

Scenes in Switzerland eBook

Scenes in Switzerland by American Tract Society

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Contents

Scenes in Switzerland eBook.....	1
Contents.....	2
Table of Contents.....	4
Page 1.....	5
Page 2.....	7
Page 3.....	9
Page 4.....	11
Page 5.....	12
Page 6.....	13
Page 7.....	15
Page 8.....	17
Page 9.....	19
Page 10.....	20
Page 11.....	22
Page 12.....	23
Page 13.....	25
Page 14.....	27
Page 15.....	28
Page 16.....	30
Page 17.....	32
Page 18.....	34
Page 19.....	36
Page 20.....	38
Page 21.....	40
Page 22.....	41



Page 23..... 43
Page 24..... 44
Page 25..... 46
Page 26..... 48
Page 27..... 50
Page 28..... 51
Page 29..... 53
Page 30..... 55
Page 31..... 57
Page 32..... 58
Page 33..... 60
Page 34..... 62
Page 35..... 63
Page 36..... 64
Page 37..... 65
Page 38..... 66

Table of Contents

Section	Table of Contents	Page
Start of eBook		1
Gretchen PAGE 5		1
The Glaciers Of Savoy		11



Page 1

Gretchen PAGE 5

A Night in the Cathedral 28

The Glaciers of Savoy 45

The Bride of the Aar 63

A Sabbath in Lausanne 79

The Guide of Montanvert 96

Mont Blanc 127

From Berne to Basle 135

Scenes In Switzerland.

Gretchen.

Time flies swiftly when we are sightseeing; and it was late in the autumn of 18— when I reached Lindau. Lake Constance lay before me, a pale, green sheet of water, hemmed in on the south by bold mountain ranges, filling the interim between the Rhine valley and the long undulating ridges of the Canton Thurgau. These heights, cleft at intervals by green smiling valleys and deep ravines, are only the front of table-land stretching away like an inclined plane, and dotted with scattered houses and cloistering villages. The deep green of forest and pasture land was beginning to show the touch of autumn's pencil; the bright hues striking against gray, rocky walls; the topmost edge of each successive elevation crowned with a sharp outline of golden light, deepening the purple gloom of the shaded slopes.

Behind and over this region towers the Sentis, its brow of snow bristling with spear points. It was altogether too late to think of the Baths, or even to look at the little lake of Wallenstatt; and still, I was unwilling to return without a friendly shake of the hand of my old friend Spruner, who had perched himself in one of the upper cantons. "You should have been here earlier," said the landlord; "in summer we have plenty of visitors."

"I rather look upon the mountains in their parti-colored vests, than when dressed in simple green," I replied.

"If you can stand the weather;" and he thrust his pipe deeper into his mouth, and twirled the button of his coat.



Hastily making my adieus, the postillion cracked his whip, and we started. “There is no danger of bad weather for a month,” said the driver, “and when we get up farther you will see what will pay you for the trouble of coming:” a speech that promised well for the day, I argued; and a certain share of respect leaped up for the man in his laced coat and steeple-crowned hat. A good specimen of his class—and once satisfied of this, I gave myself up to the present, without the least foreboding with regard to the future.

Over us hung masses of gray cloud, stretching across the valley like a curtain, and falling in voluminous folds almost to the level of Lake Constance. As we passed through this belt, and came out, with cloud and mist below us, I listened as the postillion related the popular legends handed down from one generation to another, for the last six hundred years. Reaching the crest of the topmost height, he stopped suddenly.

“It is just the day to see the herdsmen;” and he threw down the reins, and prepared to dismount. I stood up and looked around.



Page 2

“The battle you know between the herdsmen and the monks, with Austria to help. It was a hard battle, and the knights were whipped; and ever since, on certain days, the herdsmen are seen armed with bows and pikes,” he continued. By this time I had taken in his meaning, and turning my attention to the misty curtain rolling up into clouds about the sides of the mountain, I had no difficulty in picturing the discomfited Austrians flying from the pursuit of the hardy mountaineers.

“It was a great battle, and they have never tried it since,” and there was a ring in the voice that sounded like the echo of Gruetli.

“No wonder, if your herdsmen are still ready to keep up the fight.”

“You do not see them,” and he made a gesture in the direction where my eye still lingered.

“As plainly as any body can,” and I tried hard not to smile.

“It is quite true this;” and he gathered up the reins.

“I do not doubt it.”

As we passed on, the clouds rounded into islands, touched with silver on the upper edges.

“This is the place for fine muslin and embroideries,” said the postillion in a changed tone.

“Where are they made?” I asked.

“Every house has a loom,” he said.

A small way to manufacture muslins; but when the density of the population and the incessant labor is taken into consideration, it is not so strange. With regard to the houses I was greatly disappointed. Not only are they so near that neighbors can converse freely, but they are large, and even luxurious, in comparison with the same class in other parts of Europe. Many of these houses are four stories, with large, square rooms at the base; the upper ones narrowed by the high steeple roof which projects several feet, forming balconies, beautifully carved and highly ornamented. The outer walls are covered with shingles from two to three inches broad, overlapping each other, and rounded at the ends; reminding one of old roofs seen in the French quarter. The lowest story is of stone, plastered, and whitewashed. Such a house is very warm, very durable; and painted by the successive changes of winter and summer, the external appearance is altogether pleasing. Our ascent was gradual; with stately houses one after another, and fruit-trees on the sheltered side. In the balconies, pots of bright-hued flowers, and sometimes a face to greet us.



Towards sundown we halted at the little town where my friend had deposited himself; and as my foot touched the wooden step of the little hotel, whom should I meet but my old college chum; no longer thin and pale as when I knew him, but round-faced as an alderman, and merry as though his heart was full of new wine.

“You are not to stop here,” as the landlord came out to receive me: “My house is not far off, and *Gretchen*, you remember her? will be glad to see you.”

Page 3

Of course I remembered Gretchen; but to meet her as my friend's wife was quite another thing. A few steps brought us to the door of a handsome establishment two centuries old, or more; the front frescoed, and the interior neat and orderly as a New England housewife's. The floor upon which we entered from the street was paved with a species of marble, black and white, diamond shaped, but too suggestive of cold to be altogether pleasing. A broad, wooden staircase of a peculiar rich brown hue led to the parlor on the second floor. The windows looking out into the mountain ranges were draped with ruby-colored damask; the floor was covered with a richly tufted carpet bordered with flowers, and sofas and easy chairs were temptingly arranged. On a table in the centre of the room, and under an elaborately chased lamp, were implements for letter-writing, magazines, and newspapers. Through the folding-doors we caught a glimpse of well-filled book-shelves, and a woman's voice came floating out to the rich, mellow accompaniment of the piano. There was the rustle of a silk dress. I turned my head.

"This is my ambition," said my friend, while a look of pride blended with the manly expression of his handsome face.

There stood Gretchen—the Gretchen I had known ten years before; no longer the slight blushing girl, but mature in her beauty, a happy wife and mother; the same sweet smile on her lips, and her eye full of gushing gladness as she welcomed me to her home.

The fire was blazing cheerily, and we three talking of the old times, with hardly a thought of the broken links between.

"The college is still the same," said my friend, "with the high cupola and long galleries. Gretchen and I visited it last summer; there were few that we knew, and many of the professors have slipped away. Gretchen's father was one of these. We missed him in his quiet home, and above all, in the old church. A man with dark hair and black flashing eyes stood in his place—a learned, man, but wanting in the inward fire, the simple eloquence of the old man we used to love. After service, I strolled past the college buildings, and tried to trace the names we cut on the old beeches, but they were all overgrown."

"I know nothing that brings home to the heart so quickly the consciousness of increasing years, as to find those whom we used to look upon as children grown to maturity, taking upon themselves the care and responsibility of life. Here is Gretchen; a deeper bloom upon her cheek, and her eye sparkling with a higher pride."

"Just as mid-day is brighter than the morning," said my friend.

Down the hall came the pattering of little feet, and the nurse entered with two stout boys and a lovely girl, a second Gretchen, the same roguish blue eyes, and golden hair rippling away from her white forehead:

“These are my hopes,” said the father, and a smile curled his lip, amid, his eye filled with tenderness as he glanced at Gretchen’s face. Lingered over the tea-table where Gretchen presided with more than youthful grace, we talked not only of the past, but of present work and life.



Page 4

“One,” I continued, taking up the thread, “I met in Southern Italy, dreaming; as I was dreaming, by the dark grotto of Pausilippo. Meeting upon classic ground, it seemed strange to talk of old times, but we did. And sitting down upon the promontory of Baiae, looking off upon the blue sea, we told each other our respective stories; just as ships will shift their course to come within speaking distance, compare longitude, and exchange letters, and—part. I have not heard from Eckerman since.”

My dreams were pleasant that night, and the next morning there was another surprise for me. Gretchen’s brother was the pastor of a little church just above them; I must not go without seeing him, Gretchen said. How could I? Euler was my classmate; together we labored for knowledge, and our first manly sympathies run in the same channel.

On Sabbath I saw my friend in the pulpit. “How like his father,” I whispered to Gretchen; the poetry in him warming his soul into a burst of fervid eloquence, and his face glowing with the beautiful truths he was unfolding to his hearers. An uncouth church of rough stone, with quaint windows and curious carvings, the ceiling arched, with a blue ground on which blazed innumerable stars. Strange and novel as it was, my eye never wandered from the speaker; the voice and expression so like the kind and generous man who had presided over the college, and who carried with him the affections of each succeeding class. This seems to me more of a triumph now, than it did then. A cultivated mind may challenge respect, but there is need of a noble one to win affection.

It was a week before I could think of leaving, and then the clouds twisted through and around the severed pyramids of the Alps, and the rain began. In such weather the scenery is not only shrouded, but the people are shut up in their homes. Pastor Euler had an ample study however, and here we read and wrote, and talked; with his wife, a pleasant-voiced woman, to enliven the pauses with music, and children dashing into the study giving abrupt and sudden turnings to our dreaming. Christmas was near, and I was easily persuaded to see more of a people, shut in as they were from the noise and commotion of the lower world, and still not so far as to be unknowing of all that was taking place, whether in deliberative bodies, state policies, or the lighter chit-chat of the day.

