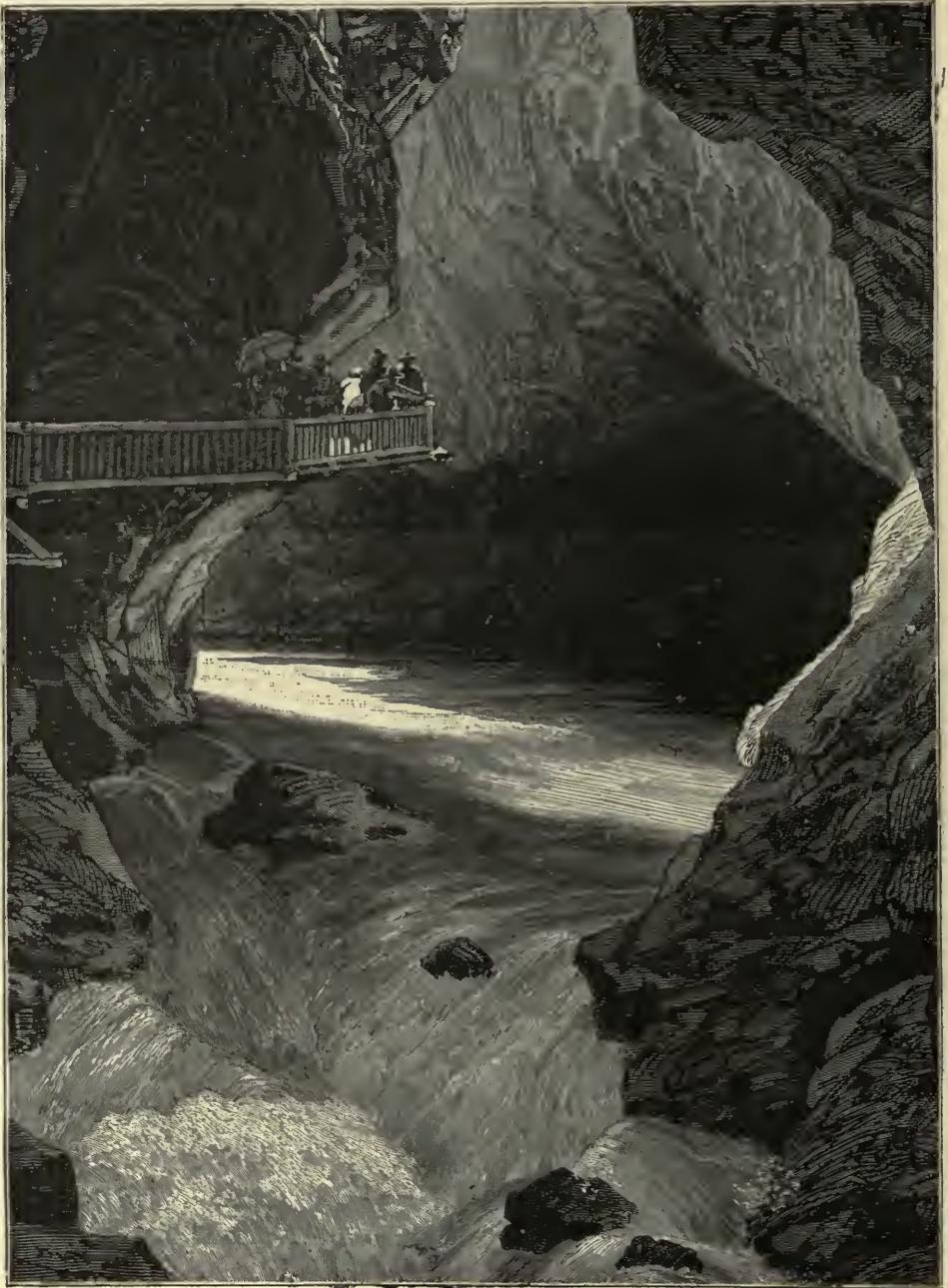
These valleys, as well as those of the Einfisch, Turtmann, Bagne, Entremont, and the great valley of St. Nicholas, have all been formed by the streams which pour down from the great chain of Alps which extends from the massive group of Monte Rosa past the Matterhorn to the Grand Combin. The Val d'Hérens is watered by the Borgne ;



ZERMATT.

and Evolena, a mountain eyrie—brown, or rather black, with age—is the centre whence innumerable expeditions are made to the snowy mountains on the other side of the stream. On our way up hither from Sion we pass the village of Vex by a tolerable carriage-road recently constructed. There is much to look at even in the immediate neighbourhood, for the mountains to left and right of us are

dotted with houses, cottages, and chapels, and a plentiful supply of



GORGE OF THE TRIENT, VALAIS.

water issues from the rocks in all directions, and hurries down to join

the Borgne. Most of the trees are larches, whose cheerful green foliage shines like gold in the sunlight.

Very charming excursions may be made; and those who wish to



SKETCH IN THE VALLEY OF ZERMATT.

have the pleasure of gathering edelweiss, and other rare Alpine flowers with their own hands, while they see their dreams of the Alps actually realised before their eyes, cannot do better than descend into the little valley of Arzinol, the one chosen abode of the nymph of

whom the young cowherds talk enthusiastically as the source of all their good fortune.

But let us look away, and over the heads of all these mountains, to the black Matterhorn. No matter where one may be, the eye reverts to it again and again, for it is the most singular in form and

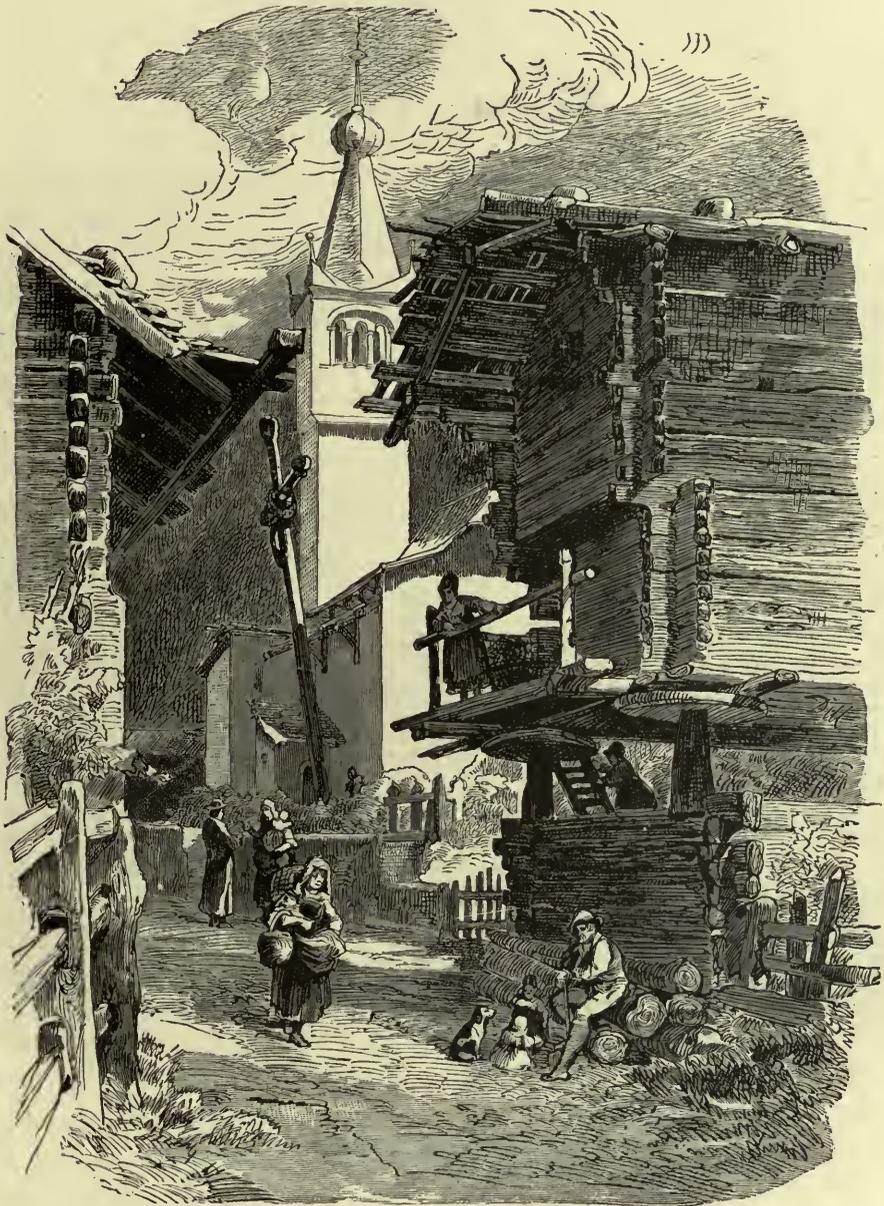


THE TWINS, CASTOR AND POLLUX.

the noblest in outline of all the Alps, and as such is indelibly impressed upon the memory.

The Matterhorn! Assuredly its builder was a Titanic genius, and its architecture excites the astonishment of the most cold-blooded of travellers. Among these latter, by the way, foreigners give the first place to the English, who are considered to be the most sober-minded

adherents of the *nil admirari* principle. Yet even they stood lost in admiration when they first beheld the massive proportions of the



TAESCH.

Matterhorn; and at last, despite all dangers and difficulties, they succeeded in reaching its summit.

The Matterhorn, formerly called the Great Horn by the inhabitants of Zermatt, and also known under the name of Mont Cervin and Monte Silvio, stands at the back of the valleys of Zermatt and Tournanche, on the frontier of Italy and Switzerland, and attains a height of nearly fifteen thousand feet above the level of the sea. The pinnacle itself, which rises from out the glaciers which cover the crest of the Alps of Valais, is some four thousand feet in height, and is in form an obelisk with sharply-cut edges, and smooth, black, bare sides. Looking at it from Zermatt, one feels crushed and overpowered by its magnitude; and it may well seem utterly inaccessible to the puny beings who crawl around its base—indeed, it is difficult even now to understand how so many persons have succeeded in reaching its summit.

On the 14th July, 1865, Whymper, the boldest of all mountaineers, made the ascent from Zermatt, accompanied by Lord Francis Douglas, the Rev. Mr. Hudson, and Mr. Hadow, and succeeded in reaching the summit of the highest peak; but, as if to justify the popular saying that only one chamois hunter in twenty ever reaches the top, Whymper's three companions paid for their daring with their lives. Their names are written in blood on the sides of the obelisk as a warning to all future generations; but the marvel is that even one should have lived to come down again. However, the ascent has been successfully made many times since 1865; and a girl of eighteen, bearing the auspicious name of Félicité, has set her foot on the brow of this most defiant of giants. Yes, "the most defiant of giants," for, compared with him, his neighbour Monte Rosa looks like a sublime monarch of the Alps, and wears his many-pointed crown with calm majesty and dignity. Monte Rosa rises to a height of fifteen thousand feet, extensive glaciers nestle at its feet, and it is enveloped in a snowy mantle of dazzling silvery brightness. Only two of its peaks stand actually on Italian soil, the others are on the frontier between Italy and Switzerland.

It is from the valley of Macugnaga that one gains the best idea of the size of this huge knot of mountains, which rise like a wall at the back of the upper valley. It is incontestably the mightiest of all the mighty giants which rear their snowy heads aloft in this neighbourhood; and, indeed, there is only one with which it cannot compare, namely, the great monarch of the Alps, Mont Blanc himself.

The place whence people now usually start on the numerous excursions which may be made around Monte Rosa is Zermatt

(Praborgne in Italian), a village of the usual Valasian type lying at the back of the valley of St. Nicholas. Its principal buildings are some first-class hotels, which are always filled to overflowing during the season, and are patronised chiefly by our adventurous fellow-countrymen; but, as the longest summer is not long enough for the accomplishment of all the numerous expeditions which here present



HOTEL VICTORIA, KANDERSTEG, WITH VIEWS OF THE BLUEMLISALP AND DOLDENHORN.

themselves in such tempting variety, the modest traveller will do well to confine himself to the beaten paths, which will amply reward him for all his exertions.

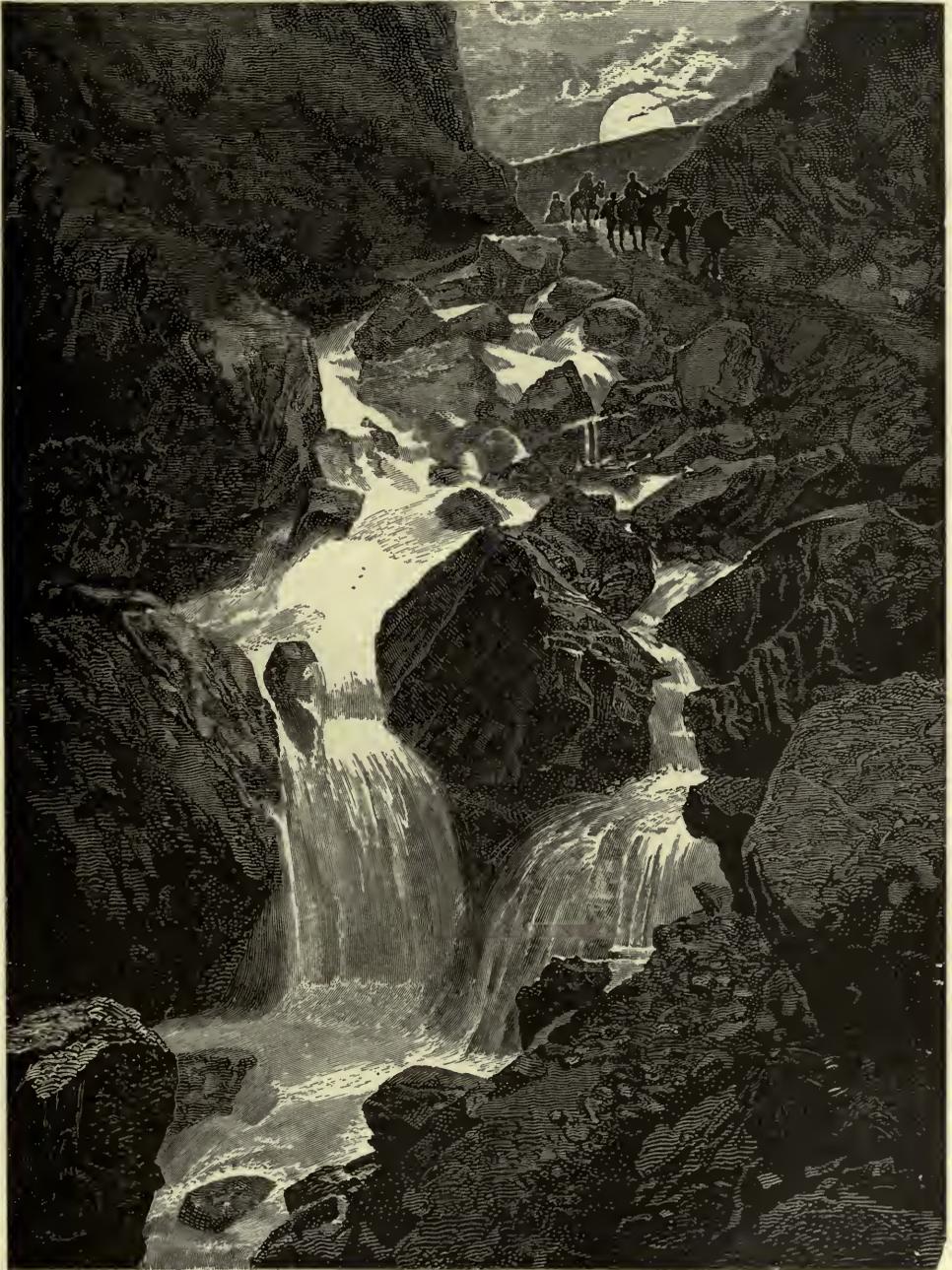
The first excursion made is usually that to the Gorner Grat and the Riffelberg, where there is a good mountain inn. The ascent from Zermatt takes us through a cool fragrant forest, and affords a view of the Gorner glacier, whence the river Visp flows down into

the valley. When we reach the Gorner Grat, higher up, the view becomes overpoweringly grand, and shows us alps, icebergs, snow-fields, precipices, and glacier after glacier. Yonder rise the peaks of the Cima di Jazzi and the Lyskamm, and there, above all, is Monte Rosa in all its glorious splendour. Between the black savage-looking Breithorn and the Lyskamm are the shining snow-covered peaks of Castor and Pollux; farther on are the Theodulshorn and the Matterhorn. Glaciers innumerable fill the valley at their feet, and to the north rise the mighty mountains of the Bernese Oberland.

At Stalden, the two torrents of the Gorner Visp and Saaser Visp meet, and by following their course we shall soon find ourselves once more in the valley of the Rhone, and on the high road leading to Brieg. If the traveller's eyes be not weary with so much gazing, and if there be enough strength left in his knees, he may turn to the left at Mörel and wend his way upwards through woods and gently sloping Alpine meadows to the Eggischorn, whence there is another grand view to be seen. Indeed, so far as glaciers are concerned, this point of view is the finest of all, for the Aletsch glacier is the largest and most perfect of its kind in Europe. It is the most highly developed of all the glaciers of the Alps, and the little glacier of Grindelwald is but a dwarf in comparison. The Aletsch glacier is twelve miles long, and may be well seen from the summit of the Eggischorn; though the view from the Bellalp opposite is better still, as the entire length can be seen at once. From this point of view it looks like a stream leaping boldly down the side of the beautiful Jungfrau, and challenging the spectator's whole and undivided attention. And indeed the Jungfrau herself, as well as the Monk and the Giant, which look so sublimely down into the valley of Grindelwald, are here nothing more than snow-capped heights, and pass almost unnoticed.

We shall not be much struck with the glacier of the Rhone if we visit it after the Aletsch glacier; but those who come to it direct from Lucerne and Altdorf, by way of Andermatt and the wildly beautiful Furca Pass, will be greatly delighted and surprised by the deep cerulean blue of the great jagged masses of ice which they will suddenly see on their right hand—so close that they can almost touch them—as they pursue their way down the steep high road into the upper valley of the Rhone. This glacier is distinguished for the purity of its ice and the beauty of its colour; and, in spite of all rivals

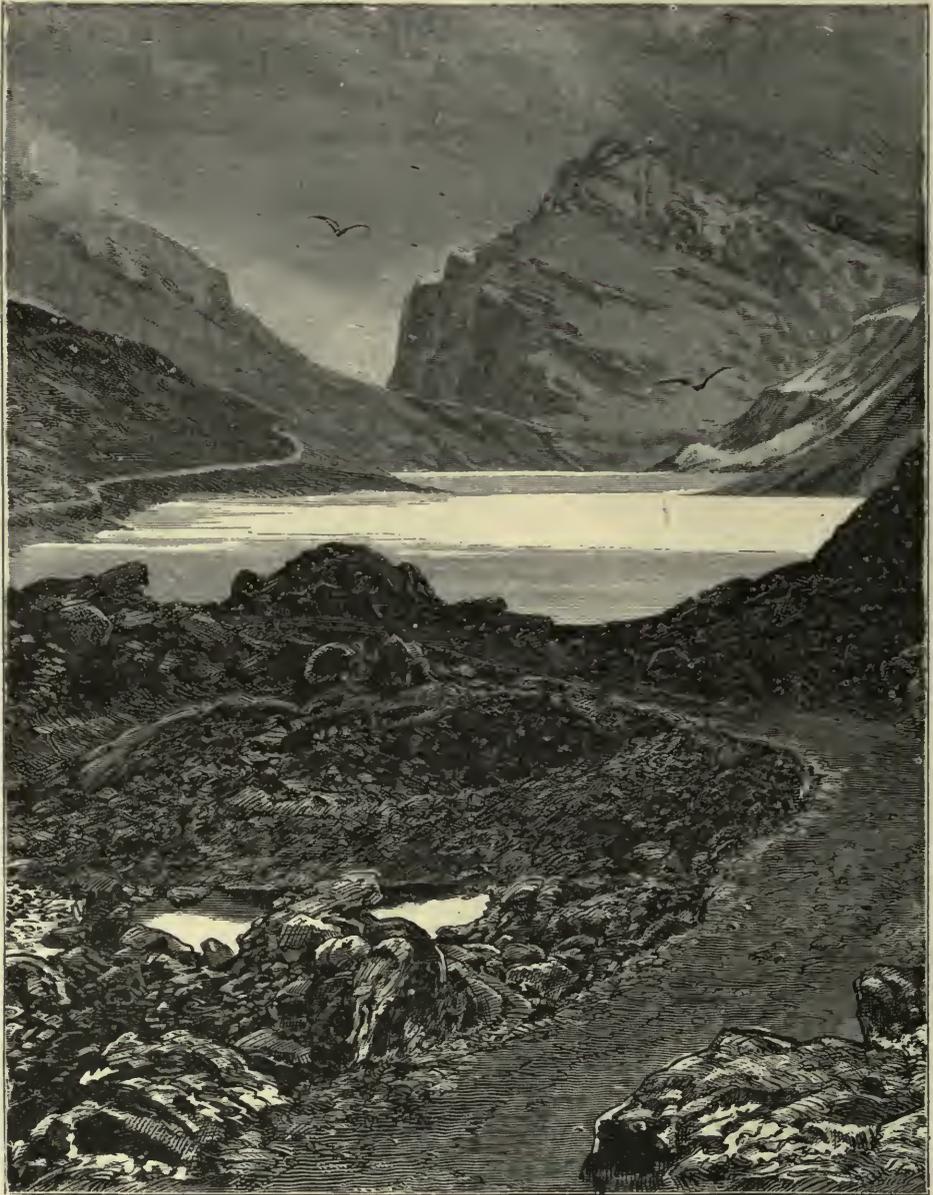
it is one of the most famous sights of Switzerland. To the man of



FALLS OF THE KANDER.

science it is something more than this, for, being the best and longest

known of all the glaciers, it has contributed greatly to the solution of various geological problems.



GEMMI PASS AND LAKE OF DAUBEN.

Travellers coming from the north who prefer to plunge at once *in medias res*, instead of beginning at the beginning of the Rhone valley

may come from lovely Thun through the rich and beautiful valley of Kanderthal, and may drive comfortably in their carriages through the Kandergrund to Kandersteg, where the valley comes to an end and the great wide world of mountains rears its formidable "horns" before them. Here is the famous Gemmi Pass, the threshold both of the Bernese Oberland and Rhone valley. A very beautiful mountain path leads up from Kandersteg to the desolate region on the summit of the pass, and takes the traveller past the inn of Schwarenbach, which has acquired some notoriety as being the place chosen by Werner as the scene of a very gloomy tragedy. Farther on the path winds along the margin of the melancholy little lake of Dauben, which is three-quarters of a mile long and about half a mile broad, and is frozen nearly ten months of the year. Its waters are dull and lifeless, and the dreary waste around, unenlivened by anything more cheerful than the bleating of sheep and the croaking of jackdaws, is very dismal. Suddenly, however, as we pursue our way, a splendid panorama is unfolded before us. We are standing on the brink of a stupendous precipice, and immediately below us, at a giddy depth, we see the baths of Leuk, and a little lower down a bit of the valley of the Rhone. Dumas says that when he reached this point and looked into the depths below, the sight so overpowered him that he sank to the ground unconscious; and while he was making the descent his teeth chattered to such a degree that he was obliged to stuff his pocket-handkerchief into his mouth; when he reached the bottom the said handkerchief looked as if it had been cut through and through with a razor.

Dumas' experiences, however, are, we believe, peculiar to himself, and have not, as far as we are aware, been shared by any, even the most nervous of lady travellers. The descent to Leuk is extremely interesting, but before we enter upon it we will take advantage of our elevated point of view to wave our farewells to the whole Canton of Valais.



CHAPTER XX.

