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SWISS MEN AND SWISS MOUNTAINS.

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AND

SWISS MOUNTAINS.

BY ROBERT FERGUSON,

AUTHOR OF "THE PIPE OF REPOSE."

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

TO

THE VERY REVEREND A. C. TAIT,

DEAN OF CARLISLE,

This little Work

IS RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

CONTENTS.

SWISS MEN AND SWISS MOUNTAINS.

CHAPTER I.

THE QUEEN OF THE RHINE.

Bale, l'honneur du Rhin que je veux celebrer,
Et d'un los principal sur toutes honorer,
Car que pourroit-on voir en une cité belle
Qui point ne se rencontre abondamment en elle?
Veux-tu voir des beautés qui pourraient Jupiter
Arracher de son throne et le faire quitter?
Veux-tu voir une ville exquise en batimens?
Les batimens ce sont ses plus beaux ornemens.
Aymes-tu des Marchans l'exercice et hantise?
Bale ne se soustient que par la marchandise.
Et si tu veux du Grec la cognoissance avoir,
Ou du langage Hebrieu les beaux secrets sçavoir,
Bale te fournira d'escoles suffisantes
Pour acquirer bientot ces choses excellentes.
Et pour encore mieux contenter ton desir,
Soulager ton estude, et y prendre plaisir,
Elle te fera voir sa noble imprimerie,
Et l'artifice grand de sa papeterie,
De sorte qu' à bon droit cette ville de Bale
Porte dessus le front le nom d'Imperiale.

—*From* LESCARBOT'S *Tableau de la Suisse, a curious descriptive poem, published in* 1618.

THE name of Basle, or rather of the German Basil, is said to be derived from Basileia, or Basilis—a Queen; in allusion to its opulence and importance, or perhaps to its commanding

position upon the Rhine; and judging from the eulogium of Lescarbot, in the lines heading this chapter, it would seem at one time to have been more deserving of the title than at present. His catalogue of its attractions is certainly very complete, beginning with the ladies and ending with the paper-mills. It is curious, however, that this lively Frenchman should be so much enraptured with a place where such severe sumptuary laws prevailed, and where dancing was strictly prohibited, particularly as the great charm of Fribourg seems to have been that the ladies were not only accomplished dancers, but would not even refuse "*un honeste baisir*," in case the dance required "*de cette forme user*."

One of the oldest descriptions we have of Basle is by Æneas Sylvius, afterwards Pope Pius II., who visited it in the year 1436; and who, in addition to other subjects of commendation, praises it in very high terms for the religious disposition of its people. How strangely to us reads the paragraph next in juxtaposition, which informs us that they were in the habit of employing towards suspected persons such horrible tortures, that death itself was in many cases to be preferred.

The religious character of the people was shown by the quaint and curious inscriptions upon their houses, one of the most singular of which is that recorded in Murray—

> Auf Gott Ich meine hoffnung bau,
> Und wohne in der Alten Sau.
>
> In God I build my hopes of grace—
> The ancient Sow's my dwelling-place.

And upon which the editor of the continental edition has exercised at once his independence of mind and his knowledge of Scotch by an original version—

> In God my hopes of grace I *big*,
> And dwell within the ancient Pig.

The hotel of the *Three Kings* at Basle is an inn of old renown;

for Misson,* who visited Switzerland about the year 1690, says in his "Instructions to Travellers,"—"At Basil, lodge at the Three Kings, where you will be well entertained." The sign is a not unusual one in Switzerland, and in Piedmont extremely common.

It has sometimes occurred to me, that "the remarkable inns of Europe" would make an amusing and an attractive book. One that at all events would come home to the sympathies of a very numerous class of readers; for how large a portion of the traveller's interest is expended in that quarter, the conversation of all tourists, and the pages of every journal, abundantly testify. Some inns there are that are interesting for their antiquity, such as the *Three Moors* at Augsburg, which may have sheltered crusaders on their way to Palestine. Some that are remarkable for the magnitude of their scale; and others for the beauty or the singularity of their position. Nor, though the mere statistics of some of the well-known inns would be interesting, would they be without their legends and their traditions; for many a curious scene must live in the recollection of those who have ministered within their walls. Switzerland is noted for the number of its inns, of which there are no fewer than 14,500, which, the population according to the last census being 2,425,000, gives an inn to every 167 persons. The immense number of tourists, together with the continual pilgrimages going on in the Catholic cantons, must account for this unusually great proportion.

The traveller, arrived at the threshold of Switzerland, and nourishing his anticipations of delight, can scarcely fail to be impressed, as he looks from the long balcony of the *Three Kings* hotel upon the rushing Rhine below, with the thought of the wondrous power and beauty which attend the pouring forth of that stream upon the earth. The glory of water is there, in its

* "A New Voyage to Italy, with curious observations on several other countries —as Germany, Switzerland, &c.; together with useful instructions for those who shall travel thither."—By MAXIMILIAN MISSON.

every varied shape; and, mingled in the tide before him, he sees the foaming Reichenbach, and the Staubach's silken thread, the azure ice-caves of Rosenlaui, and the Jung-Frau's virgin snows.

In the present days of gold-finding, it is natural to expect that the sands of the Rhine, which have long been known to contain a proportion of the precious deposit, should not escape a severe scrutiny. Accordingly, within the last year or two, large samples of the sand have been carried away by the Dutch government from Mannheim, Basle, and Schaffhausen, for examination. "It is not certain yet," says the *Builder*, from which I derive my information, "whether the washing of the gold shall take place *in loco*, or whether whole ship-loads of auriferous sand will be conveyed to Holland, to be washed and smelted there." Gold has also been found in the sands of the Aar, which falls into the Rhine between Schaffhausen and Basle; and it is possible that the gold found in the latter river may be only, or principally, that which is conveyed into it by the Aar. If it should be found at Basle, and not at Schaffhausen, there will then be little doubt that such is the case. It is said, moreover, that the Aar has not been found to contain gold till it has received the torrent of the Reichenbach; and if so, we are brought nearer to the source of the precious deposit. Carion, however, informs us in his chronicle, that gold is to be found in most of the rivers of Switzerland; and relates that the thirteen cantons having stood godfather to Claudia, daughter of Henry III., they presented the Queen with a medal of appropriate device, formed of their native gold, and of the weight of 2000 crowns.

But I do not think that gold—at least in quantity to repay the search—will be found any where so near home as the Rhine. It seems to be a rallying cry of Providence, to replenish the earth and subdue it. When the nomade tribes, in the ages past, found the land straightened and the pastures scant, they struck their tents, and swarmed, like the bees, to another hive.

But man sits rooted in his own civilisation—sits looking on "the fields he knows;" and cramped though he be, and crowded, it is hard for him to move. Tell him of rich pastures and untrodden plains that are ready for a master's hand—he stirs not. But whisper "gold!" and he starts to his feet, and cries "where?"—"in the uttermost parts of the earth." It matters not—he is gone.

If the traveller be not in too great a hurry for lingering on the portal, a day may be passed with pleasure and advantage in rambling over the curious and ancient town of Basle. There are still many quaint old houses and picturesque little bits within its walls; there are many recollections of the past, that rise up before him as he wanders along. And if he muse in the gloomy shade of its cloisters for awhile, and see the tombs of many a Burckhardt laid in funeral state among the proud burghers of Basle—let him think of the one who died in a distant land, and sleeps in his Moslem grave on the banks of the Nile.

Every body knows how, until the end of the last century, it was a part of the religion of the people of Basle to keep their clocks an hour in advance of those of the rest of the world. It is somewhat remarkable, however, that the origin of so singular a practice should not be more clearly traced. One theory accounts for it, by the supposition that the people of Basle were an hour lazier than other people, and required this notable device in order to keep them up to the mark. Another is, that the clock having been struck by lightning, and the hand forced an hour forward, the superstition of the people prevented them from interfering with what they considered to be the act of heaven. A third is, that the attempt of an enemy to surprise the town at a certain appointed hour, was defeated by the town clock, which was to have given the signal, striking an hour in advance, and thus deceiving them into the belief that they were too late; in grateful commemoration of which this tribute of

respect was paid to bad clock-making—like that of the Romans to the geese, which saved the Capitol. A fourth theory—and that which finds favour in the eyes of the respectable traveller, Coxe—is, that it is owing to the fact of the choir of the cathedral being built at a little deviation from the due east, which consequently produced a corresponding variation upon the sundial which was affixed to it. Whatever the origin of the practice might be, it was considered by the people of Basle as an integral part of their constitution; and every proposition made in the council to alter it, met with a signal defeat. Unsuccessful in the open field, the reformers made an attempt to put the clock right by stealth. They shifted the hands half a minute each day; and had already succeeded in putting it back three-quarters of an hour, when, by some means, the people found out that their time was being tampered with, and terrible was the commotion. I can just fancy the speeches made on the occasion—

"Fellow-citizens and countrymen of the immortal Tell! An insidious attempt has just been made on one of our cherished and time-honoured institutions! That which has so long bid defiance to the utmost efforts of their open violence, your enemies have been conspiring in the guilty darkness of secresy to undermine," &c. &c.

And then they would go in a body, with shouts and patriotic songs, and—*put the clock wrong again.* But the day came at last, for all that. The clocks have gone right for fifty years; and now there is railway time at Basle.

Sir Philip Skippon,* who visited Switzerland in 1663, notices a circumstance which shows that extortion is no new vice in that country. "On visiting, when at Basle, the library of Erasmus, then kept in a part of the cathedral, and now, I believe, incorporated with the university library, a book was brought to him, in which he wrote his name; and, in compliance with what

* An account of a journey made through part of the Low Countries, Germany, Italy, and France—by Philip Skippon, Esq. (afterwards Sir Philip Skippon.)

he justly calls "an odd covetous custom," paid a golden ducat. Even on visiting a private collection of curiosities in the same town, the above "odd covetous custom" was not dispensed with—the son of the learned collector himself bringing in the book, and pocketing the fee. People are sometimes apt to forget, when the revolving wheel of life brings up new phases of the same old social vice, that others, and not less repulsive, have disappeared beneath the surface. The traveller of the present day may well congratulate himself, as he passes through Switzerland, on his exemption from the oppressive civilities which used to be practised in former times. In Basle, for instance, it used to be the custom, on the arrival of a stranger, for the authorities to wait upon him with an offering of wine and a complimentary harangue; in return for which honour he was expected to make a handsome present. A still more thoroughly Swiss way of paying respect to a visiter, is mentioned by Baron Zurlauben as practised in some parts of the country, and which consisted in the magistrates *inviting themselves to dine with him at his expense.** It is, however, only a fair set-off to the above, to mention that the town of Basle, in ancient days, paid a substantial tribute to letters, by passing a law, that any poor man who could talk Latin, coming as a stranger to the town, might demand three days' gratuitous support.

Having explored the principal part of the main town, which is situated on the left bank of the river, I crossed over the long bridge to Little Basle. On this side most of the ribbon manufactories appear to be placed; and from one of them a stream of azure water—itself like a long blue ribbon—curled swiftly down a channel in the side of the street; but ere I reached the place from which it issued, it had changed to a tender green. I presently emerged upon the river side, where I noticed a wooden column, upon which were marked the respective levels of the most remarkable inundations—well up among which was that of

* Voyage Pittoresque de la Suisse.

1851. In how many other records is the sorrowful memory of those inundations kept!

Having now fairly done my duty towards Basle—for I had rambled about its streets in every direction the whole day, and lost myself two or three times—I sat down by the river side, to watch the noble tide flow by, and gaze on the handsome dwellings and terraced gardens of the aristocratic burghers across the river. Misson, in his "Instructions to Travellers," before quoted, recommends visiters to Basle to be present, if possible, "at the wedding of some rich burgher, the public feast of the magistrates, or that of the professors of the university." This, by the way, reminds me of the recommendation given to travellers in one of the continental guides to London, published during the time of the Great Exhibition, not on any account to omit dining with the lord mayor, or with one of the great city companies. Not being able to be present at the wedding of any rich burgher, I lighted a cigar, and sat, instead, watching their pleasant dwellings across the river, till I fell into that state of mind which almost every one has experienced, (particularly with a cigar in his mouth,) in which self seems to merge into the scene before it; and I could almost imagine that I had lived all my life in one of those quiet houses by the river side—listened to the sound of those cathedral bells—smoked in that green, familiar garden—and watched the end of my cigar whirled away by the eddying Rhine.

But in that panorama of the Rhine, the Hotel of the Three Kings was a conspicuous object; and no fit of poetic abstraction prevented me from remembering that there was a table d'hôte there at six o'clock. The next morning the washerwoman returned me three shirts which I had given out to wash; and the spell which detained me at Basle was at an end.

CHAPTER II.

THE ROAD TO ZURICH.

Of old sat Freedom on the heights,
The thunders breaking at her feet;
Above her shook the starry lights;
She heard the torrents meet.
* * * * *
Then stept she down thro' town and field,
To mingle with the human race;
And part by part to men reveal'd
The fulness of her face.

TENNYSON.

FROM Basle I took the diligence to Zurich. A little way out of Brugg we passed the abbey of Königsfelden, founded by the Empress Elizabeth and Agnes of Hungary, on the spot where the Emperor Albert, husband of the one and father of the other, was assassinated two years before. How much religion went in those days to the building of an abbey, we may judge by the ferocious revenge which Agnes, unable to lay hands on the conspirators themselves, took upon their innocent families and friends, when, on occasion of the butchery of sixty-three guiltless victims before her at one time, she exclaimed, "Now I bathe in May-dew!" The actual murderers succeeded in making their escape, with the exception of Wart, who was undoubtedly present, though his share in the deed is disputed. He was sentenced to be broken alive upon the wheel; but the usual "stroke of mercy" was denied, and he lingered for two days and two nights before death relieved him from his sufferings. I know few stories more affecting than that of the de-

votion of Wart's wife in the hours of his long agony. During the day she concealed herself in the neighbourhood, and as soon as it was dark, eluding the guards, she contrived to climb up to the scaffold, and kneeling by his side through the slow and terrible night, wiped away the sweat of anguish from his brow, and whispered into his ear the consolations of faith and love. Before the morning broke, she hastened away to hide herself near the spot, and to pray that, when she came again, she might find him dead.

There came in the morning a gay troop of knights to see the sight; and bitterly spoke one, when he looked upon the unmutilated face. "Are there no crows in your country?" was his stern demand. It was the cruel Agnes in disguise.

Strange indeed it is, that two such passions should have a common origin of woman's affection—that the same source should send forth such sweet waters and such bitter!

At Baden, the most ancient, and still one of the most important watering-places of Switzerland, we waited for an hour, until the train was ready to start for Zurich. Though gambling is certainly not a vice of the prudent and careful Swiss; yet, in the time of the Romans, this place would seem to have been almost as bad as its German namesake at the present day. There is a field in the neighbourhood which has received the name of *the dice* meadow (*Würfel Wiese*), on account of the dice which have been found in it. Not however I think, precisely as Murray has it, so much from the *quantity* of dice discovered, as from the fact of their being found there at all. For strange to say, for a long time after their first discovery, they were supposed to be natural productions; and many a grave dissertation was wasted upon them by the philosophers and learned societies of the age. Scheutzer, in his *Natur-geschichte des Schweizerlandes*, gives representations of several of them, and enters into an elaborate argument, which one would have thought the most cursory glance at his accompanying illustrations would have

rendered quite unnecessary, to prove that they are artificial, and not natural productions. He had, he tells us, two in his possession, for each of which he had paid two louis-d'or; and the man from whom he obtained them had only one left, for which, on the ground of the bareness of the market, he had the conscience to ask fifty louis. It would seem from this, that the quantity discovered had not been very large.

If the philosopher made such mistakes about the character of the Roman remains, well might the illiterate peasantry do the same, and we shall not be surprised at the instance mentioned by Hirschfeld in his *Briefe über die Schweiss*, written towards the end of the last century. He tells us that a statue of the Egyptian Isis, who was worshipped by the Romans as the goddess presiding over medicinal waters, having been found at this place, was set up in a hall of the bath-house, near the place reserved for the baths of the poor, and that the peasants seeing it when they came to bathe, mistook it for the image of a certain native Saint Verene, much celebrated for the cures which she performed, and were in the habit of paying honour to it accordingly. He relates another, and a more curious instance of similar superstition, which occurred at a place called Steinen, where a beautiful Roman pavement was found, containing in the centre the head of a satyr. This the peasantry of the neighbourhood, who probably traced a likeness in it to some picture in one of their own churches, immediately pronounced to be the head of Moses, and the place where it was discovered they assumed to be his grave. The fame of this discovery soon spread far and wide, and pilgrims began to flock to it from all the neighbouring districts. At length the authorities, by way of putting a stop to this unauthorized worship, ordered a hole to be dug, and the beautiful pavement to be once more committed to the earth.

The carriages upon the line from Baden to Zurich are similar to those in use in America, as also on most of the German lines, not being divided into separate compartments as with us,

but having the seats ranged in rows as if in a room, with a pathway down the middle. This plan affords such manifold advantages over our own, that I very much wonder it has never been adopted in England. In the first place, instead of the delay caused by stopping to take tickets at the windows, the guard can walk quietly through the train and collect them at his leisure. Secondly, if any thing goes wrong, either in the way of accident to the carriages, or misbehaviour among the passengers, it cannot go on long without his finding it out. Thirdly, it gives the opportunity of warming the carriages by a stove in the centre, so that the passengers need not suffer from cold as they do with us. And lastly, the amusement of watching one's fellow-travellers, quite compensated in my opinion for the German atmosphere of smoke, and even for the difference between fifteen miles an hour and thirty.

Near me were seated a Swiss lady and gentleman, the former of whom was without any covering for the head except a coiffure consisting of a scrap of gauze. I set them down, according to the fashion in which one forms theories about one's fellow-travellers, as persons who had come out for a day's pleasure, and were returning to Zurich in the evening. They turned out, however, to be pilgrims on their way to the festival at Einsiedeln, where I met them a few days afterwards, the lady still wearing upon her head the same bit of gossamer.

In the course of about an hour we were at our journey's end, and the *Bear* received me in his capacious embrace.

In each of two works which came in my way about the same time, I found a remark relating to Zurich, and each was curious enough in its line. The one was from the travels of Sir Philip Skippon, who, in a queer, confused sentence, informs his readers, that at Zurich "all of the unmarried women, and most of the men, wear ruffs, and long brushy beards." Though the sense leads us to conclude his intended meaning to be, that all of the unmarried women wore ruffs, and that most of the men wore long

brushy beards; yet, as far as the syntax and construction of the passage are concerned, they are very positive in assigning to the young ladies of Zurich the most unfeminine ornament of a long brushy beard.

The other was from a little work called, *Les Pelerinages de la Suisse*, published at Brussels by the *Société Nationale pour la Propagation des Bons Livres*. It is a compendious description of the *chronologie morale* of Zurich, which it sums up in five words, "commerce, richesses, orgueil, heresie, corruption!" Tolerably bigoted this, even for a society for the propagation of good books. How intolerance must poison the judgment, and the moral perceptions, when a man can travel through beautiful Switzerland, and be subdued into no charity; when he can look on Zurich with all its industry, and comfort, and its honourable zeal for intellectual improvement, and wring out from his heart nothing but burning drops of gall!

It was in the year 1830, that Zurich began the educational movement by the establishment of a university, which has had the assistance of many distinguished men, political exiles from their own country, who have repaid by their services the protection which she afforded them. Among these was the celebrated Oken, a native of Jena, who held the professorship of natural history in the university, and whose works are distinguished by their profundity of knowledge, and boldness of speculation, mixed with a good deal that is whimsical, and a little that is absurd. He died in the spring of 1851, at the age of 73.

Switzerland has recently lost another of the most illustrious of her adopted sons, the venerable Zschokke, who died at Aarau in the summer of 1848, full of years and honour. Few writers have exercised so powerful and wide-spread an influence over a nation as Heinrich Zschokke. His history of Switzerland is one of the most popular ever written of any country; his social and political writings are held in national estimation; and his family prayers are used almost universally throughout the households

of Protestant Switzerland and Germany. I cannot help a sort of feeling that it gives an additional interest to the works of a great man, when, as in the case of Zschokke, they proceed directly from, and bear on their title-page the name of the little town in which he lives. It seems to stamp a sort of individuality upon them, and to invest them somewhat more with the character of direct messages from himself.

On the following morning I embarked upon the lake for Horgen, where the diligence from the Rigi meets the steamer. Beautiful are the shores of the Zurich-see in the beauty of fertility and cultivation—of azure waters and of green fields, dotted with white and cheerful-looking houses. Most of the handsome dwellings upon its shores are the residences of the *millocrats* of Zurich, to use a barbarous word which many people employ now-a-days who ought to know better. There might have been "heresy" on board the boat; but at any rate there was no "corruption," for every thing was beautifully clean and neat.

About a fourth of the steamer's passengers left at Horgen for the Rigi, a thing to be noted. For the lake of Zurich is one of the great highways of the land, and yet a fourth of the passengers, not as a casual occurrence, but as about the ordinary average of the season, were bound to see the sunrise from a mountain top!

CHAPTER III.

THE QUEEN OF MOUNTAINS.

Lull'd by the sound of pastoral bell
Rude Nature's pilgrims did we go
From the dread summit of the Queen
Of Mountains, through a deep ravine,
Where, in her holy chapel, dwells
Our Lady of the Snow.

WORDSWORTH.

THE name of the Rigi has been usually derived from *Regina Montium*, "the Queen of Mountains," under which name it is described by several of the older writers. This however is, as Murray observes, a very fanciful derivation, and a much more probable one is that quoted by Businger, in his *Stadt Luzern*, from *Mons Rigidus*, the firm or compact mountain, in contradistinction to Mount Pilate, which originally bore the name of Fracmont—*mons fractus*—the broken mountain; or perhaps to its neighbour the Rossberg—the fall of a portion of which, owing to the looseness of its formation, produced such disastrous results at the beginning of the present century.

The traveller bound for the Rigi does well to make his ascent from Goldau; for there, gazing on the terrific effect produced by the fall of but a fragment from the neighbouring Rossberg, he is enabled to form some idea of the scale upon which God has formed these giants of the earth. A curious thing it is to look round upon that plain, buried in the ruins a hundred feet deep, with huge fragments of rock flung, many of them, far up the Rigi sides, and then to look up at that seeming little streak

on the mountain top, whence the slice has peeled off into the plain. So, when one of the caliphs sought to level the smallest of the three pyramids of Gizeh, after collecting an army of workmen, and labouring for many months, when at last he gave up the task in despair, though the earth was strewn with the fragments, the marks of his violence were scarcely to be traced upon the structure.

I dined at the *Cheval Blanc*, a nice little inn which has risen up amid the wreck of this ruined plain. A small artificial eminence has been formed close by, from which a good view is obtained of the scene of desolation. All around it are strewn vast heaps of rubbish and mighty fragments of rock, as if a mountain badly put together had come to pieces in its place.

I remarked at different places in the canton a print illustrative of the catastrophe, and published by the government for the benefit of the sufferers—one of that period when it seemed to be considered necessary for the proper elucidation of the subject, to introduce into the foreground the figures of two men, one of whom points out to the other with a stick the object intended to be represented. I respected that trumpery print, published by the government of a canton in a great emergency, for the simple and primitive state of things which it seemed to indicate.

In the traveller's book, at the *Cheval Blanc*, was a note by a traveller just returned from Schwytz, warmly recommending an inn of the same name in that town, for the civility of its landlord, and the attractions of his "charming" daughter; and, as in duty bound, I made a note of it, intending to go through Schwytz on my way to Einsiedeln.

The party with whom I ascended the Rigi consisted of French and Germans; two of the latter were young ladies, who, bending their necks, and stepping out more boldly than is taught in the dancing-school, kept up with the best of our party. Nor did they omit, fatigued though they might be, to turn aside and kneel for a moment (for they were Catholics) at some of the

little wayside chapels consecrated to "our Lady of the Snow." The father of these young ladies was a particularly fierce-looking man, with one of those twisted, cat-like mustaches, which give such a peculiar ferocity to the appearance. He turned out, however, to be a remarkably quiet and inoffensive man, who blushed confusedly as he stammered a reply in bad French when he was spoken to.

We had almost reached the top when we were overtaken by an Englishman, bathed in perspiration, who had, as he informed us, made the ascent against time in some incredibly small number of minutes. Soon we were snugly lodged in the inn on the Rigi Culm, and in a little while the guests were all assembled at supper in its spacious *salle*. Within and without—how striking was the contrast! within was a clinking of glasses, a clattering of plates, a cloud of smoke, and a hubbub of many tongues. Without, the moon shone clear and cold on the naked mountain top, and the ground stiffened silently in the still and frosty air.

A strange thing it seems, when one thinks of it, that on the top of any given mountain in Europe, shall be nightly collected a company of fifty or sixty persons from all parts of the old world, and even from many parts of the new, and that for any object less potent than a religious one. And yet is not that object somewhat akin to a religious one, for it is an appreciation of a part of the divine mind? When the Almighty rested from his labours, he looked on every thing that he had made, and behold it was very good. Now, it is not to all men, it has not been in all time, that every thing is good. The plain, yielding bread to strengthen man's heart, and wine to gladden his face; the forest, with its fruitful trees, and its shelter for the hunter's game; the lake, the river with its myriad fish—O yes!—the fertile plain is good, and the forest, and the teeming lake; but the lonely mountain, the terrible glacier, and the awful cataract? Yes! and he who can feel that they too are good, completes a link

upwards towards his Creator. Even poor Shelley, when he looked upon the glory of Mount Blanc, could exclaim, amid his sorrows and his doubts :—

> "Thou hast a voice—great mountain! to repeal
> Large codes of fraud and woe."

And doubt not, ye who gaze from the mountain top on the magnificence of God, that He who once pronounced it good, still looks down with like pleasure on the beauty which he has made.

We stand in the chill of the morning, in the cold and grey before sunrise, like ancient worshippers of the sun, watching for the first beam of the god whom we adore. We look down upon a wonderful white sky of mist between us and the earth; but so far beneath our feet, that we think at the first sight that it is the earth which has been snowed over in the night. Slowly the veil unfurls, and all the glorious panorama of mountain, and plain, and silver lake is spread before our eyes; and yet, I must confess, the view did not impress me so much as that of the mighty white curtain which at first concealed it from our sight.