“You will have an opportunity to see more of my parish than you can possibly see on a Sabbath occasion. I visit them as often as I can, and twice a year I receive them at my own house. The ‘Weihnachtsgeschenk’ is looked forward to with great pleasure, and the meeting of the Landsgemeinde in April is sure to bring my people together.”

Gretchen and her husband were clamorous for me to remain, and there was no resisting the pleading tones of the children, their little clinging fingers stronger than bands of iron.



Page 5

All night the rain beat against my chamber window, and in the morning the lower slopes of the mountain were white with new snow. Dark clouds lay heavily on the Alpine peaks, the air was raw and chilly—still it was Christmas. I was aroused at daybreak by the chiming of village bells, and then a procession of choral singers went through the streets, pausing under the window of each house, and singing Christmas hymns. As they passed on, the children caught up the refrain, and joining hands made the halls resound with their gleeful voices. Before breakfast a huge bowl was passed around with a foaming drink, not unlike egg-nog in appearance, but differing in taste materially. “May your Christmas be a merry one,” as it passed from lip to lip; “and a profitable one,” was always responded.

Church was open an hour earlier than on ordinary occasions, “so that the people may have ample time for dinner,” said the pastor. Religion with these mountain worshippers was not a form. The birthday of the blessed Redeemer was to them a reality. They believed that he was born and that he died; and it was to commemorate his nativity that hymns were sung and garlands wound. At an early hour they began to gather, and before the time of service the house was closely packed. There were no chains of evergreen, but small fir-trees were occasionally placed. These were covered with garlands and crowns of bright-hued flowers, giving a novel and striking appearance, as of some floral temple or mosque, set in a great pavilion. The high pulpit was draped in white, and a voluminous white curtain covered the background. The effect was charming.

And as the pastor began the service, the melody of his voice broke away into tenderness as he touched upon the love of God in giving his Son to be the propitiation for sin: holding up the picture so vividly, and telling the simple story with a pathos and a power that little children even could not fail to see and to appreciate. How much better than studied and elaborate essays, diving into metaphysics and technicalities so deeply that beauty is lost, and the mind diverted by the difficulty of following the intricate windings.

First did he impress his hearers with the fact that God loved the world, and through the fulness of that love the Son came down to suffer and to die: secondly, that the natural heart is at enmity with God, not willing that God should rule. Thus a change must be effected; a reconciliation made. This could only be wrought by sacrifice; and Christ was offered once for all; his blood cleanseth from all sin. A plain, simple statement, and it sunk into the hearts of his hearers with a power sure to tell upon their future lives.

After the blessing, each remained silently upon his knees for a few moments. Then all was greeting and congratulation; all were friends; the idea never entered their heads that a stranger could be among them at that season.



Page 6

At dinner I was introduced to the landamman and two other members of the council, and from them gathered brief notes with reference to the little democracy won, and held intact for so many years. The dessert was hardly removed before they began to come: first the old men in black coats and high hats, and women with white, pointed caps and wide ruffles; then the middle-aged, fathers and mothers, bringing little children, all with the same conscientious expression on their faces, the same "Happy Christmas," while the pastor's "God bless you," was a benediction that carried happiness to the hearts of those who heard it.

Lastly came the youths; maidens with eyes full of a childlike innocence, the quick color coming and going as they greeted the pastor and his friends, and received his blessing in return. Gretchen and her husband were with us, and Gretchen number two was my especial escort, leading me through the rooms, and introducing me in her naive manner, "Mamma's friend, and papa's, and uncle Euler's."

Christmas festivities were kept up during the week; and before that elapsed, I was won to add a month, and then another, it being quite impossible to slip away from the kind friends with whom I had so much in common; the fascination only the more potent as we listened to the beating winds, and looked out into the slippery paths leading down into the cantons beneath.

Spring had come when it was "fit to travel," as Gretchen said. The green of the landscape was brilliant and uniform; the turf sown with primrose, violet, anemone, veronica, and buttercups. It was time for me to leave; neither could I be persuaded to stay till the meeting of the Landsgemeinde. It was sad to leave them, and the little Gretchen was only pacified by my assurance that, if possible, I would return at no distant day. My friend Spruner had business at Herisau, and spending one more evening together, our prayers mingling for the last time, we parted.

Our way led through the valley of the Sitter, a stream fed by the Sentis Alps, and spanned by a bridge hundreds of feet above the water. The same smooth carpet of velvet green was spread everywhere.

"There is no greener land," said Spruner; "the grass is so rich that the inhabitants cannot even spare enough for vegetable gardens. Our tables are supplied from the lower vallies."

"In our country we should not dream of making hay in the month of April," I remarked, seeing several stout men already in the field.

"With suitable care they can mow the same field every six weeks," responded my friend. "And it is no doubt this peculiar process that gives such sweetness and splendor of color, seen nowhere else, not even between the hedgerows of England."

The day proved to be neither clear nor rainy: a steel blue sky brought out the broken peaks of Kasten, while the white shoulders of the Sentis were veiled with a thin, gray suit.

Page 7

“A month later and we should see the herdsmen,” remarked Spruner. “The leader of the herd marches in front with a large bell suspended from his neck by a handsome leathern band; the others follow, some with garlands of flowers and straps of embroidered leather, with milking pails suspended between the horns.”

Before nightfall, occasional streaks of sunshine shot across the mountain. It did not last, however, and when we reached our stopping-place, it was raining below and snowing above us.

The next morning our road dropped into a ravine, bringing something to admire at every turn. Leaving our course, we visited the Cascade of Horsfall, the beauty of which amply repaid us for the delay it cost. That night we slept at Herisau, the largest town in the Canton, and here I was to part with Spruner. There was no difficulty in reaching the lower valley. With many shakes of the hand, and “May God’s blessing be upon you,” we parted: one to take the railroad to Zurich, the other back to his household charms, and the work he had chosen.

A Night In The Cathedral.

Franz Hoffner’s father was kappelmeister; and the old cathedral with its grained arches and cloistered aisles resounded with rare music, as the organist took his seat, and run his fingers over the keys with the careless ease of one who knows not only to control, but to infuse something of his own spirit into the otherwise senseless machine before him. Under his inspiration it became a living, breathing form; lifting the hearts of worshippers, and giving them glimpses of what is hereafter to be obtained.

Herr Hoffner was a rare musician; but, alas, musicians are no exception to the rule: the wheel is always turning; one goes up and another goes down. A new star had risen. Court belles and beauties grew enthusiastic. The elector’s heart was touched; his influence was asked. “Herr Hoffner has been here long enough,” it was said. There was a twinge of the electoral conscience.

Herr Hoffner went to his house a ruined man; and the new favorite, Carl Von Stein, played upon the keys so dear to the heart of the old organist.

Herr Hoffner had a wife and two lovely children; and one would suppose that he could live in the beautiful cottage the elector had given him, independent of the favorite. But no; deprived of his old instrument all else was lost to him. For hours would he sit before his humble door, heedless of his wife’s entreaties or the childish prattle of Franz and Nanette; his eye riveted on the old cathedral, and his hands playing nervously, as though cheating himself with the idea he was still at the organ. Then roused by a sudden inspiration, he would rush to the piano and play till his hands dropped from mere exhaustion.



Franz and Nanette loved music, and they could play skilfully, but they were all too young to be of service; and thus they lived cut off from all outward influences befitting their age; loving music above everything else, and yearning for the time when they could go out and win for their father, as he had once done for them.



Page 8

Years passed. Franz Hoffner was a tall, slight boy, and his father was blind. Sitting at his cottage door he could no longer see the tall towers of the old cathedral, but he could hear the chime of stately bells—and his fingers played on: while Franz and Nanette not unfrequently climbed up the winding stairs, just to beg Herr Von Stein to let them touch the keys their father used to love.

[Illustration]

It happened one day the organist went out and left the key in the lock. Franz entered with the evening worshippers. A nameless feeling seized him. Urged on by the sudden impulse, he mounted the stairs. He did not dream of playing, he only thought of the organ as his father's friend; and to seat himself on the stool where his father had so often sat was all he aimed to do. A moment, and he spied the key; would there be any harm in raising the lid and playing himself? Herr Von Stein had never denied him. He grew courageous. A few chords and Franz forgot that his father would be expecting him; piece after piece was played till his memory could serve him no longer, and then he began to improvise.

All at once heavy shadows were cast over the keys: he looked down into the church, it was dark and still. A strange awe seized him, he felt that it was night; and the great doors locked. Hastily as his trembling limbs would allow, he crept down the stairs. Darkness shrouded the aisles. He reached the doors, they were barred and bolted. What would his father say? and Nanette, would she think where he was, and rouse the old door-keeper?

High up through the tower-window he caught sight of a star; and the moon poured her silver radiance full on the face of the organ. Creeping up the stairs, he once more opened the instrument. Surely some one would hear him if he played, and Nanette he knew would not leave him to stay in the old cathedral alone.

Hours passed: the full moon cast her splendor on a sweet child-face bent over the keys in the organ-loft of the old cathedral, a smile still played about his lips, and his light brown hair lay in rings on his broad, white forehead. Franz was asleep, and while asleep he dreamed.

* * * * *

A beautiful lady, he thought, came to the cottage; she had a sweet, lovely face, but so sad that Franz wondered what sorrow could have come to one so rich and beautiful. The lady caught the expression of his eye, and slipping her arm around him, drew him still nearer.

“You think because I am rich that I must be happy. Learn then, my child, that wealth does not bring happiness; neither does beauty win lasting favor. To be good is to be

rich, and it also makes us beautiful. The power that we have in ourselves is far superior to the outward circumstances that surround us.”

“My father had this power,” replied Franz. “You see it did not profit him; for when he thought himself secure as kappelmeister, the elector gave his place to another, and now he is growing old and blind.”