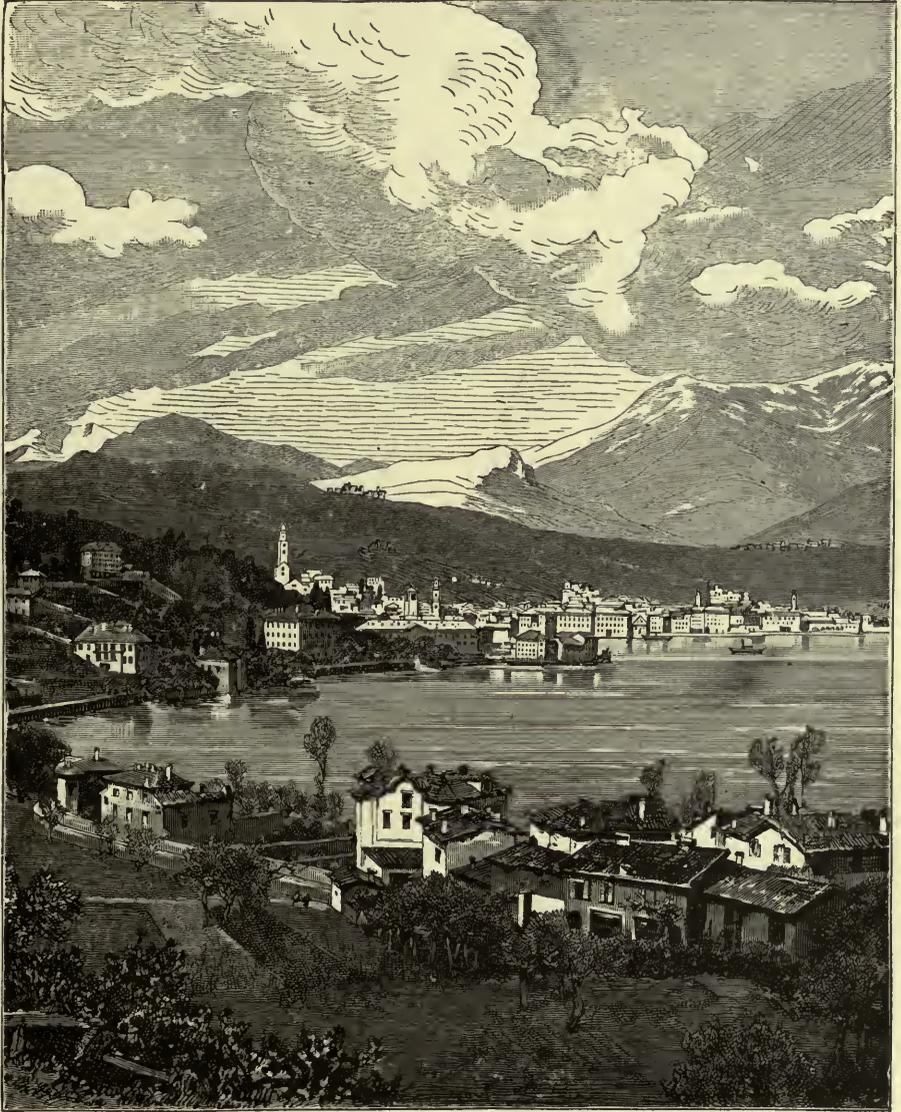
FROM THE LAKES TO THE ST. GOTTHARD.

BETWEEN the glaciers of the High Alps and the sunny plain of Lombardy, bounded on the east by the vale of the Adda, and on the west by that of the Doire, lies the lake district of Italy—a region of light and sunshine, endowed with all the charms that captivate the eye and rejoice the heart—a veritable garden, where the products of the chilly north and the luxuriant south meet and flourish equally.

Into this fertile region stretches the southern part of the Swiss Canton of Tessin, or Ticino, which lies between the Lago Maggiore and the Lago di Como, and almost encloses the Lake of Lugano. Here the oppressive relaxing heat of the Lombard plain becomes more temperate, though the sunshine loses nothing of its brilliancy, and its fertilising powers seem to be doubled. Umbrageous woods of deciduous trees clothe all the hills and mountains, while the slopes are covered with nut trees, chestnuts, and vine-clad mulberry trees; the fields and meadows show signs of exuberant fertility, and the gardens are bright with the rosy blossoms of the peach and almond in the springtime, and yield an abundant supply of golden-hued figs in the summer. Such are the characteristics of the southern part of the canton, which extends to and includes Locarno, on the lake of Maggiore, and Bellinzona, on the river Ticino. Beyond these places the country soon begins to assume a less genial aspect, and we enter upon the Alpine district of Ticino, with its precipitous heights, wild waterfalls, and frequent glimpses of glaciers. Southern vegetation and Italian-looking towns and villages are left behind; Nature becomes more chary of her gifts, or refuses to bestow them

at all, except as the reward of laborious toil; poverty is rampant, and the people are generally too indolent to cope vigorously with it.

The canton takes its name from the river Tessin, or Ticino, the



LUGANO.

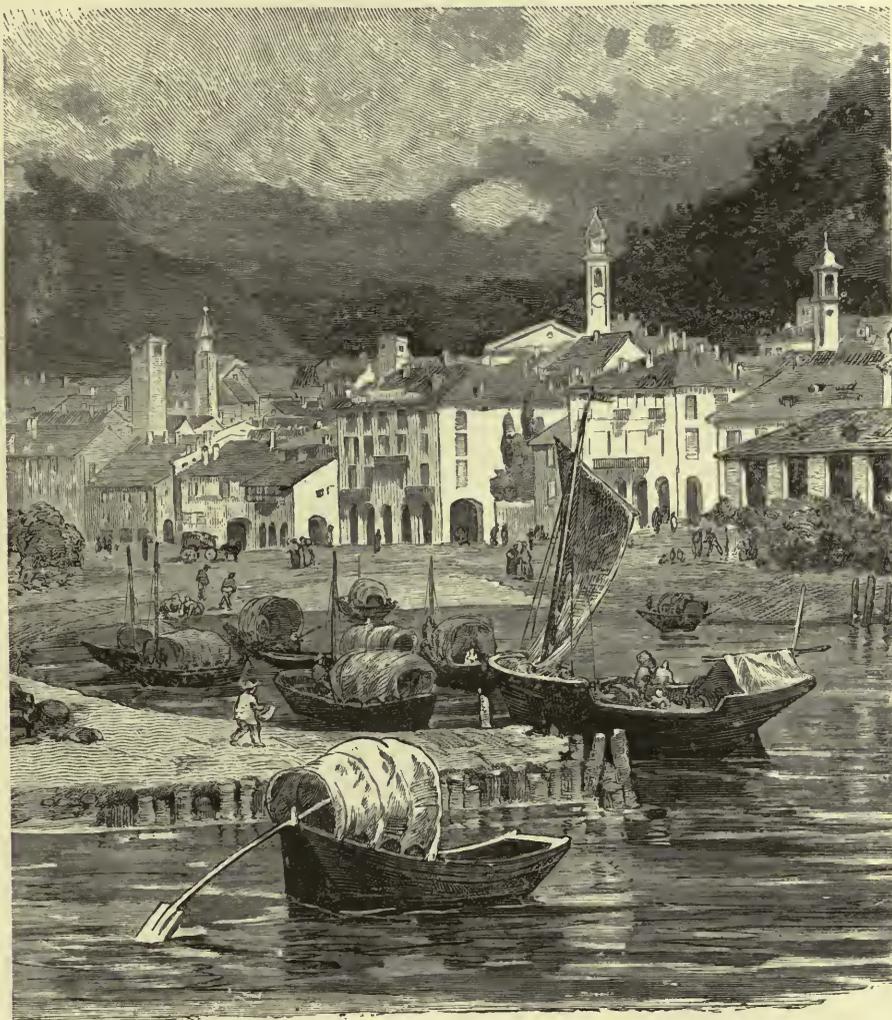
Ticinus of the ancients; but the part of the river between Bellinzona, and the mouth of the Val Blegno is called the Riviera, and it is along the Riviera that the population of the canton is chiefly settled. The Ticino rises in the Lepontine Alps,

one of its sources being in the Val Bedretto, on the pass of Nüfenen or Novena, the other in the small lakes on the St. Gotthard. It flows southward through the Val Leventina, joins the Moësa on its way down from the Val Misocco (Val Mesolcina, in Italian), and then in order to cleanse itself from its impurities, enters the Lago Maggiore at Magadino, after which it flows southwards again until it meets the river Po. The world-renowned road of the St. Gotthard runs along by the side of the Ticino through a valley which abounds in gorges, wild-looking rocks, waterfalls, and the most picturesque and beautiful scenery. This is probably all that the summer tourist will see of the northern portion of the canton, as the Val Maggio—a valley which lies parallel with the Val Ticino on the west—is seldom visited. To most persons the Canton of Ticino means the St. Gotthard Pass, Airolo, Faido, Biasca, Bellinzona, Locarno, and Lugano; and when they have seen these they have seen the principal places of interest.

It is difficult to realise that one is still in Switzerland, for the earth and the sky, the style of architecture, the people themselves, as well as their language and mode of life, have all undergone a change, and the cement which binds Ticino to the Confederacy seems to have almost melted away beneath the burning rays of the sun of Italy. If the Swiss, speaking generally, be mountaineers, the Ticinesi are dalesmen, and have had their vigour and energy squeezed out of them by the misfortunes which have weighed them down for centuries past. In the Pays de Vaud and in Geneva the people are thoroughly Swiss, in spite of their French language and manners; but the same cannot be said of the Italian-speaking Ticinesi. The fact of their political union with the Republic they do not attempt to deny; but the canton and the Confederacy have not yet really grown together, and there is little unity of feeling between them. Ticino is still to Switzerland what the ivy is to the tree, and the connection between the two is not a whit more intimate. She would like to claim all the rights which the union confers upon her, and at the same time to avoid discharging any of the duties which it entails.

However, no one ought to be surprised at this—least of all the Swiss on the other side of the St. Gotthard, for they were hard masters to Ticino for three hundred years, and ruled it in all respects as oppressively as Gessler himself could have done. The government of these “estates of the Ennetberg,” as they were called, was

entrusted to eight bailiffs who ill-treated and plundered the whole district, and in fact tryannised over it as a subject province. Whenever, as not infrequently happened, the miserable canton became the battle-field of the Latin and German races, it was tossed to and



LOCARNO.

fro between the two in the most insulting fashion. Unfortunately for itself, it lies on the borders of Austria, Piedmont, and Switzerland, and it is a noticeable fact that living on any frontier has a demoralising influence. The political existence of the canton, properly speaking, dates only from 1840, so it would be vain to expect from

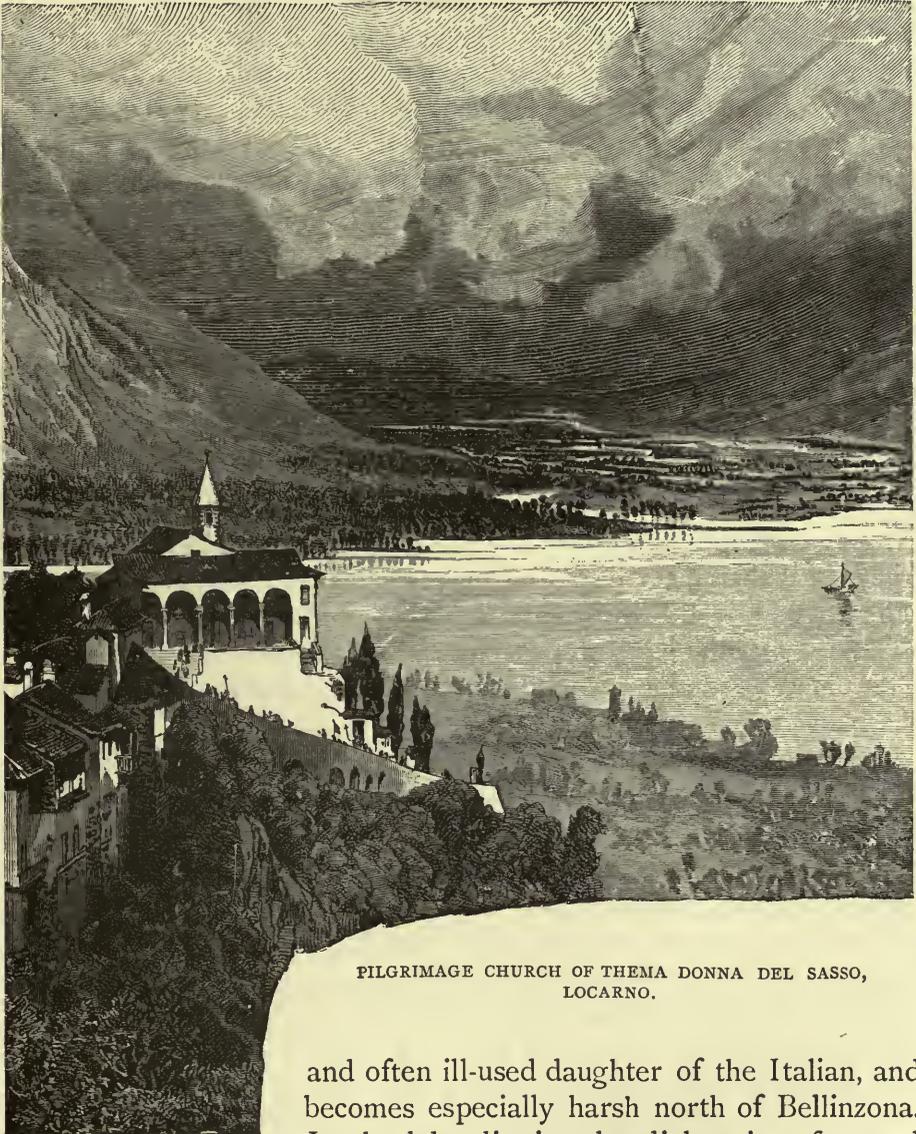
it such patriotism as that of the original members of the Confederacy. In time, no doubt, it will be educated up to its position.

Living in a state of anxiety and insecurity from seed-time to harvest, constantly expecting a storm to burst upon him either from the north or the south, it was impossible for the Ticinese to feel any great attachment for his native land. He lived in a hurry, plying only such trades and handicrafts as could be carried on by the way, as it were, and almost neglecting the surer sources of profit afforded him by the generally fertile character of the soil. Pastoral occupations are followed in Ticino to a certain extent, but they do not seem to come naturally to the people, and are by no means so well understood here as in the northern cantons. Almost all the technical expressions used in connection with the business of the dairy are borrowed from the German. In the southern portion of the canton, the Ticinese is supplied with all that he needs by the liberal hand of Nature ; in the north, he used to make something out of the roads across the Alps, and when that failed he took to begging—a very thriving trade in former days. It would be unjust to say that the Ticinese is altogether lazy ; but lazy at home he certainly is, and he prefers uncertain gains abroad to a certain livelihood in his native land. One meets him on all the high roads and in all the great cities of Europe, as if he were some bird of passage possessed by a strange spirit of restlessness. In one place he is a tinker, chimney-sweep, porter, or seller of roasted chestnuts, cooper, waiter, coffee-house keeper, innkeeper ; in another place he is a civil engineer—and a particularly skilful one too—or he is a mason, stone cutter, glazier, or decorator. He is most frequently to be met with in the towns of France, particularly in Paris, but he goes also to Rome and Naples, and even to Moscow and St. Petersburg.

Only the old and feeble are left at home with the women and children, to look after the houses and gardens and to cultivate the soil, and the result is as unsatisfactory as one might expect : the fields are neglected, and do not improve ; and there is no comfort in the houses, which are perfectly bare and without any attempt at adornment, often dirty, and always cheerless—just the sort of nests that might belong to birds of passage, in fact. The Ticinese looks upon his home as a temporary place of abode, and returns thither merely to recruit himself after his toil in foreign lands.

Nature has not been very bountiful to him in the matter of personal charms and endowments. Hair and complexion notwith-

standing, few of the faces one sees possess any very marked Italian characteristics, and from the majority they have disappeared altogether. The same may be said of the language, which is a degenerate



PILGRIMAGE CHURCH OF THEMA DONNA DEL SASSO,
LOCARNO.

and often ill-used daughter of the Italian, and becomes especially harsh north of Bellinzona. In the lake district the dialect is softer and the women are better looking; but here, as throughout the whole Canton of Tessin, they are soon past their prime, and their comeliness is impaired by hard work even before it has attained its full development. There are almost no distinctive costumes nowadays, and the

only way in which the women differ externally from their neighbours is in the manner of dressing their hair. Their abundant plaits are arranged in a sort of aureole at the back of the head, and are transixed by the large-headed silver pins which seem to be universally worn in the neighbourhood of the Italian lakes. Massive silver studs behind the ears complete the coiffure. Round their necks they wear strings of their favourite garnets, the stones alternating with beads of gold filigree ; and on their heads, especially when they go to church, they wear a black or white veil, arranged after the rather becoming fashion prevalent throughout North Italy. The fashion was probably introduced in the first instance by the numerous families who came from Milan and settled permanently at Lugano and other places in the vicinity. They showed considerable discrimination in their choice, it must be confessed, and one is more than half disposed to envy them ; for, of all the many lovely places which stud the shore of this and the other lakes, Lugano is perhaps the loveliest. It is built upon gently rising ground in the form of a small amphitheatre, and looks like a miniature Genoa or a tiny Naples, with the hills rising in a semicircle close behind it, and white villas and pleasant villages peeping out of the green bowers below. The vegetation becomes more and more luxuriant as it approaches the margin of the lake, and the tall, beautiful trees are all festooned with vines, whose long wreaths hang down so low as almost to touch the blue waters.

From the terrace of the Church of St. Lawrence, which is situated on an eminence above the town, there is a fine view of the lake. The most conspicuous object on our left hand is Monte Bré, which rises to the north-east of Lugano, and is backed by the loftier Monte Boglia ; the lake winds round its base to Porlezza. Opposite us, the foreground is occupied by Monte Caprino, whose cool grottoes are used as wine-cellars by the townspeople ; its slopes are covered with lime-trees and young chestnuts, and behind it rises the Colmo di Creccio, while farther off still we can just catch the twin summits of the Monte Generoso. To the right is the famous cone-shaped mountain of San Salvatore, from the top of which the view is equally lovely and far more extensive. San Salvatore stands on a sort of peninsula ; for the lake, after running south as far as Morcote, turns sharp round to the north and proceeds in this direction as far as Agno, which is almost in a line with Lugano ; and between these two towns lies the little lake of Muzzano.

This Lago di Lugano, or Lago Ceresio, as the Luganesi themselves call it, seems to be always smiling at the sky. The sky is almost always blue, and so is the water; and the white sails of the fishing boats which glide over its surface scarcely disturb its dream-like repose. As if it would fain bestow some portion of its loveliness on its famous neighbour, it flows westward to the Lago Maggiore, when it reaches Agno, forming the deeply indented bay of Pontetresa, which itself almost deserves to be called a lake. Numerous small rivers flow into the lake on all sides. At Porlezza it receives the Cucchio, at Lugano the Cassarate, which flows down into it from a valley of great fertility; farther on it is joined by the Vedeggio, Maglisaina, and Sovaglia. Its shores are fanned by the most delicious breezes, and if the chilly *tramontana* prevails at night, its place is taken by the softly-breathing *brevia* in the day-time. Generally speaking, the climate is temperate, and the rude, stormy winds known as the *porzellina* and *marino* seldom blow. It is no wonder that those whose chief object is to enjoy themselves quietly and without much exertion should love to linger on the shores of this lake, for its charms are numerous and varied, and the Hôtel du Parc, formerly a convent, which stands close to the water's edge, and is surrounded by trees, is a very pleasant place for a protracted sojourn. Visitors are constantly to be seen sitting in the balconies, and are apparently never weary of gazing out over the sparkling waters at the blue mountains in the distance. Others take one of the hotel boats and row across the lake, sometimes to a villa or tiny village, sometimes to some of the beautiful gardens and groves which fringe its margin, and sometimes to the celebrated wine cellars of Monte Caprino. Those who are of a more restless turn of mind will find plenty of longer excursions to satisfy them: the steamers *Ceresio* and *Generoso* will lend them the aid of their wings, and the railway will convey them, in the shortest possible space of time, either to Italy or to Melide, Maroggia, Capolago, or to Mendrisio, the garden of Italian Switzerland, which lies on the high road to Como and Milan. Besides all this, they may, if they please, make the ascent of Monte Generoso, or Gionnero, the Rigi of Italian Switzerland, which is daily becoming more famous. The people of Lugano have a saying with regard to this mountain, which runs as follows: "Senseless is he who does not desire to see it, and senseless is he who, having seen it, does not admire it; more senseless still is the man who, having seen and admired it, goes away and leaves it." But there is a great deal closer

at hand which is well worthy of a visit, and within easy walking, riding, or driving distance; in fact, the attractions of the neighbourhood are simply inexhaustible, and people who go hence to Locarno often think regretfully of the Paradise they have left behind them on the Ceresio.

Yet Locarno is situated on the Lago Maggiore, and all our ideas as to the beauty of Italian scenery are commonly associated with the name of this lake. And it must be confessed that Locarno is beautiful; but we miss the fresh, honest air of Lugano, where the warm breath of the south wind is so deliciously tempered by breezes blowing straight down from the Alps. Locarno is like a snake lurking amid the roses and fruits which grow here in such rich profusion as to remind one of the garden of the Hesperides. Nowhere do trees of all descriptions grow more luxuriantly than on the Locarno shore, but the entire locality is a prey to the malaria, which is bred in the extensive shores of the Ticino and spreads its leaden wings over the whole northern shore of the lake. Can it be owing to the malaria that the town of Locarno has always hitherto seemed to be in a state of retrogression?

Locarno, called Luggarus by the Germans, is an ancient town at all events, and looks as if it were so thoroughly tired out by all it has gone through that it would fain sit still and rest in idleness. In mediæval times it belonged to the party of the Guelfs, was allied with Milan, and was constantly exposed to the attacks of the Ghibellines. After that it fell into the hands of the Visconti, who rebuilt the grim-looking castle which still stands between the river Maggia and the lake; and in 1513 the Swiss became masters of the town—without, however, mending its fortunes. A year later the bridge of La Torretta, at Bellinzona, was carried away by a terrible inundation, and for a time Locarno's communication with the main road was quite cut off. The banishment of its Protestant inhabitants was a self-inflicted blow to its prosperity, which the town has even now hardly recovered. On a closer inspection one can detect many a wrinkle on the old town's face, and a good deal of grass about its feet. Generally speaking, it is a very sleepy-looking place, and seems only to wake up for a short time on market days, when all is life and bustle and the scene is really an interesting one. People flock in from all parts of the Lago Maggiore, from all the valleys of Locarno, from the mountains of Onsernone, Centovalli, and Verzasca, from Bellinzona, and even from the district of Lugano. On these occasions

the shops, which are usually closed at other times, are thrown



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temptingly open, and the goldsmiths make a display of their wares ; for the market-women and their daughters are very fond of buying

ornaments and trinkets with the money they make by their various goods. One is a good deal tempted to follow them back to their homes, especially those of them who dwell in the beautiful and interesting valley of Val Maggia, which is becoming more and more popular with tourists year by year. If this should be too far off, however, we might at least manage an excursion to the next most beautiful spot, namely, the ancient convent and pilgrimage church of the Madonna del Sasso. It looks extremely picturesque seen from the shore of the lake; but when we reach the top of the eminence on which it stands all the most charming features of the Locarno scenery are at once revealed to our gaze. The church crowns the summit of a very narrow cliff, which rises between two small wooded valleys, whence issue the various streams which unite at the base of the cliff, and form the wild mountain-torrent known as the Ramogna. This torrent has destroyed the good road which formerly led up to the convent, and the ascent is rather toilsome in consequence; but the view from the top is at once so grand and so lovely, and affords such unexpected pleasure, that we are more than compensated for all our exertions. Standing in front of the convent beneath the little *pergola* (a trellis-work covered with vines, and supported on stone pillars), we see before us a series of the most lovely pictures, in which mountains and valleys, woods and groves, the glorious blue lake, and the sparkling river Maggia form the principal features. There is something singularly charming about the elevated situation of this convent. The tall trees wave around its walls, the birds sing, the air is fragrant with the scent of innumerable flowers, and to a superficial observer, the pictures of the Passion which adorn the convent walls, albeit by the hand of Bernardo Luino, might seem at first sight to be out of harmony with the general joyousness of nature.