The sunrise being over, we have time to look at each other, and to exchange greetings. There are my friends of the previous evening, the two young ladies with their ferocious-looking father, and a young countryman whom they have picked up. There are one or two couples (there almost always are) with their arms round each other's waists, couples who have just been made one flesh, and seem holding together till the splice becomes consolidated. Most of the party are trim and ready for the day; but among others, and particularly the English, there is a considerable arrear of brushing and shaving to be done. And now they all turn in, some lingeringly, and others with remarkable alacrity, to breakfast.

As every body gets up at the same time on the Rigi, every body breakfasts at about the same time; and, there being nothing else to be seen, they all take their departure nearly together: consequently, when the party happens to be large, there may be

a little scrambling for breakfasts and for bills. I do not see why there need be any delay about the latter at any rate; for supposing wines, &c., to be paid for as ordered, the rest might easily be reduced to a simple printed form. Every body has supper, and every body goes to bed; no one would think of going away before breakfast—and no one would think of staying after it. I gave the landlord a £5 note to change, remarking at the same time, "I presume you know what that is?"

"I do," he replied; and, handing me five shining Victorias, added, "I presume *you* know what those are?" The Rigi, at any rate, is not

"Sacred from Threadneedle-street."

And now the pathways are dotted with returning groups, and the Rigi Culm is left to its solitude for awhile, till evening shall bring back its array of fresh faces, and the same unvarying round of suppers and sunrise—breakfasts and bills. In the mean time there is an interval of rest—

"For now the noonday quiet holds the hill."

I engaged a man to carry my luggage down the mountain. He was not a very intelligent man, but still I thought him sufficiently so to carry my bag. He turned out, in fact, to be rather too much so; for if he had had no ideas at all we would have got on well enough; but unfortunately he had one idea, which being that there was no place in the world so well worth seeing as Kussnacht, proved to me, who did not want to go to Kussnacht, practically inconvenient. On first starting, and while deliberating, with my Keller in my hand, which of the paths to take, he volunteered the information, that "at Kussnacht is Tell's chapel, and the *hohle gasse*—it is very fine."

I, however, made up my mind to go down to Weggis, of which I informed him, and he responded with a "jo" (ja.) As, however, his "jo" had rather a dubious sound, and as he still kept repeating at intervals the above piece of information about

Kussnacht, I thought it prudent, whenever we came to a place where two paths met, to remind him that it was to Weggis I was going, and he always replied with his usual ambiguous "jo." At last, judging from the direction we were taking that we could not be going towards Weggis, I stopped short, and said to him, "Are we going to Kussnacht?"

"Jo," he replied, and this time with a heartiness about which there could be no mistake. It is never pleasant to go back, and as fate seemed to have determined that I was to go to Kussnacht, and we were already a long way on the road towards it, I struggled no longer against my destiny, but went to Kussnacht, where, though not much in a humour for appreciating Tell, I saw the *hohle gasse*—a green lane much like other green lanes, where he shot Gessler from behind a tree, and the chapel, much like other chapels, erected in commemoration of the act.

After which I made the best of my way to Lucerne, in a bad humour with my guide, whom I scolded whenever there was any pretext for doing so; and feeling towards Tell (who was also partly to blame) much like the Athenian, who was disgusted at hearing Aristides always called "the just."

CHAPTER IV.

THE HEART OF SWITZERLAND.

Majestic Berne, high on her guardian steep
Holding a central station of command,
Might well be call'd this noble body's HEAD;
Thou, lodged 'mid mountainous intrenchments deep,
Its HEART; and ever may the heroic land,
Thy name, O SCHWYTZ, in happy freedom keep!
WORDSWORTH.

I TOOK the steamer from Lucerne to Brunnen, thence intending to proceed on foot to Schwytz. We stopped at Weggis to take in some passengers from the Rigi, and all of them happened to be English—a fact upon which a German standing near me remarked, observing in a low voice to his friend, "*Alle Engländer.*" One of my countrymen, however, unfortunately knew enough of German to understand the remark, which he seemed to interpret as an affront to his nationality, and to consider himself bound to resent accordingly.

"All English!" he replied, in a rude voice; "yes, to be sure we are, and what of that?" and then called out aloud to his companion—"I say, there is a fellow here says we are all English;" while the poor German stood by, wondering what he could have done thus to rouse the wrath of the British lion. It was a great pity the ignorance of my countryman did not extend one degree further.

On entering the hotel at Brunnen, I found the landlady, a little humpbacked woman, singing, and accompanying herself—not without a certain degree of taste—on a piano in the *salle-a-*

manger. I glanced at her music—it was a translation of Scott's hymn to the Virgin, from the "Lady of the Lake."

Very pleasantly is Schwytz situated in its fertile valley at the mountain foot. Above it rises the picturesque Mythen, clothed with verdure, and dotted with white chalêts half-way up, and then shooting up boldly, with its two bare granite peaks, into the blue sky, the white feathery clouds resting on its summit like a plume. The houses are, many of them, large and good; and the town, though destitute of any particular trade or manufacture, appears neat and thriving. Certainly, if the number of pianos be any index to the prosperity of a place, the jingling I heard, as I strolled through the streets of Schwytz, would give it a high rank, though I doubt if the result be altogether what the corn-law rhymer expected, when he indulged the wish, that every cottage in England might have its piano.

We made our way to the Rœssli, or Cheval Blanc, which, though figuring in Murray as two distinct inns, is in fact one and the same, a horse in Switzerland, at least upon a sign-board, being always a white one. We were received by Miss ——, the object of the Goldau raptures, an obliging and cheerful young woman, and "charming"—so far as a woman can be without being pretty. As was the case in the inn at Brunnen, she had her piano in the *salle-a-manger;* and, when not otherwise engaged, she sat down and played a polka, and then jumped up and changed the dishes.

This was all delightfully primitive; and as I looked from the window upon the unpretending grave of Aloys Reding, in the churchyard across the way, I could fancy that I was at length in the midst of a simple-minded people, and far away from the taint of the great Babylon. But Schwytz, small as it is, possesses its daily paper; and I took up a number which lay upon the table. The very first thing that met my eye was, I am ashamed to say, a piece of English rascality. It was one of those shameless quack advertisements with which so many of our

papers teem ; but here the villany was enhanced by a most glowing testimonial from *The Times!* a paper which—nor does it stand alone—disdains even to dirty its fingers with its advertisements. *The Times* could not find language to express its sense of the value of the medicine—the man who invented it was a benefactor to his race—and I think they had even had the impudence to make the editor say, that he had taken it himself. To show the system upon which these things are conducted, I could scarcely take up a paper in any part of Switzerland without finding the same advertisement in it ; but it was only in a sequestered little place like Schwytz that they could venture to add this audacious falsehood.

Nor do such advertisements appear in vain. I travelled, a few days afterwards, in the *coupé* of a diligence with a respectable and intelligent Swiss merchant, who, among other topics, inquired with more than usual interest after the welfare of a certain Dr. Morison.

"Which Dr. Morison do you mean?" I asked ; "the man who translated the Bible into Chinese?"

"No," he replied ; "I mean the celebrated physician of that name."

"What! the man who makes the pills?"

"Yes," he said; "that is the person I mean."

"Doctor Morison has, I believe, been dead some years ; but I have no doubt the trade is still carried on, for it is much too good a thing to be given up."

"True," he replied ; "it is certainly an admirable medicine."

"I did not mean it in that sense," I said; "we in England look upon the thing as an arrant piece of humbug."

"Well," he replied, "all I know is, that some years ago I was ill of a complaint which had baffled all the doctors I consulted, when, at last, I was recommended to try these pills of Morison's. I did so; and in a short time I was completely cured."

To this, of course, I could make no reply, particularly as I had never tried Morison's pills myself.

Many of our countrymen complain of being cheated by the Swiss. It may be some small satisfaction to them to know, that we *do* cheat them in return. Or rather, perhaps, my reader may observe, the story in question proves that you *cannot* cheat the Swiss; they will always contrive to get value for their money. This person, for instance, took Morison's pills, and—was cured. I had felt a little national pride on hearing the humpbacked woman at Brunnen singing the poetry of Scott. But what, after all, is fame? for one person in Switzerland who sings Scott's poetry, there are doubtless ten who swallow Morison's pills.

I had seen the charming daughter referred to in the Goldau paragraph, but the civil father had not yet made his appearance; so I inquired of Miss —— what had become of him. The question seemed to afford the young lady a great deal of amusement; for she repeated it to her sister, and they both laughed together for a long time before I could get an answer. At last she said, "Il n'y a pas un papa—il n'y a q'une mama," and then they both fell to laughing again; but what the joke was, connected with that query, or whether there was any, I could not make out. Perhaps it might have been, that the Goldau paragraph had misled previous travellers into making the same uncalled-for inquiry.

CHAPTER V.

PILGRIMAGE TO EINSIEDELN.

"There is a path over the Mythenberg, from Einsiedeln to Schwytz, shorter than the carriage-road."—MURRAY.

AT Schwytz I met with an Englishman, with whom I had made an appointment to ride over the mountain to Einsiedeln, and witness the ceremonies of the annual fête.

We had made no previous bargain about the horses; and it was not until the gaunt and bony steeds were produced, that we thought of inquiring about the price.

"Five-and-twenty francs each," said the guide. "Monstrous!" we exclaimed; "and for such horses as these, too!"

"But the road is very bad," urged the man.

"That is a reason why the horses should be good."

Hearing the dispute, Miss —— came to the door, and innocently inquired what was the matter. "Why," we replied indignantly, "he asks five-and-twenty francs each for the horses!"

"Oh!" said she, in the character of *amicus curiæ*—"that is really not too much." (Fie! Miss ——; that was not quite fair.)

"Mais—Mademoiselle," we replied; "it is more than the horses are worth if we had to buy them."

However, there was no redress. Nobody among the bystanders appeared to be on our side; no ancient and venerable landamman came out (as he might have done in a novel), and

demanded if Switzerland was thus to be dishonoured in its very heart's core. So we made the best of it, and set off.

The guide had said the road was bad. If he had said there was no road at all, it would have been nearer the truth. There did appear to have been a horse-road; but innovations had been made which almost deprived it of the character. In many places we were obliged to dismount, and drag our horses after us—squeezing them through gates, and dodging them over planks which were evidently never intended for horses; while pilgrim after pilgrim passed us on foot, staring wonderingly, as he went by, at the trouble we were taking to keep up our dignity. To complete our misfortunes, there was such a dense mist over the valley as to prevent us from catching a glimpse of the prospect we had anticipated.

On the summit of the pass is a little chalêt, which supplies refreshments to the pilgrims on their way to Einsiedeln. Here we stopped to rest our horses; and, as usual in such case, we considered ourselves bound to have something "for the good of the house." We asked for milk, but they had no milk—kirchwasser, but they had no kirchwasser; so we called for a glass of wine, which was the only thing they had. The old woman tried hard to persuade us to come into the house, that the *umbra* might be reckoned in the bill; but we preferred the fresh air outside. So she brought out a table, on which she placed a bottle of wine, a plate of cakes, a jug of water, and a basin of sugar; and I saw that we were marked out for victims. We tasted the wine, found it desperately sour, and washed away the taste with a glass of water. We then inquired how much we had to pay, and were told four francs. We exclaimed against the imposition; but of course it was of no use. However, as we had to pay for it, we determined not to leave it to the greedy old woman, and told our guide to finish it. This he did *con amore*—emptied the bottle of wine, cleared the plate of cakes, and (but that was not fair) pocketed half the

sugar. Having done which, he immediately pronounced the wine to be extremely bad; and all the rest of the way he kept muttering to himself, as he went along, "schlecter wein!" We thought at first that it was only a prudent precaution, on his part, to prevent us from thinking that we had conferred any benefit upon him, which might be taken into account when the question of trinkgeld came to be settled. But we soon found that the bad wine (in conjunction with whatever he might have taken on his own account) was really beginning to take some effect upon him; and from the rolling of his eyes, and the unsteadiness of his legs, we were at one time under serious apprehensions that we might have to drag him after us, as well as the horses.

It is in sequestered little places like this that travellers are sometimes the most outrageously imposed upon—where avarice is checked by no restraining fear of killing the goose that lays the golden eggs. One of the most ingenious apologies for an exorbitant charge that I knew, was related me by a traveller, who was one of a small party that stopped at a chalêt on some little-frequented route, and had some milk, for which they were charged seven francs. On remonstrating at the extravagance of such a charge, as they had had nothing but a little milk, the woman replied—

"Yes—but there were cutlets, and a variety of other things, which you might have had."

"True," they replied; "but we did not have them."

"That was your own fault," she replied; "we did our part in providing them—and travellers have only themselves to blame if they do not take them."

Every medal has its reverse. Let Cumberland furnish a contrast to this; and *apropos* of milk. In company with a friend, I visited the druidical circle called "Long Meg and her Daughters;" and we stopped at a public-house to have some milk, and rest half an hour in its quiet parlour. On coming

out, I asked the woman of the house how much there was to pay, and she told me fourpence. I gave her sixpence, and she handed me the change.

"Never mind the change, my good woman," said I.

"But the milk is only fourpence," replied she.

"I know; but I give you sixpence."

"*But the milk is only fourpence,*" she replied, in a tone of decision mingled with surprise. She seemed in her own mind to strip the proposition of its conventionalism, and to recoil from the idea of receiving twopence as a present.

Glad to find so much honest independence left in Cumberland, I marvelled, and rejoiced, and went my way.

We now began to descend towards the Alpthal; and presently our path was abruptly cut off by a hedge right across it. Our guide was completely at fault; and after vainly reconnoitring for some time, we luckily fell in with a woman, who seemed to live in the neighbourhood. There was a short parley—she showed us the way; there was another parley—and finally he gave her a piece of money. O depth of cupidity! she had covenanted to show him the way *for so much!* Nay—cheat the Englishman as ye will; but there should be honour among thieves—and "corbies do not pick out corbies' eyes." *

We got into the Alpthal, along which we pursued our way to Einsiedeln, through a bleak and sterile country, entirely devoid of attraction. We fell in with several small parties of pilgrims, men and women, on their way to the festival. Most of them were beguiling the journey by appropriate prayers, which one of the party recited, while the rest all joined in the responses; and I am sorry to say that our guide, under the influence of the

* This however is, as all travellers must have observed, a common practice in Switzerland; and the ancient law of Unterwalden, which enjoins on all the inhabitants of the canton to direct strangers upon their road without fee or reward, is by no means an unmeaning one. Upon the generous disposition, however, of my companion—an officer and an Irishman—the above incident made a great impression; and it was a long time before he could get it out of his mind.

bad wine which he had taken, sometimes broke in upon their devotions with remarks not altogether befitting a good Catholic.

One of the first sights we saw, on entering the dining-room of the *Paon* at Einsiedeln, was an Englishman whom we had left in bed when we started early in the morning from Schwytz, and who had come round by the diligence for three francs, quietly finishing his dinner. The hotel was like an English country inn during an election. Every room in the house seemed crammed with people getting their dinner, and all was chatter and confusion. But order soon resulted, at least as far as we were concerned; for in less than half an hour we had a capital dinner, consisting of several courses, served up to us—and were as well waited upon as if we had had the whole house to ourselves. Nor, though the charges are raised during the festival, was our bill, when we departed, otherwise than a moderate one.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BLACK VIRGIN OF SWITZERLAND.

"By his leave, good uncle, and yours, I will bestow these splendid earrings on the shrine of Our Lady of Einsiedeln, to express our general gratitude to her protecting favour."—ANNE OF GEIERSTEIN.

THERE is something very imposing in the appearance of this stately monastery, with its dependent village, situated in this bleak and sterile Alpine valley, at an elevation of 3000 feet above the sea, and subject to a rigorous climate. The church presents a handsome and commanding front towards the town, which is grouped around in a somewhat semicircular form, leaving a spacious area between for the performance of the out-door fêtes. As we were crossing this area on our way to the church, we met, among the crowd of people, a file of priests, one of whom gave us a cordial salute as we passed. We were rather at a loss to understand, at the time, why a priest of Einsiedeln should be so glad to see us; but when I was afterwards informed that there were two Englishmen among their number, it immediately occurred to me that this must have been one of them, who recognised his countrymen, and whose thoughts were perhaps carried back for the moment to an unforgotten home in England.

The church was crowded with pilgrims—mostly peasants of the very poorest class—and around its sides were stuck rows of women, sitting with their old legs stretched out before them against the wall. I noticed some of them who seemed to be exceedingly devout; but on looking at them a second time, I saw

that they were fast asleep—and no wonder; for being too poor to afford a lodging, many of them take up their quarters entirely in the church. Even the very poorest of them, however, had with her a sort of little band-box, filled with the curiosities of the place—beads, images, and gaudily-coloured prints. The sale of these, and other necessaries for pilgrims, constitutes the trade of the place, and in the production of religious prints and books, it has no fewer than sixteen printing-presses employed.

We squeezed our way among the rest of the pilgrims in front of the shrine, to get a look at the celebrated Black Virgin of Switzerland. This image has been supposed by some writers to be an Egyptian figure of Isis, with the infant Horus in her arms, and to have been brought into Europe by some travelling merchant, or by some pilgrim returning from the East. This supposition seems to me not destitute of probability, having observed elsewhere in Switzerland what I conceive to be traces of the Egyptian mythology. Above the portal under the tower of the church of St. Nicholas at Friburg, is a bas-relief representing the last judgment, in which occur the figures of a devil with a pig's head, dragging the wicked after him to hell, and an angel weighing mankind in a pair of scales. Now, we know that among the ancient Egyptians the pig was an emblem of the Evil Being; and on seeing the above representation, an Egyptian traveller can scarcely fail to be reminded of similar scenes in the ancient sculptures, wherein the good and evil actions of the dead are weighed by Anubis, and the soul of the wicked carried off under the form of a pig.

We may, perhaps, find a reason to account for its being adopted as an image of the Virgin in the passage, "I am black but comely"—from the song of Solomon—an allusion which the prevailing sentiment of the age might not unnaturally interpret as having reference to the Virgin Mary. This part of the Scriptures, it is well known, was in peculiar favour with the divines of the middle age, who found curious and mystic mean-

ings in almost every line of it—so much so, that St. Bernard preached no fewer than twenty-two sermons upon the first three verses. In a little history of the abbey, which I purchased on the spot, the colour of the image is ascribed partly to the smoke of the ever-burning lamps which surround it—a cause obviously insufficient, as it would apply to many other images as well as this.

The average number of pilgrims for the twenty-two years ending 1840, has been, according to the history above quoted, about 134,000; the numbers having fallen off from 180,000 in 1835, to 132,000 in 1837, which is probably to be attributed to the difficulties thrown by the Austrian government in the way of pilgrims from the Tyrol. Independently of individual pilgrimages, there are, according to the same authority, about seventy parishes which make regularly once a year a solemn procession to the shrine. Since the Reformation, the number of pilgrims is, of course, very much reduced. From Zurich alone, for a period of about 170 years, one person out of every family in the town, making a total of about 1500 individuals, went regularly in procession once a year, in fulfilment of a vow made before a battle with the Austrians.

The convent has been four times totally, and twice partially, destroyed by fire. It has suffered reverses at different times from other causes; but at the present time its funds are said to be in a prosperous condition, and the revenue derived from its possessions, and from the contributions of the numerous pilgrims, must be considerable. Mr. Mügge* was informed, but he does not vouch for the truth of the statement, that it is in the habit of sending out agents, like the travellers of a commercial house, through the countries of the Rhine, Alsace, the Black Forest, and Bavaria, for the purpose of taking orders, and receiving payment for the sale of masses and indulgences, from those who may not be able to undertake the pilgrimage in person.

* Switzerland in 1847.

The ceremonies attending the festival are so fully described in Murray, that it would be superfluous to repeat the description. Less imposing in themselves than those to be witnessed in many other Catholic countries, the circumstances of the locality, and the diversified character of the pilgrims congregated together, tend to give them a picturesque and striking appearance. As evening drew on, the façade of the church, and the houses facing the square, were illuminated with many-coloured lamps; and on the hill above, a wooden cross, lighted up in the same manner, produced when it was dark, against the deep shade of the pine forest behind, the effect of a fiery cross in the sky.

The festival is in commemoration of the miraculous consecration of the church by angels on the 14th of September, 948, on the anniversary of which day it is held. When the 14th falls on a Sunday, the festivities, says Murray, are greater—it would be more correct to say, are of longer duration than usual. Respecting the circumstances of this dedication, there is, according to the little work before mentioned, a rather curious discrepancy between the service of the Breviary and the Bull of Leo VIII.; for whereas the former says that Conrad saw Jesus Christ himself, arrayed in pontifical robes, descend from heaven, the Bull of the Pope says simply that he deposed, on being aroused at midnight by celestial music, to seeing angels or heavenly spirits performing the services of consecration.

In the chapel attached to the burying-ground I observed a curious practice, which is also to be seen in one or two other places in Switzerland. While the bodies of the dead repose beneath the earth in the churchyard, their skulls are all symmetrically arranged on shelves in the chapel, each labelled with the name of the individual, and the date of his death, like a collection of craniological specimens. The object of this singular practice is, no doubt, by presenting before the eyes of the living this memento of the dead, to secure for their souls not

only the prayers of their relations and fellow-parishioners, but also of such of the numerous pilgrims as may have any to spare.

The best the landlord of the *Paon* could do for us in the way of sleeping accommodation, was a bed among three of us, in a room with two other bed-fulls—an offer which we respectfully declined. After a little reconnoitring, we were lucky enough to obtain a capital room with three beds in an adjoining house, the mistress of which by some means spoke excellent English; but as she was in bed when we arrived, and our only conversation with her was through the keyhole, the opportunity was not favourable for inquiring into her history. I awoke, or half awoke, in the middle of the night, and heard a tramp of many feet, and the sound of voices chanting a solemn psalm; but I could scarcely tell till afterwards whether it was a reality or a dream.

CHAPTER VII.

RETURN FROM PILGRIMAGE.

On the following morning, having paid my bill at the *Paon*, I strapped my knapsack on my back, took leave of my friends, and marched off for Rapperschwyll. I presently fell in with a pilgrim returning home, with whom I joined company for the rest of the way. My new friend was a young man from the canton of St. Gall; he had been out three days, and his luggage was—an umbrella. This seems to be an indispensable companion to a Swiss peasant, when from home for however short a time; for there was scarcely a pilgrim, even among the very poorest, who was not provided with one of them. There is a great difference between the habits of our mountaineers and the Swiss in this respect; and yet our climate is a more variable one than that of Switzerland.

I found my companion a simple-minded, yet not unintelligent, young man, with a perfect faith in every thing that was to be seen at Einsiedeln. He informed me, that the music I had heard in bed was that of a solemn procession, which had taken place during the night, and in which he had borne a part. He also it was who informed me of the fact of two of my countrymen being among the priests connected with the convent; and from the way in which he told me, he evidently expected me to feel rather proud about it.

In the course of our conversation, he happened to make some allusion to Jerusalem; and I informed him of my having been

there. "Been to Jerusalem!" he exclaimed; "why, you ought to write a book." I could not help smiling at the idea, it had been already so extensively carried out in my own country. The only work he was acquainted with on the subject was that of Baron Geramb, the unquestioning faith, and romantic colouring of which must no doubt recommend it to Catholics of his class.

On the summit of Mount Etzel, about half-way between Einsiedeln and Rapperschwyll, is a little chapel, built upon the spot where Meinrad originally had his cell, before he exchanged, for the sake of greater seclusion, to Einsiedeln. There is also a little inn, into which I marched with the rest of the pilgrims, and fearlessly called for a glass of *kirschwasser*, for which, for once, I paid pilgrim's price—about three farthings.

How beautiful is the sweet lake of Zurich, with its richly cultivated shores, and the picturesque long bridge of Rapperschwyll, as we look down upon it from the top of the hill, after coming from the bleak valley of Einsiedeln. Yet it was from among these lovely scenes that Meinrad looked up longingly to the solitude of the gloomy forest of Etzel, where at first he pitched his cell.

I descended the hill, crossed the long bridge to Rapperschwyll, and bidding farewell to my companion, who sought a humbler resting-place, entered the Hotel du Lac to wait for the steamer. Having a little time to spare, I strolled up to the old castle above the town, out of which issued a miserable-looking being, who inquired if I would like to see the interior. I asked him if there was any thing to see, to which he of course replied that there was a great deal. So I followed him in; but the only thing worth looking at, was the view from the tower over the lake. While I was seeing the castle, a little girl had gone for the keys of the church, so that I was obliged also to take a look at that. But seeing another person running for the keys of some place else, I thought it prudent to beat a retreat.

On returning to the hotel, I found the landlord waiting for me—or rather for my Murray—which I had no sooner laid upon the table, than he made a swoop upon it, looked at the date, and then turned eagerly to Rapperschwyll. Now I had happened to lose my original Murray, and had been obliged to supply its place with a foreign one, which, though bearing the date of 1851, was merely a reprint of the edition of 1845, which edition, it seems, recommended an inn called the *Paon* as the best at Rapperschwyll.

"This is too bad!" he exclaimed indignantly, on turning to the place. "The *Paon* has been shut up for three years—not that it ever was the best; but now there is no such hotel."

I soothed his wounded feelings, by representing to him that this, though bearing a recent date, was merely a reprint of an old edition; and that, when the new edition appeared, it would no doubt do him the justice he deserved. Since then the new edition has made its appearance; and I can fancy the poor man's delight, on reading the few but important words—"Rapperschwyll—Inn: Hotel du Lac—very good."