Page 9

“Is this so?” exclaimed the lady, a warm light flashing into her gray eye. “Did the elector give his place to another?”

“Indeed, he did; and it broke my father’s heart,” replied Franz. “Since then, we have neither of us known pleasure; only when we go to the cathedral, Nanette and me; and when we return, our father never tires of asking questions.”

“This must not always be,” replied the lady. “Will you come with me, my child, and it is possible we can show you a way whereby you can do something for a father whom you so much love.”

“I will go with you,” replied Franz; “but I must not be gone long, for my father will miss me when he wakes.”

Then Franz gave his hand to the beautiful lady, and she led him by a smooth way through the most lovely wood; tall trees, filled with singing birds, skirted the banks of clear, running streams, while flowering shrubs and vines flung their perfume to the air. At length she came to a gate so strong and high Franz thought it would be impossible to open it. But as they approached, it seemed to swing back noiselessly on its hinges. Franz saw there was a lodge there, with a gray-haired man, and little children playing before the door, and as the lady passed all bowed to her.

Presently they came in sight of a magnificent castle, its walls white and glistening; while the sunlight glinting against the deep windows, flashed and scintillated like a bed of diamonds. As they came nearer, the lady left the broad road, and wound along a narrow path, and came to a little postern gate, and up a broad marble terrace, with sparkling fountains, and with flowers brighter than he had seen before, and birds of gay plumage flashing their beauty through the tree-tops. At the top of the terrace she gave him into the care of an elderly man, with a white flowing beard and eyes full of tenderness. A few words were said, and the old man took Franz by the hand and led him into a room, the floor of which was marble, smooth as glass, while the walls were green and gold. In the centre was a marble basin or pool, with steps leading down; the atmosphere was dim by reason of a sweet and subtle perfume rising from the water. Franz was hardly conscious till he came out of the bath; then his hair was carefully dressed, and a new suit of clothes was brought him.

He had only time to look at himself in the mirror, when the lady returned. She was dressed in a rich white silk, covered with lace and sprinkled with pearls and diamonds. On her head she wore a crown; bright and sparkling as it was, it was not half so beautiful as the sweet face that beamed below it. The deep traces of sorrow were gone, she looked like one happy in the consciousness of a good deed done, and a sweet smile was on her lip as she held out her hand to Franz. Together they walked down the marble hall and up the broad staircase, on through rows of stately ladies and martial-looking men, the crowd opening and bowing as they passed.

Page 10

At length they came to a room larger, more magnificent than the rest. Persian carpets covered the floor, and the windows were draped with blue and gold. On a dais at the extremity of the room was an oaken chair of quaint device, in which sat a proud-looking man, pale and careworn as though weary of so much state and ceremony.

“My child,” said the prince, “Do you feel like playing for me? I am too weak to go to the cathedral, and I fancy if I can hear you play I shall feel better.”

Franz was a timid boy, but he loved to please. He was always ready to play for his father. He glanced at the lady, there was a sweet smile resting on her face. Dropping on his knee Franz kissed the hand of the prince. “I will do my best, since you are so good as to ask me.”

Franz looked up, and saw what he had not seen before, an organ quite like the one his father so loved.

“Play just as you do in the old cathedral,” whispered the lady, and then she seated herself in a chair by the side of the prince. Franz saw nothing but the keys, he heard nothing but the sweet soul harmony, and this he must interpret to the beautiful lady and the sick prince by means of his instrument. How long he played he never knew, but when he ceased a slight hand lay on his shoulder, and a sweet face bent above him.

“To do good, Franz, is the secret of happiness. This power is yours, and so long as you use it, so long you will be happy. The dear, heavenly Father watches over and cares for those whose lives are given for the good of others.” Saying this she led him away to the prince. But what was Franz’s surprise! beside him on his right hand were Franz’s father and mother, no longer blind, but dressed in costly robes, their faces radiant with happiness, while Nanette looked charmingly, in a white gauze dress and silver slippers. Franz was bewildered, not knowing whether to advance towards the prince, or to run and embrace his parents.

“This is the reward of obedience to your parents,” said the lady, kissing the boy’s white forehead.

* * * * *

The light of day came streaming through the tower window—the child awoke. It was cold. A chill ran through his frame. He had been in the cathedral all night, and his parents—what anguish they must have endured. Hastily as his numbed limbs would allow, he went down the stairs. A few worshippers were bowing before the altar; Franz dropped on his knees a moment, and then ran with all his speed out of the door and down the street.



Very glad were Franz's parents when he returned, and Nanette wept for joy; but when at breakfast he related his dream, the face of the old organist lit up with a great hope.

"I know, my boy, it will all come true. So long as we love and trust Him, the good Christ will not leave us to suffer."

Christmas had come. There were no presents for Franz and Nanette. Only one could they make, and this was a nice, warm dressing-gown for their blind father.



Page 11

One day a beautiful lady took refuge in the cottage; her carriage had broken down, and she must stop till the postilion could return to the castle. At the cottage she heard Franz play and Nanette sing, and listened to the blind organist, as the cathedral bells broke on the evening air.

“You must come with me,” said the lady. “We have been planning concerts at the castle, and you shall give them.”

“My children are not old enough to go by themselves, and I am blind,” replied the father.

“I will not deprive you of your children,” said the lady; “my father has influence. And besides, he has near him an eminent physician; it is possible something can be done to restore your sight.”

In three days the lady returned, and carried Herr Hoffner with his wife and children to the castle. Charmed with the young musicians, the elector repented of the thoughtless deed, in depriving the father of his position as kappelmeister. Very tenderly did he treat him now, and under the care of the skilful physician, it was soon announced there was hope of his recovering his sight. This done, he was once more offered the position; but Herr Hoffner was a just man; to do by others as he would be done by was his motto. Herr Von Stein had filled the post acceptably; it was no fault of his that the old organist had lost his place. Herr Hoffner would not accept it, but only asked that he might be allowed to give concerts with his children. Franz labored diligently at his studies, and already was he beginning to surprise his friends, not only with his playing, but with his composition.

Years passed: there was a great gathering in that grand old capital. A musical festival was in progress, and all the celebrities the world over had congregated there. Franz Hoffner was in the zenith of his glory. At the close of the performance, and while the entire audience joined in acclamations of praise to the youthful leader, a rich medal was presented. On one side the profile view of the elector and his daughter, set round with diamonds; on the other, “Music is only valuable as it lifts the heart and purifies our fallen nature.”

Franz Hoffner lived to be a great musician; but he never ceased to think of his parents and Nanette. Honors were empty, and applause vain, only so far as they contributed to the happiness of those he loved.

The Glaciers Of Savoy

After a few weeks passed in Geneva, we determined to go on to Chamouni, and for this purpose engaged a guide accustomed for years to the mountain passes, and on whom we were told that we could rely implicitly.

Page 12

This being arranged, we took a last drive around the environs of the city; the views of the lake and of the mountains in every direction, were enchanting and sublime. From the head of the lake, a greater variety of interesting objects met the eye than can be seen perhaps from any other spot in Europe. At your feet you behold a venerable and populous city; while a vast and beautiful lake spreads its clear waves beyond, amid a landscape rich in all the products a cultivated soil can furnish; while vast and gloomy mountains stretch their giant forms on high. In clear weather, Mont Blanc appears the venerable monarch of the Alps. Below this, Saleve rises to upwards of three thousand feet, with the uninterrupted length of the Jura on the left, whose highest point is over four thousand. Proceeding along the banks of the Arve, we at length alighted at the entrance of a thicket, through which we made our way with difficulty, the path being hilly and very slippery, to a place where we saw at our feet the celebrated junction of the Arve and the Rhone. The Arve has a thick soapy appearance; the Rhone is of a fine dark green, and seems for a while to spurn a connection with its muddy visitor. For two or three miles the Rhone keeps up its reserve, and the rivers roll side by side, without mingling their waters. At length they meet and blend: the distinction is lost, the polluted Arve is absorbed in the haughty and majestic Rhone.

We were to leave Geneva the next morning. Before night our guide came: he was ill, would we take his son? The proposition did not please us; it was a dangerous journey, and many had been lost in the mountain passes.

“Erwald knows as much of the passes as I do,” said the father, “and he is anxious to go; his sister lives at Maglan, and she is down with the fever.”

I saw how it was. Erwald was to go to Maglan to visit his sister; and if the father could arrange for him to go with us, of course he himself would be free to make another engagement.

“Do you feel sure that you can guide us safely?” I asked of Erwald.

“Certainly, monsieur; I have been over the way many times. If I was not quite sure, I would not offer to go.”

“Not if you could gain a good many francs by going?”

“It would not be right to say to you that I knew the way, if I did not.”

The boy’s face was attractive, his voice gentle, and his blue eyes full of tenderness. His look and his answer delighted me.

“No, it would not be right, Erwald; and because you love the right and feel sure that you can serve us, I will take you in your father’s place.”



“I am glad, very glad; and now I must see my mother. Vesta is sick and she will be glad to see any one from home.”

Erwald’s face was glowing; I turned to the father.

“Erwald is a good child,” he said. “At first we felt vexed with him and Vesta for leaving the church, and not a few times did we punish them. But they were so good and patient that it troubled us; and now their mother is a Protestant, and I never go to mass.”



Page 13

It was explained, the serene calm of the earnest blue eyes: Erwald was a Christian.

Early in the morning our guide made his appearance. His countenance sweet and pleasing as it was the night previous. He was accompanied by a little woman in a black gown and bodice, with a high cap and the whitest of kerchiefs—a mild sweet-faced woman, whom we knew at once as his mother.

“You’ll tell Vesta mother thinks of her all the time, and prays the Father every hour to make her well again.”

On my asking if she was not afraid to have her son go on so dangerous a journey, she answered:

“Our Father will take care of him and bring him back to us.”

The simple faith of the good woman struck me as greatly to be desired. With all her simplicity she had the true Wisdom: and her good motherly face went with me long after I left Erwald in Chamouni.