The lake looks so extremely inviting from here that most people yield to its allurements and soon make their way down to its margin, where they may take a boat and coast southwards along its shores until they reach those fortunate islands, the Isole Borromee, which are known severally as Isola Bella, Isola Madre, and Isola dei Pescatori.

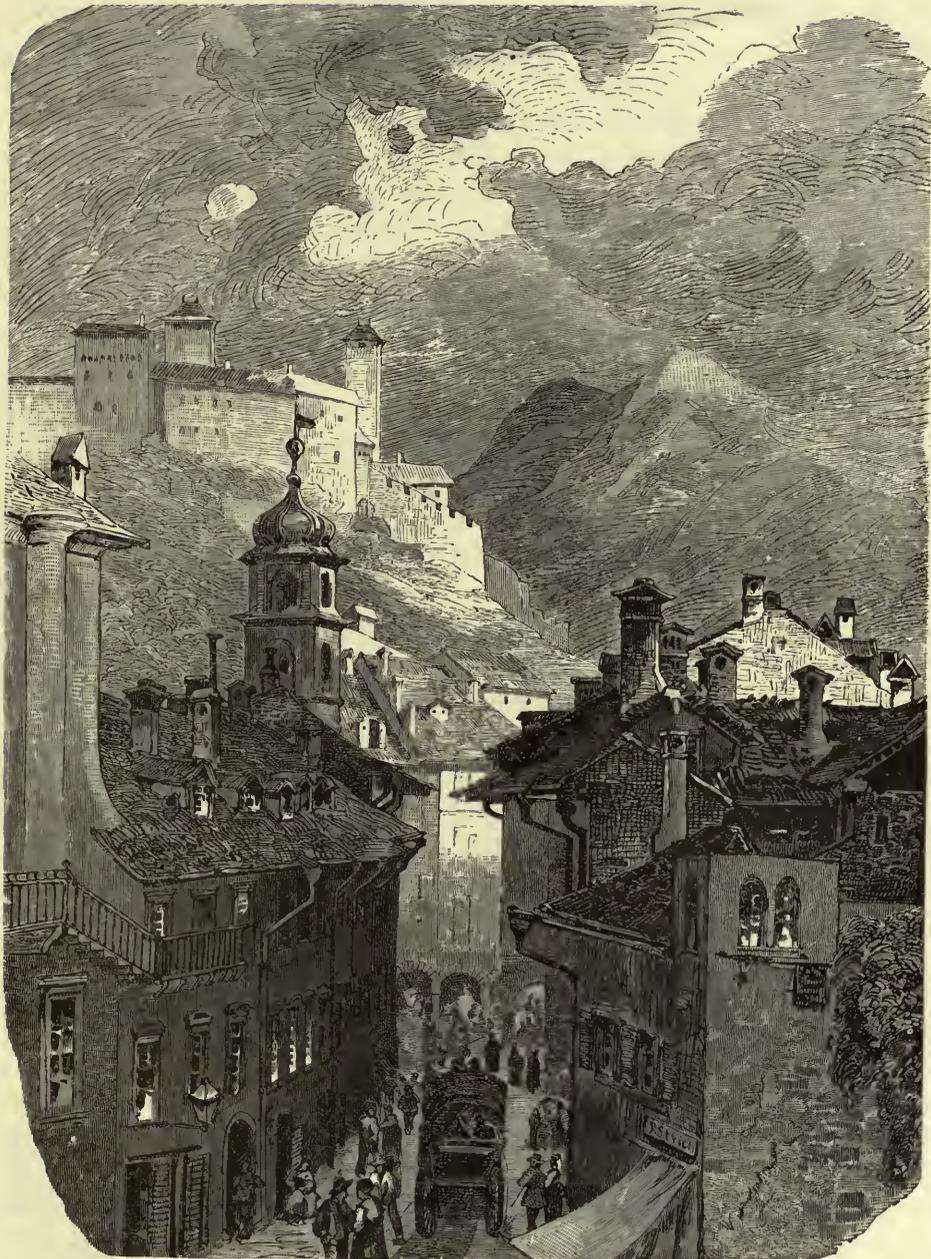
It is hard to turn one's back on all the glorious beauty of Italy; but we have to wend our way homewards, and must therefore turn our steps towards Bellinzona, where the Canton of Ticino ceases to be Italian for those coming from the south, and begins to be Italian for those arriving by the St. Gotthard road.

Bellinzona itself is a thoroughly Italian town, and its aspect is grand and striking as we look down upon it from the slopes of Monte Cenere and see it standing on the banks of the broad Ticino, in the midst of the most beautiful and garden-like scenery. The extensive valley in which it is situated was anciently known as the Campi Canini. Its battlemented walls and the three old castles known respectively as the Castle of Uri, or Castello Grande, the Castello di Svitto, and the Castle of Unterwalden, give the place almost an air of defiance when viewed from a distance; but this disappears speedily upon a closer and more intimate acquaintance. Indeed, the town resembles some old statue overgrown with roses and creepers, round which the children laugh and play and gather flowers, without bestowing a thought upon their ancient ancestor. There is nothing in Bellinzona to inspire fear or awe nowadays. The sound of the war trumpet has given place to the song of the herdsman and the ritornello of the street boy, and the cicada hums its summer song in profoundest peace where once the clash of arms was frequently to be heard. There are many beautiful views to be seen from the neighbouring vineyards, which are reached by shady paths through groves and thickets. On the cliffs of Corvaro, overshadowed by trees, stands a lonely little church dedicated to the Madonna, which contains a whole world of poetry within its four walls. There are a few villages and a good many scattered houses upon these heights, and if we desire to become better acquainted with the people and their manners and customs, we shall have a good opportunity of doing so here. As we proceed still farther north, and along the Riviera, or Rivierthal, as the Italians and Germans respectively call the valley of the Ticino. Between Bellinzona and Biasca the Italian echoes grow fainter and fainter; but the roads are still bordered by vineyards, and the granite pillars which support the trellised vines, as well as the peach, almond, and fig trees, still occasionally remind us of the south. These, however, are presently succeeded by nut trees, cherry trees, alders growing by the water-side, and plantations of pines on the mountains; and by the time we reach Biasca the snowy mountains are once more towering over our heads. The streams, too, become more voluminous and impetuous, the Frodabach forms a considerable waterfall—and, in fact, it was rocks and floods together which wrought such terrible havoc here in 1512. It was a wealthy and populous district then, thanks to the German part of the population; but it is so no longer, and the numerous villages along the road and

upon the heights are best seen at a distance. If one goes too near, one finds that they are dismal dens with extraordinarily narrow streets, and full of filthy puddles ; and the few stone houses they contain look slovenly and ill-kept for the most part. The wooden houses are small and ugly—the front being of wood and the back of stone, and the roof covered with shingle. The first floor is reached by an outside staircase, which leads at once into the kitchen, and this again into the small, low living room, whence almost all air and light are excluded. These dwellings are unbearably hot in the summer, and in winter they are stifling ; for the whole family eat, drink, sleep, and work in this confined space, and the window is never opened. There is little that is attractive about these villages, though vanity has induced them to embellish to a certain extent that side which they turn towards the road ; yet even here the evidences of Italian frivolity are too marked to be mistaken.

We are now in the Val Leventina, a valley which extends from the junction of the Brenno and Ticino, at Biasca, up to the St. Gotthard, and is enlivened by the river Ticino with its companions, as well as by the great St. Gotthard road. It contains about twenty villages, and is generally divided into three districts, known respectively as the Upper, Middle, and Lower Valley ; the boundary of the Upper Valley being marked by Airolo and Quinto, that of the others by Faido and Giornico. The valley, taken as a whole, is by no means the abode of wealth, and, when the traffic along the St. Gotthard road does not afford them sufficient employment, the men usually go and seek their fortunes abroad. The women work in the fields and meadows, or sit in their dismal little rooms weaving ; but a good many of them follow the example of the men, and leave their homes for foreign lands. Whether the future will improve matters is a question ; for the railway, when it comes, will only hurry travellers through the valley faster than they go at present, and the inhabitants will have nothing to do but to gaze after it. If the future has nothing good in store for them, the past has certainly left them little but sorrowful memories, and even the grand natural memorial of the “Sassi Grossi” (Great Rocks) at Giornico, which commemorates a victory gained over their enemies, reminds them at the same time that this very victory only helped to strengthen the hands of their subsequent oppressors, the cow-herds of Uri. The people of the Val Leventina were at war just then with Milan ; and Count Marsiglio Torello, who had been sent against them at the head of fifteen

thousand men, a large body of cavalry, and a good deal of artillery,



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had advanced as far as the bridge of Biasca. There he found a

number of the peasants awaiting him ; but they made a feint of retreating when he approached, and drew him on to the flat ground between Bodia and Giornico, where Stanga, their captain, had made every preparation for the reception of the ducal troops. This part of the valley had been purposely laid under water, and, as it was now the month of November, one night's sharp frost was sufficient to convert the whole surface into a sheet of hard ice. The dalesmen, only a few hundred in number, took up a position on the cliffs above and, as the troops approached, they first rolled huge masses of rock down upon them from the slopes, and then charged furiously upon them. An utter rout ensued ; several thousand of the enemy were slain, their guns and arms fell into the hands of the victors, and they fled down the Riviera, in dire confusion, pursued by the Ticinesi, who took a great number of them prisoners. The men of the Val Leventina distinguished themselves greatly on this occasion, and Stanga, their captain, returned home when the conflict was over, but only to die on the threshold of the numerous wounds he had received in the fight.

At Faido there are a number of beautiful old chestnut trees, which remind us that there is another side to the picture we have just drawn. It must be indeed confessed that the unfortunate valley was most haughtily treated by its masters, the men of Uri. In all their intercourse with these latter, the dalesmen were required to address them as "*Illustrissimi e potentissimi signori e padroni nostri clementissimi*" — "Most illustrious and most mighty lords and our most merciful masters," while they dared not speak of themselves except as "*Umilissimi e fedelissimi servitori e sudditi*" — "Most humble and faithful servants and subjects."

Such being the state of things, but little was needed to kindle the smouldering flames of insurrection, and in 1755 a premature attempt was made to shake off the Swiss yoke. It failed, however, for want of proper management, and the men of Uri and their confederates, who had come across the St. Gotthard Pass, quickly crushed the rebellion. The people of the Val Leventina were summoned to Faido on the 2nd of June, and they came, three thousand of them, with shame for the past and fear for the future plainly written on their faces. They were surrounded by the Confederate troops, and compelled, bare-headed and on bended knees to swear unconditional obedience to their masters ; and in the same posture they were made to witness the execution of their leaders who were hanged on the

very chestnut trees we see before us. Horror-stricken and sad at heart, the dalesmen returned to their miserable huts to find themselves in a state of worse bondage than before.

There is something gloomy and dismal about the face of the whole country here. It looks as if there were a curse upon it; and the people themselves are grave and silent, as is only natural in those who are the heirs of such a dreary past, and have grown up in perpetual conflict with the powers of nature.

Above Faido the Ticino rushes with demoniacal fury through a narrow passage which it forced for itself ages ago in the Monte Piottino or Platifer. To describe its mad raging impetuosity is simply impossible, for it is unlike anything else. The road is carried along close above the boiling waters, which is now spanned by a railway-bridge.

And now the scenery becomes grander and wilder every step we take forward, and the cliffs advance nearer and nearer, threatening to bar the traveller's farther progress. We pass the poor little hamlet of Piotta, which lies on a mountain-slope close to a wild-looking ravine on the other side of the road, then we reach Airolo, at the entrance of the Val Tremola—and then the real ascent to the St. Gotthard begins. The great St. Gotthard tunnel terminates at Airolo, and this gigantic work has greatly contributed to the prosperity of the village.

The Italian element is very strong in Airolo; and one fancies that the stream of intending emigrants who proposed to cross the Alps at this point, were suddenly arrested by finding that they might make money here without going any farther. It is here that the corkscrew-windings of the St. Gotthard road begin, and from here to Hospenthal, in the Vale of Urseren, the traveller has no opportunity of buying anything he may require on his journey, except at the humble hospice. Accordingly, there has always been a great demand here for small wares of all sorts, and for porters, agents, stables, relays of horses, and taverns, as well as for such handicraftsmen as smiths, saddlers, and wheelwrights; and all these various needs are just what the Ticinese is capable of supplying. Airolo, therefore, was a very flourishing place even in the days when the only road across the St. Gotthard was but a bridle-path, and that a bad one; for sixteen thousand travellers and some ten thousand beasts of burthen naturally required that some sort of provision should be made for their various needs. The great new road of course made many

changes, however, and the new railway, when completed, will not have much to do with Airolo; so one fears its present prosperity can be but short-lived, and must be doomed to gradual decay.

At Airolo the ascent begins in the pleasantest manner through rich green meadows; and the pedestrian, as he follows the short cuts made by the old road, can see the innumerable twists and turns of the newer and easier road, which looks at a distance like an uncoiled rope flung across the mountain, or, as Rogers says—

“ Like a silver zone
Flung about carelessly, it shines afar,
Catching the eye in many a broken link,
In many a turn and traverse as it glides.”

On fine, bright days we enter even the Val Tremola, or Tremiora (the Vale of Trembling), without the least feeling of apprehension; though, when we have crossed the bridge which takes us once more to the right bank of the Ticino, we are close to Madonna ai Leit, San Giuseppe, St. Antonio, and il Buco dei Calanchetti, spots which are all of them in very ill repute for one reason or other. The last-mentioned, for instance, derives its name from a party of glaziers who all perished here on their way back from France to their homes in the valley of Calanca. They had insisted on leaving the safe shelter of the Hospice and continuing their journey, in spite of all the warnings given them, and were buried in the snow. All this part of the road, but even more that on the other side of the Hospice, is exposed in winter to frequent snowstorms, called *tourmentes* or *guxen* by the Swiss, and *kisses* by the people of the Val Leventina—kisses given by the fiend-like tramontana which too often end in death.

It is computed that on an average three or four persons perished annually on this pass; but we have records of some extraordinary disasters. In 1478, for instance, sixty Swiss soldiers all perished together; in 1624, three hundred persons were overwhelmed by an avalanche, and in 1816 forty pack-horses, laden with merchandise, perished in a similar way; and yet it is a walk of only two hours and a half from Airolo to the Hospice, and only two from the summit of the pass to Urseren. The first intimation that we are nearing the Hospice is afforded by the sight of the old mortuary chapel, perched on a rock by the way-side, and now falling into decay. On the height to the right stands the old Hospice itself, with several wooden sheds,

and among them the modern hotel of Monte Prosa, kept by the well-



GORGE OF THE TICINO, AIROLO.

known Signor Felix Lombardi; on the opposite side of the road is

the Albergo del S. Gottardo, a warehouse, once a custom-house, and now used as a house of refreshment for carriers, drivers, &c.

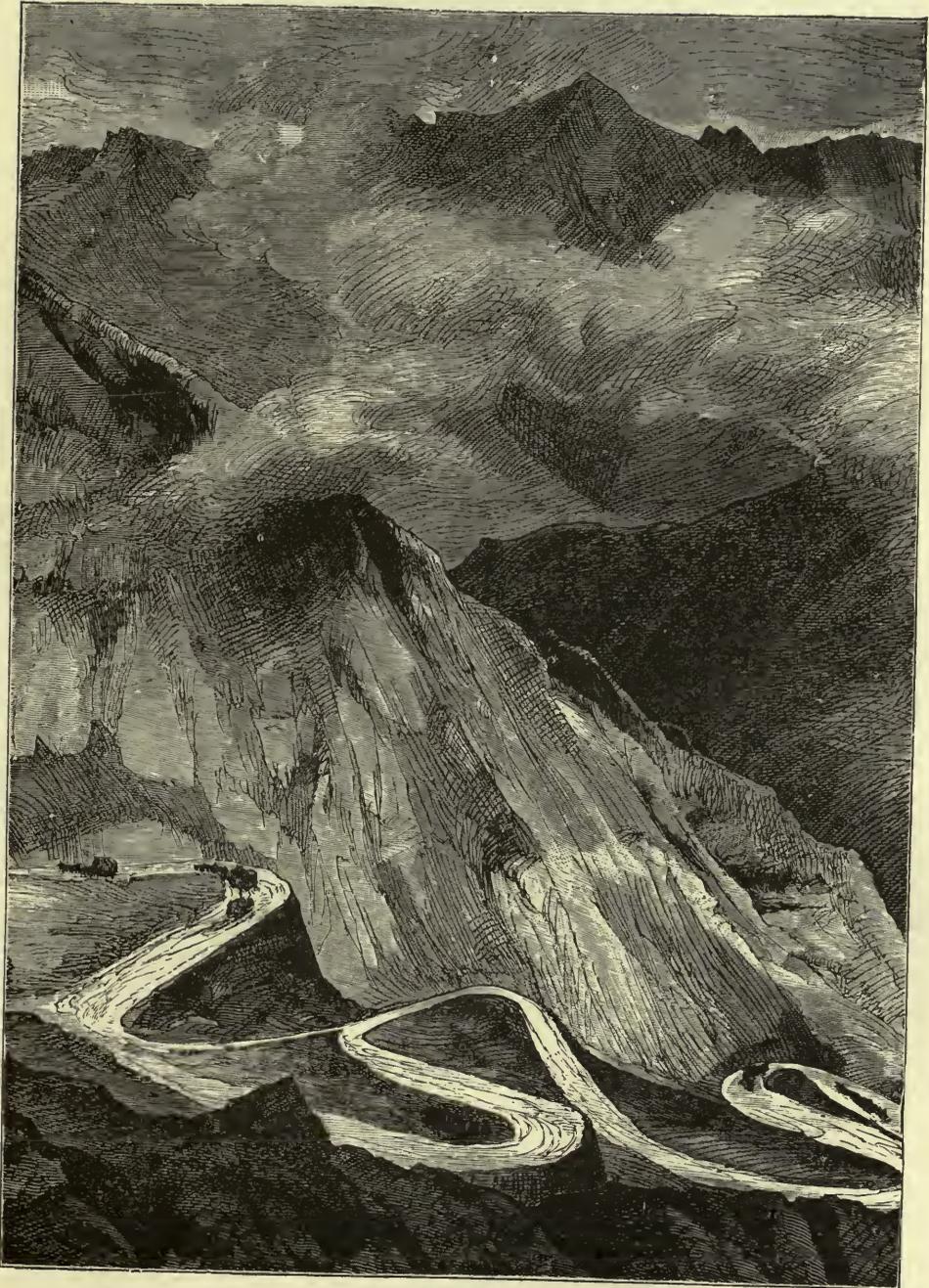
The most noteworthy peaks around are the Pizzo Centrale, or Tritthorn, Monte Prosa, the Fibbia, Pizzo Lucendro, and Piz Orsino, none of which are quite ten thousand feet in height, though some come very near it, and all are considerably over eight thousand feet.

The history of the St. Gotthard Pass and its Hospice is long and interesting, though it does not go back as far as one might be led by its present world-wide fame to expect. Our first trustworthy information concerning it dates from the fourteenth century, and is furnished by the famous Father Placido a Specha. In the records of the convent of Disentis, which were afterwards destroyed by fire, he had seen it mentioned that there was a hospice at the foot of the mountain in 1300, that merchandise was conveyed across the path in 1321, and that in 1374 the abbot of the convent had caused a hospice and chapel to be built on the summit of the pass. In 1431, when many of the ecclesiastical dignitaries of the time were passing through on their way to the council then being held at Basel, a certain Canon Ferrario was sent up to the hospice to attend to them. This was not for long, however; and later on, when the convent had handed over its pastures to the village of Airolo, the same place was laid under an obligation to keep up the little institution on the mountain pass.

St. Carlo Borromeo had intended to build a considerable house on the spot, but was prevented by death from carrying out his designs. In 1602 Friedrich Borromäus sent an ecclesiastic thither, and in 1629 he had a house built there, but this was deserted from 1648 to 1682. The hospice of the Capuchins was first established in 1683, through the instrumentality of Cardinal Visconti. A hundred years later it was destroyed by avalanches, was rebuilt, and again destroyed—this time by the French, who lay encamped here from 1799 to 1800, and to supply their want of fuel, burnt up all the woodwork the buildings contained. Money being scarce, a very humble little hospice for poor travellers was first erected, and this gradually developed into the present grand group of buildings.

And now, without further delay, we must follow the downward course of the Reuss to the beautiful peaceful valley below, with its undulating pastures and silvery river; with here the pleasant little village of Hospenthal and its characteristic ruin, and farther on the imposing village of Andermatt, overshadowed by its beautiful wood of pine trees.

Here we may take our choice of two or three different routes. If

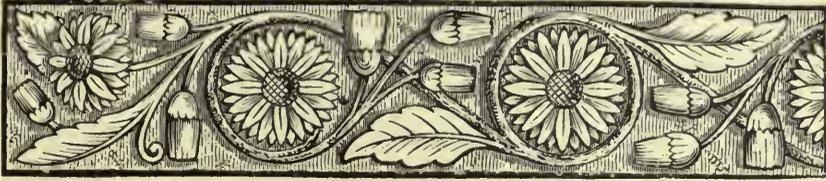


VAL TREMOLA.

we proceed through the tunnel known as the Urnerloch, or Hole of

Uri, and across the Devil's Bridge, we shall find ourselves once more by the Lake of Lucerne, while the road to the west over the Realp and Furca Pass, will in a few hours take us back to Valais; so we must strike out in a new direction, and make for the pass of the Oberalp. And who shall be our leader? Old "Father Rhine" himself!





CHAPTER XXI.

FROM THE ST. GOTTHARD TO CHUR.

“This is the highest point. Two ways the rivers
Leap down to different seas, and as they roll
Grow deep and still, and their majestic presence
Becomes a benefaction to the towns
They visit, wandering silently among them,
Like patriarchs old among their shining tents.

LONGFELLOW.



ONE of the rivers mentioned by the poet in the above lines is the Rhine, the “sacred river” of Germany, which is born amid the mountains of the St. Gotthard group. Wherever he goes, whatever he does, the German never loses his pride in the beautiful river of the Fatherland, even though he may never have beheld it with his bodily eyes. The Rhine, the green Rhine, with its vineyards and castles, towns, villages, and church spires, exercises upon him a sort of fascination not unlike that of the Lorelei who captivates the boatmen with her singing. All the hopes and fears of Germany gather about the noble river, upon whose banks stand the faithful “Watch.” The Rhine will always be the poet’s river, “if only for the sake of its wine;” but it must be admitted that there is very little poetry about its earlier course, and that even when it reaches Chur it does not show itself in the light of a benefactor.

The country on either side is rather dull and dead-looking, and the ancient glories of the once famous province of Rhætia seem to have departed, leaving hardly a trace behind. The groups of grey or brown huts which congregate chiefly about the mouths of the lateral valleys are certainly not imposing; and, what with the huge

masses of rock which meet one at every turn, the dark dense forests which cover the mountains, and the few signs of life to be seen on the road, the general aspect of things is such as inclines one to augur that the valley, or at least the greater part of it, has never yet been brought under the influence of civilisation. It seems to have been much the same in ancient times, for the first immigrants were fugitives, and



VRIN, VALLEY OF LUGNETZ.

as they naturally preferred settling as far out of danger as possible, they made their new homes among the safe heights of the Central Alps. They were the ancestors of the present population of the canton now known as the Grisons. They did not, however, always remain among the mountains, for, when the times became quieter, such of them as did not prefer to return to Italy came down into the principal valleys

and settled along the banks of the streams and rivers. Here, after a time, their repose was disturbed by the inroads of the Franks and Saxons, who drove them back to the upland valleys. The invaders established themselves along the main arteries of the Rhine, and speedily reduced such of the inhabitants as were left to a state of slavery, while those who retained their freedom were obliged to make their homes in almost inaccessible ravines near the glaciers. The castles were deserted, the country around them became more and more desolate, and the nobles were left alone in their glory. But the German nobility of Upper Rhætia tried to follow the people, and built their eyries high up among the Siberian pines, where birds of prey have their nests; and there are still to be seen as many as a hundred and eighty ruined castles and watch-towers of the period of which we are speaking. Now as then, however, the greater part of the population of the Grisons dwell at a great elevation; and but for the white church steeples, which peer out like lighthouses here and there above the low brown huts, and show where a village is to be found, one would be inclined to suppose that the mountains were uninhabited. There are no convenient roads, often there are only footpaths, and even these generally lead up that side of the mountain which is farthest away from the main valley. The villages lying between the ice-clad peaks of the Crispalt and Trons, on the left bank of the Rhine, are none of them much less than three thousand feet above the level of the sea; and Chiamut, which may derive its name from *Caput Montis*, stands at an elevation of five thousand three hundred and eighty feet. Few of the villages between Trons and Chur, again, are situated in the valley, and these few are but poor places. All the real life and prosperity of the district is to be found higher up on the plateaux, or in hidden nooks at the back of the lateral valleys of Somvix, Lugnetz, Vrin, Vals, and Savien, whither the people were driven in ancient times by their love of liberty or dread of enemies. It was in these highland villages that the budding liberties of Rhætia found their chief support during the fourteenth century, when the famous *Lia Grischa*, or Grey League, was formed, which saved the lords of Rhäzüns, Disentis, and Sax, and all their kin, from the clutches of Austria and Chur. The villages had long since gained their liberty without any help from the nobles—each community was, in fact, a republic, strong within and without; and, as it was quite hopeless now to think of mastering them, the only thing to be done was to join their league, and to recognise the common peasant as a

fellow-soldier and an equal. The peasant acquiesced readily enough, but when, shortly after the conclusion of the compact, the nobles fell back into their old ways, and became overbearing and arrogant, the people insisted upon a regular treaty, and their deputies peremptorily demanded that "the nobles should banish all injustice, violence, and scandalous excess from the borders within their jurisdiction," adding that "at all events the people would no longer put up with the unbridled wickedness of the nobles, though quite ready to obey them in all things lawful and honourable."