The name of Murray is certainly one to conjure with in Switzerland. I happened to meet with a gentleman who rejoiced (literally) in that patronymic, which he found of incalculable advantage in travelling through this country. Among some of the smaller and more ignorant landlords, he might perhaps be supposed to be *the* Murray himself; and though the better informed could scarcely make such a mistake, yet, for aught they knew, he might be the cousin, or the second cousin; and, at any rate, it was the safe side to be civil to him. He found, accordingly, that his fare was generally remarkably good, and his bills remarkably small; and for some time he was at a loss to conceive, upon what grounds it was that so much favour was shown to him. However, the mystery was at length cleared up; for on one occasion, after he had eaten a preposterously good dinner, and paid a ridiculously small bill, the landlord came up to him,

and inquired, with many professions of civility, if he was satisfied with his fare. He answered, and with good reason, that he was perfectly satisfied. The landlord bowed low as he proceeded—

"In that case, may I hope to be favoured with a recommendation in the next edition of the hand-book?"

CHAPTER VIII.

CARNIVAL AMONG THE SHEPHERDS.

In the canton of Lucerne, on the western side of Mount Pilatus, and about four hours' distant from the capital, lies the pastoral valley of Entlibuch—noted for the primitive character of its inhabitants, their ready wit, and their peculiar customs. Of these the most curious, and one of great antiquity, was the festival of the Hirsmontag—a sort of carnival, held on the first Monday in Lent; and which, after having been prohibited by the government, and again revived under certain restrictions, has, within the last two or three years, been finally discontinued. The name of Hirsmontag is derived from *hirzen*, an old word signifying to feast or revel; and the name of Gudismontag, by which it was known in Lucerne, is derived from *gäuden*, another old word of the same signification.

The most remarkable feature of this festival consisted in an interchange of poetical squibs, or satires, among the different parishes, each of which kept a satirical poet for the purpose, whom it despatched at the season to some other parish, according to preconcerted arrangement, receiving in return a similar messenger from some one of its neighbours. The duty of the satirist, or Hirsmontagboth, as he was called, was to make himself acquainted with the scandal of the parish of which he was constituted the censor, and to expose, which he did in rude and stinging rhymes, any little peccadillo or act of folly committed since the previous anniversary. Having first attended service in their parish church, the people all assembled in the public

place of their village to await the arrival of the Hirsmontagboth, who, mounted on the finest horse which his parish could provide, fantastically bedecked with shells and flowers, rode into the village, assembled the people around him, and commenced in a loud singing tone the business of the day. First came a sort of prologue, which consisted sometimes of an eulogium upon some particular deed connected with the history of the valley—sometimes of a satirical comparison between the morals and manners of their parish and his own, or the abilities of their *sprecher* and himself. Then came the jokes, or *possen*, a series of rude satirical rhymes, at the expense of any of the inhabitants of the parish who might have laid themselves open to ridicule, and which were received with unbounded delight by all except the unfortunate subject. The softer sex was not spared, nor does delicacy ever seem to have stood in the way of a good thing. An exception was made in favour of the powers that be, who were not allowed to be made the subjects of ridicule; but the *sprecher*, without mentioning names, often related such characteristic anecdotes as clearly to indicate the individual intended.

I give a few examples, quoted from Stalder,* to shew the style of the subjects chosen for the *sprecher's* irony on these occasions. I had purposed also giving a translation of one of the *possen*; but the points were so local as not to be intelligible, and the wit, if ever there had been any, had evaporated in the process of translation.

"A rich widower, having given sundry hints of his intention to marry again, gave thereby great dissatisfaction to his sons, who expressed their discontent so unguardedly among their neighbours, as to draw upon them the irony of the *sprecher*."

"A man having, on the occasion of some merry-making, eaten and drunk so much as nearly (I quote Stalder) to burst himself, was, very deservedly, held up to public ridicule."

"A young couple being engaged to be married, and a circum-

* Fragmente über Entlebuch.

stance, arising out of the licence of Swiss courtship, having rendered it particularly desirable that the affair should come off without delay, the want of the necessary funds placed them in a state of embarrassment, which it was cruel to increase by making them a public laughing-stock."

The above are a few of the examples given by Stalder; others are so coarse as not to bear repeating; and altogether, the glimpse they give us of the manners of the people, is not such as to make us desire a closer acquaintance with that primitive simplicity which looks so charming at a distance.

After having taken the people to task for their individual sins, the *sprecher* proceeds to recite the *dorfruf*, which is a sort of general satire upon the parish, and lastly comes the *beschlusz*, an exhortation to them to amend their ways, and behave themselves better for the time to come.

The Hirsmontagboth having now finished his task, they repair to the dancing-hall, where the ambassador, in his fantastic attire, is the guest of honour, and has the privilege of picking out the prettiest girl for his partner. However keenly he may have wounded the feelings of any of those present, his person is here held sacred; but did he not, as Stalder says, take the precaution of riding home while it is daylight, he might chance to find some one of his victims lying in ambush for him with a hatful of stones.

This ends the first part of the ceremony, and the ambassador returns home, while the men of the two parishes go in procession with drums beating and colours flying to the field, where a friendly contest is to take place between them. Forming themselves into lines closely linked together, the men of the two parishes are drawn up facing each other in hostile array. For a moment or two they stand gazing on each other in "fearful and majestic silence," as Stalder says, rising into mock heroics for the occasion. Then they fall upon their knees, in imitation of the worthy old Swiss custom of praying before battle, and at the

sound of the trumpet start to their feet, and charge upon each other. The foremost ranks meet and jostle, backed by those in the rear, while the more enthusiastic of the women push behind. The party which succeeds in breaking the ranks of their opponents are dignified by the name of Swiss, while the vanquished must be content to take the obnoxious title of Austrians. The contending parties then return home, and the rest of the evening is spent in revelry and feasting.

I am inclined to think, from some of the circumstances attending this festival, as well as from the time chosen for its celebration, viz., the day before confession, that the original design had a higher object in view than that of mere amusement, and that the powerful engine of ridicule may have been intended to exercise a beneficial censorship over the morals of the valley. But whatever may have been the original intention of its institution, it would seem from the examples quoted in Stalder, that the satirist was generally more ready to find a salient point for his wit than to expose a case of ordinary misdemeanour. It would appear also from the same authority, that offences might sometimes be compounded for by money, and that a fee to the satirist would, in some cases, purchase immunity from his ridicule for one who perhaps might be the most deserving object of it. Seeing, too, the coarseness and total want of delicacy displayed in these productions, we cannot wonder that they gave rise to such frequent quarrels and so much ill-feeling as to cause the practice to be discontinued.

Anxious to explore this primitive and pastoral district, I took a place for Entlebuch in the diligence between Lucerne and Berne—the great road between these two places running through a considerable part of the valley. One of our fellow-passengers was a bearded and spectacled Swiss from Berne, who gave me very strongly the idea of being one of Young Switzerland. And such indeed he was; for he presently informed us that he had been one of those who took part in the expedition of the "free

corps" against Lucerne. This, as many of my readers will be aware, was a volunteer expedition of radicals from Berne, Outer Basle, and Argovie, for the purpose of expelling the Jesuits by force of arms, and the result of which was as disastrous as the means employed were unjustifiable. Our friend had been taken prisoner among the rest, and confined with a great number of others in one of the churches at Lucerne, where they were nearly starved. Subsequently, when the Diet had pronounced the sonderbund (or exclusive alliance of the Catholic cantons among each other) to be inconsistent with the federal part, and the forces of the confederation had been brought into the field, after a short struggle the ultramontane party gave way, the Jesuits were expelled, and the sonderbund dissolved. One of the engagements took place in this valley of Entlebuch, at Schüpfheim, and near the very place where the free corps had been so roughly handled a short time before.* It may be worth mentioning, that General Dufour, the commander-in-chief of the federal army, was the intimate friend of the present Emperor of the French, during the latter's exile in Switzerland; and that the treatise on engineering, which appeared in the name of Louis Napoleon, is generally believed by the Swiss, though probably without any sufficient grounds, to have been the work of Dufour.

The first things I saw, on getting out of the diligence at Entlebuch, was an uncommonly smart mansion, with all due appendages, including a little hothouse, and with such a show of flowers in its garden, as to make an English lady, one of my fellow-passengers, exclaim—"O how I envy you getting out at such a pretty place!" This mansion, I was informed, was the property of a prosperous dealer in cheeses, of which this fertile valley produces a large quantity. On entering the hotel, I found myself stared in the face by Kiss' Amazon; and on the

* For an account of the Sonderbund war, and of the causes which produced it, see "Mayer's Hand-book of the late Civil War in Switzerland," which seems to be written in an impartial spirit.

walls of the same room were prints of Romeo and Juliet, and a Frenchified copy of Wilkie's Blind Man's Buff. I proceeded to make inquiries about the festival of the Hirsmontag; and was told that it had been given up some time ago. I then asked about the Schwing-feste, or wrestling-matches, for which this valley used to be so renowned. They had been given up that very year, except at Flueli—the remotest village of the valley. In short, the people were turning genteel—and I became disgusted. "What!" thought I; "do I come here in search of the primitive and peculiar—and am I to see Kiss' Amazon and a cheesemonger's villa?" So, without further reflection, I took out my Keller—saw that there was a path across the Schlierenberg, a sort of spur of Mount Pilate, into the valley of Sarnen—engaged a guide—ordered some dinner—and in a couple of hours was on my way across the mountain.

I know that this proceeding was quite indefensible: it was hasty, foolish, and unworthy of a traveller. No doubt, since the high-road between Lucerne and Berne ran through this valley, it may have wrought a great change in the villages through which it passes; but still, in others of the remoter ones, as Flueli, the inhabitants may still retain much of their original simplicity. At any rate, I had come expressly to explore this valley; and ought I to have run away because I saw Kiss' Amazon? Besides, all the signs of the weather had been portending rain. Pilate had taken off his hat, and put on a thing like a waterproof cape—a sure sign of wet. And sure enough it came, with peals of thunder that made the mountain tremble. All this passed through my mind when it was too late, as I walked on after my guide in a drenching shower of rain, enveloped in a dripping Mackintosh, and harassed by a reproving conscience.

But this was only the beginning of evils; for I soon found that my guide, who had confidently reckoned upon reaching Sarnen before dark, had quite miscalculated the distance, and

while yet upon the mountain, and a long way from our journey's end, night began to draw on apace. For some time we could distinguish the path glimmering before us, and we pushed on, sometimes plunging up to our knees in mud—sometimes dashing through the torrents, which we heard waxing louder and louder around us, and not unfrequently tumbling into either, as the case might be. At length we entered a thick wood, and when we emerged, the path could no longer be distinguished. I now began to speculate upon the most approved ways of passing a night upon the mountains. A dreary one is that recorded by Thomas Plater, who tells us in his biography, that, being overtaken by night when travelling with a party across the mountains, and fearing to be overcome by slumber, they all joined hands, according to the custom practised upon such occasions, and walked round and round in a circle until daylight. But my guide seemed to have a general idea of the direction, and rushed vaguely onwards. There was, as it turned out, not any danger; for we were upon the green slopes of the mountain, so that it was as inglorious as it was uncomfortable. Yet to me, following my guide in the dark, without the slightest idea where he was going, it sounded rather alarming to hear him sometimes go down with a splash, and not to know whether it was over a precipice or into a puddle.

At length our way was stopped by some obstruction—it was a railing, the work of men's hands, and presently we saw the welcome glimmering of a light. To this we directed our course, and in another minute were at the door of a comfortable chalêt. The owners, an old man with his wife and family, received us very kindly, lighted a good fire, wrung out our wet clothes, and set before us two swingeing basins of coffee. It was not *café au lait*, but rather *lait au café*, for it consisted of a large quantity of milk with a very small proportion of coffee—which, as the milk was very good, and the coffee was no doubt very bad, was much the better arrangement: and on future occasions I

improved upon it by omitting the coffee altogether. Separated from the main apartment by a curtain was a room containing two beds, one of which they insisted upon resigning to me, and which, after some faint scruples, I accepted; the other they gave up to my guide—who made none. The beds, though coarse, were clean, and I slept undisturbed, except for a vision of two paths branching out before me, which, as I was unable to settle which was the right one, kept continually presenting itself before me for a solution. How changed was the scene when I awoke in the morning, and, opening the little window, saw that we were upon the highest green slopes of the mountain, looking down upon the lovely vale of Sarnen, with its lake gleaming like silver in the morning sun! I found the family seated round the breakfast-table, upon which was placed a surprising bowl of stirabout and five large spoons. The old man said a long grace, and then, each seizing his spoon, they set vigorously to work, and soon made the bottom of the basin to appear.

After recompensing the hospitable peasants for their trouble, and declining, with many thanks, a spoon in the stirabout, I descended the mountain slope, and, passing through the village of Schwendi, in an hour and a half arrived at the capital of Obwalden.

CHAPTER IX.

VALE OF SARNEN.

THE inn at Sarnen—it is written in Murray—"is neither very good nor very clean;" yet still, thought I, it will furnish a breakfast to a hungry man. Whatever it may have been, I am bound to say, as well from my own experience as from the report of other travellers, and the remarks in the visiters' book (one in verse, beginning, "Old Murray may say what he pleases,") that there is not a better inn in Switzerland. Fresh trout—alpine strawberries—new-laid eggs—the only good coffee I ever got in this country—and who shall dare to call that breakfast bad?

It cannot of course but be the case, that however trustworthy may be the recommendations of Murray at the time they were written, changes and improvements must, of necessity, be continually taking place. It happens sometimes, for instance, that an innkeeper of evil reputation may see into the error of his ways, and strive to amend, or that the inn may be taken by a landlord of a different stamp; while, on the other hand, a continued run of prosperity may make the good landlord careless and indifferent. By slow degrees must the repentant landlord reap the fruits of reformation, and for many a day must he turn sadly from the unprofitable smoke and din of his own dining-room, to the quiet carriages drawn up before his rival's door. But a place of repentance will come at last. Some day, sooner or later, will the other hotel be full, and the owners of the carriage last arrived must turn away sulkily to the inn of ill renown.

"Ah! thou whited sepulchre," think they, as the landlord comes out to meet them with the blandest of welcomes; "*we* know what sort of place this is."

But the landlord sees in that growling Englishman the angel of better times, and nothing can daunt his civility. They find, to their astonishment, that every thing else is on a par with the attention of the landlord, and that, in point of fact, they are the first to make a grand discovery. They tell it to all their friends —they make a note of it in all the visiters' books; and, if of sufficiently energetic disposition, perhaps write, as some of them threatened to do in the present instance, to Murray himself upon the subject.

Overlooking the town of Sarnen is the eminence of the Landenberg, once the site of an Austrian tyrant's fortress, and on which is now placed the public shooting-place of the canton. The target, placed against the side of a hill, exhibited decisive proof of the skill of the Obwalden marksmen; for the balls clustered all the more thickly around the inner circles, and not a few were lodged in the bull's-eye itself. How powerful an engine of defence these institutions afford in a country like Switzerland, the desperate resistance made on one or two occasions by a mere handful of men to the organized forces of France sufficiently testifies. And surely too, in a country like England, where almost every field contains cover for marksmen—a population trained to the use of the rifle, would have furnished an arm of defence which the government did not well to treat with so little respect.

Among the successful candidates at the public rifle-matches, two are recorded that are more particularly deserving of notice; the one, an English nobleman, Lord Vernon, who won the first prize at Basle in 1849; and the other, a girl of fourteen, named Aloise Mager, whose picture (a plain little body with a rifle as big as herself) may be seen on many of the walls of Switzerland.

The eminence of the Landenberg commands on one side a beautiful view of the lovely valley and the lake of Sarnen,

while on the other, rises the stern and gloomy form of Pilatus, upon which, as I proposed making his closer acquaintance on the morrow, I looked with more especial interest. He now seemed to put on truly a forbidding—almost an infernal look. Though the sun shone brightly on the valley below, his summit was covered with dense black clouds, from the midst of which there seemed to steam up a white vapour like the smoke of a volcano; and it only needed a muttered peal of thunder to seem as if the unquiet spirit of the Roman governor rose up to curse the happiness of the valleys around him.

Having no further duty to perform for this day than to reach Alpnach by the evening, I considered it a point of honour to dine at the place where I had got so good a breakfast, and in the mean time walked over to Saxelen. Here was the native place of Nicholas de Flue, better known in Switzerland by the title of Bruder Klaus, who enjoys the double reputation of a patriot and a saint, in the former of which characters he preserved his country from the horrors of civil war, and in the latter of which he deserted his wife and family to retire into the desert. The inscription upon his tomb runs thus,—"Nicholas de Flue quitted his wife and family to go into the desert; he served God nineteen years and a half without taking any sustenance." A melancholy thing it is, and shows the dark spirit of the times, that a wise and good man like him, and one too capable of rendering such service to his country, should be so little superior to the morbid superstition of the age. Melancholy, too, that the inscription upon his tomb should, as his greatest glory, record only his mistake. The peace which he secured to his country seems to be denied to himself; for his poor bones, which lie in a magnificent shrine within the church, are lifted at certain times to be exhibited to the pilgrims who flock to his shrine. Numberless are the miraculous cures supposed to have been effected by their agency. Murer, in his "Helvetia Sancta," gives a detailed list of 262 cases, many of

which, relating how certain individuals, being ill of certain complaints, paid a visit to his shrine, and subsequently recovered their health, I must admit, are not open to scepticism. The number of recorded cases of possession by evil spirits in the list, is rather curious. The story of the nineteen years' fast is still apparently in full credit; for I found it in a little history which I bought upon the spot, published by the landlord of the *Rossli*, who seems to have charge of the literature of the place. His stock comprised a number of hymns in honour of the saint, from one of which I copied the opening verse, which is rather curious.

"Preiset-volke, ohne ende,
Ehrt und lobt den Bruder Klaus!
Hoch erhebet eure hände
Hier in seinem Gotte's haus!"

"Praise—ye people—without end,
Esteem and honour Brother Klaus!
High uplift your hands
Here, in his God's house!"

As I sauntered along from Sarnen to Alpnach, I met several small parties of pilgrims on their way to the shrine of the saint, most of them busily engaged in repeating their devotions on the road.

Passing through Alpnach, I went on a mile and a half further to Alpnach am Gestad, on the border of the lake, where I put up at the *Cheval Blanc*, kept by a lively landlady and (apparently) a stupid landlord, and made arrangements for ascending Mount Pilate on the following day, to which, however, I must devote a separate chapter.

CHAPTER X.

MOUNT PILATE.

"'How the accursed heathen scowls upon us!' said the younger of the merchants, while the cloud darkened and seemed to settle on the brow of Mount Pilatus. '*Vade retro:*—be thou defied, sinner!'"—ANNE OF GEIERSTEIN.

MOUNT PILATE derives its name from Pontius Pilate, the governor of Judea, of whom tradition relates, that on being banished from Rome he found his way to this country, (for Switzerland seems in all ages to have been the resort of troubled spirits,) where, after wandering about for some time in anguish and remorse, he at length drowned himself in a lake upon the summit of this mountain.

From its position as a sort of advanced guard of the Alps, all the storms which burst upon Lucerne first form upon Pilate; and hence the superstitious belief which prevailed for so many ages, that they were caused by the unquiet spirit confined within the lake. As his wrath was supposed to be excited by any thing thrown into the lake, and even by the mere approach of any one to look upon his prison-house, we cannot wonder that it was judged prudent by the government of Lucerne to forbid the ascent of the mountain under severe penalties, extending, as it would seem, in some cases even to the death of the offender.

Some writers have, however, supposed the name to be merely a corruption of the Latin "pileatus," capped—in allusion to the clouds with which his summit is generally surrounded. Independently of the improbability of the tradition being derived from the name, rather than the name from the tradition, there

is strong evidence to show that the mountain originally bore no other name than that of "Fracmont" (mons fractus), and that the name of Pilatus was at first given only to the lake, from which, by the force of the tradition, it in time extended to the whole mountain. Thus Stumff, in his Swiss chronicle, A.D. 1548, says expressly, that on the mountain called Fracmont there is a lake called Pilatus See. Wyss, in a note to his "Idyllen, Volksagen," &c., says, "Fracmont is evidently the oldest name of the mountain." Businger likewise, in his "Stadt Lucerne," makes the same remark—"Other, and certainly the oldest records call it Fracmont. . . ." Under this name it is described by Gessner, Kircher, and others of the older writers. At the time when Wagner visited it (A.D. 1676), the name of "Pilate" would seem to have been coming into use; for though he employs the term "mons fractus" himself as the correct name, he sometimes adds, "vulgarly called mount Pilate." A particular part of the mountain he alludes to in one place as "mount Pilate properly so called," from which it would seem probable that the name having been at first given only to the lake, afterwards came to be applied to that part of the mountain in which it is situated, and, finally, to the mountain itself.

So numerous were the legends and traditions connected with this mountain, that somewhere about forty different treatises have been written upon the subject. So early even as the thirteenth century, it had afforded materials to two writers on ecclesiastical subjects. One of the legends, quoted by Cappeler in his "Historia montis Pilati," relates that Pilate, on being recalled to Rome to account for his misgovernment of the province, was conducted into the presence of Tiberius, who, to the astonishment of all present, immediately on his entrance, received him with courtesy and respect, and, instead of the punishment which he deserved, honourably dismissed him. No sooner, however, had the ex-governor left the imperial presence, than the Emperor's indignation returned, and Pilate was again summoned

before him—again to be kindly received, and honourably dismissed. This happened for several times, till at length the attendants, beginning to suspect that he had on his person some hidden amulet or charm, strictly examined him, and found, concealed beneath his own garments, the tunic of our Lord, of which being deprived, he was, when again brought before the Emperor, immediately condemned to death. After his execution, his body was thrown into the Tiber, upon which such terrific tempests ensued, that it was taken up and carried into Gaul, where it was flung into the Rhone. The same effects resulted there, in consequence of which it was removed to Switzerland, and thrown into the lake on the summit of this mountain. Even here, however, the accursed corpse could not rest, for the spirit of the evil governor haunted the mountain in the form of a fearful spectre, terrifying the shepherds and destroying the flocks. At length, by the arts of a powerful magician who opportunely visited the place, he was exorcised, and confined within the gloomy lake on the summit, whence only once a year, on the anniversary of the day on which he condemned the innocent blood, he was to arise, and show himself, arrayed in his robes of office, and seated, as of old, on his tribunal. Otherwise, he was forbidden to appear unless invoked, or disturbed in his rest by the approach of a stranger. We see here how, even in their superstitions, the Swiss preserve their practical and matter-of-fact character. They cannot be content, as the Germans or English might be, with the abstract horror of the ghost of an evil governor; they must make him actually damage the pastures, actually worry the sheep, before they can fully appreciate the visitation.

It is perhaps not unnatural to find the most conspicuous actor in the scene of our Lord's death selected by the popular mind as the especial object of wrath and hatred, even though he might be by no means the most culpable; for Pilate seems to have been a well-meaning man, hampered probably by general instructions not to interfere with the religious prejudices of the Jews—anxious

to save a man whom he believed to be guilty of no real crime—yet doubtful whether the home government would justify him in doing so, at the expense of an insurrection. The remarkable aversion in which his memory is held by the people of many Catholic countries, as evidenced in the ceremonies practised at some of the Mysteries, where they make an effigy of him, and then fall upon and beat it with sticks, would seem to be the result of an ignorance of the narrative, did we not find the same feeling manifested in stories such as the above, which are evidently the production of minds not altogether of the lowest class.

Besides the apparitions immediately connected with the lake itself, the mountain was believed to be the haunt of other evil spirits—the Türst and the Bergmannlein—of which the shepherds stood in continual apprehension, and for their protection against which they used a curious form of adjuration, which is to be found in Cappeler.

Nor were more material horrors wanting, in the shape of fiery dragons, which had their abode in the caves upon the mountain. Wagner gives an account of one which was seen in the year 1649, by a witness no less credible than the chief magistrate of Lucerne. This person, whose name was Christopher Schorer, "while by night he contemplated the serenity of the heavens," saw a sight which must, one would think, have effectually disturbed his own serenity. It was no less than a fiery dragon, which issued out of a cave of Mount Pilate. It had a long tail—an extended neck—and a head like a serpent. Every stroke of its wings upon the air produced a shower of sparks, and altogether it was a dragon of the most approved pattern. He thought at first that it was a meteor; but when he had "diligently observed it," he became convinced that it was no meteor, but a veritable dragon. Some thirty years afterwards, a huge skeleton was discovered in a cave upon the mountain, which exactly corresponded with the dragon which M. Schorer

had seen. Now, my intelligent readers will have no great difficulty in perceiving, that what the worthy prefect did see was a meteor, as he at first supposed it to be before he had "diligently observed it,"—and in the skeleton of the dragon, they will recognise the fossil remains of one of the Saurii—probably the Pterodactylus, which does in fact bear a strong resemblance to the old figures of dragons. Another similar skeleton of a dragon is recorded to have been found in a cave upon the mountain called Staffelwand; but in this case the poor dragon had come to an untimely end, having been crushed flat by the fall of part of the mountain from an earthquake. This also was no doubt another fossil animal of the same species, imbedded in the strata of the rock. After relating the above stories of dragons, Wagner goes on to say that there are other accounts, which, from the circumstances recorded, he thinks must be somewhat apocryphal. After what he relates as authentic, I should rather like to know what he considers apocryphal.

Among these old writers were some who were not wanting in patience and industry in their way. They did not shrink from the labour of searching the pages of ancient and modern history for parallels; but, with a few exceptions, they did shrink from asking an explanation from the terrible mountain itself. So they went on, copying marvels from each other, writing books about the mysterious lake on the mountain top, themselves remaining carefully at the bottom, till at length Wagner of Zurich came, a man of another school. His maxim was to see things for himself, a practice which does not seem to have been very common in his time; for he is obliged to borrow a word from the Greek to express it. Not as any sceptic did he go up; for he was a man, as we have just seen, who believed in fiery dragons, and that sort of thing, but in all honesty, to know whether these things were so. And this is what he says—"Although there is an old tradition that this lake creates storms, rain, thunder, &c., if any thing be designedly thrown into it—that this is

nothing else than a lie, and a foolish fable, autopsia and experience have convinced us; for all we who were present threw into it stones, sticks, roots, clods, and whatever came to hand, and stood there for some considerable time, waiting to see whether any vapour would arise from the waters, or whether the waters would be converted into mists. But vain was all our waiting: we wasted our industry; our efforts were fruitless: no tempests arose, no thunderstorms, no evil of any sort, neither to the towns, nor to the villages, nor to the fields."