A few miles from Geneva, we entered Savoy. Here the scenery of the Alps began to open before us. On the right the Arve was seen winding through a cultivated and luxuriant valley; on both sides, hills and rocks rose to a considerable elevation, and behind, the mountains of the Jura range closed in grandeur the delightful view. We passed through a succession of peaceful villages, and at length reached by a long avenue of elms the little town of Bonneville on the Arve. The town is embosomed in the mountains, and watered by the river. It has a fine old bridge over the river from which the country is viewed to great advantage. On the right the mole is elegantly formed, and terminates in a peak, a complete contrast to Mont Brezon on the left, wild and savage in its aspect, and little more than a bare and rugged rock with occasional pitches of verdure.

[Illustration]

From Bonneville the road passes over the bridge to the foot of the mole, and traverses a lovely valley, hemmed in by lofty mountains, and rich in scenes of pastoral beauty. The road is lined on each side with walnut-trees, which afford a grateful shade. Passing the village of Sigony, Erwald pointed to the remains of an old convent far up the mountain, whose inmates were wont to welcome the traveller, when these valleys, destitute of good roads and inns, were explored with difficulty and with danger.

From this place the mountains closed upon us; rocks began to overhang the road, and the Arve was rather heard than seen. At length we crossed a romantic looking bridge and entered the little town of Cluse, enclosed on both sides by rocky ramparts, and sheltered equally from sunbeams and from storms. Following the various windings of



the valley, the Arve seemed to spread itself into a series of lakes, each presenting its own peculiar loveliness and majesty. The sides of the mountains were occasionally bare and rugged, but for the most part they were clothed with forests of fir; while above, pointed summits and fantastic crags everywhere met the eye, and filled the beholder with admiration and awe.

Page 14

A few miles up the valley, Erwald called our attention to the entrance of the cavern of Balme. It is a natural gallery in the rock and well worth a visit. The valley now becomes more spacious; while its boundaries increase in grandeur. The meadows, adorned with groves of beech-trees, rise in gentle swells from the verge of the Arve, and spread their green carpet, dotted with cottages and watered by innumerable streams, to the base of the neighboring heights. At one of these cottages we rested for the night. I never dreamed of a fairer scene; it was too beautiful for sleep; the murmurings of the Arve were the only sounds that broke upon the ear, while all around tremendous precipices rose to heaven, shutting out from us the cares and tumults of the busy world. To pay for my enthusiasm I awoke with a headache and a feeling of weariness that sensibly diminished the enjoyment of the morning.

Leaving this enchanted spot, we passed the waterfall D'Orli, and a few miles beyond we paused to admire the cataract of Arpenas. Its height is estimated at eight hundred feet. The water rushes with considerable volume over a tremendous precipice of dark and fantastic rocks. At first it divides into separate streams that in their fall resemble descending rockets, till at length, caught by the rocks beneath, they meet and mingle in one mass of foam.

At the cataract we had an instance of that deception which is produced to the eye by the magnitude of the objects which compose the scenery of these Alpine regions. Viewed from the road the fall did not appear by any means so considerable as its measurement determines; while at its foot there was a little green hillock to the summit of which it seemed a few steps would reach. To this hillock we determined to proceed. But what was our astonishment when we found a mountain before us, and when we reached its top, the cataract loomed up in inconceivable vastness, rushing into a wild abyss beneath, that deafened us with its uproar and bedewed us with its spray.

We now approached the village of Maglan, where Vesta lived. As we drew near, I observed Erwald's face flush and grow pale; that dear sister he had not seen since his father drove her from the house because of her apostasy. Now she was ill and had sent for him. How great the change! His mother was a Christian and his father did not go to mass. As we entered the village I was struck with the pleasing, intelligent faces of all that we met. Leaving us at the door of the only lodging-house in the place, Erwald went to visit his sister; but not before I had asked that he would return for me provided that he found her comfortable. In an hour or more, he returned, his countenance sad, but still peaceful. Vesta was sicker than he had dreamed of; it was feared that she would not recover.

"Do you think it will not hurt her, for me to see her?" I asked.

"Oh, no, she said that she would like to see you."



Page 15

During our short walk few words were said. As we reached the cottage a young man came out to meet us, with a flaxen-haired, blue-eyed child in his arms, and another clinging to his hand. It was Vesta's husband, and these were her children. Following them into the cottage, I found myself at once in the presence of the dying woman. The sight of a strange face did not disturb her. With a look that seemed to comprehend the Christian bond of union between us she held out her hand.

"I have come with Erwald," I said, "to see his sister. I am sorry to find you so very ill."

"Almost home," she gasped.

"You do not feel that you are alone; there is One to walk with you?"

"Jesus, my Redeemer, my Comforter."

Erwald was kneeling by the bed, his eyes were full of tears, and his hand trembled as he clasped the pale thin fingers.

"You will get well, Vesta, you will come to the old home once again, mother expects you, and father." The words were gone. Sobs echoed through the cottage.

"Tell mother, not an hour but I have thought of her. Tell her that I am glad she loves Jesus; and father, ask him for my sake to read the little Bible that I sent him. I would so like to see them, Erwald; but it cannot be. For this, as well as for my husband and children, I would live; but I go to Jesus. Live so as to meet me there."

There was no excitement, only a weary look stole over the face. Leaving Erwald, I walked back to the inn. Though far away from home, and surrounded by strange scenery and strange people, it was delightful to find the same faith here as in my own home, the same heaven inspired confidence in the Redeemer.

The next morning the sick woman was more comfortable. Erwald did not say it, but I knew that he wanted to stay with her.

"Go with us to Le Prieure," I said to him, "and then you shall return. In the valley of Chamouni I feel sure we can procure a guide."

As we left Maglan, our road, or rather path, led up a deep and fertile valley, watered by the Arve, rich in woods of fir, and bounded by mountains of various forms and of tremendous altitudes; their rugged peaks sometimes lost in the clouds; at others, their heads towered in majesty above them. Bathed in the blue ether of the heavens they looked as if themselves ethereal, oftentimes exhibiting a play of colors, having the appearance of transparent matter, of the purest elements and richest hues, and when seen in the light of the setting sun they were only more glorious. At the upper end of the valley we came upon the cataract of the Chede. It is elegant in form. The scenery that

surrounds it is sylvan and sequestered. The torrent that feeds it rushes down a succession of precipices, hurrying dashing along to meet the waters of the Arve.



Page 16

The path now became extremely difficult, and we continued to ascend, till we reached the lake of Chede, whose water is famed as the purest in the Alps. From this point we saw Mont Blanc—saw the clouds roll off, and leave its rugged head white with the snows of ages—a beautiful contrast with the deep azure of the sky it seemed almost to touch. Looking, our eyes were dazzled by the vast and spotless object before us; pure and fleecy as were the light clouds that lingered round it, they were dark compared with its glittering brightness; while the obscurity in which the lower scenes were wrapt gave it the appearance of a crystal mountain in a sea of clouds. With Erwald standing at my side, it seemed but a step from earth to heaven, through those regions of the purest white, untrodden solitudes, meet only for the visits of celestial beings.

Thus far our way had been comparatively safe. Now, we had need of caution at each step; scrambling along ledges of lofty rocks, with deep ravines beneath; then crossing mountain torrents where a single misstep would have been fatal. Before night we passed the remains of an avalanche, an enormous mass of snow crushing as it fell everything in its path. We were now in the valley of Chamouni. At the sight of the first glacier I felt some little disappointment. It is not itself a mountain of ice, but lies in a deep sloping ravine between two mountains, filling it up, and differing in height according to the base. There are five of these glaciers in the valley. They usually lie in a direction north and south, and thus deeply imbedded in the clefts of the valley the sun rarely visits them.

From Savoy our numbers were greatly increased, and as the daylight vanished we quickened our pace. Le Prieure was before us. This was the place where I had promised to part with Erwald. There were plenty of guides; but none of them with the sweet calm look of the boy face before me.

“You will think of us sometimes,” he said as I held his hand at parting, “and when you pray to our heavenly Father, ask Him to look upon us in mercy.”

“I will ask Him, Erwald; and I shall always remember the journey from Geneva to Chamouni as the most varied and interesting of my life.”

“The Bride Of The Aar.”

It was the day after Christmas; a heavy fall of snow during the night, the tiny flakes full of graceful motion till long past noon, had made a gloomy day for the inmates of Myrtlebank. True, there was many a gay trill and clear silvery laugh ringing through the old rooms. Alick was spending his college vacation at home, and Frank and Carry were merry as school-girls are wont to be, when books are flung aside, and fun and frolic take the place of study and recitation.

“What are you dreaming about, uncle Paul?” and Carry perched herself on the arm of her uncle’s chair, and patted his cheek with her little dimpled hand.

“I have been thinking, child”—and there was a choking sensation in uncle Paul’s throat, and a strange mist in his clear gray eyes. Carry’s sympathies were awakened.



Page 17

“Thinking about something long time ago, uncle Paul?” and the rosy cheek was laid close to the thin, pallid one.

“Tell us, uncle Paul; you know you promised us;” and Carry slid her arms about her uncle’s neck, and felt his great heart beat against her own.

“It was a long time ago,” began uncle Paul. “I had just finished my studies, and not being strong, the physician advised a year’s travel on the continent. My father was a merchant, and had friends in the different European cities, and there was little danger that I should lack for attention; and with a supply of letters, and one in particular to a friend of my father’s, a pastor among the mountains of Switzerland, I started. I pass over the leave-taking; finding myself alone on the sea; the nights of calm when leaning over the ship’s side, looking down into the dark depths, murmuring snatches of home songs, bringing up vividly before me faces of those I loved; and as the ocean swells came rocking under us, down we went into the valleys and up over the hills of water. I felt as safe, rocked in the great cradle of the deep, as when at home. His eye was upon me; His arm encircled me.