Accordingly, the Abbot of Disentis, Count Werdenberg, and the Barons of Sax and Brun, all rode to the well-known sycamore tree of Trons, where the head men of the villages and the bailiffs of the several jurisdictions met them, and received their oaths that they "would thenceforth take the people under their protection, abstain from taking the law into their own hands, would put down violence, and be true to the league as long as the world lasted." This took place in 1424, and the league included the whole of the valley of the Vorderrhein as far as Richenau with its lateral valleys, down to the Rheinwald glacier, which is the source of the Hinterrhein, and the valley of Misoceo, as far as the Italian frontier.

Two other leagues existed besides the one just mentioned, namely the *Lia Cudé*, or "League of the House of God," and the "League of the Ten Jurisdictions," or *Lia dellas desch-dretturas*; but these both joined the *Lia Grisca* in 1471, and out of the confederation then formed has arisen the modern canton of the Grisons.

These leagues were the ruin of most of the foreign nobles; whereas the genuine Rhætian nobility, being intimately connected with the people and deriving all their strength from them, always contrived to maintain their power and influence unimpaired. They still have flourishing representatives in the families of Planta, Salis, Travers, Jäklin, Juvalta, Sprecher, Tschärner, Enderlin, Mohr, and others. The rest of the population, too, still maintain their energy of character, and though somewhat rude and peculiar, are thoroughly honest folk, and possess many good qualities; in fact, they bear a good deal of natural resemblance to their own canton, which of late years, since the rest of Switzerland has become rather too conventional, has annually attracted many thousands of visitors by the very boldness and ruggedness of its scenery. The Canton of the Grisons certainly is peculiar, and its aspect is very different from that of the Alpine district west of the St. Gotthard, through which we have already

passed. There we have gigantic mountains rising suddenly and abruptly before us, their mighty peaks seeming to touch the very heavens, while close by there are deep valleys, such as those of the Rhone, St. Nicholas, Lauterbrunnen, and Grindelwald, in the Bernese Oberland, besides those of Ticino, Schwyz, and Uri, which lie so low as hardly to be in the highlands at all. Here, on the other hand, the whole district seems to have been uplifted together. The chains of mountains present few marked indentations; there are few deeply-hollowed valleys, few precipitous heights; gentle slopes lead from one level to another, and there are no abrupt transitions, and yet the whole is essentially a mountain district. The canton consists of a network of these mountain valleys, about a hundred and fifty in number, and of groups and chains of mountains, none of which, as before said, attain the colossal size and majestic proportions to which we are accustomed in the rest of Switzerland; and yet there is a magic charm in the rich variety of the scenery.

A true child of nature—nature as she appears in the Grisons, that is—is the Rhine, the whole of whose early course lies through this canton. Consisting, at first, mainly of the Vorder-Rhein, and Hinter-Rhein, it is afterwards reinforced by the junction of the Plessur, Landquart, and Tamina, and flows north, a full-grown, substantial river, till it reaches the frontier town of Sargans. Those, however, who think that the sources of the Rhine are easily and speedily ascertained, are quite mistaken, for the traveller will have rivulets and streams innumerable pointed out to him by the natives, all of which they call Rhein or Rin. However, tourists are not wont to be over-particular about such matters, and it is enough for them to stand anywhere near the cradle of the Rhine, and gaze upon the Badus, or Sixmaduna, the mighty sentinel to whose guardianship it is committed. By its side stand the Piz Toma, Plauncaulta, and Nurgallas, bending in unbroken silence over their own reflections in the green lake of Tomassee, which lies in a hollow among the mountains, at a height of seven thousand six hundred and ninety feet above the sea-level. It is fed by water from the glaciers, which, as it flows forth from it again, receives the name of the Rhine or Vorder-Rhein.

The whole valley, through which the river flows in an easterly direction, lies before us, as far as the grey pyramid of the Falkniss at Liechtenstein; we can see all the various villages which dot the mountain slopes on either side, and we can even distinguish the

different buildings in Chur. The Rhätikon, a chain of mountains of very varied outline in the Prättigau, form the background of the picture, while the foreground, to the south-east, is occupied by the mountains and glaciers which contain the other sources of the Rhine. There are the shining heads of the Medelser and Lugnetzer mountains, overtopped by the mountains of the Rheinwald, and we see the Medelser, or Mittel-Rhein, and the voluminous Hinter-Rhein pouring down from them into the valley of the Vorder-Rhein, which lies before us. The first village we reach on our way down from the Badus is one already mentioned—namely, Chiamut, Camot, or Tschiamut, as it is variously called. It lies higher than any village in the upper valley of the Vorder-Rhein, being five thousand three hundred and eighty feet above the sea. It is very isolated, and by no means beautiful; all that is to be seen being a dozen tumble-down cottages, an old weather-beaten church, rickety stables, herds of cattle, and herdsmen. These latter contrive to make the soil yield a certain amount of rye, barley, flax, and vegetables every year, in spite of the elevation at which they live. Here the Gämmern-Rhein comes down from the ice-clad Crispalt to the north, and joins the Vorder-Rhein; and the farther we go down the valley the more numerous become the little streams which flow down on all sides from the Oberalpstock and Piz Rondadura to join the swelling river, which, after receiving these various additions, is called the Tavetscher-Rhein, a name which it keeps till it reaches Disentis. Here a marked change comes over it, and its volume is increased by the junction of the Medelser, which is also improperly called the Mittel-Rhein, its first really important tributary, which rushes down from the east side of the Punta Nera. Henceforth, as far as Reichenau, the river is called the Rin Surselva, or Oberland Rhine.

The most important place in the Rhætian Oberland is Disentis, a town of great antiquity and some historical importance. It was from Disentis that Christianity was introduced into the surrounding country, and the same place was the nursery of agriculture and civilisation. The neighbourhood was in a very wild state when Sigisbert came hither more than twelve hundred years ago, at the time when Victor I. was governor of Chur. Sigisbert preached the Gospel to the hunters and herdsmen and other wild inhabitants of the forest, and Placidus, a rich man of the neighbourhood, was by him stirred up to found a convent on the site of the monk's hermitage. This, however, was more than the Victor above-mentioned would stand, and he went so

far as to behead Placidus; but retribution speedily came upon him, and he was drowned in the Rhine; after which the church and convent were erected according to the original design. During the French Revolution the wealthy convent, with all its valuable antiquities was reduced to ashes; and in 1846 it was again burnt down.

Disentis is situated on a verdant plateau, bordered by terraces which on the one side descend to the Rhine, and on the north are interspersed with wooded slopes which rise higher and higher until they terminate in rugged and precipitous mountain ridges, above

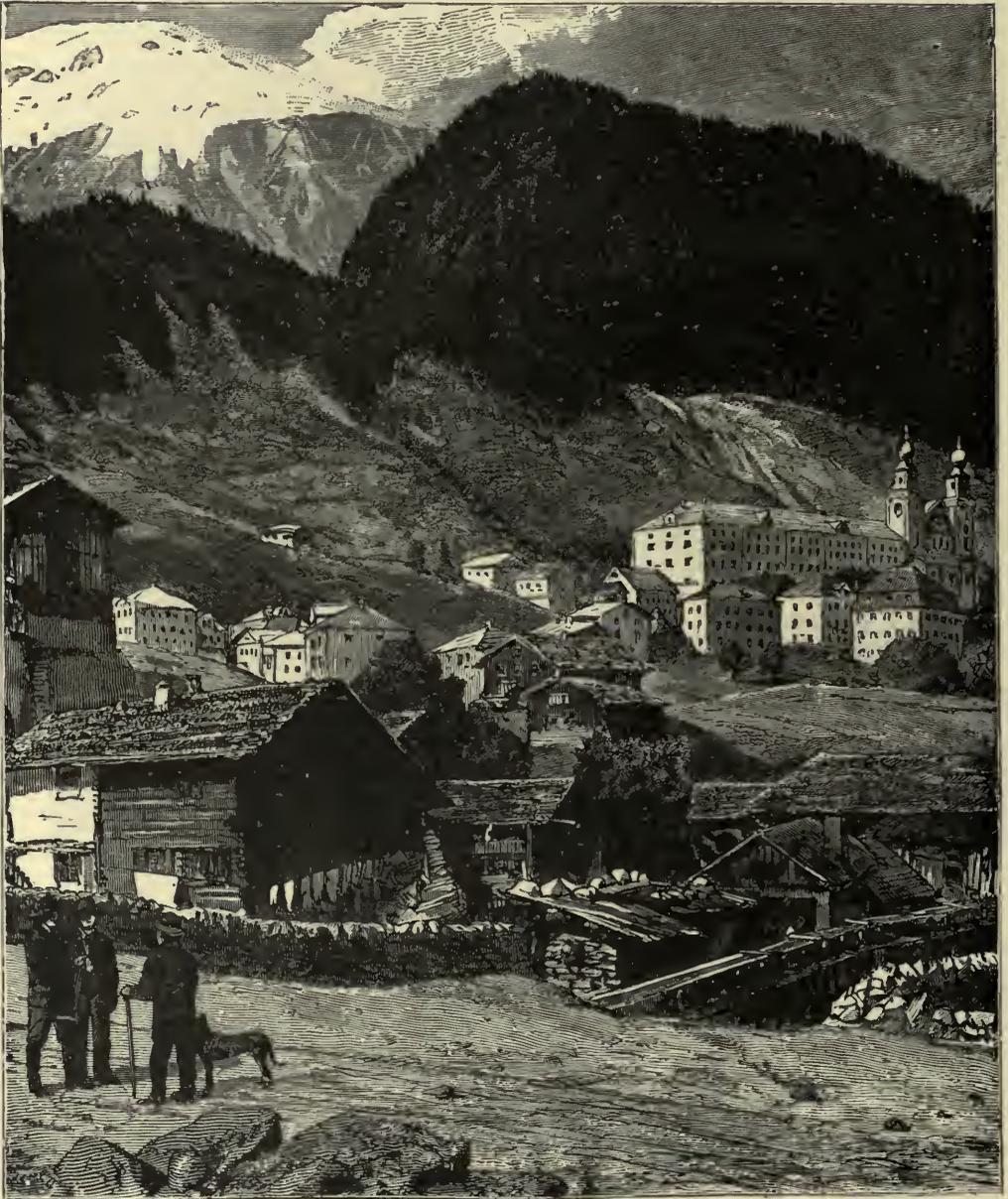


PIZ BADUS AND LAKE OF TOMA.

which the glaciers of the Oberalpstock are just visible. On the opposite side of the river the dark pine-woods are overtopped by the glistening, silvery-looking Medelser glacier; and looking up the valley of the Rhine, we see the mountains rising higher and higher one above another, until the majestic forms of the Crispalt and Badus bar all further view.

We are nearly four thousand feet above the sea, and yet we notice many respectable specimens of the apple, pear, cherry, and plum, which not only blossom, but bear fruit. None of the best corn-

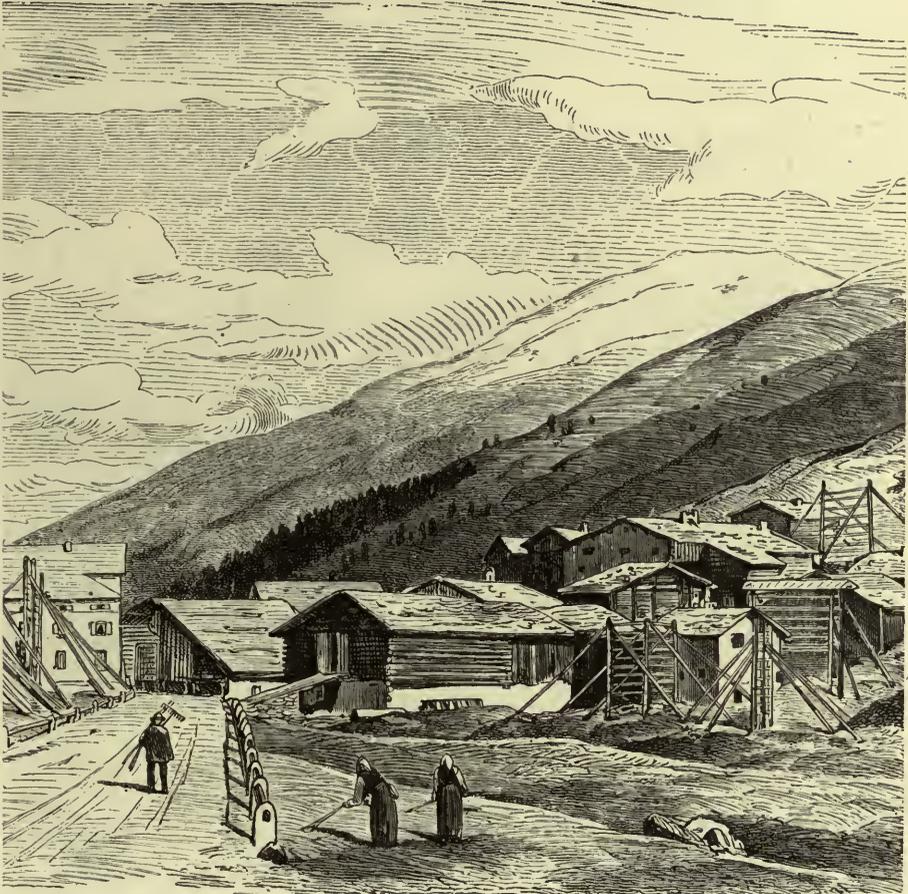
growing districts can show finer crops than are produced in this neighbourhood ; and the trees here are often in full leaf while the



DISENTIS.

snow is on the ground at Chur. A better site could not have been found for the monastery or for the village.

The best view of the valley of the Vorder Rhein, as well as of the Val Somvix and Val Medels, is to be obtained from the summit of the Piz Muraun, which stands opposite the Russeintobel, and which is the loftiest of the many offshoots of the Medelser chain. The peak nearest to us is the Piz Lavaz; behind it are the Cima Camadra, from which hangs the Nedels glacier, and the Piz Cristallina; and behind



CHIAMUT.

them lies the Canton of Ticino, which is reached by the road through the Val Medels and over the Lukmanier. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries this road was much frequented by merchants, but afterwards the traffic fell off and reverted to the old routes over the Alps, which had been much improved in the meantime. A splendid road has been recently constructed, and the Lukmanier pass has at last had tardy justice done it.

Opposite Disentis is the mouth of the Val Medels, a narrow gloomy ravine, out of which rushes the Medelser Rhein, in a series of falls or miniature cataracts. The road into the Val Medels does not lead up the ravine, but along its left side, after crossing the Vorder Rhein; and the first village we come to is that of Medels, or



CHAPEL AT TRONS.

Mompamedels, which lies on a hill to the right. The valley is lonely and dreary-looking, and the silence is broken only by the roar of the river as it receives the tempestuous torrent which comes thundering down the Cristallina valley to join the Mittel Rhine at Perdatsch.

The road now leads up by a steep ascent to the first hospice, that

of St. Joan, which is succeeded by that of St. Gall: both are simple refuges and nothing more. A third hospice is passed, when the Rhine gradually becomes calmer and quieter; and soon we have reached Santa Maria, the highest of the hospices, which, however, is not very comfortable.

We must now return to Disentis, that we may follow the course



VILLAGE OF MEIERHOF, OBERSAXEN.

of the river as far as Somvix. On our way we have to pass over the famous Russeintobel, a deep ravine forming the entrance to the Russein valleys, which are known by the general name of Val Barkuns, or Russeintobel. The torrent in the depth below is the Rhine of Barkuns, now crossed by a bridge, from which there is a

good view of the Rhine valley and the village of Somvix. This village lies at the mouth of the Val Somvix, which is about as wide as the Val Medels, and runs nearly up to the southern boundary of the canton. People have been deterred from settling here by dread of the avalanches, and the whole landscape is of a gloomy character. Time has brought few changes to this lonely spot; but this cannot be said of the famous sycamore of Trons, or Truns, which stands near the chapel of St. Anna, at the entrance of the village. In 1424, when the members of the Grey League came hither to swear fidelity one to the other, the tree had wide-spreading branches which completely overshadowed the chapel, whereas now it is only an old hollow trunk.

Trons is the birthplace of the free constitution of the Grisons, and is a tolerably nice-looking village. The fine old buildings of which it consists are most picturesquely situated in an angle formed by the Ferrerabach, the Rhine, and the mountains, and are surrounded by a fringe of gardens and orchards, while the Tödi, always a beautiful object, stands out prominently in the background. The road from here down to Chur winds about a good deal, but those who like really crooked ways and by-paths may gratify their taste to the utmost by journeying over the hills and dales, mountains and valleys.

It is far pleasanter, however to quit the narrow valley of the Rhine altogether, and to make our way along the sunny terraces which traverse the broad back of the Piz Mundaun. These are studded with numerous villages and farms, whose inhabitants speak German. The origin of this colony is not very clear. In all probability the colonists came from Valais in the thirteenth century, and not only retained their liberty, but enjoyed the favour of the nobles. The principal place in Obersaxen is Meirorhof, which is surrounded by clusters of houses, and lies near a rocky gorge enlivened by a noisy waterfall. Two passes—the Kisten and Panix—lead hence northward into the Canton of Glarus.

We now return to the main road, which has crossed over to the right bank of the Rhine, and the first place we come to is the gloomy little village of Tavanaza. It was at the spring here that the deputies used to lay down their arms, unpack their provisions, and eat their breakfasts in simple rural fashion; but nowadays there is a grand banquet at some hotel.

Ilanz, or Glion, as it is called in Romansch, is the first town we come to in the Valley of the Rhine. The town spreads out on both sides of the river, and looks much more important than it really is.

Portions of the ancient towers, walls, and gates in the upper town on the right bank of the river are still standing, as well as numerous antiquated buildings, adorned with the coat-of-arms of old noble families. If Ilanz and the neighbouring town of Flims ever recall the past, they must think of the time when they and Lugnetz belonged



WOMEN'S GATE, PORCLAS PASS, NEAR ILANZ.

to Baron Ulrich Walter von Belmont, and the latter was attacked by Count Rudolf von Montfort, who rushed up the Valley of the Rhine, captured Flims, burnt Ilanz, and advanced towards Lugnetz, whither Baron Walter had retreated.

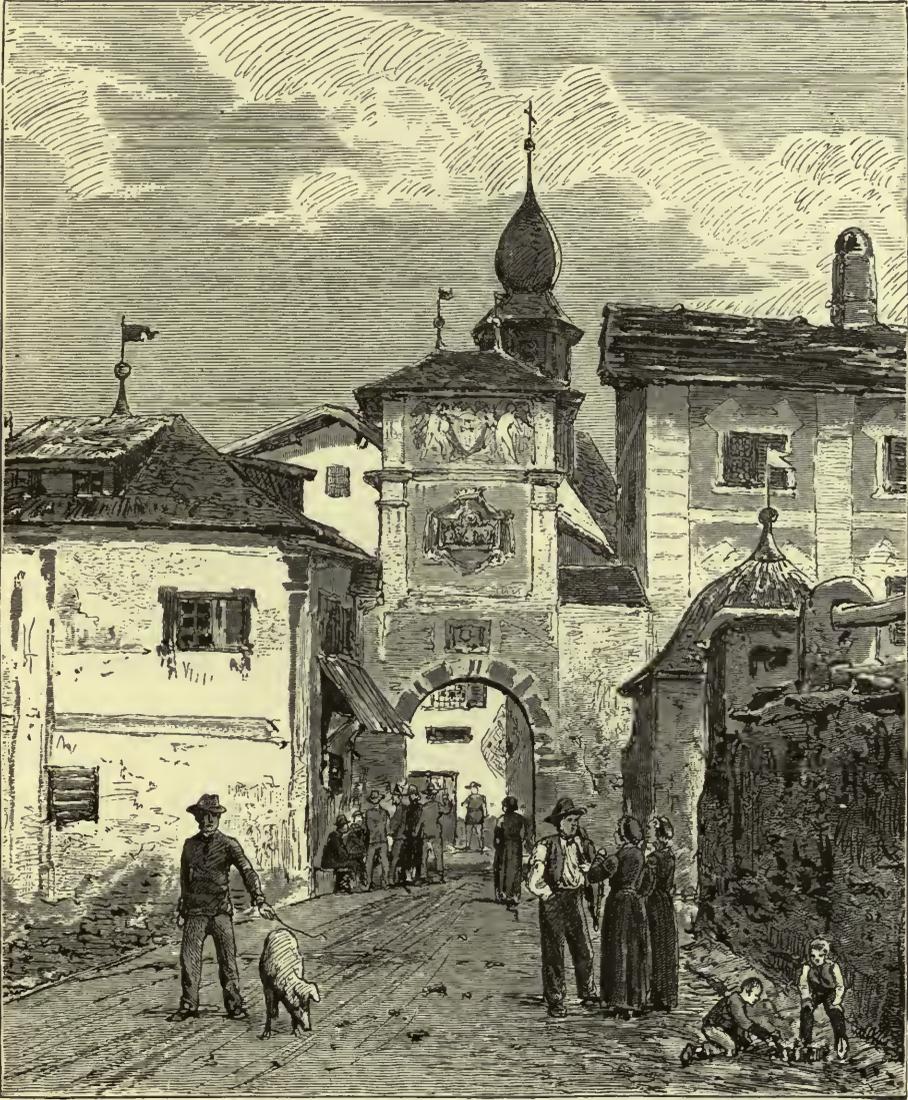
We are reminded of this ruinous invasion by the sight of the

narrow pass of Porclas, or Frauenthor (Women's Gate), where the might of this noble incendiary and assassin was broken by the hands of women. This old gate is still standing in a narrow defile which leads to one of the terraces of the Piz Mundaun. The slopes are so thickly wooded as to be impassable, and it was equally impossible for the Count to proceed farther along the valley on the opposite side of the river, owing to the ravines and woods which there also obstructed his path. Accordingly the greater part of his force proceeded to cross the Alpine pastures to St. Carlo, where the men of Lugnetz had assembled to defend themselves, with Baron Walter at their head. Another body of men advanced towards Porclas, expecting to find it open and undefended; instead of which all the women and girls of the neighbourhood were assembled here to dispute their farther progress. They had barricaded the gate, and had covered the rocks round about with heaps of stones and trunks of trees, while they had armed themselves with their household utensils and field implements. The enemy made a fierce assault, but it was all to no purpose; the brave women stood to their posts, and as the struggle on the heights above had been meanwhile decided in favour of Baron Walter and the men of Lugnetz, the assailants were caught in the rear, and, being unable to retreat, were either slain or taken prisoners. A great many nobles perished, and among the prisoners was Montfort himself. As for the women of Lugnetz, they were henceforth allowed to take precedence of every one else at the Holy Communion, a mark of honour which they still enjoy.