He also goes into details as to the appearance of the lake itself, which was popularly supposed to correspond with the horrors of which it was the centre. It was styled "the infernal lake," and was invested with some similar properties to those which are attributed to the lake of Gomorrha. It was fed by no springs, nor had it any outlet for its waters. The wind had no power to raise a ripple upon its surface, and its colour was a strange and dismal black. All these points Wagner combats in detail. It was supplied by no spring, for it derived its sources from melted snows; it had no particular outlet, for its waters were dissipated among neighbouring marshes. The wind had little effect upon it—because it was protected by thick woods—and its waters were dark—because they were dirty.

Notwithstanding the horrors with which Mount Pilate abounded, many hermits, with a courage worthy of a better object, at one time took up their abode upon it; indeed, the prospect of meeting with a supernatural temptation was probably an additional inducement.

Among other natural curiosities of the mountain, there are two caves worthy of a more particular notice. The one is called the Mond-milch loch—from a substance called mond-milch (cream of the moon) which exudes in a fluid state from the cavities of the rock. This substance, which is white, porous, and friable, is found also in a cave upon the Rigi, and in some other places in Switzerland. It is sometimes called Steinmarck (stone marrow), and the

name given to it by Gessner is "Agaricum saxatile." It was highly valued as a medicine, being probably somewhat similar in its nature to magnesia.

The other cave is called "Dominic's loch," from a white stone near its mouth, which bears some real or supposed resemblance to the figure of a man. As the position of the cave in the face of a steep and inaccessible precipice prevented any close examination, the peasants were at liberty to form their own theories on the subject, and they accordingly decided it to be the statue of a monk, and christened it Dominic. Here, then, was a proper marvel—a gigantic, mysterious statue, in an inaccessible cavern upon the mountain; and for a long time after all the other mysteries of the mountain had capitulated—this one, by reason of its impregnable situation, still held out. About the middle of the last century, a villager was dashed to pieces in an attempt to reach it by means of ropes let down from the summit of the rock. Half a century later, an attempt was made by a party, headed by General Pfyffer, to approach it from another direction. This was through the cave of the Mond-milch loch, which is situated on the opposite side of the mountain, and was supposed to communicate by a subterraneous passage with the Dominic's loch. The party set out to explore it accordingly on their hands and knees; but after crawling for a considerable distance through the bowels of the earth, when at length they came in sight of the glimmering of daylight on the opposite side, they seem to have become nervous, and to have retreated without reaching the mysterious chamber. And still, for half a century more, Dominic maintained his ground. Mr. Coxe, who visited Switzerland shortly afterwards, thus describes it:—"Mount Pilate offers a most singular curiosity. At the elevation of five thousand feet, and in the most perpendicular part of the mountain, near the pasture of Brunlen, is observed, in the middle of a cavern hollowed in a black rock, a colossal statue, which appears to be of white stone. It is the figure of a man in drapery, standing leaning one elbow

on a pedestal, with one leg crossed over the other, and so regularly formed that it cannot be a *lusus naturæ*."

It was not till the beginning of the present century that the question was set at rest, when a bold fellow named Ignacius Matt, a chamois hunter, braving all dangers, real and supernatural, descended to the cave, and reported that the mysterious colossal statue was nothing but a natural deception.

I had for some time been desirous of ascending this mountain, both on account of its extraordinary natural formation, and of the dead traditions with which it is surrounded. Murray, however, describes the ascent as "difficult, and in some places dangerous." Now I have all faith in Murray; for he is duly impressed with a sense of the responsibility with which he is invested. No bereaved circle can mourn the loss of an adventurous brother, and say, "Murray deceived him, and he died." But as I happen to have a bad head for precipices—I was anxious to know what sort of danger it was. Whether, in fact, it was dangerous-*looking* danger. So I sent for a guide and put the question to him. "There was no danger at all," he said, in going up from Alpnach—of course adding, "provided you have a good guide." I desired the landlady to ask him if a man whose head is easily turned could do it. I do not know whether the mountaineer understood the meaning of the expression or not; for I observed him give a glance at mine, as if to see that it was properly fastened on to my neck, before he committed himself to an affirmative. I may here mention, that in ascending from the side of Alpnach there is little difficulty, and not any danger, and that the whole excursion to the summit of the Tomlis-horn and back, may be accomplished in seven hours. The danger is on the side of Lucerne, in climbing from the Brunlen Alps to the summit, during a part of which ascent you have to scramble on your hands and knees. My landlady, on the principle, I suppose, of "nothing like leather," was of opinion that it required only a good hotel at the top to make the excursion as favourite

a one as the Rigi. If, however, she had ever been at the top herself, she would have had some difficulty in finding a place for her hotel; for the peak of the Esel only holds twelve men, and that of the Tomlis-horn is not much more capacious.

There are, according to Businger, six paths to the summit, four from the side of Lucerne, and two from that of Alpnach. That which my guide selected skirted along the lower slopes off the mountain, through rich orchards of the apple and the plum tree, until it brought us about opposite to the village of Alpnach. Here there is a chasm or huge ravine which seems almost to split the mountain to its core, and through which descends the torrent of the Schlieren. By the side of this ravine we ascended for a little way, and then crossing it just below a pretty waterfall, we shortly arrived at the road made by some French speculators for carrying down the timber of the forests which clothes the sides of the mountain. Along this road—certainly as rough a one as we can suppose ever to have been made for wheels—we travelled for a little distance, and then, striking off to the right, approached again the edge of the ravine, and presently arrived at a sort of plain, hollowed, as it were, in the middle of the mountain, above which rose the two peaks of the Esel and the Tomlis-horn. It was now I saw clearly how appropriate was the old name of Fracmont, or the broken mountain; for this part of it gave me the idea of having had its centre scooped out, as one might take a bite out of an apple.

The first thing we saw on emerging upon this plain was a herd of many swine, feeding—a sight which, remembering that this animal is a type of the evil spirit, might have destroyed the equanimity of some of the old travellers.

At the foot of the Tomlis-horn we went into a little chalêt, where a solitary shepherd was busy making his cheeses. But even here the schoolmaster had come up; for ranged along the walls, along with the other implements of his trade, all beautifully clean and neat, were three slates, on which he kept his

accounts in very creditable figures. And here too the press had sent up a voice; for there was the *Neuer Haus Almanac*, published at Zug—a compendious and useful publication, beginning with the great exhibition, and ending with the multiplication table. It opened on the well-thumbed page which contained the unmistakable likeness of the palace of industry; and many a lonely night, no doubt, had the oft-told tale beguiled in that little hut upon Mount Pilate. Gone are all the old traditions—the tales of wonder and of horror—the evil demons and the fiery dragons; and instead, there comes up a voice of the new life—a voice from England and Albert, that speaks to all; for the solitary shepherd who makes his cheeses on the mountain top feels that his is industry too.

After resting here a few minutes, we proceeded to climb the steep ascent of the Tomlis-horn—which is indeed the only part of the expedition that presents the slightest difficulty. The view from it is certainly inferior to that from the Rigi, and the ridge is so steep and narrow, that it requires a better head than mine to remain with much complacency at the top.

The lake of Pilate lies on the opposite or Lucerne side of the summit, but rather more to the east. There is another small lake, or rather pond, on the side of Alpnach, and just at the foot of the Tomlis-horn, which has been sometimes mistaken for its more celebrated neighbour. Indeed, I am not quite sure that Murray has not fallen into this error, when he describes the lake of Pilate as lying "beyond the limits of canton Lucerne, and on the opposite or east side of the Tomlis-horn." At any rate, the writer is unquestionably mistaken when he goes on to state, that "there is no other lake upon the mountain."

The flora of this mountain, as far as I could judge, presents much less variety than that of the Rigi. There are two flowers mentioned by Wyss as common, and of which the names, as he gives them, strike me as being much more poetical than those we generally find. The one, which seems to be a sort of

geranium, is called *Gottesgnade* (God's grace); and the other, the *Polypodium vulgare*, is called *Engel fuss* (angel's foot). It is a poetical idea to associate the grace of God with a simple little idle weed that decorates the lonely mountain-top. And it is too a poetical thought to associate with the angel's footsteps no rare exotic from some more favoured land, but a little native flower so common as to be called "vulgare." I am bound, however, to admit, that when I questioned my guide upon the subject, he was not acquainted with any flower by the name of *angel's foot*. There was one, he said, called *cat's foot*—perhaps that might be it.

I returned to Alpnach by the same way as I had ascended, and in the evening took a boat to Stanzstad, there to join the steamer for Brunnen, my object being to go through the Muotta-thal and over the Pragel pass to Glarus. For, as my landlady informed me, in consequence of one of the foolish disputes which are frequently occurring between the company and the different governments on the shores of the lake—the steamer either refuses, or is not permitted, I forget which, to land passengers at Alpnach.

CHAPTER XI.

VALLEY OF MUOTTA.

THE valley of Muotta possesses an interest not only on account of its historical recollections and the grandeur of its scenery, but also on account of the simple and primitive character of its inhabitants. As an illustration of this last, Mr. Coxe gives a curious account, related to him by General Pfyffer, showing the "astonishing confidence" displayed by them in their dealings with each other. "He showed me," he says, "on each side of the road that runs through the valley of Muotta, in the canton of Schwytz, several ranges of small shops, uninhabited, yet filled with various goods, of which the prices are all marked; any passengers, who wish to become purchasers, enter the shops, take away the merchandise, and deposit the price, which the owners call for in the evening."

Astonishing confidence indeed—how very different from our "ticket-shops!" It is to be presumed, however, that none of the shops contained articles of female adornment. I can fancy customers picking out a cabbage, and putting down a penny; but, honesty apart, imagine women turned out to "wander at their own sweet will" among caps and ribbons. That the story must be received with a little allowance, is, I think, pretty evident; for if this valley ever contained several ranges of shops, the inhabitants must have been in a very different position to what they are at present.

As a pendent to Mr. Coxe's story of "astonishing confidence,"

I may, perhaps, be allowed to quote an equally curious one of astonishing candour related by Misson of the women of Soleure, among whom, at the time of his visit (about 1690), it was the custom to have their *age* embroidered upon their dress.

Towards its entrance the valley of Muotta contracts to a narrow gorge, at the mouth of which are several mills for sawing up the timber, which is thrown into the stream further up the valley, and allowed to float down as a cheap and ready mode of conveyance. Here also is—or was—a manufactory for preparing wood for musical instruments, as pianos and violins, &c. The proprietor always selects for his purpose the trees grown in the most exposed situations, and on the north side of the mountain—the wood being more elastic, and producing a finer tone. Thus the same qualities which form the toughness of the mast give sweetness also to the piano; and of two trees that grew on the mountain, side by side, the one may quiver in the fury of the ocean blast, and the other, carved, and gilt, and polished, may thrill to the touch of a lady's fingers—such is destiny. The same qualities of the Alpine wood caused, as Simler tells us,* large quantities of yew to be exported to England for the purpose of making bows, "which," he adds, "that people" (as if the islanders were rather behind the rest of the world) "still make use of."

Above this gorge the valley opens out, and appears capable of considerable cultivation, though the inhabitants are poor, and the houses generally of a very humble description. The principal village is Muotta, where there is a little inn, in which I took up my quarters for the night. A primitive little place it is, and *very* primitive are the two women who keep it—devout Catholics; for all the ornaments of the house consisted of religious emblems, and my bed-room was adorned with pictures of all the saints, and with relics of some of them in ornamental frames.

* De Alpibus Commentarius.

The traveller who comes to them on a Friday must be content to fare as a good Catholic, for no other than a *maigre* dinner will they be induced to set before him on that day. And ill would it be in any one to grumble, for they do it in all honesty and sincerity of purpose. Indeed they seem, in their simplicity, to know of no difference of faith; for one of them brought me, to beguile the evening, a book of Catholic divinity to read.

A little distance beyond the village stands the nunnery of St. Joseph, the inmates of which form no exception to the general character of the valley. Their convent is poor, and their manner of life frugal and primitive—they make their own clothes, and cultivate with their own hands the little territory which belongs to them. A few of them were about when I passed; one, in company with a man, was cutting grass in an adjoining field—another was on her knees scrubbing the floor of the little chapel—and a third was practising a service upon the organ. A little while afterwards, a group of them came in from making hay somewhere in the neighbourhood, one or two of whom were young and well-looking women. This simple community, I must own, brought, somehow, the conventual system before me in an odd light. There is generally a sort of mystery about a convent—a romance of veils, grating, and what not; and, not being able to see what is going on, you naturally conclude the inmates to be doing something which other people don't do. But when, in an open and matter-of-fact manner, you see a number of respectable and industrious young women turn out and make hay all day in the fields, and then go home at night to prayers and supper, you naturally feel inclined to ask what they are doing which they might not have done otherwise. Not but that they are serving God better by their honest industry than by a life of concealment and mortification; yet that is just the principle upon which I should have dispensed with the convent altogether, and sought out good husbands for all those tidy and well-behaved young women. But one cannot have

every thing one's own way, and I will not speak otherwise than with respect of the nuns of St. Joseph.

On returning to my inn, I found a good though homely dinner waiting for me; and after I had dined, the remembrance of a fine pear-tree which I had seen casting its ripe pears at the back-door, came across me, and I asked for fruit. They brought me ancient almonds on a plate—so common is it with us all to despise that which grows at our back-door.

As I have before related, one of the women, by way of giving me profitable employment for the evening, brought me a book of Catholic divinity to read. But divinity always looks tough in German, and I found the visiters' book a species of literature more adapted for after dinner perusal. There was a remark there which rather amused me. It was by a gentleman who had just come over the Pragel pass, and was to the effect that "no lady ought to think of attempting it." What amused me was the ineffable presumption of any man's attempting to prescribe to ladies what they ought or ought not to do—I might as well say, that no gentleman above the age of sixty ought to think of attempting it.

I had some conversation with the two women in the course of the evening, and enlightened them upon various subjects connected with England; such as the fact that we had no king, but that a queen reigned over us at present—that Great Britain and Ireland were two contiguous islands, &c. I asked if none of the inhabitants of their little valley had ever gone out to see what the world was like. Yes, they said, there were two—one had been to London, and the other to Jerusalem. I had with me a little history of Brother Klaus, which I had bought at Saxelen. One of the women took it up, and remarked with a sigh, that there were no such people now-a-days—an old story that!—"the former days were better than these." Even Solomon, in the midst of his wise and splendid rule, in the face of the unexampled glory and prosperity which he had established,

found some to sigh for the troubled days of old. And yet it is a hopeful symptom of humanity, that no man is content with the age in which he lives. Some look backward, which is vain—and some look forward, which is wise; and if one seems to "cling to all the present," it is but "for the promise which it shows."

On coming down on the following morning, I found that other visiters had arrived—two frank and friendly German students, full of life and spirits, who had walked over from Brunnen. As we were going the same way, we agreed to join company, and in the mean time they gave me a lesson in the art of economical travelling. I had been inquiring about a guide to Glarus (or rather, a person to carry my luggage, for the path requires no guide,) but for less than seven francs I was told no guide could be procured. *They* had been on the look-out for themselves, and had picked up in the village a fine, intelligent boy of twelve, who, for a franc and a half, was to accompany them as far as the bottom of the pass, whence he would have time to return the same evening to Muotta. They suggested that he should procure another boy for me on the same terms; and the little fellow, delighted with his commission, darted off and soon returned with a companion, older and stouter than himself—but totally devoid of the intelligence which beamed in his own countenance.

Both of the women came to the door, and shook hands with me cordially at parting. The same roof had sheltered us both, and it seemed that a tie had been formed which had to be shaken loose. They did not shake hands with the Germans, who had only breakfasted. And—(O the innate selfishness of the human heart!)—there was a sort of lurking feeling in my breast, that it would not have been fair if they had.

I like the individuality of these little inns. I hate to be made a number of. At Lucerne I was C. 13; here I could feel myself once more a human being. And not only a human being,

but a definite human being—one identified in many ways with a separate humanity. And in this retired place, where few English travellers come, and still fewer spend a night—so long as these two women keep their little inn, no doubt this one Englishman will be remembered.

As we wound up the steep ascent of the Pragel pass, my companions beguiled the way with some of their queer, characteristic student songs, and one of them gave, for my especial edification, "Love not," and other highly sentimental English ditties, which he had picked up from a fellow-student, an Irishman, who, as he said, sang all day long.

I could not help being struck, as I looked at my companions, their hats wreathed round fantastically with wild-flowers, singing and shouting along their way, with the contrast, in appearance and demeanour, between them and the men of our own universities. "*Only look at them!*" says the accomplished author of "Vacation Rambles," in arguing for the superiority of our own. And doubtless, if university men were made to look at, Oxford leaves nothing to desire. The fluency, however, with which one of my companions spoke English, presented a feature in which too many of our own would be sadly deficient; and I cannot but think that it shows something wanting in that system upon which Mr. Justice Talfourd bestows elsewhere such unqualified commendation, that a highly educated man, and a justly esteemed writer like himself, should be unable to make himself understood in either of the two great languages of Europe.

By this pass it was that Suwarrow, after having crossed the Kinzig Kulm to Muotta, and made a desperate but vain attempt to cut his way out by the mouth, retreated to Glarus, and finally, by the Sernftthal into the Grisons. How many a peaceful Alpine valley has been the scene of deadly strife—how many a torrent has run red with blood—how many a mountain pass has been encircled with troops as with the coil of a glittering serpent, and meanwhile the wretched inhabitants,

who knew nothing of French, or Russian, or Austrian, their politics or their quarrels, have suffered from all, and been trodden on by all.

At the top of the pass we stopped at a little chalêt, to rest and get some delicious milk. The old man who inhabited it was a regular Swiss teatotaller—one of seven brothers, he informed us, *not one of whom smoked.* And somewhat dogmatically he added his opinion, as he saw us make certain suspicious demonstrations, that "Rauchen ist nicht gut."

On arriving at the bottom of the pass, we held a council, and determined to take one of the boys on with us to Glarus. Our first guide strongly recommended himself; the other boy, he said, did not know the road, and moreover, added the hopeful youth, he was not accustomed to the society of gentlemen! The former of these reasons was quite sufficient—we could have dispensed with the latter; so the other boy, who had never a word to say when his deficiencies were canvassed, was paid, and returned home, and the boy who was "accustomed to the society of gentlemen" accompanied us to Glarus.

We now descended into the Klonthal, a small but extremely beautiful valley. The bright verdure of its pastures, contrasted with the stern grey of the snow-topped mountains which wall it in, and the shadows of the light green meadows cast upon the dark green waters of its lake, produced an enchanting effect, and I could not but admire the taste of the poet Gessner, who selected this valley for his summer residence. For a few moments we stood, gazing upon the scene of tranquil loveliness, and then one of my companions, selecting some flat stones, proceeded to make ducks and drakes on the smooth surface of the lake—an art in which he displayed a dexterity to which I should have thought no "mere foreigner" could have attained. And when I proceeded to imitate his example, my attempts were such shameful failures, that for the honour of England I desisted.

Very fine, too, is the gorge through which the lake discharges

its waters by the foaming and impetuous torrent of the Lontsch into the Linth. Some men were busy as we passed, launching upon its furious tide the logs which they had cut upon the mountains, to send down to Glarus. Not one half of them, however, though they started with the swiftness of arrows, arrived safely at their journey's end; for some were dashed among the rocks in the torrent's bed, and others were seized by the stream and whirled round and round among the eddies. The men came afterwards down the stream with long poles, to push off those which they found sticking. In some of them, which accompanied us on our way, we came to take an almost childish interest; and when one of them stuck upon a rock, my companions, although they had walked that morning from Brunnen, and intended to go on the same evening to Wesen, stopped fully quarter of an hour, pelting it ineffectually with stones. Enthusiasm is contagious, and so I throwing aside the proprieties—and our young guide the baggage—we all four set vigorously to work, and might have been seen, to the astonishment of any well-conducted traveller, pelting away as if our peace of mind depended upon the result.

CHAPTER XII.

VALLEY OF THE LINTH.

It is a new and a stirring life that meets you when you come to Glarus. You see it even in the inn; for there are not only the artist with his portfolio, and the tourist with his alpenstock and knapsack, but there are also men with samples and order-books —men in the oil way or the drug trade come to sell; or it may be, buyers come to look after the newest styles produced under the shadow of the Glarnetsh. It is indeed curious to see the hive of industry which has been established in this hollow of the mountains—how the strength of the foaming Linth is yoked to iron wheels—how the springs which flow from the unsullied snows are made to lend their purity to the calico-printer—how the forests yield up their life for his furnaces—and how the wild mountain torrents serve as carriers for his fuel. The whole way along the valley of the Linth there are factories and print-works; the whirl of machinery mingles with the roar of the torrent, and the ground was covered, as I passed, with scarlet that rivalled the poppy.

Here it is that the wood which is brought down from the higher valleys is secured and laid up for use; and by the side of most of the factories may be seen three or four huge piles like haystacks, stored by for consumption.

Besides its cotton manufacture, Glarus also does a large trade in an agricultural product peculiar to itself, that of the green cheese called Schwabzeiger, of which large quantities are exported

to America, as well as to different parts of Europe. Having always been under the impression of this being a sort of article of luxury, I was surprised to be informed that it is used very generally by the poorer classes, being sold at the low rate of twenty cents, or about twopence per pound.

Strongly as the life and bustle of this stirring place contrast with the repose, we might almost say the deadness, of its neighbour, Schwytz; yet, contrary to the usual case, the agricultural canton seems to have a more active press than the commercial one, for whereas Schwytz possesses its daily paper, in Glarus there is only one appearing twice a-week. There was an advertisement in a number which I took up, from a captain in the army, who it appears was also a tailor, calling attention to his stock of epaulets for all ranks, "prices moderate, and quality warranted." This way of combining two trades at first might make us smile; and yet there is probably, for its size, no more efficient army in Europe than the Swiss, as assuredly there is none more economical.

A pleasing feature in this secluded valley seems to be freedom from that religious bitterness which is so prevalent in some other parts of Switzerland—and a "religious equality"—but not the editor of the *Tablet's* sort. The two sects of Protestant and Catholic dwell in harmony together, and hold their services alternately in the same old Gothic church, in which, by the way, the latter, who are a small minority of the population, seem, as far as decoration is concerned, to have it all their own way. And when the canton celebrates its annual festival in commemoration of the glorious victory of Näfels, the sermon is preached on alternate years by the ministers of the respective faiths. An impressive and an interesting sight must that festival be, held on the spot where, nearly five centuries ago, their ancestors, a handful of shepherds, drove before them the Austrian knights. Eleven times they charged the foe that day, and at each place there is a great stone set up—a simple and primitive

memorial, like that which Joshua set up when Israel passed over Jordan. On the first Thursday in April, the inhabitants of the canton, men and women, Catholic and Protestant, shepherd and calico-printer, make a solemn procession to the place. There is something strange in thus seeing now, when Glarus has become a place of manufactures, the printing-machine and the spinning-jenny mixed up with a deed of old renown, and the factory-hands turning out to do homage on an ancient battle-field. But well they know what the printing-machine and the spinning-jenny owe to freedom, nor do they forget that the hands which weave muslins may one day have to wield muskets. An ambassador from the neighbouring canton of Schwytz has an honourable place in the procession; for thirty men of Schywtz shared the danger and glory of that day, and for nearly five hundred years has the canton of Glarus acknowledged the deed of service done her by those thirty men in her hour of need. Wesen had once its ambassador too, but no honourable part was his. In a suppliant's guise he came, to make atonement for the sins of his ancestors, in that the part they took that day was with the enemies of freedom. This somewhat invidious feature of the ceremony was abolished on the establishment of the Helvetic republic. On arriving at the first grey stone, the procession stops, and all falling on their knees round that simple altar, they return thanks to Almighty God, who gave them victory in the battle. At each of the stones the same service is repeated; and on arriving at the last, where the final charge was made, the secretary of the canton reads an account of the circumstances attending that passage in their history, after which a sermon is preached appropriate to the occasion. Happy people, if they can look back on all their past, and find nothing that will not do for the text of a sermon! Not but that all history is full of sermons—but with a difference. Such of my readers as are curious in sermons, might like to know what sort of a discourse could be preached on such a sub-

ject. In the description of Entlebuch by F. J. Stalder, parish priest of Escholzmatt in that valley, he quotes at full length a sermon—perhaps one of his own—preached on the anniversary of the battle of Sempach, another of those surprising victories gained over the Austrians by a handful of Swiss, and celebrated in its own neighbourhood much in the same way as that of Näfels. This sermon will serve as a specimen of the style adopted on such occasions. The text is from Maccabees, "Call to remembrance what acts our fathers did in their time, so shall ye receive great honour, and an everlasting name."

The parallels are all drawn from the history of the Jews, and curious enough it looks to see references intermixed to the chronicles of the kings of Judah, the book of Maccabees, and Müller's history of Switzerland. The style is vivid and impassioned; and, as we listen to its trumpet tones, we might almost fancy we heard the voice of some old puritan crying to his men—"Strike!—spare not!—smite Amalek, hip and thigh!" Again and again, as he recounts the deeds of that day, comes in the text at the close of each ringing period, "Call to remembrance what acts our fathers did of old." He stands upon the battle-field, and points out the positions of the two hostile forces. "Here," he says, "were posted our enemies in the plain—there stood our fathers on the hill. It is not to be expected," he goes on, "that I can set before your eyes the scene of that bloody fight. Not how your fathers, after a look of faith to heaven, stand firm in a new-born strength. Not how 'Death or victory!' 'Freedom!' 'Fatherland!' 'God!' rings through the air; and 'Death or victory!' 'Freedom!' 'Fatherland!' 'God!' the hollow woods reply. Not how, down bursting from the mountain like lions robbed of their young, they rush upon the scoffing foe. Ha! in vain the axe's murderous stroke—in vain the halberd's thrust—in vain the blow of the mighty sword! In vain—never an opening yet! But laugh not—laugh not yet over your coming triumph! * * * * *

See! Brethren—see! springs Arnold of Winkelried three leaps forward—he grasps with his outspread arms the extended spears—he presses them beneath him with a Switzer's strength—makes a way like Eleazer. 'Brothers, follow me!' he cries. And not more swiftly does the thunderbolt shiver in twain the rock, than did our fathers, rushing on over their kinsman's corpse, hew their way through the crowded ranks."