“But pleasant as the voyage and full of memories, I see that you are impatient to pass over to the mountains of Switzerland. Words are weak to describe the magnificence of the Juras: looking upon the rolling heights shrouded with pine-trees, and down thousands of feet at the very roadside, upon cottage roofs and emerald valleys, where the deer herds were feeding quietly. All this I had seen, and then we came to a little town called Bex; and here, from too much expenditure of enthusiasm perhaps, I was confined for weeks with a raging fever.

“One day, when the fever left me weak and feeble as a child, who should enter but the good pastor Ortler. He had heard of my illness, and leaving home, he had travelled over the hills to nurse me in my weakness; and when I grew strong enough to bear it, he treated me to short drives along Lake Lemman, whence we could see the meadows that skirt Geneva, the rough, shaggy mountains of Savoy, and far behind them, so far that we could not distinguish between cap and cloud, Mont Blanc and the needles of Chamouni.

“The good pastor Ortler, with his fine voice and clear, earnest eyes, was in possession at all times of a charm of manner that had for me an irresistible fascination. But when he talked of God, his greatness as seen in his works, the magnificent and matchless glory by which we were surrounded: above all, when he spoke of His tenderness and love, I realized as I had never done before the beauty of holiness, and the happiness, in this life even, of a soul firmly anchored in the faith of Christ.

“Once, I remember, he steadied my feet to a rocky point overlooking the little town of Ferney, and the deserted chateau of Voltaire. And then followed a conversation, in which the tenderness of the good pastor’s heart was manifest as he spoke of the fine

mind wrecked on the sands of unbelief. 'And to think of this man's influence,' he said, with sorrow in his tones, and regrets over a lost life and a lost soul.



Page 18

“Upon the shores of the lake stood the old home of De Stael; and nearly opposite, its white walls reflected upon the bosom of the water the house where Byron lived and wrote. In the distance we could see the gleaming roofs of Geneva, the dark cathedral, and the tall hotels. As the weeks wore on I grew stronger. Winter was coming, and the good pastor must go home. He would not hear of leaving me, and together we went down into Savoy, and over the ‘mer de glace,’ and trod on the edge of frowning glaciers.

“We were sufficiently near the monastery of the great St. Bernard to take it in our path; toiling along where the ice cracked in the narrow footway, and the moon glittered on the waste of snow and glistened across the dark windows. Pastor Ortler was at home with the monks, and hardly had we thawed ourselves before the ample fireplace, when a supper was prepared, and over their well-spread tables the monks told stories of travellers lost among the granite heights, with clefts and ledges filled with ice.

“Among the rest, friar Le-Bon gave a description of the ‘Ice Maiden,’ or ‘*Bride of the Aar*,’ said to be seen often when the great glacier of Aar sends out icy breezes, and the echoes ring from rock to rock, as it were the audible voice of God.

“‘Years ago,’ he said, ‘a young Englishman and his wife were travelling for scientific purposes; measuring heights, and sounding depths. They were always accompanied by guides; but now, charmed by the untold splendor, and urged by deep emotion, they climbed higher and higher, regardless of danger. Twice had the guide called out to them that the very beauty of the day, the sun obscured but not darkened, the softened air, were all favorable to a snowslide or avalanche.

“‘Full of life and vivacity, the young wife went on from one point to another, higher and higher; her lithe figure brought out against the sky, as occasionally she plunged her iron-pointed staff deep into the snow, and turned to admire the vast panorama at her feet. Her husband was making the ascent at a slower pace, looking up to admire the boldness of the little woman, and then playfully scolding her as she stood poised in mid-air so far above him. Aware of her danger, and fearing to startle her, the guide had ascended, and now stood with the husband on a little ledge quite underneath the cliff on which stood the fearless bride.

“‘A moment—there was a low, murmuring sound, as when the autumn leaves are swept by the evening breeze. The guide heard it, and his cheek paled. At the same time a voice was heard above.

“‘“What is that, Walter, it seems as though the mountain was moving?”

“‘“For heaven’s sake, jump! we will catch you,” shouted the guide.

“‘“Quick, Gertrude!” A gleam of white shot over them, and a piercing shriek mingled with one long resounding crash, and the glittering crystal was plunged into the valley below,



leaving nothing but bare jagged rocks and stunted shrubs, where all was smooth and white but a moment before. Months after, the bones of the fair English girl were buried here,' continued friar Le-Bon.



Page 19

“And her husband?’ I asked.

“They brought him here, and it was terrible to see his agony. When he grew stronger, we sent a novice with him to England; it would not do to trust him by himself.’

“You do not mean to say that his reason was gone?’ I asked.

“He was never rational after that morning,’ replied the friar; ‘muttering and moaning, and repeating the name of Gertrude constantly. Carl left him with his friends, and we have never heard if he recovered.’

“And the lady?’ asked pastor Ortler.

“On calm, still days, and just before an avalanche,’ said the kind friar, ‘her image is always seen standing upon the loftiest height, beckoning with her white taper fingers to some one below.’

“Entertained with so much hospitality, we were loath to leave the friendly hospice, only for the pastor’s anxiety to reach home. Down into the sweet valley of the Megringen, and northward by Grindenwald and Thun, and up the steep heights over which falls the white foam of Reichenbach; and farther on towards the crystal Rosenlani, and the tall, still Engel Horner, we came to a little village cradled in security beneath the towering hills; the church-spire glancing in the sunlight, and the simple cottagers jubilant in welcoming home their beloved pastor.

“At the door of the pastor’s home we were met by a sweet-browed woman with a lovely infant in her arms, crowing and laughing as the father kissed it over and over again; while a boy of ten and a girl of six summers, ran with open arms to greet him.

“You stayed so long, papa.’

“And we missed you so much,’ after the first greeting.

“This young friend was very ill; you would not have had me leave him?’

“Oh, no, papa, but’—when the little Griselda stopped suddenly, and threw a half-defiant glance at my face, and Thorwald stood measuring me with his great black eyes.

“Hardly recovered from my illness, I stayed with the good pastor Ortler through Christmas week, and a month afterwards. Never did I pass pleasanter days. The wife Rosalind was as kind as a sister, and her children grew soon to like me as an old friend. Very simple was their manner of life, while the air they breathed was fragrant with the love they bore to Him who made and redeemed them, and who had in his good providence, set them in a pleasant place.



“Christmas to them was not a week of jubilee alone. Busy hands decorated the little church, and visits were made to the poor and sick, and presents were given without the hope of reward. Sitting by the parlor fire at night, the pastor told of the parishioners he had seen, their wants and needs; while Rosalind knit stockings, and fashioned garments.

Page 20

“It would seem that one so well fitted for society would tire of this narrow bound,” I once said. With an eye brimming over with tenderness, the pastor replied: ‘There are souls to save here quite as precious as anywhere else.’ I felt humbled before his quiet glance. This was the work for him to do; this was the work he loved. What matter in what part of the vineyard? wherever there was a soul. But this mountain grandeur pleased him. These quiet solitudes led him upward. The glorious diadem of the hills was always urging him onward. Hard and self-denying as his life, he had ample recompense in daily, hourly communion with the Father through the majesty of his works.”

“I should like to live where I could see all this,” whispered Carry.

“The heart that loves, finds beauty and grandeur everywhere,” responded uncle Paul; “not only the mountain passes, but the valleys echo His praise, and there are few places so sterile but human lives abound.”

“Griselda and Thorwald, have you seen them since?” asked Carry.

“Ten years afterwards, I saw them. Griselda was a tall stately girl, with blue laughing eyes, and curls of pale brown, and Thorwald was a student at Geneva. Pastor Ortler was still the same, preaching to his little flock, and giving freely of his means, his wife only slightly older. Once more we wandered over the heights and in the valleys, the spots where I lingered years before, plucking a flower and drinking from the cold glacier water. Afterward, when it became necessary for me to return, good pastor Ortler and his wife went with me, and together we passed a winter in Milan.”

“And Griselda?” asked Carry.

“Oh, uncle Paul, Griselda was”—and Carry glanced up at the portrait of a young and beautiful woman hanging in a niche on the left-hand of the fireplace. Uncle Paul’s portrait occupied the other side. Silence brooded over them; while to Carry it seemed the lady in the picture looked as if with recognition in her eyes. How delicate, how aerial she seemed! yet real, and true. Was it any wonder uncle Paul was so good, having had the companionship of such a spirit so many years? And as she looked, the stately frame seemed to open, and the lady to come down from her place and seat herself on the other arm of uncle Paul’s chair, and to lay her head on his shoulder.

“To do good was her aim, Carry; may it be yours,” said uncle Paul, and the spell was broken.

A Sabbath In Lausanne.

After a long journey we arrived at the head of the lake of Geneva, by far the most interesting portion of this sheet of water. The mountains on the left of the valley are



extremely wild and majestic, and at their feet, close on the borders of the lake, is the little village where I had promised to spend the Sabbath with my old friend Wagner. The sun had gone down, but a rosy flush tinged the clouds and lingered about the tops of the mountains.

Page 21

The walk was not long to the parsonage, a low rambling cottage, with deep windows and overhanging roof, embowered in trees and fragrant with the breath of flowers. All this we took in at a look, and without any break in the talk, taking us back as it did to the day when we bade good-by to the college and its professors, and shook hands with each other for the last time. Looking into Wagner's face it did not seem so long ago; while I, floating round the world, had gathered experience enough to make me feel, if not look, something older. At the porch we were met by Maude, her slight girlish figure rounded into the perfection of womanhood, the rich bloom of her cheek not quite as deep perhaps; but the sweet blue eyes met mine with all the old frankness, the charming naivete that had rendered her so much a favorite when a child.

Sitting there in the lessening light it all came back; the old university at Basle, and above all, the old professor, Maude's father, whom we all loved.

"His place is well filled, and still we miss him," said Wagner.