The people here are a remarkably fine race—the men are strong and muscular, and walk with a firm bold step, and the women are tall and vivacious-looking; so that altogether one feels tolerably certain they would give any enemy as warm a reception now as they did centuries ago. Both men and women have always been noted for their strength of will, determination, diligence, and endurance, as well as for their remarkably good abilities. They speak German, and are characterized by their fair hair; this being especially the case with the good-looking women of the Valserthal, who are further distinguished by a gay costume.

When the Germans originally came to these valleys is, as we have already remarked, uncertain, but there is a plausible tradition that they were brought hither from Swabia by the Hohenstaufen emperors, who were anxious to have the important passes into Italy in safe and faithful keeping.

At Surcastels, where the river Glenner is joined by the Vriner and Vaiser Rhein, which both flow from the foot of the Adula, the valley Lugnetz divides into two branches, and soon attains an elevation

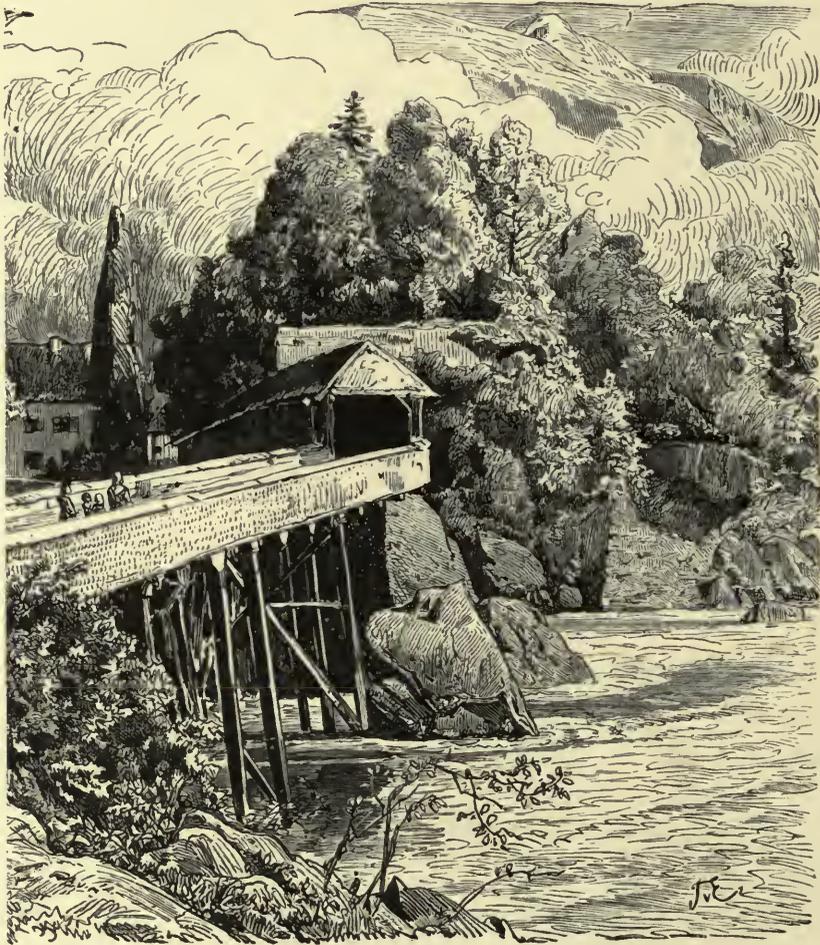


OBERTHOR, ILANZ.

at which Alpine farming is the only profitable occupation. The valley is extremely picturesque.

Returning to the bridge of Ilanz, we proceed through shady

orchards to Cästris, and then on through woodland scenery to Valendas, Versam, Bonaduz, and Reichenau. Versam is situated at the mouth of the valley of Savienthal, which runs parallel with the valley of Lugnetz, and is watered by the Savien Rhein or Rabiusa.



JUNCTION OF THE VORDER RHEIN AND HINTER RHEIN, AT REICHENAU.

Standing on the bold bridge which spans the stream at Versam, we see it pouring down through a dark, crooked gorge, to join the Vorder Rhein, which passes through a ravine as gloomy, and then, broadening out as its channel becomes less confined, it flows on more calmly and quietly to the open country about Reichenau, where it receives its most considerable affluent, the Hinter Rhein, which is quite a

large river, and henceforth it is called the Rhine, a name which it keeps throughout the whole of its subsequent course until it reaches the North Sea.

Most people have seen views of Reichenau, with its grand-looking château and the fine bridge over the river; and every one knows that at the beginning of the present century the château was converted into a schoolhouse, and that one of the teachers, who went by the name of Maitre Chabaut, was no other than Louis Philippe, afterwards King of the French, who remained here discharging the duties of an usher for some months. This incident reminds one of the other Reichenau on Lake Constance, which another aspirant to the French throne, Napoleon III., had daily before his eyes while he cherished his youthful aspirations in the safe retreat of Aresenberg. The beautiful gardens which surround the château of which we are at present speaking seem doubly delightful after the woods and wilderness of the Upper Rhine valleys, and they afford us a good view of the confluence of the two Rhines.





CHAPTER XXII.

CHUR AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD.

“Above the frequent feudal towers
Through green leaves lift their walls of grey,
And many a rock which steeply lours,
And noble arch in proud decay,
Look o'er this vale of vintage bowers.

* * * * *

“The river nobly foams and flows,
The charm of this enchanted ground,
And all its thousand turns disclose
Some fresher beauty varying round.”

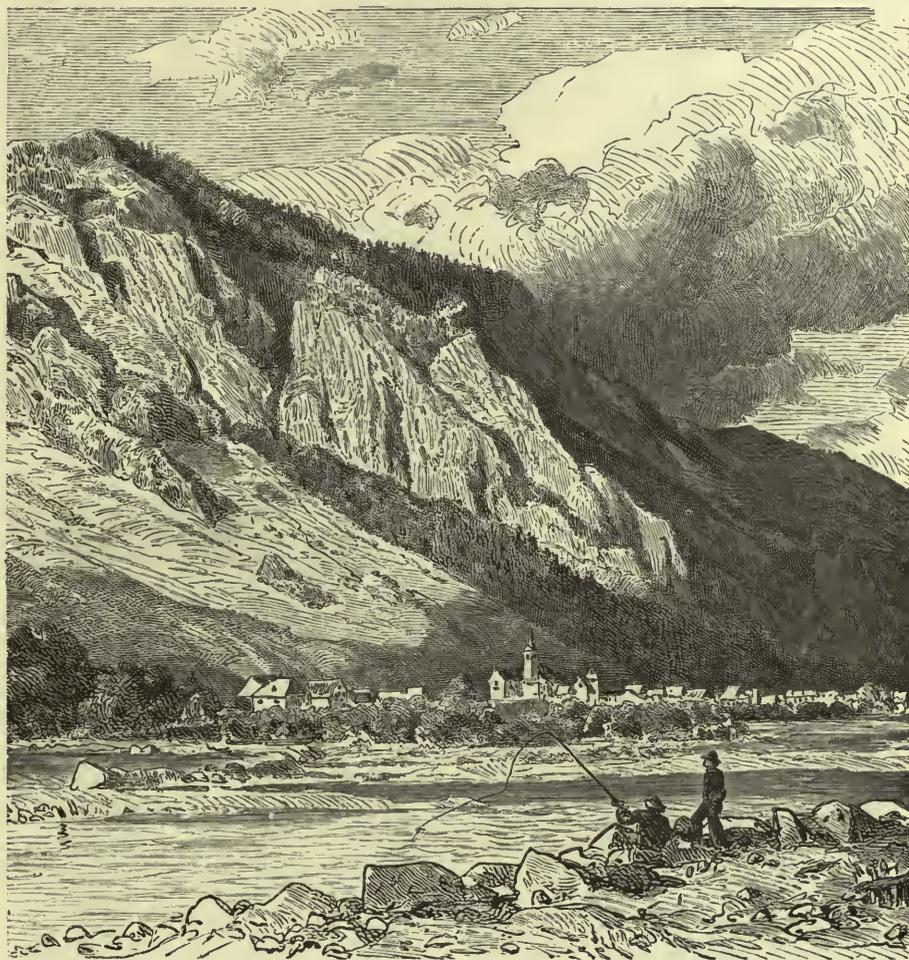
CHILDE HAROLD.



THE town of Chur, or Coire, ought to be seen on a bright summer day, when the neighbouring mountains have donned their festal array and are all ablaze with golden light, when the steep sides of the Calandar wear their richest colouring, and the whole valley is decked in brilliant hues of green and gold. Then the scene is exquisitely beautiful, and reminds one of the south and Italy. Probably the old Romans thought the same, for they came hither more than eighteen hundred years ago, and established themselves on the cliff which projects from the Mittenberg into the valley of the Plessur. This settlement afterwards developed into the Curia Rhætorum of the later empire. It was not the charm of the surrounding scenery however, which attracted the Romans: their keen eyes quickly discovered that the position was of great strategical importance. Accordingly a Roman castle soon arose on the spot, Roman colonists came and settled here permanently, and brought with them not only Roman civilisation, but a new language. The colony rose speedily to importance: prefects were appointed,

a court of justice was established—and from this, the “Curia,” the present name of the town is said to be derived.

What information we have respecting the ancient history of the town is for the most part obscure and traditionary. After the decline



FELSBERG, AND HEIGHTS OF THE CALANDA.

of the Romans it fell into the hands of the Ostrogoths, who were succeeded by the Franks, who introduced the laws and regulations of Charles the Great. Christianity had been introduced long since, and though St. Lucius is a somewhat legendary personage, it is quite certain that as early as the fourth century the affairs of the people

were conducted by bishops, whose influence became yet greater in the fifth century. At first they simply managed matters, but under the Frankish form of government they became temporal lords of the



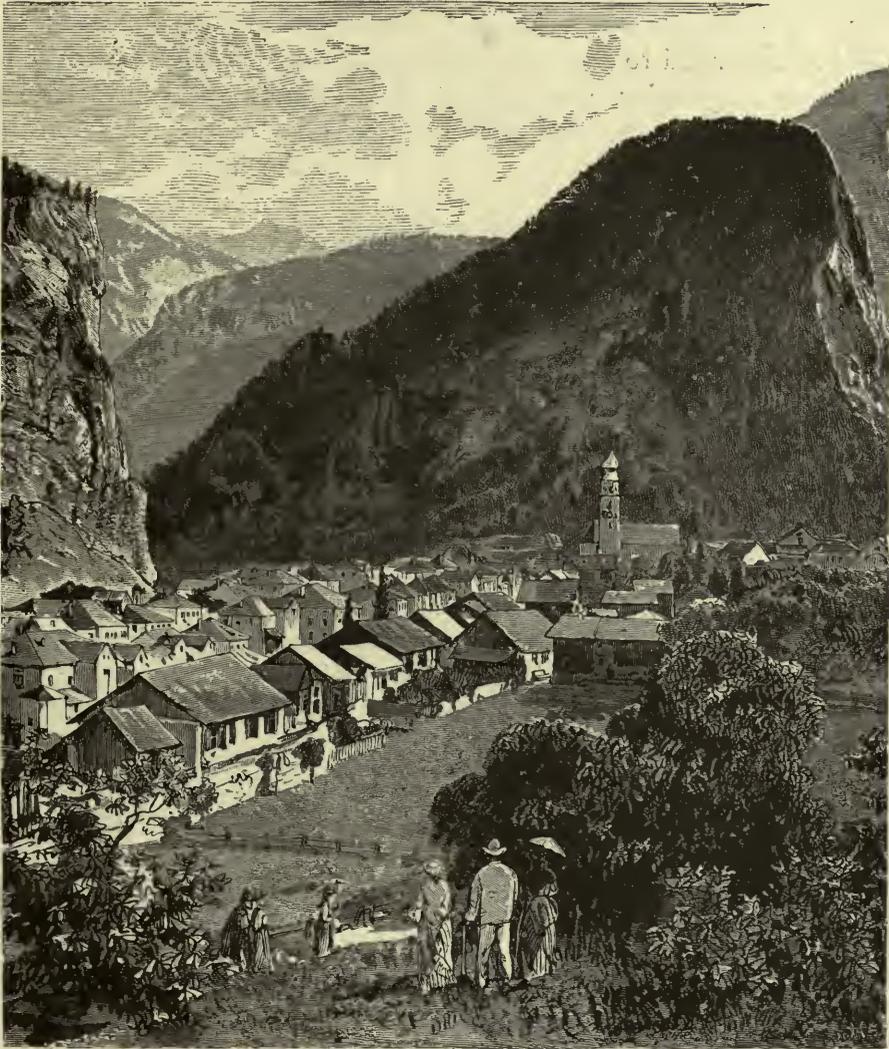
CASTLE OF RHAEZUENS.

town, which, though previously independent, soon began to lose its liberties one after the other.

This state of things lasted for some five hundred years, after which Chur awoke from her slumbers, and tried to become a little more independent. The bishop, however, opposed her with all his might and main, and even laid the town under an interdict. The townspeople retorted by besieging the episcopal palace, and at the end of

three days the bishop found himself obliged to capitulate and make certain concessions, which were speedily followed by others of a more important character.

In 1464 the town suffered greatly from a terrible fire which



VILLAGE OF THUSIS AND MOUTH OF THE VIA MALA.

consumed the chief part of it, and the Emperor compassionately bestowed upon it all the rights of an imperial free town. A quarter of a century later it was emancipated from the bishop's jurisdiction, on payment of an indemnity, and then began its season of prosperity.

Order was speedily restored, and in 1544 the Reformed religion was established here by Johannes Commander, soon after which the first public school was opened.

The history of the following centuries consists only of deeds of violence, torture, executions, party strifes, religious hatred, persecutions, and foreign interference. In spite of all this, however, the town has continued to improve, and before long we may expect it to assume much grander proportions. It is situated on a slope, having lofty mountains on one side of it and the valley of the Rhine on the other. It is almost entirely shielded from the north wind by the Mittenberg and adjacent hills; but it lies open to the south, and accordingly the surrounding slopes are covered with vines, introduced probably by the Romans. The landscape is enlivened by the river Plessur, which, after doing much damage to the town for centuries, has now been brought under proper control. The mountain to the left is the Pizokel, which acts as a parasol to the town in the winter time. Chur has often been compared with Innsbruck, and there may be some general resemblance between the two; but the scenery about Chur is grander, while Innsbruck is a far more pleasant and attractive town than Chur. The latter, indeed, has been very slow to assume the aspect and dimensions of a town, and in fact it is only quite recently that it has possessed any buildings at all worthy of its position as capital of the canton; but these are now springing up in all directions, and the town is spreading rapidly.

The old part of Chur seems to have been built without any plan and contains no regular street: it consists of crooked lanes and alleys, all of which are narrow and confined and very ill-paved; and yet the town has always been prosperous and well-to-do. It is in the form of a triangle, of which the "Hof," or Court, is the apex, and the Graben-promenade the base. The principal thoroughfares are the Obere-gasse and Reichs-gasse, which run into the St. Martinsplatz. Chur was formerly divided into three parts: the village of Chur; which extends from the St. Martinsplatz to the Lukmanier Hotel; the Königshof, or Court; and the Borough, which contained the two towers of Marsoila and Spinoila, and two churches. Modern Chur is divided only into the Court and the Town, of which the former is certainly the best worth seeing. The prince-bishop used to reside within the precincts of the Court, where his palace, as well as the beautiful cathedral and Roman Catholic cemetery, is still to be seen. Here also stands the cantonal school, one of the best educational

establishments in Switzerland. The environs of the town are made pleasant by numerous gardens and magnificent fruit-trees, and if the townspeople grow weary of their narrow streets and such restaurants as the "Rothe Löwe" and "Süße Winkel," they can go out to the "Rosenhügel," at the foot of the Pizokel, and watch the Rhine as it



HOUSES IN ZILLIS.

flows past the heights of the Calanda, or look at the rivers Plessur and Landquart, while they drink their bottle of good old Valtellina and enjoy the peaceful sunshine in which Ems, Felsberg, Haldenstein, and the "Five Villages" lie bathed below. On Sundays almost the whole population is to be found either at the "Rosenhügel" or

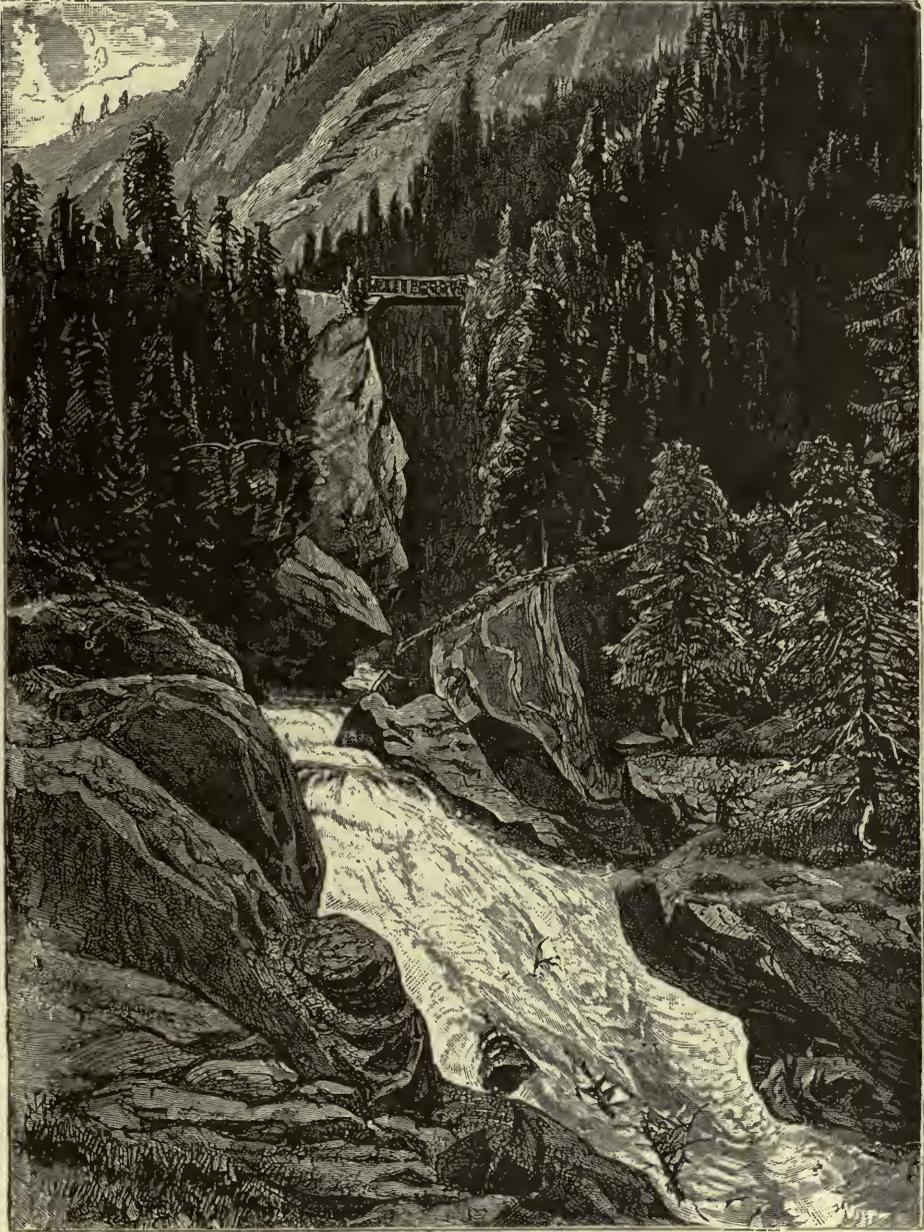
the "Lürlibad," while those that are young and active climb up to the chapel of St. Lucius, which is situated on the slopes of the Mittenberg.



VILLAGE OF SPLÜGEN.

If we were to attempt any description of the many longer and shorter excursions which may be made in the immediate neighbourhood of Chur, such as those to Passug, to the Känzli, the ravine of

Scalära, to Trimmis and Schwarzwald, we should find ourselves in the



FALLS OF THE RHINE, ROFLA GORGE.

position of the traveller at the good hotel Steinbrock, who, after scanning the long bill of fare, and being somewhat puzzled by the

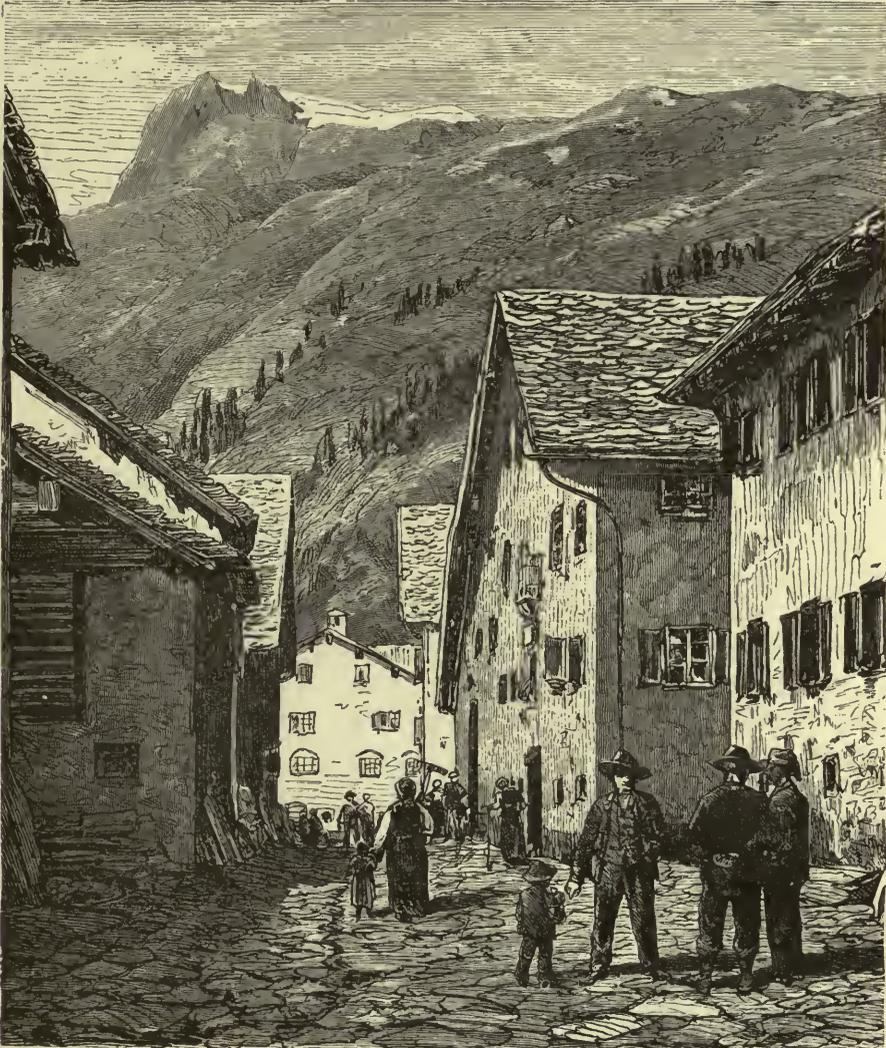
mixture of Italian and German dishes, ends by pronouncing them all extremely good. We must, however, just mention the "Maiensässe," on the Pizokel, as it is a particularly favourite resort of the people of Chur.

The interesting but ill-famed village of Felsberg, formerly known as Wälschberg, is the first place we pass on the right of the road. It is extraordinary that people can cling so obstinately to a place which threatens them with hourly destruction. Masses of dolomite and limestone may at any moment fall down from the Calanda, for the mountain is always crumbling, and is constantly sending heaps of rubbish down into the valley. Not unfrequently the crash of the falling fragments is heard as far as Chur, and the whole place is enveloped in a cloud of dust. The great mound of débris, which gradually increased in size until at last it towered over Alt-Felsberg, became at length so dangerous that, about thirty years ago, the inhabitants were obliged to move a little farther off and build themselves new houses.