These be brave words, though they do not read very like a sermon. I give the concluding words:—"So shall the Catholic and the Evangelical, equally orthodox on this point, think on the gift of freedom, and each, without distinction of external creed, will, with one heart and soul, swear fidelity to their fatherland. Hail to thee, Helvetia! The fathers will shine as noble examples to the sons; and the virtuous courage of the sons will incite them to the glory of their fathers' deeds. 'Call to remembrance what acts our fathers did in their time, so shall ye receive great honour and an everlasting name.' Well, then, brethren—that which is wanting is in your own power. Be men—as they were. Then stands our freedom as steadfast as our rocks. Hail to thee, Helvetia!"

Happy would it be for Switzerland if the spirit of this concluding sentiment were more generally felt; but alas! in how dark a contrast stand out the events of the last few years, when again, Swiss fought against Swiss, and again "quarter was asked and refused in the same kindly mountain language." But the wounds of civil war, keenly as they rankle for a time, seem to heal sooner than one might expect. Let us hope that it is in this case, because both parties feel how deeply they have erred, and how deeply they have sinned.

It is a mournful reflection, when we read the stirring tale of many a gallant deed done by the Swiss in defence of their native valleys, that this very heroism should afterwards become one of the sources of their demoralization. The fame of their invincible courage immediately spread through Europe, and kings and

princes sought eagerly to purchase the services of such redoubtable champions. They were brave, and they were poor, and they sold their swords to the highest bidder. Consequently, it became an object with the European powers to obtain by bribery and intrigue as large a proportion as possible of these valuable mercenaries; and to those powers who had Swiss troops in pay, a ready pretext was never wanting for corruption. The pensions, for instance, awarded to the officers retired from foreign service, seem to have been generally accompanied by conditions inconsistent with their duty to their own country. At the sale of the books belonging to the late king of the French, I bought a manuscript journal written by the Marquis de Puysieux, French ambassador in Switzerland, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, and which possesses a certain interest as the secret record of his proceedings in that country. His mission seems to have been, briefly, to bribe as many of the Swiss as were worth bribing, and the process does not seem to have been one requiring any particular delicacy. In the few instances in which the individual sought to be gained over was himself inaccessible to a bribe, the thing was easily managed indirectly by bribing some one who had an influence over him. I have no doubt that many proud Swiss families would find that written of their ancestors which they would have been very loath to believe; and, altogether, the picture which it presents is a melancholy one, even for an age of general corruption.

And yet, after all, who can say that the heart of Switzerland is not sound? The gallant manner in which this little republic stood to her arms, a few years ago, in defence of a homeless exile, against one of the greatest powers of Europe, would not disgrace the brightest page of her history. And surely, now that the changing tide of events has placed that exile at the head of the nation which sought his expulsion, if there be any faith in kings—Switzerland should have her reward in a true ally.

Even at the present time, the firm and dignified attitude which she holds against another of her most powerful neighbours, is such as to command the respect of Europe. And, notwithstanding the support which Austria, in the pursuance of her policy, has given to the Sonderbund party, it is probable that a war which would appeal to all the old traditions of the country, would have the effect, rather than otherwise, of uniting the Swiss among themselves. For, excepting perhaps a small portion of the ultra-Catholics, those even who have most sympathy with her religion, would have none with her institutions.

To return to Glarus. There is, among the many fountains and streams which descend from the neighbouring mountains, one much celebrated among the old writers for the cures which it performed in many diseases, and deserving notice even now as a place in which were practised the earliest uses of hydropathy. This fountain, which is situated in the Krauchthal Alp, above Matt, consists of a sort of basin in the rock, supplied by a stream of intensely cold water, derived from the melted ice. Immersion in it was considered to be of great efficacy in many complaints, and even to restore the sense of hearing in old age; though Stumff, in his chronicle, says very candidly respecting this said immersion, "That some people were better after it, and some were worse." Its internal use was also supposed to cure fevers and dysenteries, provided it were taken "usque ad nauseam," which is a feature of the treatment modern hydropathists are not acquainted with.

The doctors, however, seem to have looked upon this fountain with a little jealousy, and science was not to be content with cold water, if any thing else would do as well. The philosophers set their wits to work accordingly, and marvellous was the result. Among the wiseacres of the period, it was a very general opinion that rock crystals were formed of indurated ice, that is to say, of ice which, never having been melted from generation to generation, had in the course of ages become perfectly hard and indis-

soluble. Here, then, was the very essence of coldness, and, instead of drinking a dozen gallons of cold water, how much more compendious, not to say scientific, would it be to administer a few grains in this concentrated form! And accordingly powdered crystals became a regular article in the multifarious pharmacopœia of the time.

On coming down to breakfast on the following morning at the hotel, I made an unlucky mistake, which has, I much fear, added one to the list of my countrymen's misdoings. Seeing a door on the landing below, with *salle a manger* above it, I entered, and seated myself without ceremony, taking it for one of the public rooms of the hotel. There was only a young woman seated at a table, and a waiter laying out breakfast; and, as the room had rather a private appearance, I immediately went out, thinking I might have made a mistake. The waiter followed me as I was going down-stairs to the room where I had dined the day before, and said, "If you please, Sir, you are to breakfast in the other room." The *other* room I concluded to be that to which I was *not* going, and immediately turned back, upon which the young lady instantly jumped up, and bounced out of the room, muttering something to herself, which was, no doubt—"Confound the impudence of that Englishman!" for this was, it seems, the private apartment of the landlord's family, and the young lady turned out to be his daughter. I have no doubt the story, in something like the following shape, has gone the round of the polite society of Glarus, of which she is probably a distinguished member:—

"Those English are certainly the most impudent people on the face of the earth. The other morning, as I was sitting in our private room, going to get my breakfast, an Englishman staying at the hotel came in; and, setting himself down with the utmost coolness, began to stare at me in the most impertinent manner imaginable. After a short time he went out, and fearing lest he should come back, I sent the waiter after him to tell

him that the other room was the one in which he was to breakfast. Would you believe it—no sooner had the waiter spoken to him, than out of sheer impudence he instantly came back, and seated himself with an air which seemed to say—'I am to breakfast in the other room, am I? I'll just let you see that I will breakfast wherever I like.' Upon which, to mark my sense of his impertinence, I immediately marched out of the room, and to show that he had done it out of pure impudence, no sooner had he succeeded in driving me out, than he went away perfectly contented."

From Glarus I walked up the Lintthal to the baths of Stachelberg, following the footpath, which, being in some places rather ambiguous, took me probably double the time in which I might have done it by the road. There is a considerable traffic as far as the village of Lintthal; for there are many factories and a great amount of industry in this romantic valley: the post arrives daily, laden with commercial news, and waggon-loads of cotton come toiling by the side of the Linth. But beyond—the Todi shuts up the entrance with his giant mass and there is no way through but a steep and perilous path among the glaciers.

Agriculture seems also to thrive in the valley of the Linth, for every patch of available soil is cultivated to the utmost. It is generally I think to be observed, that where manufacturing industry prevails, agriculture is found also to flourish—or it may be rather that they are both the offspring of the same active and energetic disposition of the people.

At the village of Schmanden branches off the minor valley of the Sernft, running parellel to that of the Linth. It is known among the inhabitants by the name of the Klein-thal, in contradistinction to that of the Linth, which is called the Grosz-thal, the names of Linth and Sernft appearing to be unknown among them. Near the entrance of the Sernft-thal, in the mountain of the Blattenberg, is a slate quarry, celebrated both

for the size and excellence of its slates, and also for the perfect specimens of fossils which have been found in it. The slates used formerly to be exported to Holland, England, and other parts of Europe, and even to the East and West Indies. They are used in the neighbourhood for making tables, and a variety of other purposes. It would seem to have been here that the article was first applied to that scholastic purpose for which it is now so universally used; for Philip Skippon, travelling in 1663, takes notice of it as something new. "They have," he says, "great square tables made of one slate stone, and on them they will ordinarily sum up their accounts with a piece of chalk." From this quarry the schools in our own country used at one time to be supplied with slates, before it was found that they could be procured at home.

Towards the farther end of the Sernft-thal is another natural curiosity, the Martin's loch, a cavity perforating the mountain—through which, four times a year, the sun shines upon the village of Ems in the valley below. There was a picture of it at Glarus, with the sun shining through the hole, and the people all looking on—the whole calculated to give you the impression that you saw before you a very remarkable natural phenomenon. Just before I came to the place where the Sernft-thal branches off, I discovered that this, the 15th of September, was one of the days, and I had very nearly gone out of my way in order to witness it. For I am ashamed (or, at any rate, I ought to be) to have to record, that it did not at once occur to me that this was one of the things about which I could not choose my own time, and that, if I had intended to be present on the occasion, I ought to have started many hours earlier in the morning.

The inhabitants of the valley would seem to attach a sort of superstitious importance to the periodic appearance of the sun through this opening; for the Baron Zurlauben mentions, in the *Voyage Pittoresque de la Suisse*, that the Protestant part of the population for a long time refused to accept the new, or Gregorian

calendar, on the ground that, if they did so, the sun would not shine through the hole on the proper day—the Catholics of course submitting, in deference to the authority of the Pope.

A little farther on, I fell in with a young country woman going the same way, with whom I had some conversation under difficulties; and I was just beginning to flatter myself that I was making a little progress in understanding the *patois* of the country, when I was not a little surprised, on parting with her, to hear her say "Well, I think I understand *your French* better than you understand *my German*," and to find that she had been under the impression that I had been talking French to her the whole time. There is a peculiarity in the Swiss dialect in many parts of the country, which seems to me a curious one. We generally find that the tendency of the peasantry, particularly among the mountains, so far from clipping, or rubbing the edges off their words, is rather to strengthen and harden the sounds; but here in many cases, as in *ma* for *mann*—*ma* for *mag*—*ha* for *habe*—they seem, as it were, regularly to take the *bones* out of the words.

It was a lovely day of September as ever was when I arrived at the baths of Stachelberg. The fountain was playing, and the dahlias were all blowing in the pretty little garden in front. Beyond, the Linth murmured along through meadows of the brightest verdure, and the sparkling torrents leaped gaily to meet him down the mountain sides. Above, the clear outlines of the peaks were cut out upon a cloudless sky; and the eternal snows of the Todi glistened gloriously in the autumn sun. I stood on the balcony to gaze; but I stood and gazed alone—the season was over, and the guests were gone: the last man had left that morning. But I found the old proverb verified:—"The more the merrier, but the fewer the better fare;" for the cook, having nobody but my unworthy self to exercise his talents upon, served me up a dinner, including a dish of chamois, of which I felt myself utterly unworthy. The ridge of moun-

tains between the two parallel valleys of the Sernft and Linth, used formerly, as Wagner tells us in his *Helvetia Curiosa*, to be a celebrated haunt of the chamois; butfor a long time they have, on account of the circumscribed range to which they are confined, become comparatively scarce.

Having first refreshed myself with a bath, which was charged at the moderate rate of 75 cents, or about sevenpence-halfpenny, I set off to walk to the Panten Brucke, a wonderfully bold and light arch which spans the fearful chasm into which the valley contracts at the farther end. A little beyond the baths is a large cotton-spinning factory, worked by a mill-race from the Linth; and as I caught a glimpse, in passing under its windows, of whirling spindles and revolving wheels, I was forcibly struck with the contrast between the movements of nature and the movements formed by man. Around me the torrents danced wildly in all the freedom of ever-changing life; within, too, was intense motion—wheels and pulleys spinning round and round with almost viewless rapidity; but how all was fixed and chained, moving as if with a dead speed that was like stillness.

Near the village of Linthal is a memorial inscription, cut upon the face of a rock, to M. Durller of Zurich, the first who ascended the Todi, and who, while contemplating a second ascent, was killed by a fall from a little hill near his native town. In passing through the village, I was struck with the sickly and haggard look of many of the children I met; some of whom, of the age apparently of not more than eleven or twelve, bore on their countenances the careworn expression of age. I find that Dr. Forbes made the same observation, and that he attributes it to the ordinary cause which produces disease and imbecility in many of the Swiss valleys—the want of a proper circulation of air. This view did not occur to me; for the valley seemed wide and open—the situation of the village is tolerably elevated,—and I could not see why, in a place to which people come *for* their health, the inhabitants should be weak and sickly.

But when, on retiring to rest at the primitive hour of eight, as the wont of travellers is who have nothing to do at night, and plenty to do in the morning, I opened my window and looked out into the valley, I saw the factory lights flaring out into the deep gloom; and just as I looked, they began to be extinguished one by one, and then all at once it occurred to me that the cause might be found in the long hours. Nor was that opinion weakened when I found upon inquiring, that the hands work from half-past five in the morning till eight at night, with the intermission of but half an hour for dinner, and no time for breakfast, which they are expected to swallow before they start. Nor was it until within the last two years that any restriction was placed upon the age of those employed, which is now fixed at twelve, being a year younger than in this country. Previously to that time they are required to attend school; and it was sad to meet the fresh little children coming home with sums upon their slates, and then those for whom the law had not come in time. I may be wrong—altogether or in part—in ascribing to this cause the sickly appearance I witnessed; yet if we suppose children under the age of twelve to have worked the above-mentioned hours, such a result would be only what we might naturally have expected. It is to be hoped that, as the legislature seem to have turned their attention to the subject, they may take further steps in the same direction.

THE LAND OF TELL

Frei lebt wer sterben kann,
Frei, wer die Heldenbahn
Steight wie ein TELL hinance,
Nie hinterwärts!
SWISS PATRIOTIC SON

ON the following morning, accompanied by a guide, and attended by a pretty little dog belonging to the landlord of the baths, with which I had scraped an acquaintance the day before, and which, in spite of cajolery and threats, insisted upon setting me to Altorf, I started to climb the Klausen pass. We had not proceeded far before it began to rain; and for the rest of the ten hours which it took us to reach Altorf, we marched through an incessant shower. A stiff climb of about two hours brought us to the fertile pastures of Unnerboden, an extensive valley secluded among the mountains, but containing a considerable population in summer, and affording pasture for 700 cows. It was somewhat curious to see the cow-herds perched up upon the mountain sides, many of them holding over their heads huge and most unromantic-looking umbrellas, so very different was it to our English idea of a Swiss cow-herd. A considerable number of rude chalêts are scattered over this valley; but around the little chapel there is rather a larger cluster, which may be called a village—and there is also one which, inasmuch as it hangs out a sign, we may venture to style an inn. Close to it is another, a degree better than the rest, which is the residence of the priest; and just as we passed by he came out, arrayed in his cano-

nicals, and, going into his little chapel, began to ring his bell for prayers.

Weary work it is climbing mountains on a wet day—scrambling over slippery rocks, and trudging along marshy paths—coming every now and then to a place where there is a fine view—if you could only see it. Soaked through and through we were ere we reached the valley of Schachen, which extends from the foot of the Klausen, a distance of about a dozen miles, to Altorf. Along this I pursued my way, through a beautiful and fertile country, richly clothed with wood, and abounding with fine fruit-bearing trees—trudging along in that sort of wet, mechanical, contented state in which a man feels when the elements have done their worst, the poor little dog trotting on before, quite divested of the superfluous action with which he had started in the morning.

We were now in the land of Tell, and presently we came to the village of Burglen, where he was born; and there, upon the spot where his house once stood, as upon most of the spots where his illustrious actions have been performed, a little chapel has been placed as a certificate. Here also he died—nobly as he had lived—vainly endeavouring to save a boy from the swollen waters of the Schachen, a stream which descends from the mountain of the Klausen, and flows along this valley to the Reuss. No chapel stands upon that spot; yet it was there, and there alone, that I was able to realize a sentiment suited to the place. For the stream was swollen by the rain, as it might have been on the day when Tell was drowned; and, as I crossed the bridge over its dangerous-looking tide, I could fancy the gallant Swiss, who would have struck out bravely in a stormy sea, perishing in that treacherous stream, which trips up a man's feet, and pins his arms to his sides, and throttles him miserably against the rocks—and will not give him a fair fight for his life.

The men of this valley, Murray remarks, are considered the finest race in Switzerland; and, before reading the passage, I had

made the observation on my own account, that the men I had met were the most athletic-looking that I had seen.

One of the inns at Altorf, the *Baar*, not by any means the first, but described in Murray as "tolerable," is kept by a widow and her daughter; and as soon as ever I was thoroughly wet through, it had somehow become, without ever debating the question, a settled point in my mind, that I was to go to the inn that was kept by women. The house I found a rather gloomy-looking one, but every thing else was good; the charges were very moderate, and the women sympathized, as I had expected, with my dripping condition.

The whole of that night it rained incessantly; and the next morning presented still the same endless vista of dark clouds swimming heavily into the horizon. Again and again an indefatigable German, posted with his pipe at the window, announced that he saw a piece of blue; and we all rushed up just in time to see it slowly and cruelly covered up. Our spirits sank with the barometer; and when the landlady came in with some dreary news (which happily turned out to be false) of the diligence between Berne and Lucerne having been lost with all the passengers; and when I despondingly proclaimed my intention, in case the next day should be such another, of going home, and turning my back upon Switzerland—another man took it up, as if it had been rather a good idea. And so we sat smoking and croaking all the morning.

In such a frame of mind I borrowed an umbrella, and sallied forth to see the place where the matchless bowman went through his fearful trial.

"Tell," says an unbelieving German,* "is the weak point of the Swiss. They believe every tittle concerning him with the most resolute faith, and will not hear of any critical investigation on the subject."

It is more than fifty years ago since some disagreeable person

* Switzerland in 1847, by Theodore Mügge.

published a treatise at Berne, endeavouring to prove the story of the apple to be a myth from beginning to end. But the three cantons laid a formal complaint before the government, and the heretical work was publicly committed to the flames. A myth! Why they have the very crossbow at Zurich with which he hit the apple—they would have had the apple, too, if it would have kept. But so it is; the ancients made their heroes demigods—the middle ages made them saints—we moderns make them myths; there seems the same general desire to remove them from humanity. To say the truth, as far as the apple is concerned, seeing that the same story, with trifling variations, is the subject of no fewer than four different legends, I own I would not like to pin my own faith upon it. But—"si non e vero, e ben trovato"—the name of Tell is one that can set every man in Switzerland upon his feet, and put a musket into his hand, and the government is right not to allow any liberties to be taken with it. Keep it, therefore, till you can get a better; and, if any man doubt it, burn his book, as it is no longer the fashion to burn himself.

I stood in the place, but I own, without feeling any of the enthusiasm which the scene ought properly to have inspired. Not but that there are people who can get up, at a moment's notice, a sentiment appropriate to the time and place; but I think it shows a matter of fact disposition. No one, however, can feel enthusiastic on a wet day; and it is no wonder that, under such circumstances, I could realize nothing about Tell except the fact of his being *drowned.*

Though the crossbow has long been superseded by the rifle; yet the frequency with which one meets with it as a plaything in the hands of boys, seems to show that there is still a lingering affection in the land of Tell for the weapon with which he fought—a weapon, by the way, which one of the popes denounced as an unfair one. I wonder what he would have said to Colt's revolvers!

In such an unpropitious state of the elements as that which I have described, one sometimes feels a sort of desperate relief in taking very decided measures, as if showing a bold front could have some effect in turning the tide in one's favour. And so, acting upon this principle, I sent for a guide, and arranged to go over the Surenen pass on the following morning to Engelberg. The short conversation I had with the man was exceedingly refreshing; for, instead of smiling and shaking his head when I unfolded my project, or treating the thing altogether as a sort of jest, he entered at once into the subject pleasantly and seriously, and when asked his opinion about the weather, calmly replied that he thought it extremely likely to be fine. I could not help thinking at the time, that the wish was father to the thought; for there seemed nothing whatever to justify his opinion—yet still it is always pleasant to hear people talk so cheerfully.

I awoke many times in the course of that night, and sometimes I heard the barking of the dogs, and sometimes I heard the deep voice of the watchman's chant; but always I heard the steady, uninterrupted drip of water, constant and perfectly regular, just as if rain had become a settled feature in creation. I got up as soon as it was light, with a sort of bitter satisfaction at the unmistakeable character of the bad weather. I looked out; but how great was my surprise to find, that the rain had ceased, the sky was clear, the morning was quite fine, and that the sound which I had heard was from a fountain which happened to be near the inn! The guide was right; but I still think that he drew his bow at a venture, speculating upon the uncertainty of the season, and reasoning that, as it had rained already for two days together, it would very likely be fine on the next.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE MOUNT OF ANGELS.

When first mine eyes beheld that famous hill,
The sacred Engelberg—celestial bands,
With intermingling motions soft and still,
Hung round its top, on wings that changed their hues at will.

WORDSWORTH.

THE hill across which lay our way to Engelberg looked down upon the valley of the Reuss, and across it into the beautiful Schachen-thal, which opened out on the opposite side. The last view we had of Altorf and the valley of the Reuss, still brought to our minds nothing but rain. The lake was swollen, and the Reuss, and the Schachen were dammed back so as to overflow their banks, and lay a considerable part of the valley under water, giving to every thing a wet and miserable appearance.

Just before you begin to climb the steep ascent of the ridge of the Surenen, you come to the wretched chalêts of Waldnacht, into one of which we went in quest of some milk. Not without difficulty—for the cows and the rain had made an abominable puddle before the door, which the inmates had vainly endeavoured to bridge over by a plank, and I found to my cost, the way into that cottage the worst part of all the Surenen pass. Inside we found a woman with an infant in her arms, which always adds discomfort to wretchedness. And, when the milk was produced, there was a hair in it, and I could not take it.

"No!" I said, in reply to the remonstrances of my guide. "I have changed my mind. I think I will have a smoke instead."

"Drink it," he said; "it is good milk—you can smoke afterwards."

"I have no doubt," I said, "that it is genuine cow's milk—the evidence is more than sufficient; but—suppose you drink it yourself."

So he fished out the hair with his finger, and drank it himself.

A steep ascent of about an hour and a half, brought us to a small field of snow just under the summit of the ridge, across which, in another quarter of an hour, we mounted to the top of the pass. The Surenen Eck is a long and narrow ridge, not more than a few feet in breadth, extending from the Blakenstock on one side, to the Schlossberg on the other, and rising 7486 feet above the sea. The view from it is very fine—either looking back into the distance upon the valleys of the Schachen and the Maderan, over which the snowy peak of the Todi now shows itself—or forward into the wild valley beneath our feet, over which the magnificent Titlis reigns supreme, and into which he sends down his glaciers and his avalanches.

We descended into the valley, and sat down to rest by the pretty stream of the Stierenbach; and my guide, pointing to a stone impressed with a mark slightly resembling the point of a hoof, told me a strange tradition of the place. These pastures, it seems, were among the most fertile of Uri once, until, by the judgment of heaven upon the impiety of a shepherd, they were cursed with fearful visitation. This shepherd, as the legend runs, had conceived so great an affection for one of his sheep, that he baptised it, and gave it a Christian name. Upon which, as a punishment for his profanity, this beloved sheep was transformed into a horrible monster, which laid waste the whole district of Engelberg, and changed it into a desolate wilderness. The inhabitants, in their distress, took counsel of a certain wandering philosopher from Sp in (which used to be considered the seat of the black art), and whose advice certainly required patience no less than faith. It was this—to take a calf and feed it upon

milk during a period of nine years; the first year upon the milk of one cow, the second upon that of two, and so on, till at the end of the nine years it was to be conducted by a virgin to the scene of action, and there let loose. The people of Uri adopted this notable device, which was crowned with the most complete success; for the ox, on being let loose, presently fell in with the monster, with whom he immediately joined battle, and after a terrible conflict succeeded in gaining the victory. But unfortunately, being extremely heated by his exertions, the ox could not refrain from drinking so greedily from the stream which runs down the mountain side as to cause his own death, from which we derive the subordinate moral not to drink cold water when we are hot. Thence it is that the Stierenbach derives its name.

The whole of the way along this valley to Engelberg is very fine. On the one side is the range of the Titlis, with its peaks and glaciers, and deep fields of snow. On the other, the Blaken Alps rise up abruptly like ramparts, bare and steep. No sound disturbed the deep stillness of the scene, except the shrill whistle of the marmot, or the occasional murmur of some cascade falling from the mountain side. The rain of the last two days had given birth to so great a number of temporary falls, many of them assuming elegant and fantastic forms, that the side of the mountain in some places appeared to be quite fringed with them. About the middle of the valley is a little chapel, containing a bell, the gift of a French traveller, which is rung during storms and fogs to guide the traveller, and prevent him from losing his way.

From Altorf to Engelberg occupied us about nine hours, though the reverse of the journey requires only about seven; the difference being due to the greater elevation of the latter place, and the increased amount of climbing consequent thereon.

The situation of Engelberg is extremely imposing; it stands at the foot of the snowy Titlis, among pastures of the brightest

verdure, encircled towards the base of the mountain by a dark green belt of trees, the valley below forming a striking and beautiful contrast to the eternal winter overhead. The convent has not the same pretensions to architectural magnificence as that at Einsiedeln; it is a plain, unadorned white building; and yet, I think, harmonizing better with the situation in which it is placed, than if it had owed more to decorative art.

We made our way to the *Engel*, an inn comfortable after an old fashion, and kept by the jolliest of landlords, with a round and rosy face, a merry twinkling eye, and a voice like Lablache.