There were tears in the young wife's eyes, and rising hastily she disappeared into the house. A few moments later she appeared, her face smiling and glad, a very sweet-faced babe clasped in her arms, another tugging at her gown. "Allow me to show my treasures," she said, as she seated herself beside me. Hours passed as hours will when friends have been separated for years. Then came a summons to tea; and after that Maude put up her jewels, and the pastor introduced me to his study. Summer though it was, a bright fire of sticks was burning on the hearth; bright, but not too bright to exclude the outside view. Slowly the purple curtain drooped over the mountains, falling lower and lower, until the small village, the tiled roofs, and the wooden spire were wrapped in a cloud of dusky haze.

"You have wondered why I content myself here, when a professorship was offered me at Basle," said Wagner at length. "It was a temptation, I allow; and when I thought of Maude and the social position from which I had taken her, I hesitated. She did not, however. 'These people love you, and your preaching is blessed to them. I am afraid if you leave, there will be no one else; and one soul saved outweighs all their professorships.' It was sweetly said, and I knew by the look on her face that her heart was in keeping with her words, and I answered her accordingly."

It was late, and the next day would be the Sabbath. Maude joined us, when a hymn was sung and a prayer offered, and we slept.

The sun was shining when I awoke, and opening my lattice I looked away to, the mountains, their white heads mellowed with a glory that inspired only thoughts of that God who made all things, and who holds them by the power of his might. There was a stir in the village, just enough to show the inhabitants were not sleeping away the precious hours. A cheerful, calm reigned, in keeping with the hallowed day; the

Page 22

very birds sang in a subdued and still triumphant tone, as if they knew 'twas holy time; while the dumb cattle, feeding on the road, cropped the brown grass noiselessly. Gliding down the broad stairway, I opened the study door. The pastor was there, and I saw by the open book, with the cushion before it still deeply indented, that he had been kneeling. He advanced with his usual good-humored smile, while his voice had the mellowed sweetness of one who had been on the mount speaking face to face with the King of kings.

"I question if the Sabbath is as beautiful in the larger towns," said the pastor, leading me to the deep window.

Below, the garden sloped away to a considerable distance, and the flowers still sparkling with the dewdrops lifted their heads timidly. "You see there is some compensation for our solitude; with less temptations to draw away our thoughts, we are privileged to go up through these temple gates from glory to glory. Did you ever see anything more grand and inspiring?" and he stepped out on to the balcony, and pointed me to a range of hills ascending gradually till the top seemed to reach the clouds.

"Here linger yet the showers of fire,
Deep in each fold, high on each spire
On yonder mountain proud."

Up the walk came Maude, leading by the hand the little Lotchen, the prattle of the child showing the lesson the mother had been attempting to teach. Beautiful such a Sabbath! and my heart felt refreshed as I stood upon the threshold and looked out into the new day.

"We used to work together in Basle," said the pastor as we seated ourselves at the breakfast-table, "suppose we make the effort to-day."

"That will depend upon the portion that falls to my share," I replied.

"Give him the pulpit, Heinrich," said Maude naively.

"I am not sure that I wish him to fill it," replied the pastor with a smile.

"I more than half wish I could," came to my lips unbidden, and I could hardly keep the tears as I thought of the few months it had been mine to labor in this manner, then of that fearful illness, the loss of voice, and the journey to regain health and strength to be spent in His service.



“You remember the old Bible class,” said Wagner; “I have one here, or rather two, for we meet twice a day, some finding it more convenient to come in the morning and others after service, so that my time is pretty well filled.”

“And you would give me one of the classes,” I said, as Maude filled my coffee cup the second time.

“This is what I propose to do.”

“And I accept most cheerfully.”

“We have but a little time; in an hour you will be ready,” and the pastor went to his study.

An hour afterwards the street was full of eager faces, all going to the house of God, quiet and calm, but still cheerful and happy, stopping to interchange greetings with each other, above all glad of a welcoming look and smile from the pastor. I soon saw wherein was the charm; sympathizing and kindly affectioned toward his people the pastor interested himself in the little history of each, neglecting no one, and especially attentive to the poor and feeble aged ones of his flock. All loved him as a pastor, and by reason of this he persuaded them the more easily.



Page 23

The church was a quaint structure, half gothic, and half of a nondescript architecture peculiar to itself. Leaving the vestibule we entered at once the main audience-room, large, and sufficiently commodious, but somewhat dark and gloomy. The pulpit was high, and looked like an upright octagonal vase perched on a square pedestal. This was unoccupied at present, the people taking their seats, and forming as I saw at once into two distinct classes. In a few words the pastor explained why it was thus, and then offering a prayer in which all joined he proceeded to give me one of the classes, while he began to question the others.

It was a novel group, the women in black skirts, with square boddices, surmounted by white kerchiefs, with long flowing sleeves of white. But the head had the strangest appearance. The more elderly women wore a black cap, from the edge of which depended a trimming rising perpendicularly from the cap from four to eight inches and gave to the head the appearance of wings. Strange as it at first seemed, I soon forgot all but their eager, animated attention. The theme was the love of God in giving his only Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Very evidently, it was no stranger of whom we were speaking. Not satisfied with a mere bearing of his name, they knew and loved him. His divine arm had been reached down to them. Charmed with his sweet countenance, and won by his gentle, loving words, "Come unto me," they came with the trust and confidence of little children, acknowledging their sin, but taking him at his word, "I, even I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions, for my own sake, and will not remember thy sins." It was sweet to talk of him, this Saviour, who had done so much for them; and before I was aware the tears were running down my own cheeks, and my words were broken and fragmentary. In the meantime other worshippers came in. The hour for this kind of instruction was over. The pastor availed himself of a moment's respite, and the next was seen ascending the pulpit stairs. Maude was seated among the singers, and the morning services commenced.

I had never heard my friend deliver a formal discourse, but I knew it mattered little to him whether his message was given to few or many—love for Christ, and earnestness to save souls was the all-absorbing passion of his heart. It was only a continuation of what he had been saying, the sweetly touching story of Christ's love told simply, and still with the earnest, truthful spirit of one who knew by blessed experience the reality of what he was saying. Standing in his place and holding up the cross, for the moment it seemed that we could see Him, the Divine Son, hanging, bleeding, dying that sinners like us might be redeemed, saved, reinstated. What love! What tenderness! Is it any wonder that we wept? Not a dry eye was in the house. Those hardy peasants, with little intellectual culture, had hearts to love, hearts that could understand and appreciate in some feeble manner the promise of pardon and peace through a crucified Redeemer.

Page 24

It was an hour well spent. Never have I felt nearer the divine presence, nor more of the joy, the rest that springs from intimate communion with the blessed Saviour. How strange the revulsion of feeling in a few moments of time. I had looked with a little of pleasantry upon the quaint figures and novel costumes of the worshippers; now, I saw only the earnest attitude, the anxious gaze, the loving look. Jesus was all in all, and their love for him beautified their faces.

As we went home many kindly words were interchanged, the pastor seeking out the elderly feeble ones, and Maude speaking with the mothers, and patting the heads of little children, while I found my way to a group of youths, to deepen if possible the impression of the morning.

After dinner there was a repetition of the Bible-class, though now they met at the pastor's house. As it was warm and pleasant we seated ourselves in the garden, dividing into three groups. This class was entirely different from the one of the morning, being made up of those, many of them mothers, who could not leave their children to go out earlier; and with some, this service was the principal one of the day. The attention was quite as good, and the manner the same. It was a pleasure to teach, and the sun was throwing his last red beams on the hillside as the last one left the garden. It had been a long day, but we felt repaid.

"You have had a glimpse of our family and of our work," said the pastor. "How do you like it?"

"Is this a specimen of all your Sabbaths?"

"Just the same, with the fluctuating difference of numbers; scattered as our people are, many of them living halfway up the mountains, they are not always able to be here."

"I agree with Maude that your service is needed here."

"I knew you would. There are souls to save here as well as in Basle, and sometimes I think the love of these simple hearts is sweeter to Jesus."

Far away the mountains were lifting their heads, bathed in the golden glory from the setting sun. Maude caught the direction of my eyes.

"Perhaps I fear to much the effect upon my own soul; but these grand temple-gates are always open, and from their entrance we seem to catch glimpses of the celestial city beyond, inspiring only good and noble thoughts, with an anxious, earnest endeavor to reach higher resting-places."

"And you fear this would be less in the noise and din of the city."



“Not quite that, for the heart that loves Jesus can live and work for him anywhere; but with a free choice I prefer this.”

I felt that she was right, it was the work God had given her to do, and she was willing to do it; while the question returned to me with tenfold force, Are you as willing to labor in the field that He has given to you? The man with a vineyard places his laborers as he would have them, giving each one according to his capacity, be it more or less. Our Father has a vineyard; it is the world, and his children are the laborers. “Go work in my vineyard,” is the command. The choice is His who placed us there; to work is ours.



Page 25

“Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo! I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.”

The next day I left Lausanne, the good pastor and his wife joining me for a few miles on my way, and then we parted—to meet, teacher and taught, in the city of our God.

The Guide Of Montanvert.

We were passing the summer at the Pays de Vaud; thence making excursions, as suited our inclination, to different portions of the country, always finding something new and striking—something out of which we could draw profitable lessons for the future.

On one of these occasions we made the ascent of Montanvert, and visited the Mer de Glace. Montanvert rises abruptly from the vale of Chamouni, and may not improperly be considered a portion of the base of Mont Blanc. It is beautifully wooded to its summit, whence its name of the Green Mountain.

As we were standing in the court of the inn discussing the merits of a guide, and anxious to find a trusty and intelligent person from whom we could learn all that was to be learned, as well as feel secure in his choice of the best paths, a boy and girl came up the hill, and speaking hurriedly to the landlord, advanced confidently to the place where we stood. Lifting his cap, while a shower of light soft curls fell over his coarse blouse, he asked if we were in search of a guide, and if we would take him. His manner was so respectful, and his face and appearance so youthful, we were attracted, and still did not know how to reply to him.

“I was thinking of Franz,” said the innkeeper; “you need not fear his youth; he was born here, and his father has always been considered one of the best guides in the country; Franz knows every path.”

“Let his father come with him,” I suggested. I thought I caught a tear in the boy’s eye, and his lips trembled.