The beautiful Calanda is Chur's weather prophet, and possesses many other good qualities besides, as he showed when, some time ago, people took to digging in him for gold, and were actually rewarded for their exertions; but the Golden sun, as the mine was called, has no doubt been worked out and abandoned by this time. The first object which attracts attention is, not the village of Rhäzuns, which is just like any other, but the Castle of Rhäzuns, which stands perched on an isolated rock, and confronts us just before we reach the village. Its mediæval walls and turrets still remain, and look down upon us from a dark background of forest; but what we see in this way is only the weather-beaten shell of the building, the inner part of which belongs to very ancient times, and, indeed, is said to have been founded by no other than the fabulous Etruscan prince Rhætus, who intended it to be the chief fortress of "Rhætia Ima." Until the fifteenth century it belonged to the Barons Brun; then it came into the possession of the Counts von Zollern, and then into the hands of Austria, who bestowed it on the families of Von Marmels, Planta, and Travers in succession. Later on, Austria sent some of her own people here, and they remained until the end of the last century, when the castle again changed hands, and became the property first of Bavaria and then of France. Even then its vicissitudes were not over, for again it fell into the hands of Austria, who kept it until it was formally ceded to the Grisons at the Vienna Congress. The canton, not

knowing what to do with it if it was retained as state property, finally sold it, and its present occupants are private persons.

The view from here is lovely. Below flows the Rhine, and on



VILLAGE OF HINTERRHEIN.

the opposite of the river we have gently swelling meadows, the wooded slopes of the Heizenberg, church spires rising from amid groves of fruit-trees, brown villages dotting the greensward, numerous castles crowning the various eminences, while far off, where the valley

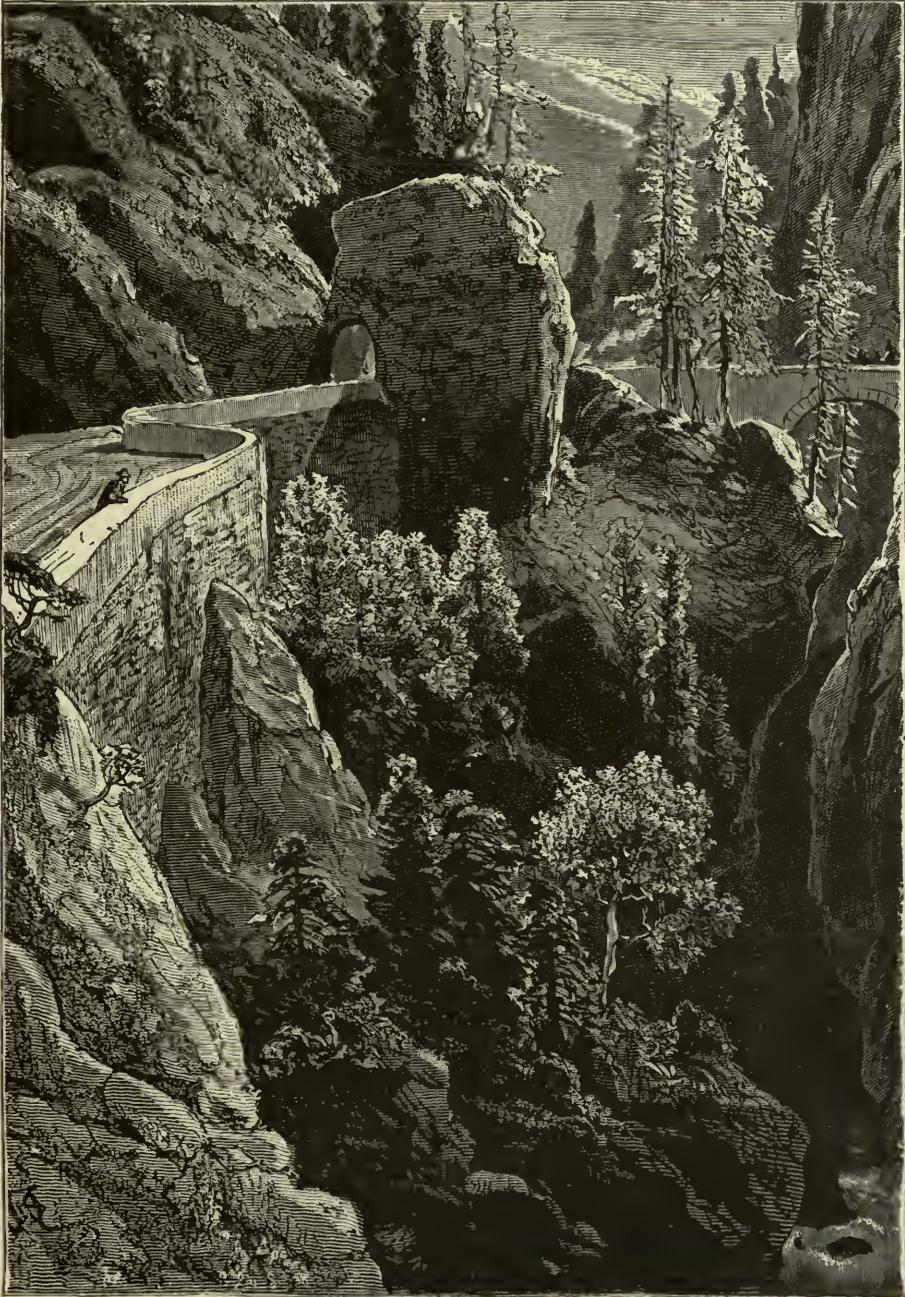
of Domleschg terminates, the horizon is bathed in soft blue haze. We should linger too long were we to repeat all the many legends attaching to the various ruins of Paspel, Sins, Zeusenbergl, Canova, Rietberg, Almens, Fürstenberg, or Campel.

The most interesting ruin is that of the Castle of Hohen-Rhätien, near Thusis, which stands near the pilgrimage chapel of St. John, on a steep cliff overlooking the Rhine, just at the entrance of the ravine known as the Verlorenes Loch. Hohen-Rhätien, or Hoch-Realta, gathers up into itself all the legendary lore of the Grisons, whose inhabitants trace their descent from the ancient Etruscans or Tuscans. Long before the commencement of our era these Etruscans are said to have been driven from North Italy by the Gauls, and to have been led to these Alpine valleys by their prince, Rhætus. Here they settled and took root, building castles and strongholds, among which Rhäzüns, Hohen-Rhätien, and Thusis, Tuscia, or Tosana, are especially worthy of mention.

The Castle of Hohen-Rhätien commanded the entire valley, and was, from its position and great strength, the most important in the province. It was inhabited down to about 1450, but was pulled down by the enraged Grey Leaguers in the course of the struggle between them and their petty tyrants. The castle possesses now but few remains of its former beauty, and of its four towers only a solitary one is left, and that is in ruins. But the view of the lovely Alpine valley of Domleschg, which opens out before us as we advance along the road from Katzis, it is still as fresh and beautiful as ever. There before us stand the church of Masein, the castle of Tagstein, while the Piz Beverin towers aloft in the distance, and the Piz Curvêr and Muttner Berg show themselves in the neighbourhood of the gorge of the Via Mala, and over the valley of the Albula rise the shining heights of Oberhalbstein. In fact, we are surrounded by mountains.

The landscape is constantly changing, but always glorious, and after passing through a succession of woods and meadows we at length reach Thusis, which lies between the Rhine and the Nolla, at the foot of a bare precipitous cliff at the entrance of the Via Mala. Thusis is a rather imposing-looking place, almost worthy to be called a town, and its inhabitants speak German. After the great fire of 1845, previous to which it had already been burnt down four times, it arose from its ashes in renewed beauty. Now that the street is made wider, and the houses are less crowded together, there is somewhat less risk of fire; but it is still exposed to great danger from the floods

of the Rhine and Nolla, which recur regularly every spring-time. In



THE VIA MALA.

fact, the chronicles of Thusis, like those of the Rhine valleys in

general, are a mere record of disasters, and when we turn to its political history things are not much better. There is one very dark page which tells of the reign of terror in 1618, when the French and Venetian ambassadors took up their abode in Thusis, finding it well adapted for their cruel purpose, and proceeded to take bloody and barbarous vengeance on the Roman Catholics. All the laws and customs of the country were set at defiance; as for moderation, or even common humanity, they seemed to be qualities utterly unknown to the persecutors, and no lighter sentence than that of torture and death was ever passed upon the unfortunate victims. Whole families, and even whole communes and jurisdictions, were condemned at once. Those were evil times; and what with Spain, France, and Austria, who each and all claimed them by turns, the wretched people no longer knew to whom they owed allegiance. Meanwhile, they managed to subsist on such gains as they could make out of the traffic between Italy and Germany; which, indeed, constitutes their chief occupation at the present day, though the road over the Splügen is not so important now as it was before the opening of the railways over the Brenner and through Mont Cenis. In winter a good many waggons pass this way; laden with casks of wine—for Thusis is famous for the well-known Valtellina; and in summer there are as many as ten diligences coming and going daily, besides numerous travelling carriages, for there is no decrease whatever in the number of travellers annually attracted hither by the awful beauty of the *Via Mala*.

Crossing the beautiful arched bridge over the Nolla, we find ourselves immediately at the mouth of the *Verlorenes Loch*, or *Trou Perdu*, the portal of which is guarded on the one side by the perpendicular cliff and castle of *Hohen-Rhätien*, and on the other by the cliff of *Crapptieg*. The *Hinter Rhein* rushes out from this defile, and the road, the beautiful *Via Mala*, runs into it on its way to the plains of Italy. A great deal has been written about the *Via Mala*, and everyone has seen sketches and pictures of it, especially of that part known as the *Verlorenes Loch*, which is a favourite subject with artists. In some parts it looks extremely dangerous, but it is not so bad in reality. In one place the road seems to be entirely blocked up by a projecting buttress of rock; but on a nearer approach we find that this has been pierced by a tunnel or gallery, and the road carried safely through it. It is this gallery which is usually, though wrongly, called the *Verlorenes Loch*; in point of fact, the name belongs to the

whole defile between Thusis and Rongella, a little village lying in a



RHEINWALD GLACIER AND SOURCE OF THE HINTER RHEIN.

small basin between grey slate cliffs, along which the present road has

been carried by the daring skill of Signor Poccobelli. It runs along in a sort of notch blasted in the side of the mountain, at a height of three hundred or more feet above the river which roars below. On reaching the second bridge the traveller finds himself in the midst of a very imposing scene, and confronted by nature in one of her wildest moods, though there is nothing really terrible about the road, unless one happens to be travelling along it alone in stormy weather, or when the water has risen to within a few feet of the arch of the bridge, as it did in 1834. At all other times one is struck chiefly by its grandeur and beauty, for the "dangerous narrow chasm," as it was called even as late as 1672, has been divested of nearly all its perils.

We now reach the village of Zillis, which was connected with Rongella in 1470 by a road which ran along the course of the Nolla at a considerable elevation, crossed the Schamser Alps, and descended into the valley at Sufers. Zillis lies in the valley of Schams, which forms a sort of connecting link between the soft beauty of the valley of Domleschg and the wilder and more sublime scenery of the Rheinwald. We are now some three thousand feet above the level of the sea; but vegetation is still vigorous and luxuriant, and the soil is alluvial—a fact which indicates that the valley was once occupied by a lake some six miles in length. It now contains several ruined castles and several villages, large and small, most of the houses being roofed with stone. Zillis is well known for its old church, and the strange paintings which adorn its wooden roof are said to date from the time of the Crusades. The church itself is associated in one's mind with the Emperor Otto I., and the terrible incursions of the Saracens employed by Berengarius of Ivrea to hold the mountain passes against Germany. Otto I. gave the church of Zillis—Ciraum in Romansch—to the Bishop of Chur, to indemnify him for the ravages of the Saracens. Opposite Zillis, on the left bank of the Rhine, lies the village of Donat, above which rise the ruins of the Castle of Fardün. Next come the large village of Andeer and the farm of Bärenburg, with the remains of a castle which formerly guarded the mouth of the Rofla ravine. This gorge bears some resemblance to that of the Via Mala, and, indeed, used formerly to be called the Inner Via Mala, that of Thusis being known as the Outer Via Mala. The rocks here, however, are of a different character, and there is nothing equal to the wild fantastic scenery of the Verlorenes Loch. The Averser Rhein comes pouring into the gorge through a dark opening in the rocks, and plunges headlong down into the

roaring Hinter Rhein. Even in the height of summer the water is perpetually boiling and foaming; and in the spring when the snow is melting, or after a violent storm, the struggle of the two rivers, as they lash themselves in fury against the porphyry and granite walls of their narrow prison, must be something truly tremendous and awful.

Above the Rofla begins the last of the three basins into which the



INN AND LAKE ON THE BERNARDINO.

valley of the Hinter Rhein is divided, that, namely, of the Rheinwald which is nearly five thousand feet above the sea. The "wald, or forest, has now been banished to the mountains; but it was probably not from this that the valley took its name, as in Romansch it is called Val da Rin. It contains the villages of Splügen, Medels, Ebi, Rufenen, and Hinterrhein, and its wealth consists in meadows and pasture-lands. Its inhabitants are German, and are said to have

been planted here close to the pass by the Hohenstaufen. This is the southernmost limit reached by the German language and German race, as well as by the Reformed Church, for on the other side of the mountains the people and language are Italian, and the religion is Roman Catholic. The people of the valley enjoyed the special protection of the German kings in former days, and in return guarded the mountain passes for them. They are spoken of in documents of



VILLAGE OF SAN BERNARDINO.

the thirteenth century as "free German people." When the league was made under the sycamore at Trons, they, the "free men of the Rhyn," were present with the rest.

The roads over the Splügen and Bernardino have been a great source of profit to them, and the pretty village of Splügen, in particular, is much enlivened by the constant passage of merchandize and travellers. Splügen contains a good many decent buildings, and lies very near the ice-clad mountains, among which the beautiful Tambolihorn

rises conspicuous in the south. Here the road divides; but both branches will take us into Italy, the one over the Splügen and the



RUINS OF THE CASTLE OF MESOCCO.

other over the Bernardino, leading to Chiavenna and Bellinzona respectively.

The Splügen pass was formerly called Urseler, or Colmo d'Orso, which seems to point to its having been at one time haunted by bears. At the highest point stood a watch-tower, *specula*, from which Speluga and the Romansch Splügia have probably been derived.

Passing by Medels and Nufenen, we reach Hinterrhein, the last village in the valley, in about two hours. It is a very small place inhabited by herdsmen, and lies almost at the foot of the huge glacier which culminates in the Rheinwaldhorn, or Piz Valrhein, eleven thousand feet high, and is flanked by the peaks of the Güferhorn, Marschalhorn, Zapporthorn, Hochberghorn, Schwarzhorn, and St. Lorenzhorn. The whole beautiful group, extending from Nufenen to Monte Generoso, are together known as the Vogelberg or Adula Mountains, called Mons Avium by the Romans, and Piz d'Uccello by the Italians.

The ice-palace from which the Hinter Rhein here issues forth is most majestic and beautiful, and much grander than the cradle of the Vorder Rhein. The stream, which is from the first of considerable size, rises in a vault of ice, near which the Romans built a temple to the nymphs. In later times, when Christianity had penetrated to these regions, a little chapel was erected here in honour of St. Peter, and soon became famous far and wide. Near the chapel there was also a hospice for the accommodation of those who crossed the Bernardino; it was afterwards occupied by hermit brothers, but was so completely destroyed at the Reformation that nothing was left of it but one little bell, which still hangs in the belfry at Hinterrhein. Making our way back to the last-named little village, we begin the steep ascent to the pass of St. Bernardino, which was known to the ancient Romans, and has long been a rival of the Splügen, though it can no more equal the latter in importance than the Splügen can equal the St. Gotthard. Still, the Bernardino road is grand, even sublime, and takes us through some mountain scenery of a solemnly magnificent character. In a couple of hours we reach the summit of the pass, where there is a very respectable mountain inn by the side of the lake. Other tiny lakelets and pools lie scattered about close by, and from them issue the streams which constitute the sources of the Moësa. This river runs through the beautiful Val Mesocco, and eventually joins the Ticino. It rushes down from the mountains with much impetuosity, forming numerous cascades as it leaps and dashes over the rocks, and is spanned by several bold bridges. The road winds serpent-like along its margin, and brings us to our next halting-

place, the little village and baths of St. Bernardino, where the valley expands a little and the Moësa is augmented by the waters of the Val Vignone. It is a very quiet, world-secluded spot, sheltered from the rude north winds by the ice-clad mountains which tower above it, and lying open to all the genial influences of the soft southern breezes.

The traveller feels at once that he is entering upon another world :



ROVEREDO.

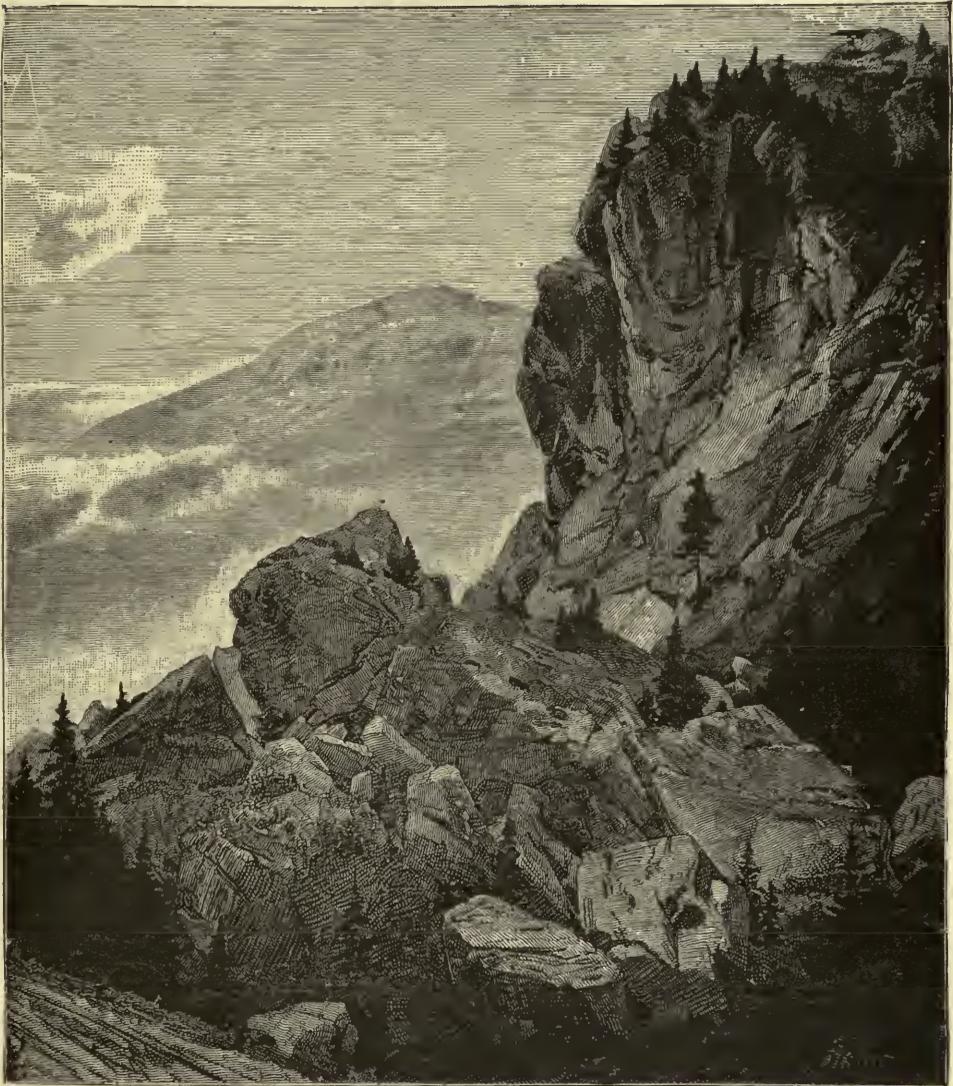
he is surrounded by people of a different character from those he has left behind him; he hears Italian spoken on all sides, and everything he sees reminds him that he is in a Roman Catholic country. The influence of St. Carlo Borromeo, the famous and energetic Bishop of Milan, extended even to this remote place, and by him the tide of the Reformation, which had advanced hither from the north, was effec-

tually checked and turned back. Already we feel that we are in Italy, the land of the olive and myrtle, for the sunshine is Italian in its fervour, and both the features of the landscape and its colouring are unmistakably Italian too. At Soazza we see the first chestnut trees, and just below the beautiful cascade of Buffalora (one of several which enliven the valley) the vine begins to be cultivated, chestnuts become more abundant, and soon our attention is caught by the light green foliage of the mulberry and fig-tree. At every step we take, the flowers, plants, and creepers which clothe the sides of the valley become more southern in their character, and the people whom we see standing at the doors of their houses are decidedly Italian in manner and feature. They are Italian, in fact; and, whether it be that they are more easily satisfied than their neighbours in the other valleys of the Grisons, certain it is that they are never so well off and prosperous. They generally leave Nature and the women to look after the fields and gardens as best they may, while they themselves, like the Ticinesi, go abroad and earn their living at small trades and handicrafts. This, at least, is what many of them do, and the number of emigrants every year is considerable.

In many parts of the Grisons, and also on the Splügen road, at certain seasons of the year one meets with numbers of men and women of a very different type from these. They are distinguished for their honesty, industry, and good looks, and are commonly called Veltliners; for they come from the Val Tellina, the beautiful valleys of the Adda and Moira, where the vine grows in luxuriant perfection. During the summer months they migrate to the northern side of the Alps, and hire themselves out as harvest labourers. They combine all the cleverness and vigour of the Graubündners with the natural grace and other characteristics of the Italians; and they possess the additional merit of wearing a particularly charming and tasteful costume.

The gem of the Mesocco valley is the ancient Castle of Mesocco, which, indeed, is the most picturesque ruin in all Switzerland. It stands almost in the centre of the valley over which it once held sway, and in spite of its antiquity, its four fine towers and strongly built walls are still in a very fair state of preservation. Its name in former times was Monsax, and it was the ancestral seat of the Counts of Sax who fought in the Hungarian wars. It is frequently mentioned in the history of the Grisons, for its influence extended as far as Northern Rhætia, and Hans von Sax was one of those who helped to frame the

Grey League of 1424. The last of the race, being in want of money, sold the castle and its lands to the Lombard family of Trivulzio, who retained it for about a hundred years, after which, in 1526, it was



FALLEN ROCKS AT MARMORERA.

destroyed by order of the Three Leagues. The place has some connection with Roveredo, the capital of the lower part of the valley, where stand the ruins of a palace which reminds us of the last owners

of the castle This Roveredo must not be confounded with the one in the Tyrol, which we pass in the railway going from Bozen to Verona; and that is all we can say about it at the present time, for we must not allow ourselves to be overcome by the fascinations of the south, as we cannot bring our Swiss tour to an end without seeing what is to be seen on the other side of Chiavenna, where lies the Engadine.





CHAPTER XXIII.

THROUGH THE ENGADINE.

“Turn we to survey
Where rougher climes a nobler race display,
Where the bleak Swiss their stormy mansion tread,
And force a churlish soil for scanty bread :
No product here the barren hills afford,
But man and steel, the soldier and his sword :
No vernal blooms their torpid rocks array,
But winter lingering chills the lap of May.”

GOLDSMITH.



IF, on some bright summer day, when the tourist season is just beginning, we could emulate the eagle's flight and hover awhile over the Bernina Mountains, taking a bird's-eye view of the country below, we should see that it is a valley, and that it extends from the plateau of the Maloja in the south-west, to the pass of Martinsbruck-Finstermünz on the Tyrolese frontier in the north-east. This valley is the Engadine, and there are as many as seven fine roads which all lead into it. Travellers from the north who have halted at Chur may choose between the Julier and Albula pass; and, further still, have the option of reaching Tiefenkasten either by way of Churwalden or by Thusis and the magnificent Schyn pass. Arrived at Tiefenkasten, they may take the western road through the valley of Oberhalbstein and over the Julier pass, which will bring them to Silva Plana in the Upper Engadine, or they may take the road to the east, which will lead them over the Albula pass to Ponte. Those who are not in a hurry, and would like to begin by visiting the green meadows of Prättigau and part of the Lower Engadine, had better go through Landquart and Davos, and across

the Flüela pass, unless they too prefer following the new road along the river as far as Tiefenkasten. Tourists from the plains of Lombardy will enter the Engadine either by Chiavenna, the Val Bregaglia and the Maloja pass, or they will pass through Tirano in the valley of the Adda, and then proceed by way of Paschiavo and the Bernina pass, which will bring them to Samaden.