The company in the house consisted of a party of Swiss from Lucerne—a lady and four gentlemen; all apparently on the most intimate terms with each other, and with the landlord. After supper we adjourned to an adjoining room containing a piano, around which the whole of the party, including the jolly landlord, who was in fact the great man of the place, drew their chairs, and spent the evening in music and singing. So I drew in my chair among the rest, looked as like a connoisseur as I could, and endeavoured to applaud in the right place. Nay, entering into the spirit of the thing, in the course of the evening I gained immense credit by calling for, and joining in the Swiss patriotic song, "Rufst du, mein Vaterland?" which I had learned out of the "Physician's Diary," and the air of which being the same as our "God save the Queen," presented no great difficulty. Then somebody called for an Italian song—somebody always does—and we went through the usual infliction of bad Italian. Finally, the singing was wound up with a comic song, appropriate to a Saturday night, descriptive of the occupations of the different days of the week, and ending with a reminder that Sunday was a day of rest—"Sonntag must mann ruhen," which, as no doubt intended, was received with a hearty laugh. Then they got up a polka, headed by an old gentleman in spectacles, whom they addressed as Herr Professor, and which lasted until one of the lady's slippers came off. After which, the landlord

handed round a glass of something which he did not charge in the bill, and we all went to bed. Though—for the sphere in which they evidently moved—there was a good deal of homeliness in the manners of these people; yet the simplicity and heartiness which they showed in their intercourse with each other, as well as their cordial civility towards me as a stranger, could not but make a favourable impression upon my mind. They had no doubt been, as is the fashion of the country, brought up together from an early age, in one of those exclusive circles into which society in Switzerland is divided. When a man marries, he enters the circle of his wife; and thus, in the present case, the party seemed to have been the friends of the lady, who appeared to be on a much more intimate footing with them than her husband was. Indeed, the way she had of patting her gentlemen friends encouragingly on the back when she wanted them to do any thing, and approvingly when they performed it to her satisfaction, would have rather amused any one accustomed only to the gravity of English society. I observed that they always addressed each other in conversation by their titles—as "Herr Professor," "Herr Doctor," &c., rather than by their names. This fondness for titles seems to be a weakness which the Swiss share in common with other republicans, and carry indeed to the further extent of giving them to the ladies. Mr. Müggе heard, when at Zurich, of a "Mrs. Deputy-Inspector of Fire-engines!" (*Frau Vice-Sprüzen-Meisterin.*)

The following day, being a Sunday, happened to be that set apart throughout all the churches of Switzerland for the annual thanksgiving to Almighty God for the blessings conferred upon the country, for the many victories vouchsafed to their arms, and for the freedom preserved to them through so many dangers and vicissitudes. The services, consequently, were of more than ordinary interest, and the spacious church was crowded with peasants from all parts of the canton. And a pretty sight they were—the girls, some of them good-looking, all dressed in the

smart costume of Unterwalden, ranged on one side—and the men, in their white shirt sleeves (as if, having a clean shirt on, they thought it a shame to hide it), on the other. I was rather scandalized at seeing a great number of the men who preceded me into the church, enter smoking their pipes; but I found afterwards that they put them out in the porch, for no tobacco mingled with the incense.

In the course of the service, a procession took place round the church, consisting of the monks and officiating priests; among whom I was not a little amused to see, by virtue of some office which he held in the canton, our jolly landlord—invested with a black cloak, and trying very hard to look solemn.

CHAPTER XV.

THE WUNDERBRUNNEN.

I STARTED on the following morning to cross by the Joch pass to Meyringen. Having been fine for two successive days, the third was, as might have been expected, extremely wet. This was the more unfortunate, as the Joch pass is a fine one, and the occasional glimpse of the magnificent Titlis, which was revealed when the mist cleared away for a moment, made it only the more provoking when they immediately closed in again.

My guide carried an umbrella slung over his shoulder, I verily believe for respectability's sake, and nothing else, as he neither made use of it himself, nor, as of course he ought to have done—offered it to me. So, as soon as I saw that he was thoroughly wet through, and could not be made any worse, I proposed to carry it for him, to which he willingly acceded. This guide spoke the worst *patois* of any man I had hitherto met with. It was generally the case with the guides I had, that, however unintelligible at first, after we had travelled together for an hour or two, we began to get at each other's meanings; but in this case, from first to last, it was with the utmost difficulty that I could make him understand the simplest question.

Passing along the shores of the Trubsee, a gloomy and desolate lake, fit to be the site of any horrible legend, we at length reached the summit, and descending thence to the pastures of Engstlen,

where the men of Hasli hold their wrestling-matches, we presently came to the celebrated intermittent fountain called the Wunderbrunnen.

This fountain in ancient times was, next to Pilate, the object of perhaps more wondrous legends and superstitious stories, than any other place in Switzerland. Its source being derived from melted snows, it flows only during the summer months, and is said (but this as an invariable rule I doubt) to cease altogether during the night. The old writers, however, improved upon this, and made it flow only three times a day, viz., at morning, noon, and night. Hence it was that it came to be regarded in early times with feelings of mixed wonder and veneration, as a fountain miraculously provided by Providence for the supply of the cattle upon the mountains. For it flowed only during the summer months, when the cattle were put out upon the pastures, and only, as they believed, at those times of the day when the cattle were usually taken to water. If any one presumed to wash himself in it, to throw any dirt into it, or to behave disrespectfully towards it in any other way, it immediately resented the indignity by disappearing altogether, and not returning for several days.

Now, one cannot wonder at legends and superstitions in an ignorant and credulous age; but it does seem odd that a mere simple fact should not be capable of being correctly ascertained. Here is a given fountain; required to know the times when this fountain flows. And yet, during all these four hundred years, it has only now—if now—been correctly ascertained. First come the old writers, with their romantic and marvellous fancies. The fountain, according to them, flowed from the beginning of June till the end of August—only at stated periods during the day, and ceased altogether under certain circumstances, as related above. Then came the earlier scientific writers, ignoring as idle fables all the stories about the fountain disappearing if disrespectfully treated; but still maintaining that it flowed only from

June till the end of August, and at certain periods of the day. Lastly comes Murray, and he states that "it flows from spring to autumn, always running from 8 a.m. to about 4 p.m., when it ceases." My evidence is to the effect, that I saw it flowing briskly on the 17th of September at half-past three in the afternoon; and if the days had been rather longer, and the rain not quite so heavy, I am strongly inclined to think that, by waiting an hour or so, I might have thrown in a fresh element of doubt as to the period of its stopping.

We now descended into the Gentel-thal, along which some goats followed us for a considerable distance in quest of salt; not agreeing in Mr. Howard's view, as to "its hurtful effects upon the body and mind of man, and upon animals," and though we repeatedly informed them by means of stones that we had none. At length we met a woman coming in the opposite direction, who undertook to drive them back to their own pastures.

It was dark when we reached the valley of Upper Hasli, and, crossing the Gadmen torrent, presently came to a covered bridge over the Aar. The river was much swollen by the rain, and the water covered the road for some distance on the opposite side. A young man, however, came wading across, and offered to carry us over on his shoulders for a franc. It was too wet and too dark to stand bargaining, and so I accepted his offer; but I was a little surprised when, on offering him the money, he declined taking it, but called his sister, and desired me to pay it over to her. She accordingly led the way to a cottage, where a light was struck, and the franc paid over, having been first duly examined by the family to ascertain that it was really a franc. I now saw his motive for refusing to take it himself: he was afraid lest I should cheat him in the dark. We should be wrong, however, in ascribing, from any such individual instances, distrustfulness as a general characteristic to the Swiss, for such instances seem to be the exception, and not the rule. On coming out, I found that my guide did not follow me, and

turning back to see what had become of him, found the family all clustered about him, like wasps round a sugar-barrel, insisting that he also should pay something. So at last he produced a coin—I have no doubt it was a very small one—and came away, muttering to himself something by no means complimentary to the people of the place. The sister, to whose care we had first been committed, was, as many of the women of Hasli have the character of being, a very good-looking girl; but O the keen, covetous look of her handsome eyes!

As we proceeded along the valley to Meyringen, we heard for a considerable distance the roar of the Reichenbach, swollen by the rain, and carrying down with it, as it seemed, large trunks of trees, which it dashed, with a sound like thunder, against the rocks. Heard in the stillness and darkness of the night, the sound was grand, nay, almost awful; but when I saw the fall on the following morning, with a boarding before it, like a peep-show, to prevent people from seeing it for nothing, I could scarcely conceive it to be the same which had made such an impression upon my mind.

At Meyringen I put up at the *Sauvage*, where I engaged a guide, and started on the following morning for Grindelwald.

CHAPTER XVI.

GRINDELWALD.

Your way through the Oberland resembles a triumphal procession. The roar of cannon announces your progress—music, vocal and instrumental, strikes up at your approach—fair children press forward to present flowers to you with their tiny hands—a venerable Swiss stands with his alpine horn before the grey peak of tempests, and proclaims to him, "Here comes the Englishman;" and from his hollow ice-caves and his snowy cliffs the Wetterhorn rings back a welcome.

Alas! the roar of the cannon is but the cry of the horseleech's daughters, and the answering thunder of the mountains sends back the same sound. In the mouths of the singers may be brave and patriotic words; but their meaning, being interpreted, is, "Give give!" The music of the alpine horn is tuned to that single note, and the language of flowers has no other word than one. First comes a man who plays upon the horn, and who, from being the first, and from having the advantage of only one arm, drives no doubt a thriving trade. I gave him a trifle as I passed on account of his one arm, which I had no sooner done than my conscience smote me for having yielded to a commonplace sentiment. When, however, after climbing a steep ascent, you come to a little hut, and have set before you a plate of strawberries and cream, for which you pay threepence-halfpenny, you feel that that is a *bonâ fide* transaction. But the man, it seems, dealt in other commodities; for I had no sooner finished the strawberries than he pointed to a cannon ready charged for me, and ready to be charged to me. But a single

man cannot afford gunpowder, so I told him that I was content with strawberries, but that there was a family coming up. Sure enough, in the course of about half an hour, the distant boom of the cannon announced that "the family" had arrived.

The mendicity which is so universally prevalent throughout the Oberland, though no doubt it has been fostered by the influx of travellers, cannot be said to be owing altogether to that cause. It would seem to be the result of that laziness of disposition which, according to the opinion of Wyss* and other authorities, among the Swiss themselves, is more peculiarly the characteristic of the inhabitants of this district. König, a Swiss artist who has illustrated his native country with his pen and pencil, says, that the women of the Oberland carry the disposition to take things easily so far, that they go down upon their knees to gather apples—put on gloves to work in the fields—and hoist an umbrella for the slightest shower.

In a little village near the falls of the Reichenbach is a girl, however, who carries on business upon a more legitimate capital than most of the others, her stock in trade being a live chamois, which is shown for a small gratuity. Her station is judiciously chosen, just where the traveller comes up with all the freshness of the Alps upon him, before he has been fatigued into indifference, or persecuted into churlishness. Here, Cockney traveller, come and look! You have gazed upon the snowy Wetterhorn, and been told that among those stern solitudes ranges the chamois in his native freedom. You have bought two polished horns for a franc a-piece, that were once the crown of one of nature's most graceful heads. You have had certain black flesh set before you at the table d'hôte, which, you were told, was chamois; and which might be or might not (for ever since the time of Jacob, a kid of the goats has been made to pass for venison.) But here is to be seen the chamois all alive, with his horns upon his own head, and his flesh upon his own ribs,

* Reise in das Berner-Oberland.

leaping up upon the table as he might scale a shelf of the rock, standing with all four feet upon a post as he might stand upon a point of the peak of tempests. Is not all this worth a franc? Then pay it, and come away.

The inn upon the top of the Scheideck was closed when we passed, I believe on account of some arrangement with the innkeepers at Grindelwald. The word *Scheideck*, which is derived from the verb *scheiden*, to separate, signifies the dividing ridge of a pass between two valleys. It is applied to different places in the Oberland; the Wengern Alp, for instance, is also known by the name of the lesser Scheideck.

Descending into the valley of Grindelwald, we made the usual detour to the upper glacier, which descends between the two mountains of the Wetterhorn and the Mettenberg. This is one of the branches or outlets of that stupendous field of ice which surrounds the mountains of the Oberland, and fills up the hollow spaces between them, forming a mass calculated at 115 square miles in extent, and supposed to be in some places of immense depth. The minister of Grindelwald informed Dr. Wyss, that having thrown stones into some of the fissures, he counted twelve or fourteen seconds before he heard them strike the bottom. This, however, is nothing to a cavity mentioned by Wagner* in the mount Gimmor, in the canton of Appenzel, into which, if you throw a stone, you may repeat the ten commandments before it reaches the bottom!

There is a curious diversity of statement as to the increase or diminution of these fields of ice, not only in the Oberland, but in Switzerland generally. One traveller, Mr. Mügge, draws a most melancholy picture of the future prospects of the country, based upon the supposed increase of the glaciers, and the encroachments of the ice-fields upon the cultivated land. Speaking of a pastor whom he met in travelling through the Kander valley, he relates the following statement:—

* Helvetia Curiosa.

"He confirmed the account I have invariably heard from inhabitants of the country, that the glaciers and masses of ice on the Alps are constantly increasing, and the pasture-land diminishing in the same proportion. Many a valley he was himself acquainted with, which in the last century fed large herds of cattle, where now scarcely as many single head can pick up a scanty subsistence. * * * The same complaint I heard repeated in many different quarters by the herdsmen on the Furka, and in the Grisons. The ice and snow are continually augmenting; the glaciers are pressing down more and more into the valleys, and filling them up; the temperature is sinking; the soil deteriorating and growing marshy. What can be the cause of this alarming change? * * * This much is certain, that where large trees once grew, no tree will grow now, and that large roots are found beneath what is now everlasting snow. In some villages, where the mountain-sides are clothed with firs, they are obviously dying away, and no art can make a young plantation prosper. In the Ursern valley, the few pines left by Suwarrow remain, but they do not increase; and in descending from the Wengern Alp, at the foot of the Jungfrau, to the Grindelwald, you see to the west a number of dying pines, whose blackened branches have as spectral an appearance as those on the Altenfiord, in Norway, beyond the polar circle."

I am afraid the old story of "the former days were better than these," has a good deal to do with all these doleful tales of the herdsmen. There can be no doubt that slow but mighty changes are going on among the glaciers and the ice-fields. New glaciers open out; ancient paths over the mountains are covered; old valleys are filled up by the encroachments of the sea of ice. But, on the other hand, it is as certain that large glaciers once existed where none are now to be found; extensive moraines are to be seen far removed from any present field of ice. Upon the whole then, it is probable, that as the ocean in some places encroaches upon, and in others recedes from the land, so the sea

of ice, notwithstanding its various fluctuations, maintains, at least in our era of the planet, pretty nearly the same proportion to the cultivated land. Something, however, may be due to this, that wherever a glacier has been, it has left behind it large rocks and heaps of rubbish, with which the plain is encumbered; so that the changes may be to the disadvantage of the cultivated land in this respect, that the soil which it gains is not of the same value as that of which it is deprived.

L'Escarbot, in his "*Tableau de la Suisse*," mentions it as a tradition among the peasants, that the glacier alternately advances and retires for a period of seven years at a time, or, as he says in his half doggerel verse:—

> "Comment sept ans durant s'augmente cette glace,
> Et sept ans diminüe en la terre plus basse."

There can be no doubt that both the Grindelwald glaciers are at present receding, or as the natives express it, in allusion to the peculiar appearance they present at such times, "turning up their noses;" and that this has been generally the case among the Alps for the last few years. With respect to the blasted forests which are to be seen in some places, as also to the fact that young plantations cannot be made to thrive, I am of opinion that it is owing to an entirely different cause. It is absurd to suppose that the pines, for instance, referred to at the foot of the Wengern Alp, have been destroyed by the cold; nor yet do I agree with Murray, that their present condition is the effect of avalanches. It is owing, in my humble opinion, to the skirts of the forest having been imprudently cut away, so as to allow the wind to get in amongst them, and cut down the trees, just like cavalry when they have once got inside of a square of infantry. And with regard to the failure of the attempts to make new plantations thrive, it is quite a different thing for young trees to spring up under the shelter of the old primeval forests, and for

the same trees to grow when planted by themselves, young and tender, without any protection.

This however is certain, that the popular mind of the Swiss is deeply imbued with the tradition of an ancient golden age, a time when, as Bridel relates in the *Conservateurum Suisse*, the cows were so large and yielded such quantities of milk, that, in default of other vessels, they were milked into reservoirs or ponds; from these the cream was gathered by means of a boat; and he goes on to relate a story of a young man who, having been drowned by the upsetting of his boat, was lost for a long time, till at length, in making the butter, his body was found sticking among the cream like a smothered fly. There, reader, for a specimen of a Swiss paradise!

Though there is no general tradition to account for the altered state of things, and the loss of this golden age, there are local fables current in almost every part of Switzerland, and bearing for the most part a strong family likeness to each other, setting forth how, owing to the wickedness of the inhabitants, certain valleys, once fertile, have been cursed, and rendered unfruitful.

On the subject of the mythology of the inhabitants of the Alps, M. de Bonstetten has made the remark that we should not expect to find, in a country of such natural magnificence as Switzerland, such traditions as the classical fable of the Titans, or the giants of Scandinavian Eddas. "All imaginary greatness," he observes, "must appear little in comparison with the Alps." And the traditions of the Oberland are in fact all of pigmies, or Bergmännlein, a race of people corresponding with our fairies; like them, of a kind and active disposition, and fond of rendering unseen services to their neighbours. They are described as having feet like geese, of which the little people would seem to be rather ashamed; for they are always represented with long robes trailing on the ground. And once, when a shepherd, whose cherries they had regularly gathered for him for many a year, being of an inquiring turn of mind, strewed ashes under

the tree, and when in the morning he saw the prints of the goose-like feet, the little folk never gathered his cherries for him any more. It is curious to see how, in the hands of the unimaginative Swiss, even the "fairy footsteps" lose their poetry.

Before reaching Grindelwald I overtook a party, consisting of two Americans, and two Frenchmen from Paris—lively and pleasant companions, some of whom I had met before. We got rooms in the *Adler*, facing the glacier, which is always satisfactory, even when you have no time to look at it.

Owing to its height above the sea—upwards of 3300 feet—the climate of Grindelwald is severe, and the crops and fruit considerably later than in the adjacent valleys. The ratio in which vegetation is retarded, according to the observations of the brothers Schlagentweit,* is about eleven days for every thousand feet, subject of course to variation from different causes. M. Bouriit relates finding here a burgher of Berne who had been banished to this Siberia of Switzerland on account of an affair of honour. A severe punishment it would be, no doubt, to spend a winter here, even to an ardent lover of nature, much more to a burgher of Berne.

In this valley are to be found some of the keenest and boldest hunters of the Alps; though the chamois, which used to range the Wetterhorn and the Mettenberg in troops of forty or fifty, have become now comparatively rare; and as to the steinbock, the sight of one is considered an extraordinary occurrence. It is said that those who are much given to this fascinating sport, generally become, from the continual perils which they encounter, and the solitude in which their days are passed, unusually grave, silent, laconic, and—so says Wyss—"interesting." It must, indeed, be a mighty passion, if all the stories be true of the expedients to which hunters must sometimes resort. So perilous are the paths they tread, that they have been said sometimes, accord-

* Untersuchungen über die Physikalische Geographie der Alpen.

ing to the same writer, to cut their feet with a knife, in order that the flow of blood might give them a securer footing upon the slippery rock. Scheutzer* alludes to a fable current among the hunters of the Alps; but which he admits, "nullam apud me invenit fidem," that there is a plant with large blue flowers, supposed by him to be the Asterum Alpinum, and which, I presume, is the same as the *gems-wurz*, which has the property of rendering the steinbock and the chamois impenetrable to a ball. The same property extended also to men, if they ate of its roots before sunrise; but this is probably merely a pleasant fiction, invented to promote early habits. The steinbock, at any rate, has not profited duly by his advantages, for he has become almost extinct. Such fabulous tales as this, which seems to be applied more particularly to the steinbock, seem to indicate, even in that day, the scarcity of the animal, and the difficulty of securing him. When secured, however, he was a valuable acquisition, and possessed properties of a sort we should scarcely have expected. A few drops of his blood, poured into a glass of wine, and taken before going to bed, produced immediately a violent perspiration, and cured all sorts of diseases. The very ball with which he was shot had its use; for water into which it was dipped acquired also valuable medicinal properties. Civilisation has shorn the chamois-hunter, likewise, of some of his sources of profit; for more valuable than the flesh, the skin, or the horns, was the *gems-ball*, a sort of bezoar, or morbid secretion sometimes found in the stomach of the animal, and used also as a medicine, which used to sell for its weight in gold; and upon the virtues of which whole treatises have been written.

Rare, comparatively, as is now the chamois, rare actually as is the steinbock—the bear, the original inhabitant from which the canton derives its name, has become still rarer in the valleys of the Oberland. Sometimes, in the severity of winter, a solitary individual descends into the plain, and, whenever this is the case,

* Itinera Alpina tria.

the neighbourhood is immediately up in arms, for a handsome reward is given by the government for his head.

Theoretically, the bear is an object of the utmost veneration and respect. He figures in the armorial bearings of the canton. He is stamped (a true mark of respect) upon its coins. He stands, a sentinel of stone, at the gates of the capital. He presides, in full armour, over the great fountain. He gives his *imprimatur* to its literature. And he eats cakes and apples at the darburg gate. From an old word—*bern*, signifying a bear—is derived the name of the canton, and from another old word—*batz*, of the same signification—is derived the name of the small coin common through Switzerland, which was first coined in this canton. Never, in short, was there a place where the aborigines have been treated with so much respect.

There is a story told of the people of Congleton in Cheshire, which might almost furnish a parallel; for in 1622, their bear having died suddenly, they appropriated the money which had been raised for the purchase of a new church bible towards buying another in his place. Hear that! ye who rail against Radical churchwardens in modern times. It ought, however, to be stated, that a ride upon a bear used to be considered in that part of the country (and is still in some places, says a writer in *Notes and Queries*) as an infallible remedy for—the hooping-cough!

The respect, however, which the Bernese pay to the bear is purely theoretical. Practically they are in the habit of shooting him whenever they meet with him, and the canton pays a premium of fifty crowns for his head. Then they carefully stuff him, and put him into their museums—so much for Aborigines!

Mr. Carne* gives an account of an Englishman who settled in the vale of Hasli, and became a mighty hunter among the mountains of the Oberland. His specific against thirst and fatigue was neither more nor less than—what think you, reader?

* Tour through Switzerland and Italy.

—a lump of white sugar. Whenever he felt overcome, he sat down, and, producing his lump of sugar, allowed it to melt in his mouth, from which he derived immediate relief. I tried the experiment, for I was rather curious to know whether, if he had sat down *without* eating the lump of sugar, it would not have produced the same effect. I found, however—or fancied—that it does, by moistening the mouth, afford a certain refreshment to the system. For myself, I never hesitated to drink, when thirsty, from the clear, cold streams which gushed forth from the surrounding rocks; nor, though this is a practice which the guides, and those who ought to know best, generally condemn, did I ever experience any ill effects from so doing. Indeed, I think it is one of the pleasures of walking in Switzerland, that you are always thirsty, and there is always delicious water. And it is satisfactory to find the practice defended by no less an authority than the author of the "Physician's Holiday."

It was a clear cold night at Grindelwald, and as I looked out from the room which "had a view of the glacier," I could see the outlines of the Eigher and the Mettenberg gleaming forth in the distance, though the face of the valley was indistinguishable through the gloom. One need not wonder at the peculiar attachment which mountaineers seem to form for their native land; for there is an individuality—so to speak—in that which is before their eyes which is wanting elsewhere. The individuality of the mountain as compared with the plain, is as that of substance compared with surface—of the statue compared with the picture. A plain, however remarkable, seems to be but a part of the earth's surface; but a mountain seems to be something on its own account. You look upon the plain in its full face; but the mountain has a full face, and a profile too. You see the plain in the light of day; but the mountain gleams forth also through the darkness of the night. You see the plain when you are near; but the familiar face of the mountain rises also to meet you from afar. It forms a broader mark to point out a man's home upon the earth.

CHAPTER XVII.

NOTHING BUT FOUNTAINS.

We started for Lauterbrunnen early the following morning, having been joined by another American, who had come over the Strahleck pass from the Grimsel to Grindelwald the day before. This is a difficult and fatiguing excursion at any season, but more especially so in the short days of September, when for many hours the traveller must make his way in the dark; and our new companion, a fine, strong, handsome fellow, showed the effects of it in his walk to Lauterbrunnen.

We halted about noon at the *Jung-frau* hotel, a little beyond the summit of the pass, in order to wait for an avalanche. Before us, separated by a deep valley, rose the magnificent white mountain, like a mighty fortress, an impregnable Gibraltar. Ever and anon curled forth a little white cloud like the thin smoke of a gun—a moment, and there came the thunder of the report. While, to complete the comparison, though it be to descend from the sublime to the ridiculous, we six men, sitting smoking in a row in front of the hotel, looked like a battery directing against the said fortress our ineffectual fire.

It is curious to compare the effect of the avalanche upon the eye with that upon the ear. Though the mass detached may weigh many tons, yet it looks at that distance like a mere pinch of snow; and, so strangely disproportionate appears the fall of that seeming pinch to the solemn sound of its falling, that, as you

sit before the door, and pour a spoonful of sugar into your coffee, it almost seems as if *it* also might naturally be followed by a low peal of thunder.

But the avalanches were few and far between, and when our party had finished their cigars, they became tired of waiting, and we started again upon our way. But still at intervals, as we wound along the path towards Lauterbrunnen, we heard the deep mutter like distant thunder upon the ear—the Jung-frau confessing to the Monk, who waits eternally by her side.

In a short time we arrived at the top of the steep and toilsome path which leads down into the deep valley of Lauterbrunnen. On the opposite side of the valley, and about upon a level with ourselves, a thin shoot of water leaped down at one bound into the gulf, and was shivered into spray before it had reached halfway down.

"Whereabouts is the Staubbach?" exclaimed two or three voices together, as we halted for a moment upon the top.

"Voila! Messieurs," said the guide.

"That?"

It was even so. Almost all travellers are disappointed with the first view of the highest fall in Europe. But when we took note that the height from which we had to descend was just about upon a level with the top of the fall, and then wound down by a steep zig-zag path 900 feet into the valley, we were able, long before we had reached the bottom, to form some idea of the leap which the Staubbach takes.

A German writer, quoted by Dr. Wyss, has compared the Reichenbach to a wild and irregular ode; the Giesbach to an epic; the fall at Handek to a sublime hymn; and the Staubbach to a fairy tale.