“Father is old, and besides he is very ill to-day; if you will allow me I will serve you faithfully.”

There was something so frank and truthful, and his words were so well chosen and showed such cultivation, that even had I feared that he was unequal to the task I should have taken him.

At this moment his sister came out of the inn, the good woman following her with a bottle of wine.

“This is for your father, Annette; I hope he will be better to-morrow.”



“I am going,” I heard Franz whisper; and taking the wine-bottle, he left Annette to carry the smaller packages, and turned to us as if ready to set off.

“You are not to take Annette, are you?” I asked.

“We live halfway up the mountain, and shall pass near the house. We shall not need our poles till we reach that point.”

We did not over-exert ourselves at the outset, casting our eyes over the green valley, and then up the snowy mountains, sometimes exchanging a word with Franz, but oftener listening, as he talked in a low voice to Annette, of what she was to do during the day.



Page 26

“And if he dies, Franz!”

“God grant that he may not.”

We had now reached the little cottage, and, laying down her packages, Annette ran to a little shed and brought each of us a long pole furnished with a spike at the end, for which we found abundant use before we returned; she then brought a draught of clear, cold water, gushing out of a rock near by, and, bidding us “God speed,” entered the hut.

Franz was with us, but he had just stopped for a word with his father, and there was a moisture in his eye that came very near calling the tears to our own. We did not question him then, but going on, we paused occasionally to observe the ruin which had been wrought by many avalanches, while our ears mistook the sound of others for thunder. Trees uprooted, withered branches and blasted trunks were scattered in every direction, and sometimes a large space was completely cleared by one of these tremendous agents of destruction.

“You have seen the village of Chamouni,” said Franz; “it is said to have been built by a few peasants who escaped an avalanche that occurred on the opposite side of the Arve.”

The higher we ascended the more steep and difficult it became, and more than once did Franz have to turn and teach us how to use our poles, resting the weight of the body upon them, but still inclining the figure to the face of the mountain instead of the valley. Higher up we came to shoots or rivers of frozen snow; the inclination of the ice being extremely steep and the surface smooth, Franz crossed first, making marks with his pole for our feet. He then directed us to look neither above nor below us, but only to our feet, for should we fall nothing could save us from sliding down the ice and being dashed against the rocks or the stumps of trees beneath. Passing the first in safety, we found the next less formidable, while the danger was diminished in proportion to the experience we acquired.

Once over, Franz told us how his father was accustomed to descend the ice shoot; planting his heels firmly in the snow and placing his pole under his right arm and leaning the entire weight of his body upon it he came down with the swiftness of an arrow, his body almost in a sitting posture, his heels and the spiked end of his pole alone touching the ice and deeply indenting it.

“It happened,” said Franz, “that my father was showing a small company of travellers to the summit, when a sudden fancy seized one of them to make the descent in that way. My father expostulated, and told him that it required practice and skill, that but few of the guides would undertake it. He would not be deterred, feeling, as he said, sure that he could do anything performed by another. Seeing that he was determined, my father helped him to adjust his pole, and then shut his eyes.”



“And what then?” I asked, as Franz stopped and looked in the direction of the Mer de Glace.

“There was no help for him,” said Franz; “he was buried at the foot of the mountain.”

Page 27

Having reached the summit, the scene that burst upon us was sublime in the highest degree; immediately beneath was the Mer de Glace, a broad river of ice running nearly forty miles up into the Alps; to the north the green valley of Chamouni, to the south the gigantic barriers that separate Savoy from Piedmont, and around us inaccessible peaks and mountains of eternal snow, finely contrasting with the deep blue of the heavens; while the roar of cataracts and the thunder of avalanches were the only sounds that broke upon the profound stillness of the terrible solitude.

On the summit of the mountain we found an inn or hospice. We entered and warmed ourselves, neither did we refuse the black bread and glass of sour wine that were presently brought to us. As we sat by the fire a small table was brought near us, and on it lay the album in which we were expected to enter our names. Many notable autographs we found here, and despite the gladness we felt in adding ours to the number, there was still a sad, desolate thought: those most distinguished had all passed away. The mountains remained, their glory undiminished; but the human beings climbing their heights, and exulting in the grandeur of heaven and earth, had vanished like the mist wreath. Years would pass and other feet would cross the slippery fields, other eyes look out upon the work of God's hands, other names be traced, and we, like the throng before us, be gone—no longer to look upon the created, but the Creator.

As soon as we were sufficiently rested, Franz summoned us to the Sea of Ice, and we began to descend the steep and rugged face of the mountain. As we approached the surface of the glacier, these inequalities rose into considerable elevations, intermingled with half-formed pyramids, bending walls and shapeless masses of ice; with blocks of granite and frightful chasms at once savage and fantastic. It puzzled me to know why it should have been called a sea, a rough and stony one at that; but to me it looked like a river, walled in by two enormous mountains, rising to the height of ten thousand feet, and forming a ravine a mile and a half wide, that pursues a straight course for several miles and divides at the upper end into two glens, like deep gashes, that run up to the highest elevation of the Alps, terminating at the lower extremity in an icy precipice of two thousand feet, whose base is in a still deeper valley. It was as if there had been innumerable torrents dashing down the precipice into the valley—arrested by a mighty hurricane as they hurried along, and wrought into the wildest forms by the fury of the tempest, and then suddenly congealed, leaving a sea or river of ice, framed in with lofty peaks and snowy summits, cataracts and avalanches, clouds and storms, a wonderful combination of the grand, the terrible, and the sublime.



Page 28

Franz understood his business of guide too well to let me loiter as I wished. "These fissures are the chief danger," he said; and, holding out his small hand, he grasped mine with the tenacity of one not accustomed to let anything slip through his fingers. A girdle of imperfectly frozen snow borders this sea; and Franz never planted his feet till he had first ascertained the nature of the surface with his pole. Some of these fissures are of an amazing depth, and, taking out my watch, I tried to fathom one of them by dropping large fragments of granite; and calculating by the time that elapsed before reaching the bottom, we judged it to be over five hundred feet.

Franz had hurried us; now, he stopped, and bade us look above us. We did so, and were amply repaid for all our toil. To try to describe it would be in vain; and still the distinct outline is indelibly impressed upon my mind, and I am confident will never be effaced. We were standing in the midst of the rough waves and yawning abysses of this frozen sea; while almost perpendicularly from its brink the mountains rose, clothed with scanty herbage, and adorned with the tiny crimson blossoms of the rhododendron that bloomed upon their sides.

As the eye looked up the valley, every trace of vegetation died away; and the snowy mountains appeared to meet and mingle with each other.

We left the glacier, and ascending again to the hospice of Montanvert, I sat down by the side of Franz upon a block of granite, and looked again upon a scene the equal of which I never expect to see again. There was a far away look in Franz's eyes. Was he thinking of the little cottage far up the mountain, and of Annette watching by the bedside of his sick father? Perhaps so; in any case I was glad that we had taken him. His could not be an everyday story, there must be some particular motive why he should want so earnestly to come. I would not question him then; but I determined to stop at the little cottage and learn for myself.

With all the untold glory above and beneath me, I felt oppressed with the littleness, as well as the greatness of my nature. How insignificant I appeared amid these gigantic forms; and still I exulted in the consciousness that "My Father made them all, that Father with whom I could commune, and whose Son I was privileged to love."

"And this God is our God," I was constrained to say aloud. Franz turned his speaking eye upon me.

"If it was not for this, how could we endure it?" he said, while there was a grave, calm look on his face, so little to be expected in a guide.

"How could we endure this grandeur, or our own littleness?" I asked.

“To know that God rules, giving each his place, to the mountains theirs, and to us ours. Insignificant we may be, and still we are each of us of more value than all the mountains in the universe. Jesus created mountains; but he died for us.”



Page 29

“Where did you learn this, Franz?”

“From the Bible, sir.”

I saw it all; the Bible was the textbook he had studied. It was this which had given him that rare expression of face, and the words so far above the condition of life indicated by the little hamlet where he lived.

There was no more time, for the sun was going down, and we must go with it; and rising, we began to make the descent.

The moon was full orbed before we reached the cottage. I was weary beyond the power of utterance.

“If you would prefer to stop here, we can give you a comfortable bed,” said Franz, “and Annette will have something to eat. I told her that there was a possibility that you would like to remain.”

It was the very thing I wanted, and placing my pole by the side of Franz’s in the little shed from which Annette had brought it in the morning, I entered the cottage.

All was still and quiet. It seemed Annette had not heard us; for as the door was opened, she rose from the bedside, where she had been kneeling, and springing lightly to Franz hid her little tear-wet face in his bosom. She did not perceive me, and for a moment there was nothing to be heard but the heavy breathing of the sick man.

“How has he been, Annette?” and Franz unclasped his sister’s arm.

“He did not say much till the sun was nearly down, then he began to ask for you, and at last I read him to sleep.”

“Can you give us something to eat, Annette? you see I have brought the stranger with me.”

She turned with such an air of modesty, dropping a courtesy so very humbly, and yet with a blending of maidenly dignity, that I felt instinctively to bow to the womanhood before me, quaint and picturesque as it was in its black dress, white sleeves, and wooden-heeled shoes.

Giving one glance at the sleeper, Annette slipped out at a side-door; while Franz rising from his straight-backed chair, and dropping on his knees beside the bed, pressed his lips to the furrowed brow. The action seemed to recall the sick man, his breathing was not so heavy and his eyes partly opened.



“Father, you are not sleeping easily; let me turn you on your pillow.” The voice was low and tender, and the action gentle as a woman’s. “Franz!” and the withered hand stroked his light curls. “Franz!” there was nothing more; but oh, what a world of love, of restored confidence! the stiffening tongue lingered fondly on each letter.

The room was large, and there was a general air of neatness; but there was a lack of comforts such as we are accustomed to see at home. There was no lamp in the room; only on the hearth a pine-knot nearly spent, sending out now a bright light, then wavering, bringing out shadows on the wall, and permitting us to catch glimpses of the outdoor radiance, the silvery effulgence of the rocks and hills.