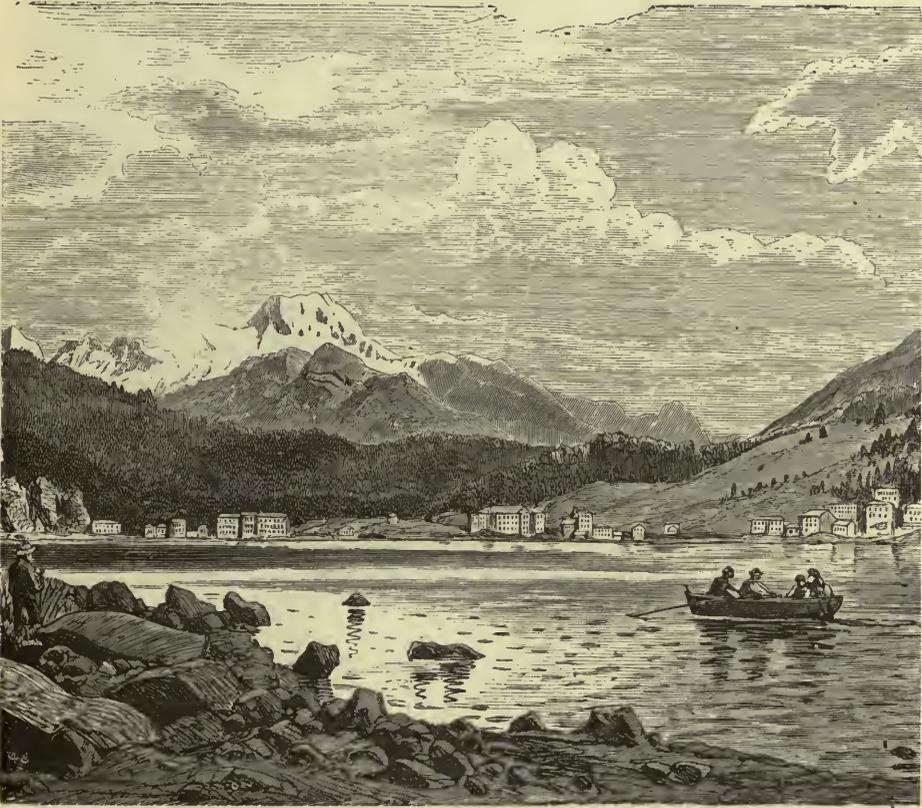
As if these were not enough, there are besides two approaches



WEISSENSTEIN, ON THE ALBUJA PASS.

from the Tyrol, one through the pass near Nauders, which leads into the Lower Engadine, the other leading from Meran to the Münsterthal and Zernetz in the Middle Engadine. In addition to these there are a number of other passes, mere footpaths, and practicable only for the pedestrian. In fact, it is only within the last forty years or so that there have been any carriage roads leading into the valley of the Inn ;

but during this time the energetic Graubündners have done wonders in the way of blasting, digging, levelling, and constructing, and all the post roads are works of a most masterly character. Those who made them knew perfectly well what they were about, though they thought less of their own convenience than of making the way easy for foreigners, who at once recognised the beauty of the Engadine and the healing virtue of its springs, which soon became a source of great



BATHS AND LAKE OF ST. MORITZ.

profit to the valley. Since that time the baths of St. Moritz and Tarasp Schuls have become a sort of Mecca and Medina to invalids, while the rest of the Engadine is a perfect El Dorado for mountaineers and lovers of beautiful scenery; in fact, the Engadine has become decidedly fashionable.

Under the name of the Engadine are included the mountains, the principal valley, and numerous lateral valleys, forming the great

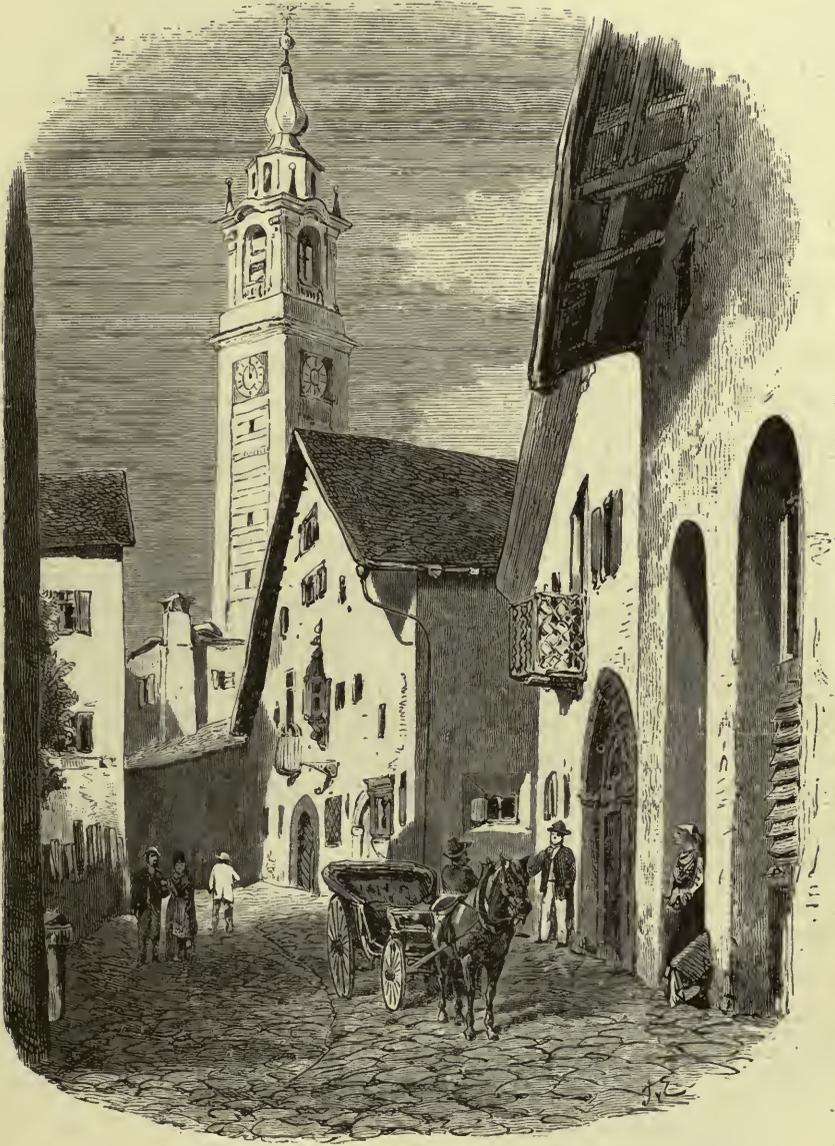
plateau, some fifty odd miles in length, which sweeps in a wide curve round the south east of Switzerland and connects the north of Italy



FARM OF ALPINA, NEAR ST. MORITZ.

with the Tyrol and South Germany. The great chains of mountains which bound it on the north and south separate it on the one hand from the northern and central portions of the Grisons—the important

valleys of the Prättigau, Davos, Bergün, and Oberhalbstein—and on the other from the southern districts of the Val Tellina, Poschiavo,



SAMADEN.

Bormio, Münsterthal, and Vintschgau. The river Inn flows through the whole length of the Engadine, which lies at a greater elevation than any other inhabited valley in Europe, with the exception, per-

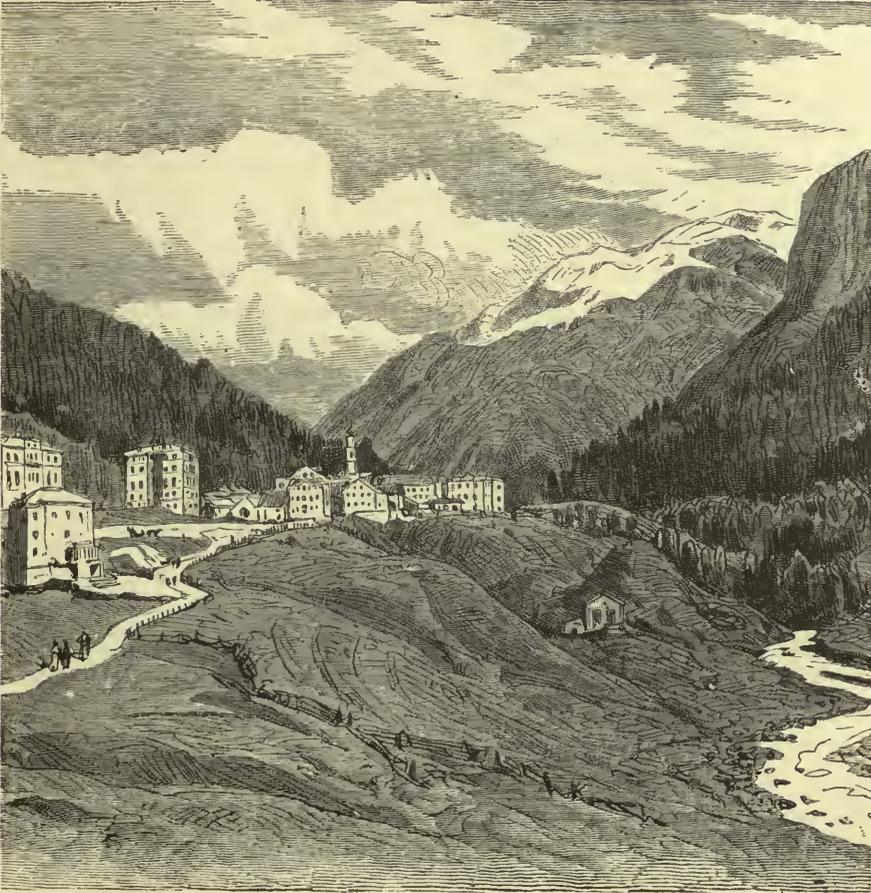
haps, of the valley of Avers. It is divided into two parts of unequal size—the Upper Engadine, which is about twenty-four, and the Lower Engadine, which is some thirty-three miles long. The Upper Engadine extends to Punt-auta or Pont-alta, a bridge below Scansf, which spans the deep ravine between Cinoschel and Brail, where in the old troubled times stood a wall stretching across the valley in a diagonal direction, and dividing the Upper from the Lower Engadine. The villages in the Lower Engadine are not nearly so large or so town-like as those of the Upper Engadine. The most important are Zernetz and Tarasp Schuls—Fex and Scharl being mere clusters of cottages. But the Lower Engadine can hardly be said to have been explored as yet. The Upper Engadine lies so far above the sea-level, that the village of Samaden is very little lower than the summit of the Rigi. Accordingly, we shall not be astonished at the absence of the orange, beech, oak, elm, sycamore, walnut, and chestnut, with which we have been so familiar in other mountain regions; and the otherwise pretty villages which stud the green pasture-lands look very bare and bald in consequence. Vegetation in general is scanty, but such plants as there are will grow here at a higher elevation than almost anywhere else.

The wild animals of the canton are as essentially alpine in their character as is the vegetation. To be sure, the steinbock, or ibex goat, once common throughout the whole of the Engadine, has been utterly exterminated, and the chamois have so diminished in numbers that travellers very seldom succeeded in catching sight of a specimen. On the other hand, the Engadine is far better off than Bern, in that it still possesses at least one genuine representative of the denizens of the old primeval forests, namely, the bear. It is by no means rare in the Engadine, though it is allowed to be hunted at all seasons of the year, as are also the wolf, lynx, vulture, eagle, and, unfortunately, even the owl. The Engadine also possesses a good deal of feathered game; but wild deer must be considered as extinct.

There is much to interest the stranger in the manners, customs, and language of the Engadine. The people are of Romansch race, and of a type more marked than the rest of the Graubünders. Their language, too, is softer and more euphonious, thanks to their proximity to Italy; and, to distinguish it from the harsher dialect of Romansch spoken in the Oberland between Chiamut and Tamins, it is called Ladin. It prevails chiefly along the banks of the Upper Inn and in the Münsterthal. In outward appearance, also, the people of the

Engadine are decidedly of the Italian type. They have abandoned their own distinctive costume for some time past.

The Engadine possesses no native industries, and, as the population is chiefly agricultural and pastoral, we must look elsewhere if we would discover the source of the wealth and prosperity which the valley enjoys. The Engadinar is to be found in all parts of the



PONTRESINA.

world; and, as he is frugal and thrifty, he almost always makes his fortune. But no sooner has he grown rich than he begins to yearn for home, and sooner or later he is sure to leave the busy bustling city, and go back to the small quiet village where he was born. There he builds himself a villa, which is quite a palace in its way, and spends the rest of his days in his own beloved native land, free from

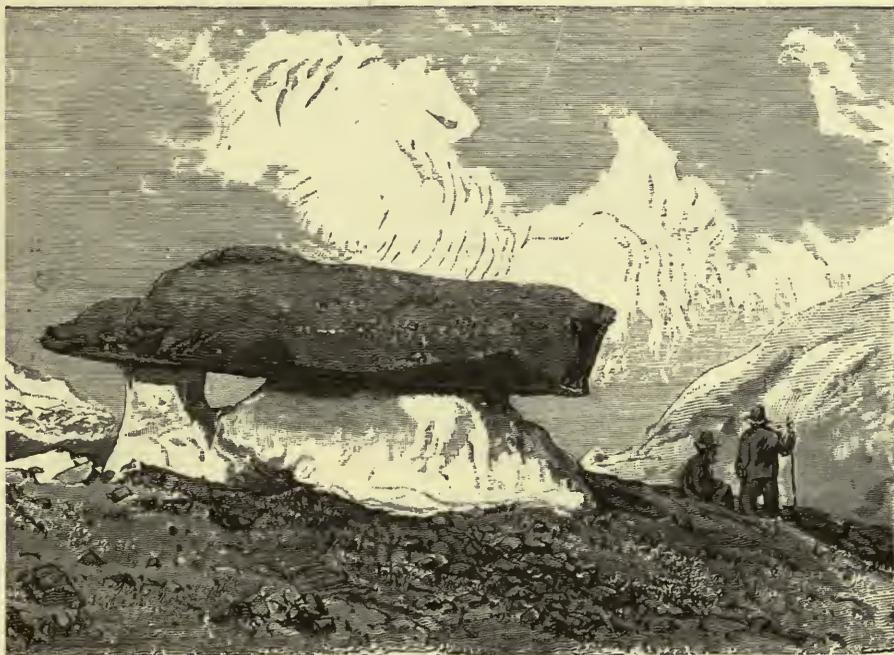
all care and anxiety. Almost all the men hereabouts speak their three or four languages with fluency, and the German is especially noted as being the best to be heard in Switzerland. Protestantism is the prevailing form of religion, and the people have always been very earnest in maintaining it. As to the meaning and derivation of the word "Engadine," opinions are divided. It is generally, however, supposed to be a corruption of *En co d' Oen*, which means *In capite Oeni*, "at the head of the Inn." One thing is tolerably certain, namely, that the valley takes its name from the river by which it is watered, for nearly all the streams which flow from the lateral valleys are called *Oen* in the popular dialect.

The whole valley falls naturally into two principal divisions, as we have said; and so again the upper valley is divided into two clearly marked and distinct portions by the diagonal ridge of rock upon which the village of St. Moritz is situated. North-east of this natural boundary are the villages of Bevers; Campovasto, called also Bamogask; Ponte, where the road over the Albula pass begins. Madulein, with the ruins of the famous Castle of Guardavall; Zutz and Scans. Besides Samaden, there are also the villages of Cellerina, Campf er, Silvaplana, and the two hamlets called Sils.

The Maloja pass is the most elevated spot in the valley of the Inn, being five thousand nine hundred feet above the level of the sea. It forms the boundary of the Upper Engadine and the valley of Bergell, or Bregaglia, called in Roman times Prægallia. This mountain sends forth its waters into the Black Sea, the Adriatic, and we may even say the North Sea. The objects most likely to attract our attention are the Piz della Margna and Piz Lunghino, which tower aloft on either side of the elevated plateau and its scanty sprinkling of cottages. More interesting than these two peaks, however, is the glorious view which the pass commands of the exquisitely beautiful valley of Bregaglia, which extends as far as Castasegna, a distance of about eighteen miles. Here the road begins to descend with surprising abruptness, and proceeds in a series of steep, perilous-looking zigzags to Casaccia; and if anyone should chance to find the air of the Engadine too cold, even in the August dog-days, he need only fly across the Maloja, and in a few hours' time he may take his seat under the blooming pomegranates which adorn the garden of Signor Conradi's Hotel at Chiavenna. Most tourists, however, pursue their journey along the margin of the Lake of Sils, past the twin hamlets of Sils, and past Silvaplana to St. Moritz and Samaden.

Silvaplana is a pleasant place, situated in the midst of quiet green meadows, with a grand view of the mountains, some spurs of which advance close up to the roadway. Its name, which means "a wooded plain," has ceased to be appropriate now that the wood has disappeared; but, standing as it does at the junction of the roads from Chiavenna and the Bernina, it is important as an emporium for merchandise.

Next to Silvaplana comes the little village of Campf er, the ancient *Campus ferri*, where the road begins to present a more animated



GLACIER TABLE.

appearance, and we are reminded that we are drawing near to St. Moritz by encountering some of the visitors, who frequently walk to the charmingly situated Acla, or farm of "Alpina," whence there is a lovely view of the valley as far as Sils, including Campf er and Silvaplana with its lake.

But yonder lies another lake surrounded by woods, above which appears the top of the well-known Piz Languard; and here, on a gentle mountain slope to our left, stands the pleasant village of St. Moritz, the most elevated in the whole of the Engadine, and which has of late years made itself a European reputation as a watering-

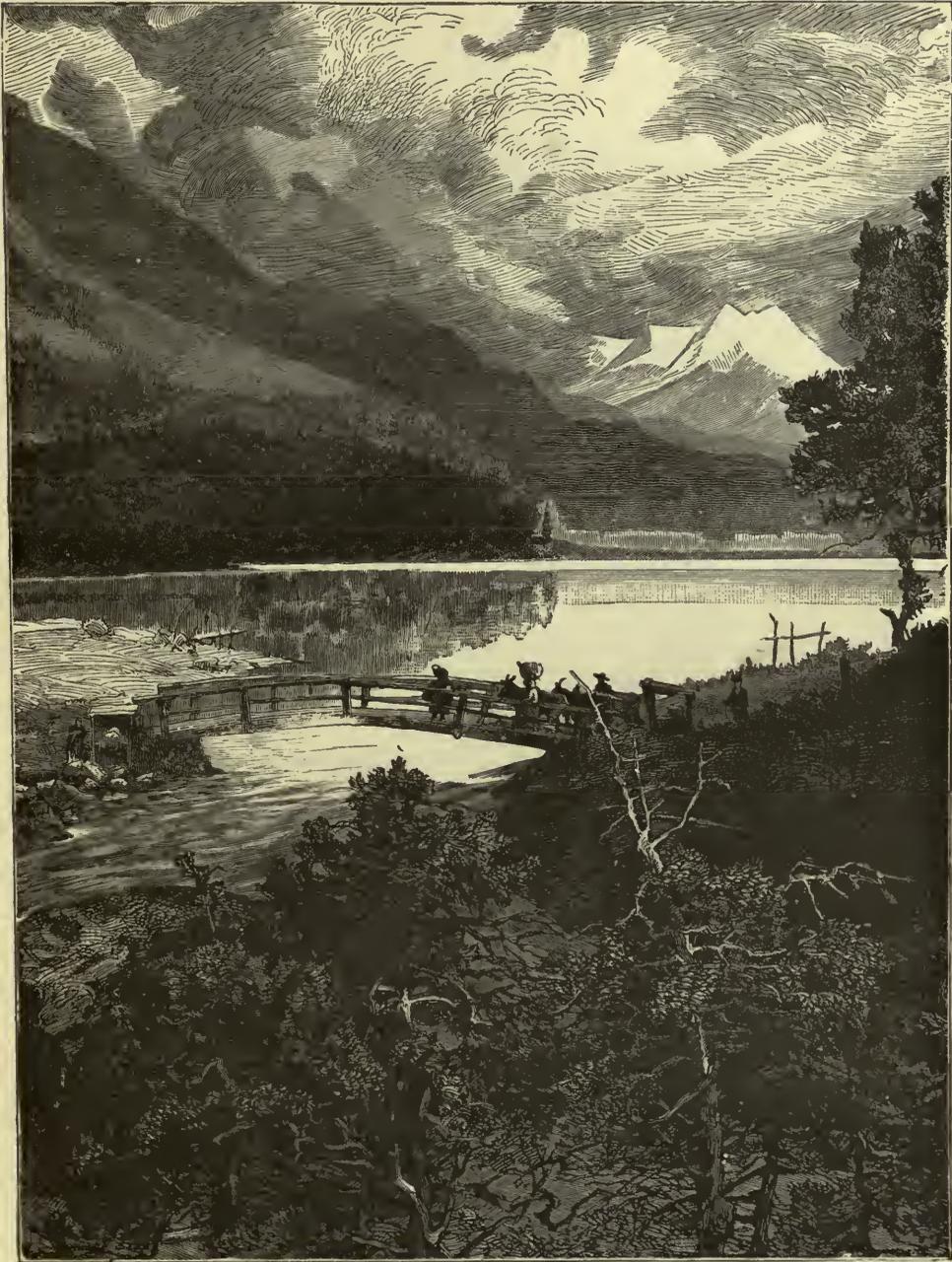
place. Though raised so far above the level of the sea, there is something in the situation of the place, and in the calm, simple grandeur of the surrounding scenery, which seems at once to produce a soothing effect upon the nerves. Certainly the wonderful cures wrought by the air and the water abundantly justify all that has been said and written in their praise. Other watering-places strive to make themselves attractive by all sorts of outward adornments; but here Nature has done everything. Certainly the pleasure-grounds are well and tastefully laid out; but the eye wanders away from them and over the woods to the frozen heights of the Piz della Margna, to the savage granite slopes of the Julier pass, then from the Piz Nair to the Piz Padella and Piz Ot, above Samaden, and thence to the bleak rocks of the Piz Languard. Close at hand we have the village, which is increasing in size every year, and at the back of the Kurhaus there is a beautiful wood in which we may take delightful walks, or there is the lake with its gay pleasure-boats, which looks extremely inviting. Those who wish for longer expeditions may go to the Piz St. Gian, to Acla Silva, and to Acla Alpina, or they may go farther still to the Piz Rosatsch or Piz Nair.

The Inn, which is a strong vigorous river, flows through the lake, and immediately afterwards forms a very beautiful cascade in the ravine of Chiarnaduras, which was formerly supposed to be inhabited by a dragon.

Shortly after leaving St. Moritz we come to Samaden, the capital of the Upper Engadine. It has some eight hundred inhabitants, and looks almost like a town. The place is always animated, owing to the constant passage of travellers and merchandise. No other village in the Engadine can boast such grand-looking buildings; many of them, in fact, are small palaces—and this is especially the case with the residence owned by the ancient Planta family. Nearly all the houses are of stone, and very solidly built.

And now we must turn our steps towards Pontresina. The road runs along the bank of the Fletzbach, and passes the old mortuary chapel of Celerina, St. Gian, which is perched upon a rocky eminence surrounded by larches. In the summer-time the meadows are full of haymakers, whose light red petticoats and waistcoats make them very telling objects in the landscape. But people of a different type from these are also frequently to be met with on these roads, and about the Roseg and Morteratsch glaciers, namely, the Bergamasque shepherds, —picturesque, interesting-looking figures, with generally handsome

faces of an Italian cast, long black curly hair, thick beards, and bright



FALLS OF THE INN AT ST. MORITZ.

eyes. These hardy men come every summer from the Bergamasque

valleys of Seriano and Brembano to the High Alps of Switzerland, bringing with them their flocks of large, long-legged Bergamasque sheep to feed on such scanty herbage as they can find among the rocks.