And like a fairy tale it is—graceful and fantastic—gleaming amid the stern yellow rocks, blotched with black like ink, that shut in the valley like a mighty wall. It should be seen many times, and in many ways, before it can be judged aright. It

should be seen when its summit is enveloped in mists, out of which it leaps like "a sky-born waterfall." It should be seen flickering in the sunlight over the rocks, like a veil of silver lace, with its folds encircled by a rainbow for a zone, and its shadow dancing upon the wall, to show that it is real living water of the earth.

Mr. Carne suggests an artificial improvement, which he thinks it would not be difficult to accomplish, in order to give its proper effect to the highest fall in Europe. It is—"To direct one or two small adjoining streams into the very narrow one that forms the fall, and thus, by augmenting the rush of water, to make it in truth a matchless cataract." If I might take the liberty of suggesting an improvement upon his improvement, it would be to put in a set of sluices, so as to be able to turn the streams in question either wholly, or partly, into the Staubbach; or else to shut off the water altogether, and turn it another way. Then a regular tariff might be established; and the traveller might have a Staubbach regulated according to the price he was willing to pay for it; say—

The original Staubbach	1 fr.	0 c.
Improved do	1	50
Very finest do	2	0

and thus the waterfall might be turned to better account for the revenues of the canton.

There is nothing in the appearance of the Staubbach to impress the beholder with a sense of awe or horror; scarcely even of sublimity. I could not realize Byron's idea of

> "the pale courser's tail,
> The giant steed to be bestrode by Death,
> As told in the Apocalypse."

I felt more inclined to describe it in the words of the man immortalized by Coleridge—as, "the prettiest thing of the kind I ever saw."

In the church at Lauterbrunnen is a painted window representing a dream which Rudolf, the lord of Strattlingen, on the lake of Thun, had when he lay sick of a dangerous illness. He saw therein Michael the archangel contending with Satan for his soul; the latter had filled the scale containing his sins so full, that it began to sink; upon which Michael pressed down with his hand the opposite scale, whereon the devil laid hold of the other, and clung to it with all his weight, until the archangel drove him away. This dream made so great an impression upon Rudolf, that on his recovery he built twelve churches; one of which was, I presume, the original church at Lauterbrunnen. It is to be hoped that he also considered it necessary to amend his ways, and lead a new life.

It is curious to find the arch-deceiver, in most of the popular legends of which he is the subject, represented as the party who is imposed upon; and in many instances, as in the story of the Devil's bridge on the St. Gothard, by the shallowest devices. This legend is to the effect, that the inhabitants of the district, being much in want of a bridge over the Reuss, covenanted with the devil to build them one, upon the moderate condition that he should be entitled to the first creature that passed over it. When the bridge was finished, the crafty Swiss, instead of, as the devil seems to have been simple enough to expect, going over it in solemn procession, headed by their landamman, or by the clergyman of the parish, who would have done for him as well, entrapped over it an unfortunate cur, to the indignation of the discomfited evil one, who in his rage snatched up a huge rock, to crush the work which he had just completed, when he was prevented by the opportune appearance of a saint, who ordered him about his business.

At Lauterbrunnen I parted with my companions, who went the same evening to Interlacken, while I walked for some distance up the valley, admiring the numberless diversified cascades

which fall from the heights above, and which have given to the valley its name; which signifies literally—"Nothing but fountains." On the following morning, having paid a farewell visit to the Staubbach, I started on foot for Interlacken.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE GEMMI.

As we approached Interlacken, we met three elaborately-dressed young Englishmen lounging out upon the road, who honoured us, as we passed, with a long stare, and a laugh at the end of it. This was, no doubt, at the expense of my poor guide, who, in a green coat with brass buttons, was, it must be admitted, rather an odd-looking figure; but still they had no business to laugh at him.

"English!" said he, turning very red. "English,—you may be sure of that!" replied I, rather bitterly; "no other people would be so rude." It is in places such as this—sauntering about Interlacken or Lucerne, that you meet with the genus *snob*—on the difficult pass, or the unfrequented route, the men you meet are gentlemen.

Skirting the shore of the beautiful lake of Thun, we presently struck off into a pretty green lane, just like an English one, which brought us out into the Kander road, at Mühlinen, a village situated at the foot of the Niesen. This mountain, which is frequently ascended on account of the fine view which it commands over the lake, was called at one time the Jesen; and there was a tradition among the country people, that it was the mountain from which our Lord ascended into heaven after his resurrection.

From the appearance of the clouds upon its summit, the inhabitants form the same prognostications about the weather as the people of Lucerne from that of Mount Pilate, and a similar

proverb to that quoted of the latter is also applied to the Niesen; indeed, the same does duty for several other mountains of Switzerland. The following is the rhyme, as quoted by Wyss in the notes to his "Idyllen, Volksagen, &c."

"Hat der Niesen einen hut,
Wird das wetter schön und gut.
Hat der Niesen einen kragen,
Darfst du's eben auch noch wagen.
Hat er mantel an und degen,
Gibt es kalten wind und regen."

"If the clouds rest upon his summit like a hat, it is a sign of fair weather. If they encircle his neck like a collar, the appearance is also favourable. But if they hang down his skirts like a cloak, with an arm projecting into the valley like a sword, cold winds and rain may be surely expected."

Near this mountain is a hill of considerable height, but cultivated to the top, which goes by the name of "the Englishman's mountain," so called probably in derision. A pleasant and fertile-looking hill it is, and no bad type of the substantial and respectable character whom it represents. There is another "Englishman's hill," which I passed on the road from Basle to Lucerne. It contains the bones of 3000 of our countrymen, followers of the freebooter, Ingelram de Coucy, who, after committing fearful ravages in different parts of Switzerland, were met and defeated here in 1376 by the shepherds of Entlebuch. And doubtless, for many a year, this hill of marauders' bones was the only mark by which very many of the Swiss knew of the existence of a people who were hereafter to invade them in so very different a manner.

We passed through the neatly-built village of Frutigen, the inn at which, the *Helvetia*, is reputed the best in the valley; and moreover, according to a note which I found in one of the visiter's books, the landlord's daughter is "the prettiest girl in Switzerland." It seems to me, however, that it is a benevolent

fraud, not unfrequently practised by a man who wants to do a good turn to a civil landlord, to give out that he has a pretty daughter. In the present case, I am unable to judge; for the inn at Kandersteg was a so much more convenient resting-place, that, regardless of the bad character given it in Murray, I determined to make it my quarters for the night. The inn *is* bad—very bad—and, moreover, higher in its charges than the very best. There is another little inn—I think it is the *Poste*—which has been described to me as, though very small, being much more comfortable.

I found here a Genevese returning home from a sketching excursion, with whom I had fallen in before, and whom, as he had previously done nothing but grumble, I was surprised to find in a state of unwonted contentment. He was getting some tea, which he assured me was extremely good. "Is it, indeed?" I asked; for of all the places in the world this bad inn was the last where I should have expected to have found good tea, so difficult to procure even in the best.

"Very good, indeed, I assure you," he replied—"*point de mauvaise odeur.*"

There, fair reader, for a compliment to a cup of fragrant bohea!

The damsel who attended upon us, as she went to and fro, frequently sighed deeply, and my Geneva friend took the liberty of inquiring what was the matter with her.

"It is so *triste* here," she said; "so few people come—I am tired of looking out upon the same mountains, and the same brook running by, and the same potatoes growing there in the garden."

"But, mademoiselle," I thought to myself, "if the beds were not quite so damp, and if the fare was not quite so meagre, and if the charges were not quite so high, perhaps the hotel would not be quite so *triste*—did this never occur to you?"

My Geneva friend's train of thought was, however, of a more

gallant character; for he politely suggested that mademoiselle could never be at a loss for consolation.

"Ah! but the young men at Kandersteg were such a set—*si grossiers!* so very different to the young men at Interlacken."

Here was a clue, and the Geneva man followed it up. "Perhaps mademoiselle had left her heart at Interlacken?" he said, and she replied with a deep sigh. This might partly account for the bad management of the house; for a young woman who has left her heart in another place, is not likely to conduct an hotel successfully. My Geneva friend appeared to feel a deep sympathy for her forlorn condition; for he followed her out to administer consolation, but came back in a state of great surprise at finding her consoling herself with a pipe of very strong tobacco.

I have heard it said that damp sheets will do you no harm, provided you have dry blankets; but in this hotel there were no dry blankets to qualify the damp sheets, and it may be a useful hint to remark, that one of the manifold uses of a Scotch plaid is to sleep in on such occasions.

We started early in the morning, in the midst of a thick fog, to climb the pass of the Gemmi, the ascent of which commences a little beyond the village of Kandersteg. We stopped at the solitary little inn of Schwarenbach, which stands in a desolate situation, about mid-way on the pass. Here the poet Werner has laid the scene of the horrible and unprofitable story of "the 24th of February!" which, as Murray remarks, "has no foundation in any real event which happened here." I was not aware of his reason for making this remark, until I read M. Dumas's "Glacier Land," a book, I may observe, which, though amusing, as any work by such an author must be, seems to me to be wanting in the sobriety necessary to give reality to a book of travel, and to convey, if I may so speak, more the idea of Switzerland come to M. Dumas, than of M. Dumas gone to Switzerland. From his account, it would seem, that for a long time after the appearance

of Werner's story, the landlord was much annoyed by the curiosity of passing travellers. And his own principal reason, he tells us, for crossing the Gemmi, was to visit the spot!

While we were here, a fat Frenchman came up, riding on a mule, which, he told us, had fallen three times with him, and cut him in two places. Considering his weight, I was not particularly surprised at his mule falling with him; but I certainly was at his not getting off and walking after these repeated accidents. His wife seemed rather amused than otherwise at his misfortunes, and upon my Geneva friend (who, I presume, had a good wife of his own) this want of sympathy seemed to make a great impression. After pondering for some time in silence, as we walked on up the pass, he turned suddenly to me, and asked—

"Do you think that woman was really his wife?"

"I presume so," I replied; "she seems too old to be his daughter."

"I do not think she can be his wife," he replied, "she seems to care so little about his hurting himself."

I made no reply, for I was unwilling to disturb my companion's estimate of conjugal affection; but I could not help thinking his argument inconclusive.

During the whole of the ascent we had been enveloped in a thick fog; but on gaining the summit the horizon was perfectly clear towards the south, and all at once the magnificent chain of the snowy Alps, with a background of cloudless azure, burst upon our sight.

As we stood and gazed in silence, my guide suddenly uttered a loud exclamation, and pointed to a mountain above our heads. I followed eagerly with my eyes, expecting at last to see the chamois for once exulting in its native freedom.

"It's uncommonly like a hare," said I, as I saw a little animal scudding away at the top of its speed on a rock overhead.

"Why," said he, "it *is* a hare."

"Then what did you give such a shout for?" I exclaimed

rather indignantly, as I turned again to the sublime panorama before me.

A little further on we came to the edge of the precipice, which goes sheer down, as perpendicularly as a wall, 1600 feet into the valley. M. Dumas tells us, that on reaching this place, and looking down, he was so overcome that he fell half-senseless upon his back! And my guide told me a story of an Englishman, who having come thus far, stopped, and demanded of his guide—

"Am I to go down here?"

"You are," replied the guide.

"Then I tell you I am *not;*" replied the Englishman, and quietly walked back again.

With wonderful skill, the path, which is a sort of shelf cut in the rock, is conducted, you can scarcely tell how, down the face of this perpendicular wall. Notwithstanding my bad head, I descended it with a sense of perfect security; though M. Dumas, on going down, found his teeth chatter so in his head, that he was obliged to stuff his pocket-handkerchief into his mouth, and on reaching the bottom, found it cut through and through as if with a razor! The original road, judging by the views we have left of it, must have been truly frightful. Simler* gives the derivation of the word *Gemmi* from the Latin, *gemitus*, "groaning"—occasioned by the fatigue and apprehension of the descent—a doubtful etymology enough, yet showing the light in which it was viewed at the time.

We stopped at Leukerbad to see the baths and the hot springs, and then walked on to join the Simplon road, in the valley of the Rhone below Leuk. There is an excellent new road from the baths, made by the government of the Vallais, who levy a toll of fourteen centimes for every passenger on foot, two francs for each one-horse, and eight francs for each two-horse carriage; this very disproportionate charge

* Vallesiæ Descriptio.

being apparently to save the natives at the expense of the *Milords*.

I stopped at a little roadside inn to wait till the diligence should come up for Martigny, and my Geneva friend also came in, and called for a bottle of wine. The wine was sour, and, with a curious contradiction of character, he commenced an animated dispute with the landlady on the subject. The landlady, who seemed touched on a tender point, argued for her wine with energy and volubility. The wine, she maintained, was good enough—and at any rate, considering the failure of the vintage for the last two years, it was as much as the bargain that there was any at all. The Geneva man appealed to my guide, and desired him to taste it, which he did, and (taking care to see that the landlady was not looking) made a face expressive of the utmost disgust—in return for which complaisance the Geneva man made him a present of it, and he sat quietly down and finished the bottle.

The diligence, which arrived about seven o'clock, and might easily have reached Martigny by eleven, contrived to get there between one and two in the morning; and, not being able at that hour to find my way to the *Cygne*, I put up at a little inn close by, where I passed a miserable night, relieved only by the reflection, that I had gone to bed at two o'clock, and was to get up again at six, in order to start for St. Bernard.

CHAPTER XIX.

ST. BERNARD.

"A house—the highest in the ancient world—
And destined to perform from age to age
The noblest service; welcoming as guests,
All of all nations, and of every faith."

ROGERS.

WHO has not heard of the convent of St. Bernard? Who has not seen, in any town of Europe, a print of a big dog with a bottle round his neck, and a man's leg sticking out of the snow? French, German, Italian, might the description be below, you needed not to stop to read it.

And who does not feel, as he starts from Martigny, with his face towards the dark mountain-wall of Italy, that it is no common excursion upon which he is bound, and that it is a day to be remembered in his life?

It was a glorious September morning as I walked on alone up the valley of the Dranse; there was only one single little white cloud in the blue sky, and I thought, as I went, how easily the fervent imagination of some pious pilgrim might have mistaken it—for it was in form not unlike a cross, and in the direction of St. Bernard—for a heaven-sent token to guide him on his way. In passing through Le Bourg, I met the superior of the convent, who resides at Martigny; a fine, benevolent-looking old man, whose appearance was not calculated to dispel the feeling with which I had set out.

How different was the being I met soon afterwards; a poor, helpless, misshapen cretin, with a large head, and feeble, crooked legs, scarcely able to walk, and not able to speak articulately,

standing at the door of a house! Throughout the valley of the Rhone, and the lateral valleys which open into it, cretinism and its accompaniment, goitre, are extremely prevalent. Probably less so now, since the cause of it has become more clearly known, than in former times. Wagner tells us, that in some parts of the Vallais the deformity of goitre was so common, that if a man wanted the usual appendage to his throat, the others would laugh at him, and call him *Gänskrägen*, "goose neck," and no doubt the poor fellow would be heartily ashamed of his deficiency. Some travellers have seemed to think that parents look upon it as a light affliction to have a cretin child; and doubtless, the frequency of the visitation may diminish the sense of grief in any particular case; but the old saying quoted by Simler, as used when a healthy child was born, "Gott* syge gelobt das kind werdt kein gouch werden,"—"God be praised the child will not prove a gowk"—shows that it was always felt as a great calamity. Even in a merely economical point of view, the sustenance and care of a useless member must be a great burden, particularly to a poor family.

Mr. Müggе has made the remark, that there seems to be no medium between perfect vigour and the imbecility of cretinism. There is, in the district subject to it, no general deterioration of the race; but the rest of a family being sound and healthy, all the imperfection and infirmity will be concentrated in one helpless and unhappy being. Thus cretinism would seem to be, then, a sort of safety-valve to prevent the deterioration of the race. The origin both of this and of goitre, so long disputed, and ascribed to such different causes, scientific men are now generally agreed to assign to the imperfect ventilation of the valleys. Dr. Goggenbühl has shown in a recent letter to Lord Ashley, that similar symptoms exist in greater or less degree, in places even in England subject to the same conditions. So commonly was goitre at one time attributed to waters, that particular springs were noted as

* Vallesiæ Descriptio.

being supposed to be peculiarly apt to produce it, and were called in consequence, *Kropfbrunnen*, literally, "crop-fountains."

I dined at the comfortable little inn at Liddes, and when about half-way between that and St. Pierre, the last village on this side the pass, I met two boys carrying hay, one of whom instantly threw down his burden upon the road, and offered to carry my knapsack. To say the truth, I was just then beginning to get rather tired of it, and so we soon came to terms—for a franc and a half he was to carry it up to the convent. Not far from St. Pierre the char road ceases, at a rude little wooden chalêt, which serves for an inn. But even this poor little place had its visiters' book, and honourable things were written in it too; one traveller, in particular, who had been laid up for a week by a severe accident, spoke in terms of the deepest gratitude of the kindness and attention he had received from the woman who kept it.

Though the morning when I started had been bright and sunny, as I mounted higher and higher above the valley, the temperature became colder and chiller; and, when we started to climb the rough mule-track to the convent, a bitter wind came rushing down the pass, driving into our faces the snow, which at the summit lay two or three inches deep. Presently my guide began to lag very much behind, and, perceiving that he was fatigued, I made him give me up the knapsack, to which he very reluctantly consented, and I walked on before, he following. At length we came in sight of the grey walls of the convent—strong, solemn, and gloomy as the desolate rocks amid which it stands. And yet who can tell how beautiful—how passing "beautiful upon the mountains"—has it seemed to many a fainting traveller! And even to me, not at all unwelcome, at seven o'clock on a snowy September night—while to my tired guide—I looked round to see how he was coming on, and to my surprise he was lying upon his back among the snow. When I turned round he rose, and came up to me; and even

then, though his voice stuck in his throat when he tried to speak, the poor boy pointed to my knapsack, and intimated his wish to fulfil his engagement. Scarcely was my back turned, before he had laid himself down again; and, had we not been within two or three hundred yards of the convent, I should have been in great fear of getting him safely there. When we arrived, the bursar, who must have had considerable experience of tired people, said that he had never before seen a person so fatigued as not to be able to speak. The boy explained to us afterwards, that he had been working hard all the morning, and was, in fact, tired to begin with; otherwise the excursion was nothing to knock up an active lad.

We entered the open doorway, and rang the bell, which no traveller ever rings in vain, whatever be his nation or his faith. It is indeed a pleasing thought, that while swords have been clashing and fires been blazing in the name of Christianity throughout the plains below, its witness nearest heaven has always been one of peace. Alas! how hard it is for man to be true to himself! The first sight that meets my eye within its walls is a memorial to Napoleon—an altar to the God of war! And the pictures from its history, which adorn its walls, are those in which troops are marching and cannon lumbering past, and the "noticeable" man with the grey cloak looking at the map of Italy. The tablet alluded to contains a most laudatory inscription in doubtful Latin to Napoleon, for the services rendered by him to the canton. As far at least as the hospice is concerned, the services would seem to have been as doubtful as the Latin in which they are expressed; for, as Mr. Brockedon remarks, though he gave largely to their funds, his donations were by no means sufficient to compensate for the expense to which he put them. If, however, the convent has reason to complain of the patronage of Napoleon I., it has still more to complain of that of Napoleon III.; for, if St. Bernard *could* be made ridiculous, the pasteboard effigy of the hospice

which figured, along with the other *shams* in the procession at Strasburg, would have tended to make it so.

The monks were just sitting down to supper when I arrived, and though it was a *maigre* day, we had an excellent, though by no means a luxurious, repast. It would be wrong to say that they are all men of superior mind, or of cultivated intellect. Their conversation among each other consisted for the most part of small talk—perfectly innocent, yet not particularly edifying—gossip about their own affairs, and speculations upon the people who had passed. Mr. Albert Smith had been there the day before, and had given them an entertainment, with which they were infinitely delighted. "Oh! qu'il est charmant!" exclaimed the bursar, as he chuckled at the recollection of a certain dialogue between an English traveller and a French postilion; which, though stale enough in London, was perfectly new upon St. Bernard. I liked them all the better for their cheerful and unaffected *bonhommie*, and their freedom from monastic cant. I respected them all the more because they eat good dinners, and sleep in comfortable beds, and laugh at a good joke, (or a bad one either, for they are not difficult to please.) They have real dangers to face—real hardships to undergo—and a manhood spent in a cold that is deadly, may well dispense with the rigours of self-imposed asceticism.

I asked the bursar respecting the confiscation of the convent property by the government of the Vallais, of which an account had appeared in the English papers. He confirmed the truth of the statement, and said that the value of the property seized was 400,000 francs. I asked him how it was that the government of a Catholic canton should thus lay hands upon religious property. He said the government were not true Catholics—they were socialists and infidels;—the people, he said, were friendly to the convent, and opposed to the spoliation, which was entirely the act of the government. But when I went on to inquire how the rulers of a democratic state could thus act in opposition

to the wishes of those who had elected them, he did not seem able to give any very satisfactory solution.

At the farther end of the table I heard a voice expatiating (in any thing but choice French) upon the steamers of America, and, as soon as dinner was over, a gentleman came up, and seizing my hand, said, "I presume, Sir, you are an Englishman?"

"I am," I replied; "and you?"

"I am an American; but it's all the same upon St. Bernard."

This was a kindly sentiment, and we required nothing more to make us friends. This gentleman was from the city of Providence, in which he held an office to which I cannot give a better title than that of "improver of public schools," and one of his objects in travelling in Europe, was to collect information which might be useful to him in the fulfilment of his duties. It is certainly a striking proof of the spirit of our American brethren, that a city of some 50,000 inhabitants should appoint an officer with the sole duty of considering and devising means for the improvement of the education of its citizens. His own history was also rather a remarkable instance of American energy and independence. His father had been a small farmer, and had designed him for the same business, in which, however, he only continued till he had saved a small sum of money; and then, borrowing the rest upon his personal credit, he completed his education, paid off the debt, and rose to an honourable post in the service of the state. In our own country, though we often find young men of talent taken by the hand by those who are able to afford it, yet an instance such as the above, which he assured me was not an uncommon one, of a young man borrowing money to educate himself upon his personal character and promise, could scarcely, I think, be found.

The Great Exhibition has had, in one respect, a remarkable effect upon the people of the United States. A great number of them naturally took advantage of the opportunity of being in London to visit the Continent of Europe; and to such an extent

did this mania for travelling spread, that in the following year, there were, from the said small city of Providence alone, no fewer than seventy persons on their travels in Europe. The effect which this intercourse is calculated to produce upon the minds of the Americans, cannot but be beneficial. My friend informed me that, as regards himself, his visit to England had corrected many errors, and dispelled many prejudices. He spoke with pleasure of the good feeling which he had found, where he had not expected it, towards America and her people. And having been in sundry provincial towns during the time of the general election, he was able to testify that there is some political life left in the old country yet.

There are, however, Americans (as there are English) whom travel cannot improve. Witness the following inscription, which I copied from the visiters' book at Trient. "Mr. and Mrs. ——, Louisville, Kentucky, U. S., America, the best and most prosperous country in the world—Amen!—Arrived on mules from Chamouni—pleased with the mountains." The condescension with which, having first eased their conscience with respect to their own country, they extend a crumb of approbation to the Swiss mountains, is exquisite. And yet, notwithstanding the ignorance and folly which they display, such remarks are not without their significance. Out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh; and it is striking to contrast the American, thus flowing over as it were with contentment, and the inhabitants of a large portion of Europe, eating their hearts with thoughts which they dare not speak.

With some points of general resemblance, the republic of the old world has many features of marked contrast with that of the new. The citizen of the American republic exults in the freedom and greatness of his country as a whole; the remotest backwoodsman feels himself to be an offshoot from one mighty trunk. The pride of the Swiss is chiefly in his own cantonal independence; the shepherd of the Alps feels him-

self to be something older than his own republic—a member of a community which has a separate history and a separate existence—which has its own laws and its own institutions—and which, if it has joined itself with others, has done so by no process of fusion. This is of course a pride which may be indulged without bringing him much into contact with the prejudices of other nations. And this may account in a measure for the difference of feeling which Cooper, the American novelist, complained of as existing among the subjects of monarchical states, towards the respective members of the two republics. In the case of the American, he found a prejudice existing against him as a republican, which was wanting in the case of the Swiss. This feeling, so far as it may still exist, is of course but a natural consequence of the behaviour of travellers, such as those above referred to, who seem to carry their flag about with them like a pocket-handkerchief, and even when they do not pull it out and flourish it in other people's faces, have always a corner of it left sticking out.

Another point of striking difference is to be found in the *status* of the youth and women in the respective countries. The social habits of the Swiss are thoroughly old-world, and the state of comparative seclusion of the women, and subjection of the young men, is in strong contrast to the position of both in the new country. In two cantons, this sort of patriarchal control extends so far as not to permit a young man to marry without the consent of his father. This is no doubt a result of the communal system prevailing with regard to the pastures, which, in a country already barely able to maintain its inhabitants, causes the increase of the population to be regarded with a certain feeling of jealousy—and this also serves to account for the difficulty, in some cases almost insurmountable, which a stranger experiences in obtaining the rights of citizenship in Switzerland, and which is another point of striking difference between the two republics.

The only other visiter at the convent was a Piedmontese

merchant, a regular *habitué* of the place, as he crossed the pass on his business four times every year. The only thing remarkable about him was his use of the word *definitivement*—with which he prefaced almost every remark he made, whether in the way of question or answer.

After supper I spent some time in examining the cabinet of curiosities attached to the visiters' apartment, which contains, in addition to a collection of the insects, plants, and minerals of the Alps, a few Celtic, and many Roman remains—the latter from the temple which stood upon the summit of the pass.

It would seem as if upon this desolate height there has been an immemorial landmark, set as it were in the sight of heaven, to tell how goes the faith of the world below. Here the rude mountain god of the Celts was worshipped with mystic rites, and perhaps on the very spot where the law of kindness is so bravely taught, the blood of the human victim has smoked up in the frosty air.