Pontresina forms the head-quarters whence excursions may be



VIEW OF THE ROSEG GLACIER, FROM PONTRESINA.

most conveniently made to the Piz Languard, the Diavolezza, the Piz Corvatsch, Boval, Fuorcla, Surlei, and Fex, to the Chapütschin and Sella pass, and round the Bernina. It is situated in a valley of the same name, which is not more than six miles long. This valley terminates in the Bernina pass, over which there is a fine road leading

through the compactly built town of Puschlav, or Poschiavo, to the Val Tellina and Bormio. -

On reaching Laret, the lower village of Pontresina, our attention is at once attracted by the dazzlingly white Roseg glacier, with the



COSTUMES IN THE VALTELLINA.

silvery peaks of the Sella, Glüschaint, Monica, Chapütschin, &c., rising beyond it. These all belong to the great central mass from which all the mountains of the Engadine seem to radiate, namely the mighty chain of the Bernina, which is remarkable both for the

boldness of its outlines and the massive proportions of its snow-fields



FALLS OF THE BERNINA..

and glaciers. Piz Bernina is the name usually appropriated to the

peak which towers aloft between the Bernina pass and the valley of Roseg, and from it proceed the three valleys which are overlooked by Pontresina. The valley of Roseg lies between the Piz Rosatsch



SCHULS.

and Piz Chalchagn, and terminates in the famous glacier of the same name, which is surmounted by the Piz Bernina, or Monte Rosso da Scerscen, a peak over thirteen thousand feet high, and the loftiest of the group. East of the Roseg valley, and at the foot of Munt Pers,

lies a second valley, which is almost filled up by the Morteratsch glacier. Between Munt Pers and the Piz Bernina are the giant peaks of Zupo, Palü, and Cambrena, all of them girt round by glaciers. To the east of this again, and close to the great pyramid of the Piz Languard, lies the third valley, which leads up to the pass of the Bernina. The lower part of these three valleys may be visited by the most inexperienced of tourists; but the upper part should not be attempted save by mountaineers well accustomed to snow and ice.

The way to the lower extremity of the Morteratsch glacier is by a level road which leads past the Languard cascade and a picturesque saw-mill, which have formed the subject of many a sketch. On our way through a shady wood of Siberian pines we also pass the much more beautiful falls of the Bernina brook, which dashes with a thundering roar over huge masses of syenite rock, worn quite smooth by the action of the water. Beyond the falls there are the wooden bridges—one over the Bernina brook, the other over the stream which flows from the Morteratsch glacier; then follows a restaurant, and in a few minutes more we reach the blue wall of ice and the ice-grotto of the beautiful glacier, which descends lower than any other similar glacier in the Engadine, and advances far down into the forest. To gain any idea of the size of the glacier, or Vadret da Morteratsch, the traveller must ascend to the summit of the isolated Isola Pers, which rears its head from out the eternal ice, and has little or no vegetation to boast of. From this height there is a wonderful view of the pyramids of blue ice, which seem to rise from an utterly unfathomable depth, and of the conglomeration of fissures, crevasses, rents, and cracks which cover the surface of the glacier and present a truly formidable appearance. The action of the sun and the presence of various foreign bodies upon the ice combine to produce some most extraordinary effects, and we see great mounds, pillars, peaks, obelisks, needles, hollows, funnels, and what are known as “glacier tables”—large blocks or slabs of stone which have fallen upon the glacier, protecting the part immediately beneath them both from sun and rain, while the surrounding portion has melted away, leaving them supported upon pillars or pedestals of ice.

Yonder, by way of the rocky Isola Pers, leads the now much-frequented path to the Munt Pers, or summit of the Diavolezza, behind which lies a dreary, desolate waste, with the melancholy little lake of the Diavolezza. From here we descend to the hospitable Bernina

houses, where we shall find something to console us for our exertions, namely, the splendid red Val-Tellina wine, which all travellers in the Engadine thoroughly appreciate. It is not so abundant as it used to be in the old days when the traffic in it was at its height, and whole strings of mules with their drivers—or, in the winter, regular caravans of sledges—might be seen crossing the pass. The three houses



PEASANTS OF THE VAL TELLINA.

presented a much more animated and interesting appearance then, and many a picturesque figure halted here for rest and refreshment; but now that there are so many other ways into the Engadine the Bernina pass is rather deserted.

In the summer-time the meadows about here are decked in the brightest green; but their splendour is of short duration, inasmuch as

winter reigns here for nearly nine months of the year, and his dominions are said to be steadily increasing in the neighbourhood of



SILVAPLANA.

the Morteratsch glacier, which has advanced considerably within the last few years.

On rattles the diligence, carrying us past the villages of Madulein, Scansf, Zernetz, and Süs, and into the Lower Engadine, which seldom,

however, proves very attractive to those who visit it after they have seen and enjoyed the finer scenery of the upper valley. All who ever read newspaper advertisements are of course familiar with the name of Tarasp-Schuls; but the place itself is but a feeble reflection of St. Moritz. Yonder, perched on a precipitous cliff, stands the grand old château of Tarasp, formerly owned by the lords of Tarasp, who maintained their authority over the village in spite of the general emancipation effected by the League. The castle was deserted from 1815, and the medicinal springs were quite neglected until the year 1860, when communication was established between the village and the rest of the world. Since then Tarasp, as well as Schuls, Fettan, and Vulpera, has been making rapid progress. Schuls has the same aspect as St. Moritz, but the climate is milder. Its old church, situated upon a lofty eminence, reminds one of the battle between the inhabitants and the Austrians, who attacked them in 1621. Men and women alike took part in the struggle and fought desperately, until the ground was strewn with their dead bodies.

Returning to Süs, which stands at the mouth of a valley called the Susascathal, from the voluminous torrent by which it is watered, we proceed on our way up to the Flüela pass. The scenery is fine, and close at hand we see the Piz del Res, Murteröl, Piz Badred, with the Grialetsch glacier, and the mouths of the Val Fless and Kehrenthal. The road winds about a great deal, and the diligence rolls slowly along between woods and cliffs, and often on the very verge of the precipice, until at length we reach the summit of the pass, seven thousand eight hundred and eighty-four feet above the level of the sea, where stands the lonely little inn called the Flüela Hospice, surrounded by solemn, awful-looking mountains, and exposed to the most cutting winds. To the left the Schwarzhorn rears its gloomy head and opposite it stands the dazzling Weisshorn. At the foot of the Schwarzhorn glacier, which supplies it with water, lies the green Lake of Schotten, which is almost always covered with ice; and separated from it only by the width of the road, we see the brighter-looking Lake of the Weisshorn. A few of the Engadine and Ortler mountains are visible in the east, but in dull weather the whole scene is decidedly dreary; and the next stage of our journey is not much more cheerful, as it takes us through a wilderness of grey rocks, stones, and débris, interspersed, indeed, with abundance of alpine flowers, but still desolate-looking. A little farther on we come in sight of the inn "Zur Alpenglocke," and farther down still we reach that of the

"Alpenrose," or "Alpine Rose," so named from the rhododendron, which grows about here in immense profusion. The road now becomes more cheerful, and turning off to the left descends into the



PEASANT WOMAN OF THE LOWER ENGADINE.

valley which is watered by the Landwasser. We catch glimpses of meadows, fir woods, mountain tops, then of a sparkling lake and a village, and we know that we are in Davos, and that the village

yonder is Davos Dörfli, that of Davos am Platz lying a little farther back.

The whole district of Davos is dotted with houses, hamlets, and cottages ; but it is only at the two places just mentioned, Im Platz and



DAVOS AM PLATZ.

Dörfli, that there is anything approaching to a village. The valley is about fifteen miles long, and the greater part of it is some five or six thousand feet above the level of the sea. It is enclosed by mountains, of which the most considerable are the Schyahörner, Schwarzhorn, and Hochdukan.

Tradition says that the valley was discovered in the thirteenth century by the huntsmen of Donat von Vaz, who were not slow to appreciate the value of its rich meadows and clear streams, as well as



ANCIENT WOODEN HOUSES AT SCHIERS, IN THE PRAETIGAU.

the abundance of fish with which the lake was supplied. The baron who was the feudal lord of the district allowed the men to settle here, and call the valley *Davos Tavau*, in Romansch, or, as the common people pronounce it, *Dafoas*, which means "behind." This

is the popular account of the way in which the valley was settled ;



THE PRAETTIGAUER CLUS.

but as a matter of fact, it seems that its first inhabitants came from Valais. For centuries Davos was neglected and left to undisturbed

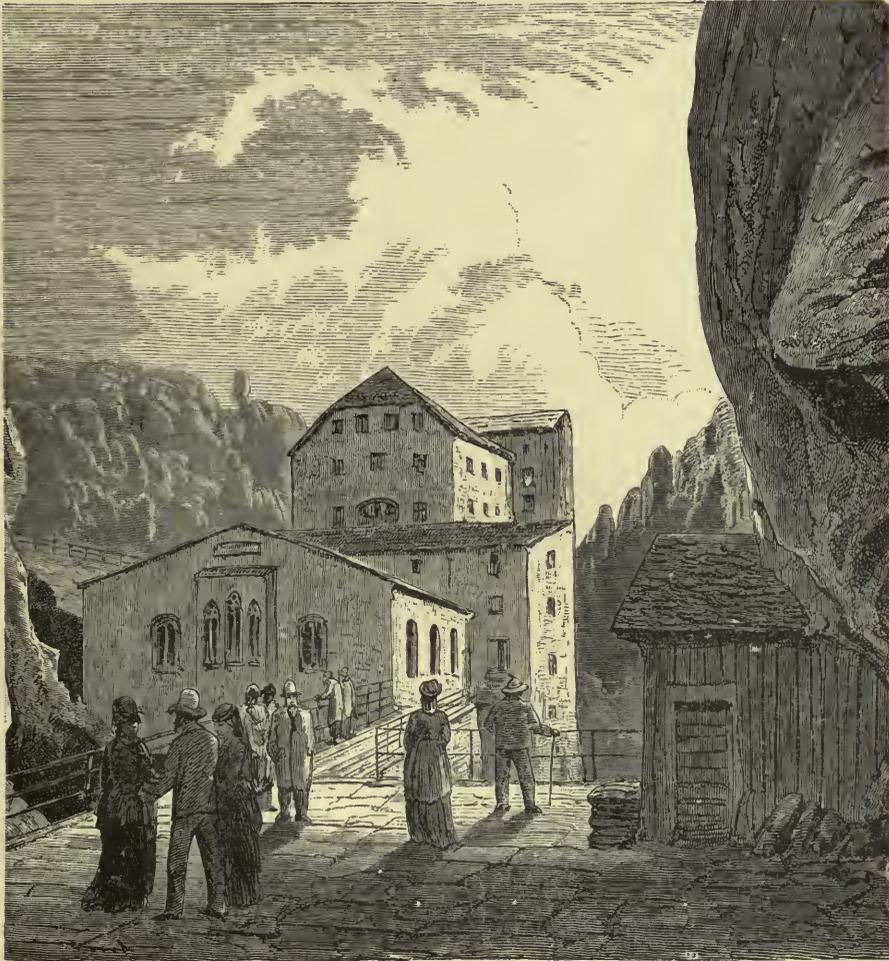
repose ; but of late years a number of hotels have suddenly sprung up, for as soon as it became known that persons suffering from consumption might be greatly benefited, and even cured, by a sojourn here, the fame of the place spread with wonderful rapidity. It is never empty, and even in the winter there are as many as five hundred visitors here waiting for the disappearance of the snow and the return of spring. It is to this circumstance that Davos owes all its interest, for in itself it possesses but few attractions, and the scenery of the neighbourhood is only moderately beautiful. Its healthfulness, however, makes many people glad to spend as much as six months at a time here.

The scenery about Klosters, the first large place in the Prättigau, is of a more pleasing and cheerful character. Prättigau, "the valley of meadows," which lies between the beautiful chains of the Rhätikon and Hochwang, is the most important valley in the Grisons, and appears to enjoy the especial favour of Heaven. The mountains are fine, and are terraced with rich meadows ; vegetation is most luxuriant ; and the people are not only prosperous and good-looking but they live in picturesque, comfortable houses, and their Alps are said to be stocked with some of the finest cattle to be seen anywhere. There are more legends and more historical reminiscences connected with this district than with any other part of Switzerland. It is delightfully refreshing to walk along by the side of the foaming Landquart, past the pleasant villages of Sernens, Küblis, Jenatz, Schiers, Grüşch, and Seewis, and past groups of houses and numerous châteaux and stabels.

As we wander along we shall often be tempted to stand still and admire the timber houses, many of which are very fine specimens of ancient woodwork, and are almost more beautiful than those of the renowned Bernese Oberland—to which, however, they bear considerable resemblance. They have, for example, the usual wooden staircase leading up to a projecting gallery, which is generally filled with flowers, the brilliant scarlet lychnis being especially conspicuous, and harmonising well with the dark brown of the woodwork. The whole house is constructed of wooden logs, skilfully put together and carved with various ornamental devices and inscriptions ; the latter being made out in antique or wedge-shaped characters, and consisting of names, dates, and pious sayings. It is a thousand pities that we cannot stay and gossip awhile with some of the people here, for they possess rich stores of legendary lore. Innumerable tales are told of

the "wild men," who seem to have sprung from this neighbourhood ; and there is one particularly beautiful and poetical legend current about the Fairy Madrisa, who fell in love with the son of a cowherd, and is said to have given her name to the Mädrishorn ob Saas.

We are now nearing the farther end of the Prättigau, and the



BATHS OF PFAEFFERS.

steep cliffs on either side approach closer and closer together, while the road is often blasted in the hard rock. The Landquart rushes furiously along in its narrow stony bed, and the wind roars through the valley behind us to blow us out into the open country. Yonder

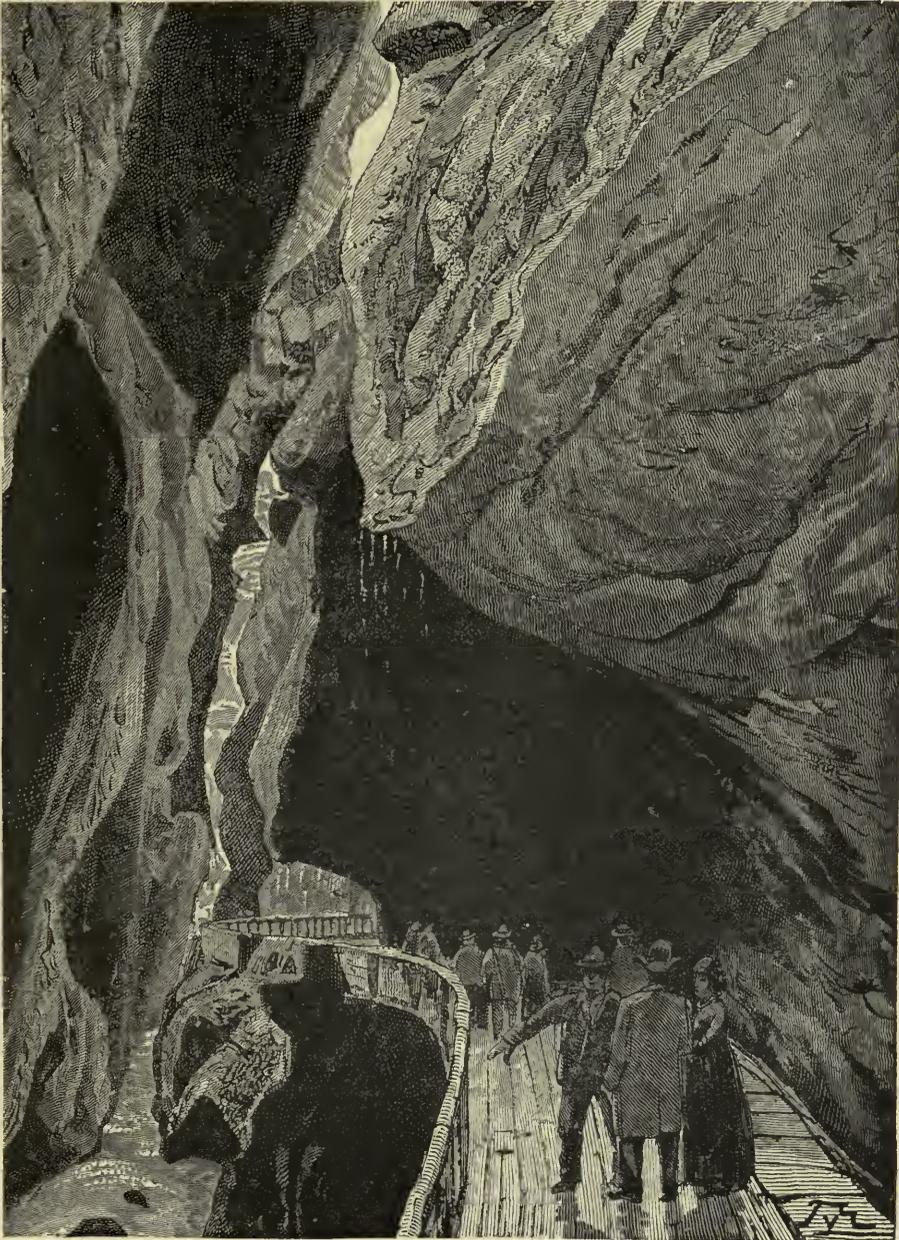
is the gorge known as the Clus, usually called the "Schloss" by the people of the Prättigau.

A long, dusty road leads in a perfectly straight line from the Clus to the railroad, which will take us down the Valley of the Rhine to the Lake of Constance, where our tour began. But we must make one last halt at Ragatz, that we may see the gorge of the Tamina, of which we have heard so much. Ragatz itself too, standing as it does in the midst of the broad bright Valley of the Rhine, with glorious woods all around it, is a very refreshing pleasant place. The houses, which are half-buried in rich green foliage, and are surrounded by gardens, look cheerful and hospitable; and there is an air of elegance and refinement about all that meets the eye, such as shows clearly that the tastes and requirements of the many distinguished visitors who annually come to Ragatz have been carefully studied and provided for. The village is overlooked by two mediæval castles, which are rich in historical associations; and that nothing may be wanting to complete the harmony of the landscape, the horizon is bounded by the beautiful forms and outlines of the ever-glorious Alps. A very little farther on, however, Nature shows herself under a totally different aspect. Grey cliffs rise to right and left of us, with trees clinging desperately to the scanty support afforded them. To the left of the winding road the impetuous Tamina rushes along with a loud roar, and here and there a mountain streamlet comes foaming down the cliff and is lost in a cloud of spray. Alpine roses, saxifrages, and wild creepers of all kinds cover the rocks, and fragments of grey nummulite, which have gradually been worn into strange distorted shapes or marked with wonderful hieroglyphics by the action of the boiling waters, which have been dashing through the gorge from time immemorial. At the far end of the ravine, and looking as if it were jammed in between the cliffs, stands the old bath-house of Pfaeffers, and behind it is the celebrated chasm through which the river rushes with frantic fury. The source of the hot springs is in a cavern among the rocks—

"Dim seen, thro' rising mists and ceaseless show'rs,
The hoary cavern wide-surrounding low'rs.
Still thro' the gap the struggling river toils,
And still below the horrid cauldron boils."

Surely some wonderful drama must have been enacted here long ago in old primeval times. The Titans are all dead and gone now,

however, though they have left their wild scenery behind, and their



GORGE OF THE TAMINA.

stage is now occupied by puny, sickly mortals, who come hither to wonder and muse over the relics of former ages.

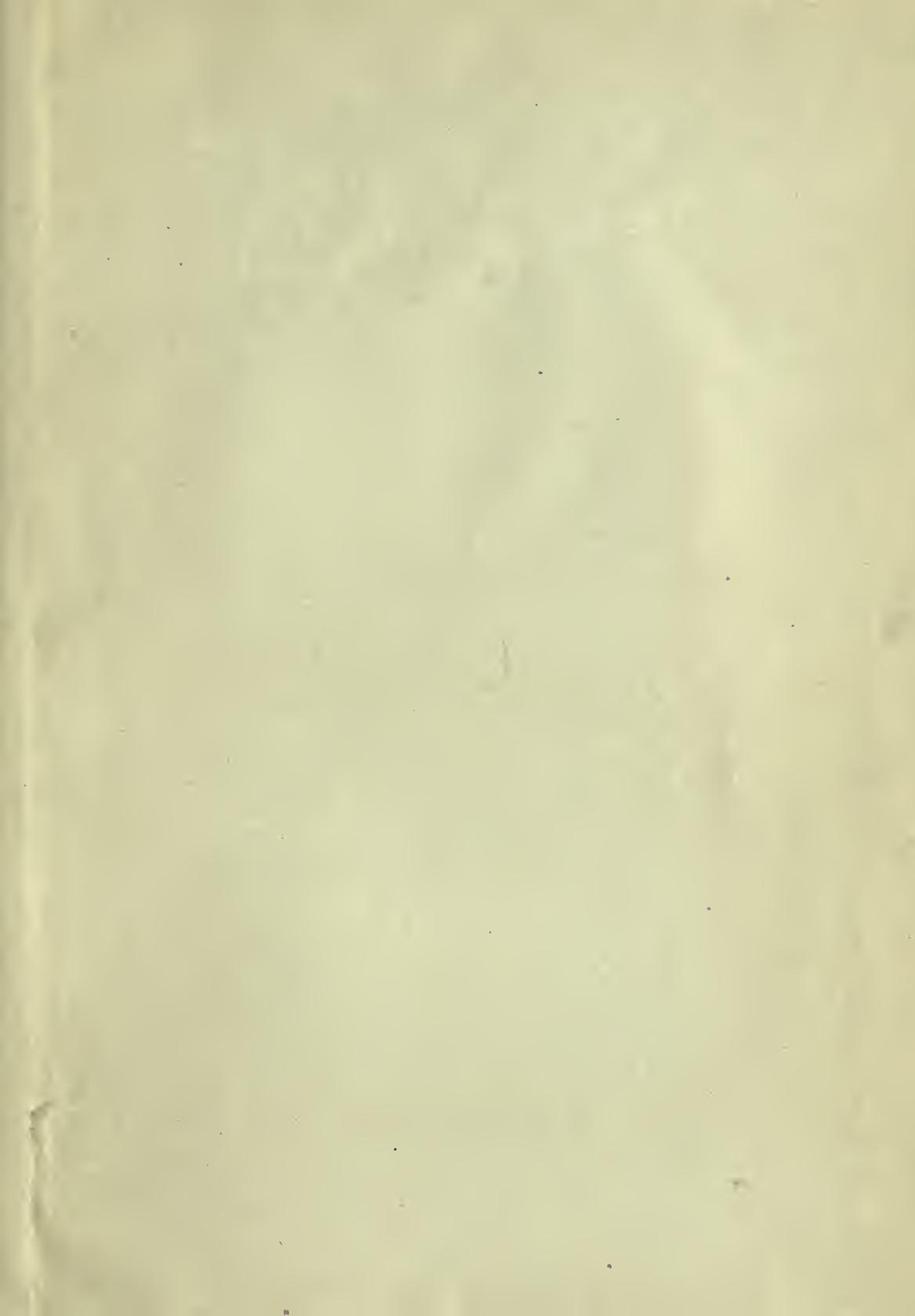
The September sun is sinking rapidly in the west, and its last rays are illuminating the forests and mountains of our beloved Switzerland. The summer is ended and our holiday ramble is over! A good deal of snow has probably fallen upon the mountains of the interior by this time, and the flocks and herds are reluctantly wending their way down into the valleys. We ourselves are passing once more through the Canton of Appenzell, and this evening we shall cross Lake Constance and set foot on German soil again; but the wild, long-drawn notes of the Alpine horn still echo in our ears, and we seem to hear the plaintive song in which the herdsman bids adieu to his favourite Alps:—

“Farewell to the pastures
So sunny and bright!
The herdsman must leave you
When summer takes flight.

“We shall come to the mountains again when the voice
Of the cuckoo is heard, bidding all things rejoice,
When the earth dons her fairest and freshest array,
And the streamlets are flowing, in beautiful May.

“Ye pastures and meadows,
Farewell then once more!
The herdsman must go,
For the summer is o'er.”

THE END.



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