Then the Roman, when he conquered the land and divided the spoil, allotted to his god for his share the shrine of the conquered deity. But, after the manner of politic conquerors, to conciliate the vanquished, Jove contracted an alliance with the conquered deity, and took to himself his title, and they worshipped the old god in him. For three centuries and a half was the Pennine Jove supreme, and interesting must have been his temple, with its altars and its votive tablets. For the first care of the merchant returned from his travel, and the soldier from his hard-fought field, on his safe arrival in the plains of Italy, was to send up his grateful offering to him who had spared, as he passed, to hurl his thunderbolts of snow.

But one day there came up a strange message to the wondering priest of that little temple, and it was, "JOVE IS GOD NO MORE." And they showed him the seal of Constantine, and they dashed down his images, and broke his fair votive tablets, and the ancient priest passed his hand over his troubled brow as he looked

on and thought, "Surely the end of all things is at hand!" Then the peasants clomb up to worship, and they found the god was gone, and to all the valleys at the foot were the tidings brought—"By decree of the Emperor, Jove is God no more." But they knew not what evil Jove had done, that he should be discarded thus—besides, there was nothing but a column in his place,—so they clave to the old god in secret for nearly six hundred years.

But at length St. Bernard came, to set about the work on another plan, and he preached and he taught the doctrines of a better faith, and he built a stately hospice to lodge the wayfarers on their perilous route; and he sent to meet them in all their danger, and to guide them in all their doubt, and they said, "Jove never did any thing like this!"—and he won them one and all.

In all this did St. Bernard well; but, like too many of his age, he seems to have performed his duty worst to those to whom he owed the most. The only hope of doting parents, and betrothed to the heiress of a neighbouring house—on the very morning of the expected ceremony, he broke his plighted troth, and fled away from his friends and from his home. The match does not seem to have been one of affection, (I believe there never was less marrying for love than in the romantic middle ages,) and the forsaken fair one found a truer knight. But there were others who were not so easily consoled, and for many a year his sorrowing parents lived in the bitterness of a hope deferred. But at length the sick hope died, and they thought only of mercy for his soul. They had heard of the holy man who lived and laboured upon the mountain—of his charity, his zeal, and his success; and whose intercession so effectual as his? To him they went, a weary journey among the snow; they found him worn by labours and fastings into premature old age. They knelt to him, and besought with tears his prayers for the soul of their son. He knew them, and blessed them as they knelt, and they heard the voice of their long-lost child, and sprung into his arms!

There is a tradition among the neighbouring peasantry, that

the heathen god, or evil spirit, whose worship St. Bernard overthrew, was confined by him in a deep cavern upon the mountain, and it used, it is said, to be a custom among the blacksmiths of the Vallais, on resuming their work on Monday morning, to strike, before commencing, three blows with the hammer upon the anvil, by way of riveting his fetters, and keeping him fast in his prison.

Besides its antiquities, and its collections in natural history, the cabinet contains a number of modern coins of different nations, selected from the offerings deposited in the poor-box of the chapel by the visiters: many of these are English, and here, of all places, I saw for the first time one of the new florins. The last thing the Bursar did, before I left, was to get me to change three and tenpence of English silver, of which some shabby traveller had taken this opportunity of clearing his pockets. I had some idea of keeping the fourpenny piece as a curiosity.

Next to the monks themselves, the dogs are of course the object of greatest interest, and no traveller would think of going away without making their acquaintance. They are at present nine in number, one of the females having lately presented the convent with an addition of five; so that there is no fear of the breed becoming extinct. When the door of their kennel was opened, and these fine animals came bounding out, gamboling around us, and struggling for caresses, I own I felt a modesty something akin to that of Mr. Urquhart, when he describes himself* as feeling honoured whenever a Spanish peasant deigned to take notice of him. There was, however, as it seemed to me, a sort of gravity in their frolics—they wanted, both old and young, the *abandon* of dogs in general—they seemed to be aware that they had come into the world, not to guard sheep, or to go into the water for sticks, but to take part with men, share and share alike, in one of the noblest works which men can undertake.

* The Pillars of Hercules.

There remains yet one other sight to be seen, and a ghastly spectacle it is. There are those who arrive at St. Bernard's, but all too late to be roused by the bright blaze, or to be cheered by the kind faces of the monks—there is a place, too, for them. The soil upon the summit is so scanty, and through the greater part of the year so hard frozen, that it would not be practicable to bury the dead bodies in the earth; and in former times, before the dead-house was built, the custom was, as Simler* tells us, to fling them into a deep crevice of the rocks. You look through the grated window of the Morgue, and you see them—some leaning against the wall, staring at you, just as they died staring at the terrible snow—some crouching, as if vainly trying to hide against the storm—and some lying shrunk up into withered bundles, a few rags and a few bones, upon the floor. 'Tis a hard fate, to be within a few hours of the sunny plains of Italy, and—all on a day of May—to meet a winter's death upon the road!

Lastly, you visit the chapel, and deposit your offering in the alms-box before you leave. It is not "of necessity," so let it be not done "grudgingly." Do not slip into the box the three and tenpence which you could not pass any where else. At least pay for wine, and food, and lodging, as at an inn, and then double that, for charity's sake, and the honour of England.

I descended in company with my new friend, and, as we walked, we beguiled the way with conversation—or rather, he descanted, and I listened—upon the institutions of America. But as this is not to our subject, let us instead, before we quit the Pennine Alps, have a word upon the name of this range of mountains. "Pen," or "Ben," is a Celtic word signifying a summit, and the Romans in this case seem to have retained the name by which the chain was known among its Celtic inhabitants. But we find the same root in their own language, as in the substantive "penna," and in the verb "penetrare," and it is derived, no doubt, from a common Eastern origin. Little, perhaps, you think then,

* Vallesiæ Descriptio.

lady, as you ride up the St. Bernard pass, that the name of the mountain upon which you climb, of the book, *Pendennis*, you were reading the other day, and of the pin which fastens your shawl, have any thing in common with each other. Nor does, perhaps, the process at once occur to you, Trinity or Christ Church man, by which the name which the Romans gave to their most private apartments, is connected with a mountain top; let us try then to trace the link. Starting with *pen*, a "summit," we next get the idea of a sharp peak or pinnacle (the old word *pen*akul.) Then we drop the mountain altogether, retaining the word in the sense of any thing sharp. Then, keeping in view the abstract quality of sharpness, we form a verb, *penetrare*, and from this, "penetralia a non penetrando," the Romans derived the name of their secret apartments. Thus true it is that the deeper we search among the records of the past, the stronger are the proofs of our common Eastern origin. Marvel not, then, that men seem to turn with an instinctive yearning to the East; 'tis the old home from which they started together, different ways, in the youth of many nations. And not only ye, who with the grip of iron bars, and the touch of thrilling wires, like strong men's arms and gentle women's fingers, having been linking lands and peoples together, have been doing the work of peace, but pale and quiet men, amid dusty records and crabbed characters, have been labouring to the same end. And the eager crowd looked on them as they streamed past, and asked in a half contempt, "What have you been doing for humanity?" At length they spoke, and they said, "We have been untwisting the skein that was tangled at Babel; we have been tracing out the links of a forgotten brotherhood!"

Having now reached the bourg Martigny, where the path branches off over the Forclaz to Chamouni, whither we had agreed to walk together on the following morning, my friend stopped for the night at a little inn there, while I went on to Martigny, where I had left some of my things. After what I

have mentioned about the seventy men from Providence, my reader will not be so much surprised to learn, that the first person my friend met at his little inn was a fellow-townsman, whom he introduced to me as one of the "original quakers" of New England. He was an original unquestionably, though, with his beard and his cigar, he certainly did not look very like a quaker. He had been, it seems, a draper in his native town, where he had acquired a small independence, and was now travelling over the world with a knapsack and five Murrays. I left him, endeavouring to beguile my friend to meet him at Vienna, and undertake a little trip to Egypt and the Holy Land; the only objection to which, in my friend's mind, seemed to be the prospect of getting a letter any day from home, to say that his wife and daughter were coming out to join him in Europe.

I called for my companions on the following morning, and we started over the Forclaz for Chamouni. We presently fell in with a young woman carrying a basket of rosy apples on her head, and I asked her if she would sell me two or three of them.

"Sell them!" she exclaimed, taking down her basket with a merry laugh—"here, take what you like without ceremony!" It is particularly pleasant in Switzerland to meet with any thing like disinterested civility; and, though truth compels me to state that this obliging young woman was very plain, and the rosy-looking apples very sour, yet her unaffected kindness was not the less agreeable.

We stopped at Trient to dine and to get dried, for the morning had been extremely wet; and here I desired the landlady of the little inn to procure me a guide to carry my knapsack the rest of the way. No sooner was the bargain concluded, than she produced her own son, a lad of about twelve. "Voici le guide, monsieur!" Now, though he was a fine, intelligent lad, with a prepossessing civility of manner—and though no one could have performed the duty better; yet still, it is not quite fair that every body you meet should think you are doing

the thing cheap, and you paying the regular price all the time.

It was evening when we reached Chamouni, and my English associations took me to the *Hotel de Londres*, while my companion put up at a little inn called the *Hotel du Mont Blanc*, which had been recommended to him by his fellow-townsman, and which, he assured me, he found very comfortable, and extremely cheap.

Having been for the most part travelling on the less frequented routes, and having met with but few English, I had not heard any news from home; and no sooner had I taken my place at the dinner-table, than I overheard a remark which made the spoon stop on the way to my mouth.

"I wonder when the Duke will be buried?" said one gentleman across the table to another. I asked no questions—for I knew that Wellington was dead!

CHAPTER XX.

THE MONARCH OF MOUNTAINS.

Mount Blanc is the monarch of mountains;
They crown'd him long ago,
On a throne of rocks, in a robe of clouds,
With a diadem of snow."

EVERY body has read the above in Murray—and many people in Byron; but the traveller does not always at once duly appreciate the truth of it. For the mind of man is not competent to rise at a glance to the scale of even the mightiest of his own creations, much less to measure the sublimity of the works of God: and Mount Blanc must be seen in many lights, and approached in many ways, before its beauty and glory can be felt aright.

But though it is indeed "long ago" since he was crowned as the monarch of mountains, it is comparatively but a short time since his sovereignty was acknowledged by man. While *Stockhorniades* were written in heroic verse to the insignificant mountain near Thun, Mount Blanc was almost unknown. Indeed, it is but a century ago, as Simond informs us, since he received a name at all. "The highest mountain in Europe had not even a name during the first half of the eighteenth century."

But I cannot agree with that writer, in thinking the name it now bears a "poor" one. It has a significance as wide as—perhaps wider than—the world; and when the rounded edge of our planet roughens as it turns up Switzerland, the astronomer of another sphere may look out for "the white mountain" of the earth.

There is no exploit from which a man derives such an immediate return for his capital invested as the ascent of Mount Blanc. I do not speak of it in the sense in which Mr. Albert Smith has obtained it, but looking at it merely in the light of an exploit. It requires not that constant endurance of privation and fatigue, that patient battling with peril, day by day, which men often undergo, unheard of and unseen—or, if heard of, but partly realized, and it may be only half believed. This is danger and fatigue brought for convenience into small compass. The toil and peril of weeks concentrated into days, and performed upon a lofty stage, so that the thing may be done in the sight of all men.

All the attendant circumstances combine to invest it with interest and excitement. It is talked about for days; it is *the* topic of the place. The preparations made, the guides engaged, the chances of failure or success are canvassed and discussed—and the projector is half a hero for his intentions. "The guides," says Talfourd, "look abstracted; porters step with a solemn air; and even the stable-boys, who harness the mules, assume a dignity." Then comes in religion with her solemn services to heighten the interest of the scene; a mass is said for the guides the day before, and prayers offered up for their safe return. The service is succeeded by an equally imposing breakfast on the following morning. And the bill of fare for the ascent, as given by Mr. Smith, reads in curious contrast to the accounts given by some travellers of having been utterly unable to eat at so great a height.

Face to face with the monarch of mountains, and separated only by the vale of Chamouni, rises the Breven to the height of 5000 feet above the plain, 8500 above the sea. This mountain, nearly three times the height of the highest in England, serves only as a station from which to view its mighty neighbour. From its summit you look across the intervening vale, and see *the* mountain in all its beauty, and horror, and glory, with its

glaciers, its pinnacles, and its snow-fields, spread out like a map before you; and by the aid of a glass you may, when travellers make the ascent, watch the little black specks moving on the mighty white.

Many travellers ascend the Breven for the prospect which it commands, and, in company with my American friend, I started to climb it too. But, being without a guide, we took a wrong path, used only by the shepherds, and certainly the steepest I ever climbed before. For some parts of the way we were obliged to use both feet and hands, drawing ourselves up by the pine trees at the side of the path. And when at last we emerged from the forest, we found our further progress barred by a steep precipice, and were obliged to stop short at about the height of the *Flegere*. But even from this point we had a magnificent view of the mountain, with its summit unveiled in the blue, cloudless sky—like the great white throne of God set on the earth. The glaciers looked like mighty roads leading up into the mountain's heart, and you might almost think you had come upon the old home of some gigantic, extinct race, and saw before you the paths, ploughed and trodden by their feet, as they went up into their icy lair. "Say, rather," might some old heathen exclaim, "yonder glittering pinnacles and silver dome must be the palace of the eternal Gods, and those are the footsteps of the Immortals, as they mounted to the 'crystal silence' of the sky."

When any adventurous traveller undertakes the ascent of Mount Blanc, numerous spectators take up their station on the sides of the Breven, from which the progress of the party, as soon as it has emerged upon the snow line, may be traced the whole way to the summit—and doubtless many an anxious wife counts them as they disappear and reappear, for if there come not up thirteen, the babe in her arms may be an orphan. And that young English scapegrace has a tender mother, too—and many a caution has she given him to keep his feet dry and take care

of cold—and little think that group, as they sit around their work, and wonder, "What is he doing now?" and one thinks this thing, and one thinks that, and never a one thinks that he is hanging between heaven and earth—eternity sheer down beneath his feet, and half an inch to spare when he walks side-ways!

That night they sleep cradled in a hollow of the rock, and as some late traveller comes down to breakfast the next morning, his nerves are shaken by the triumphant roar of M. Tairrez's cannon, announcing their safe arrival on the summit.

Great is the excitement in Chamouni when they are seen returning in the evening across the plain towards the inn. Here they come—*magnâ comitante catervâ*—the men who have been up Mount Blanc! Surely earth feels like velvet—they walk not quite like common men! Honour and glory await them; twelve of them get five-and-twenty shillings each, and the thirteenth has his name painted on a board by the side of De Saussure. He has perilled his life a score of times within the last forty-eight hours; but it is over now. He has been at the top of Europe—has stood like a fly on the cold tip of the earth's nose—and is perfectly justified in writing a book. They almost all do—I believe that is one of the reasons why they go up.

And then to bed—for a long dream of ice and snow, and snow and ice—a dream of climbing and crawling—scrambling and tumbling. And he awakes, and it seems still a dream, and he is in bed at Chamouni as if it had never been, and he can scarcely realize that this is I—the same man, *plus* the ascent of Mount Blanc. But no—it is no dream—it has become a fact as real as the mighty mountain itself—as real, and more unchangeable! An earthquake may wrench the mountain from its place; but that fact eternity cannot reverse—that man *did* ascend that mountain.

The difficulty of the ascent naturally varies very much according to the season; and it sometimes happens, as was the case when Mr. Justice Talfourd made his attempt, that a heavy fall of snow so bridges over the crevasses, that as soon as this crust

has become hardened, it affords a secure footing; and the principal part of the danger and difficulty is thereby removed. In his case it seems to have been reduced very much to a question of endurance of fatigue; and he must have felt, methinks, as he toiled upwards and upwards, printing footstep after footstep upon the vast white sheet before him, like an old and worn-out pen, marking each letter softer and more slowly, till at length its straggling points refuse to come together on the paper any more.

And now a word upon the statistics of the mountain's life, and these are by no means so meagre as might be supposed.

——"No insect's wing
Flits o'er the herbless granite,"

says Byron; but the brothers Schlagentweit* give a very different account. On the contrary, there are five kinds of spiders at the height of 10,000 feet, eight spiders and thirteen beetles at 8500; and the most curious circumstance connected with it is, that they are almost invariably black, even in the case of the species which is usually bright-coloured. What, then, is the reason of this?—for nature never works without a cause. Is it in order that the birds which feed upon them may lose no time in searching for their prey among the snow, in situations where it must of necessity be scarce? Or rather is it not—black being the colour which absorbs in greatest degree the rays of the sun—in order to keep them warm in their icy home? And they need it all, too—the insects that are frozen every night to sleep, and thawed up to breakfast by the morning sun!

But the reader will be surprised to hear of other inhabitants of these Alpine heights. Mr. Woolley of Beeston, Notts, informs us in his record of the ascent which he performed, that he spent the night on the Grands Mulets, but could not sleep "on account of the fleas and avalanches." The avalanches one might expect; but what were the fleas doing upon Mount Blanc? Would it

* Untersuchungen über die Physikalische Geographie der Alpen.

look too like a pun to suggest, that Mr. Woolley took them up with him?

The spider—a climber by profession—is the insect found at the greatest elevation; for though Mr. Fellowes, when upon the very summit, saw a butterfly floating upon the wind above his head, it appeared to be merely *in transitu*—flying over the garden wall. Ah! poor butterfly—was it instinct told thee of Italian flowers across the Alps? But thou didst not wisely select the pass!

Among animals, the chamois is of course the highest climber, attaining the height of 10,500 feet. The fox, however, which is found at the height of 10,000, is not far below him.

Of birds, different small species are found at the height of 11,000 feet; and the eagle and vulture, strong of wing, soar far above the highest peaks. Dr. Grant, who carried up some pigeons with him in a basket, and released them upon the Grands Mulets, found that they were unable to take wing at that elevation, and, after a few ineffectual flutterings, they came to the ground and were easily secured. On arriving at a lower level he again made the experiment, and this time they took the wing without any difficulty, which he considered a decisive proof that their previous inability was owing to no other cause than the rarity of the atmosphere.

This rarity of the air seems to produce other curious effects; for Mr. Auldjo, on attempting to smoke in this same place (the Grands Mulets,) found the smell so overpowering that he was obliged to desist. Mr. Albert Smith, however, who perhaps may be a more seasoned smoker, did not seem to experience the same difficulty.

Dr. Barry mentions, that when on the summit his voice sounded so weak from the diminished denseness of the air, that he could scarcely make himself heard at the distance of even a few yards, and when his fellow spoke—

> "His voice was thin, as voices from the grave."

Far into the heart of the mountain, surrounded by mighty

glaciers and magnificent peaks, there is a little sheltered rock, and here, in the midst of this sublime desert, blooms a garden of beautiful flowers. The excursion to the *Jardin*, says Murray, with all the emphasis of unwonted italics, is "*one of the most striking in the whole range of the Alps.*" But then some part of the way to it requires a good head. However, the first day I was at Chamouni two or three travellers went and returned, and I looked at them and thought to myself—"Surely whatever these men do, I can do." And when, on the second day, a fat man went and came back safe, I said to myself, "I will go if it were but for very shame." But my resolution was taken too late—the two first days were glorious, cloudless days; but the third was wet and stormy. And when we reached the Montanvert, where the old guide, Coutet, has his little inn on the verge of the sea of ice, the wind came howling down the glacier with a fury which made the house tremble as if it would be swept away. Every body said, it was out of the question to make the attempt; and so, till the weather should improve, I amused myself with examining the old guide's collection of minerals. As I turned out drawer after drawer, alone and unwatched, and some of them containing stones of considerable value, I thought of the man at Meyringen, who would not take a franc from me in the dark. But when at last I came to the drawer in which Coutet kept his five franc pieces, I could not help suggesting to him the propriety of taking more care of his money.

About noon the weather cleared up, and though too late to think of the *Jardin*, I made a short excursion upon the sea of ice. A wondrous sea it is—whose wreck is of granite, and amid whose scattered heaps you may pick up rare minerals, brought from unknown and untrodden heights, as the sea strews upon its beach strange shells, which no eye may see in their native depths! A wondrous sea—in which the rose-leaf sinks, and upon which the rock rides like a cork, floating only the higher the huger its mass, as the shadow of the great rock shields the ice beneath it

from the sun! Though imperceptibly to the eye, the tide is ever moving onward; the sun of summer quickens its pulse; the cold of winter retards its progress,—yet still it never rests! And at night, when the mountain life stands almost still—when its countless little veins are frozen up, and the murmur of its thousand rills is hushed to rest—the glacier's giant pulse alone beats heavily and slow. Yet, though silent and unseen be the progress of the sea of ice, it is moving with a force which nothing may resist—bearing along upon its bosom all that meets it in its track—polishing, as it passes, the granite rocks like glass, it holds on its onward course. Mark yon curious-looking rock going down the stream. Forbes pictured it years ago, and there it is, as if it had never stirred from its place. And yet it has never rested for a moment day or night. Half a century ago De Saussure left a ladder high up on the ice. Forbes lately picked up some of its fragments, after it had travelled downwards some 13,000 feet. And it may be, perhaps, along with the minerals and the fragments of granite carried down from the heights above, it may bring the bones of some poor wanderer who perished high up on the mountain, and by the time that the orphan who mourned for him has become a grey-haired man, may lay them in his native valley at the foot.

Now let us turn for a moment to the practical side of the question. The glacier, it seems, is eternally moving onwards, and that with a power of 10,000 horse. Here, then, is a great motive force lying idle—here is a power that requires to be "taken up." Come! ye hard-headed sons of industry; Niagara is making himself useful—is there no way to make this Samson work? If the glacier can lift a rock, why not a forge-hammer?—if it can grind stones to powder, why not spin cotton?

In returning from the Montanvert, I saw, standing at the door of a cottage, a guide who, having been frostbitten in his limbs during the ascent of the mountain the preceding summer, had been prevented ever since from following his ordinary em-

† It has done so since the above

ployment, and was now subsisting upon the charity of visiters. It certainly ought to be a consideration with those who undertake such a perilous enterprise, whether, in addition to the ordinary expenses, which amount to a considerable sum, they are in a position to afford some assistance to the guides, who may be thus crippled—perhaps for life—in the discharge of their duties, or to their wives and families, in case they should perish in the attempt.

For myself—seeing that a man can risk his life in a balloon for five pounds—I own that I think Mount Blanc is an expensive danger.

THE END.

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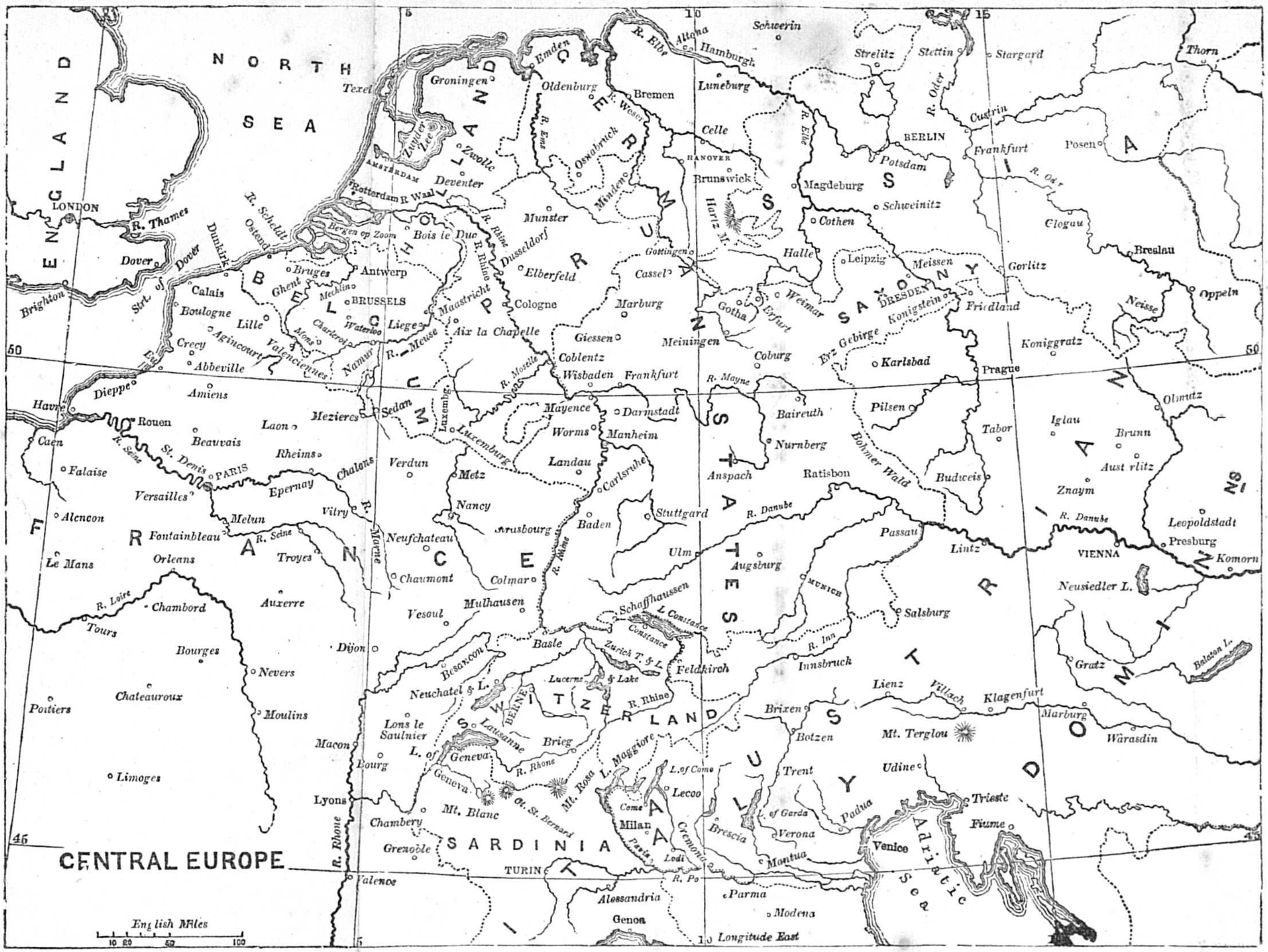
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