The sick man slept, and now his breathing was as sweet as an infant’s. I rose to look at him, his bronzed face bleached to a deathly pallor, his high brow seamed with furrows, and his hair like a network of silver falling over the coarse white pillow.



Page 30

“Has he been long ill?” I asked.

“It is about three months now,” and Franz drew up a little stand, and lifted the Bible that had been lying open on the bed to the table.

“Annette spoke of reading him to sleep; was this the book?” I questioned.

“Father has come to like this since he was sick; he don’t care for any other.”

“Then he has not always liked it?”

“No, sir.”

“May I know, Franz, when you first learned to love this book?”

He looked up with such a shy, timid look, and still with the same frankness that had characterized him during the day. Just then Annette entered, whispered to Franz, and both went out. In a moment Franz returned.

“Annette was afraid it would not do; it is the best we have, and I know you must be hungry.”

White bread, and strawberries, and goat’s milk; while the bottle of sour wine I had seen in the morning graced the table. I had not expected such a tempting meal, and I was hungry, as Franz said. Taking his seat Franz raised his eyes to mine. There was no mistaking its upward, grateful glance. Bowing our heads, we asked a blessing, and then picking up the broken thread, Franz went on to tell me of himself.

Franz’s Story.

“It is nearly four years since an English gentleman and his daughter visited Chamouni, and my father was their guide. Mr. Wyndham was a gentleman of refined manners; a Christian man, loving God, and speaking of that love with the earnestness of one who wishes others to love Him also. His daughter Alice, a frail, gentle girl, was one of those beings that seem lent, not given; the last of a large family, and herself not strong. Her father brought her to Lausanne, hoping that pure air and change of scene would restore and invigorate her. I hardly know why, but certain it is that my father was never so much interested in travellers before; while from the first it seemed to me that I could never do enough for the gentle girl, who never failed to inspire me with the love of something beyond what I knew. It was not a tangible idea, and when I tried to reach it I could not. Often in going up the mountain we would stop and rest on some shelf of the rock, while Alice would take her Bible from her pocket, and read the beautiful descriptions of the majesty and glory of the mountain heights, their grandeur and splendor, and then of the great God, creator and ruler of the universe, and kneeling in the cleft of the rock, she would commit herself to him with such a sweet, childlike confidence, I used to weep



without knowing what I was weeping for, wishing and longing that I could understand for myself. Whenever she read, and especially when she prayed, my father would listen attentively, taking care when we went home to say nothing about it.

[Illustration]



Page 31

“I remember one day we had been to ‘Le Jardin,’ a little spot of green at the foot of the grand Jarasse, framed in with eternal snows, but itself covered with Alpine plants and flowers, and yielding herbage sufficient to tempt the herdsmen to drive their cattle across the Mer de Glace. Her father and mine had gone a little out of the path, leaving me in charge and Alice to rest. Seeing some bright flowers of a peculiar species I stopped to gather them, and when I returned Alice was reading. It was not of Christ’s power, glory and majesty, but of his love, the tenderness he felt for us, of his life, and last of all, of his death. I had never heard the story before, and it took entire possession of my spirit. Going down the mountain I was continually asking myself, ‘What shall I render to him for all he has suffered on my account? and what for the blessings he has given me?’ Thinking of his buffetings, scoffs and scourging, I could hardly keep the tears. My father observing this, and supposing that I was weary or had hurt myself, was kinder than usual; but when I told him of the little book and what Alice had told me of the love of Jesus, he grew angry and said that the next time they needed a guide I should stay at home. ‘I have listened once or twice,’ he said, ‘because my living depends upon my politeness to strangers; but when it comes to turning the heads of my children it is quite another thing.’

“A few weeks after this Mr. Wyndham left Chamouni for Lausanne.

“‘We shall miss you,’ said Alice; for my father let me go to bid them good-by; ‘and that you may have something to remember me by, I am going to give you this little Bible. You will see that I have marked the passages I want you to study; and you must try to read it every day.’

“It was the very thing that I had wanted, but I could hardly tell her so. Tears were running over my face, and I had barely time to slip the little book into my pocket when my father came up. After that I was happier. I could read for myself, and it was sweet to know that God cared for me. Many a pleasant hour did I enjoy in the mountain passes, and in telling Annette of the treasure I had found in the Bible.

“My father may have suspected this. I hardly know; but one day the priest came to talk to me upbraiding me not a little with reading a book that could do me no good, and demanding that I should give it to him. This I refused to do. He appealed to my father; invectives and blows followed, and at last my father told me that I should either give up the book or never see him or Annette any more. It was a struggle, and I came near giving it up.

“When Annette suggested that I should go to Lausanne and see Mr. Wyndham and Alice, I had not thought that I could do this, and without delay started. I was received very kindly by Mr. Wyndham. Alice had grown very weak; could not walk, and seldom could ride. I can not tell you how the days passed, neither of the exertion she made to teach me out of my little book. Then came a day when her voice was still, and the next the sweet face was hidden from my sight for ever.



Page 32

“Soon after this Mr. Wyndham left for England, but before he left he had a long talk with me, and of my plans and hopes for the future. The result was that I was placed in school, of which there are several, in Lausanne, and began to study with reference to being myself a teacher of his blessed word. My little Bible I sent to Annette; but my father would not let me come home. For the last year he has been failing; three months since he took to his bed, and then Annette prevailed upon him to let me come and wait upon him. I found him greatly changed. From the first he let me read the Book, as he calls it, and of late I feel that he loves Jesus, and trusts him for the future. Living upon his labor, it troubles him that he can do nothing; and this was why I was so anxious to go with you yesterday; he likes to think of me as a guide.”

“And I trust you will be a guide,” I said, as we left the table and entered the sick-room, “a guide to lead souls to Christ. What a blessed privilege!”

“If I can only do it,” and his eyes were full of a holy light.

Annette sat by the bedside; the face of the sick man was as pale as marble, and but for the gentle breathing, we should have thought him already departed. Franz put on a fresh knot, and the red flame sent a rosy tinge over the apartment. Sitting before the fire we watched him as he slept, knowing, feeling that it could not be long. Then a chapter was read, and a prayer went up for strength and guidance.

Franz would not let me watch with him; and leading me into a small room with a clean but somewhat hard bed, left me to myself. Weary as I was, I could not sleep. The glory of the day; the sad, sweet history just related; the sick man, with the messenger waiting at the humble door, thrilled me with a feeling that would not rest. Opening my window, I enjoyed the stillness, the solitude, and the grandeur of the scene: the glittering dome of Mont Blanc, and all the surrounding and inferior domes and spires and pyramids that cluster in this wondrous region, which fancy might conceive the edifices of some great city, or the towers and dome of some vast minster. Far above the mountain-tops the moon was shining; while her retinue of stars, seen through the cool crisp air, seemed larger and more beautiful than I had ever before seen them.

It would be impossible to detail all the thoughts that passed, and the emotions that were excited in my mind. Every object around, beneath, above me seemed in silent but impressive eloquence to celebrate God's praise; from the moon that led the starry train, from the patriarch of his kindred hills and nearest to the heavenly sanctuary, down to the frozen glaciers and the roaring torrents of the lower valleys, all seemed endowed with a peculiar language—a voice to touch the heart of man, and to enter into the ear of God.

At length sleep overpowered me, and when I awoke the sun was shining. Stepping into the outer room I was met by Franz, looking as fresh as though sleep had not been denied him. Leading me to the bedside, he spoke a few words to his father, while the

trembling hand met mine, weak and worn. I saw that his course was nearly run; but there was a light in his eye that spoke of peace. Words were of little use.



Page 33

After breakfast, which Annette insisted that I should take, I walked down to the inn, and there learned more of Franz than he had been willing to tell me. Not only had he been the means of leading his father to the Saviour, but it was his habit to gather the people together and read to them out of his Bible, telling them of Jesus and of his pure and spotless life, then of his agony and death, picturing his love and his infinite tenderness.

I was not restricted to a set number of days, and for three days I vibrated between the inn and the small cottage on the mountain. On the fourth it was over; the messenger had done his bidding. Franz and Annette were not the only mourners, not a villager but joined them; and when they turned from the grave to the silence of their humble room, I went with them.

Not many days after that the door of the cottage was shut; and when I sailed for my western home, Franz Muller was prosecuting his studies at Basle.

“He is to be a minister,” said Annette, as she followed me to the door, “and he says that wherever his work is, I may share it with him.”

Her face was lit up with a smile almost as bright as I had seen on Franz’s face. Surely the angels know nothing of the rapture of such a work.

Mont Blanc.

After making the ascent of Montanvert, and learning something of the wonders of the Mer de Glace, we again sallied forth upon a tour of discovery in the immediate neighborhood of La Prieure.

With Mont Blanc before me and hardly conscious that I was alone, I pursued my walk, continuing to ascend till my path was obstructed by a mass of fallen snow. Fascinated with the idea of a better view, I determined to find a way around it, I climbed higher and higher, now stopping to admire the interior domes and spires and pyramids that cluster in this wondrous region, then fancying myself in a vast cathedral more grand and magnificent than I had ever before seen. The summit of Mont Blanc seemed to have greatly increased since I began to ascend, and this, and not looking behind me, rendered me wholly unconscious of the progress I made.

At length, from the slippery condition of the path and the frequent use that I was obliged to make of the pole with which I had been furnished, I became conscious that I had advanced far beyond what I had at first purposed. Looking back, I could see nothing of the valley; night was coming on, and the winds sweeping over the snowy heights made me shiver; at the same time they threatened to hurl me over the precipice. Go on I could not; to retrace my steps seemed equally impossible; planting my pole with its long spike deep in the ice, I attempted to keep my footing. Sending my eyes in every direction, and hoping that the guides had missed me and followed in the track, I



perceived an immense mass of ice, one of the very turrets that I had so greatly admired, trembling and just ready to fall. Before I had time to think, it slipped and fell with a thundering sound, rolling and dashing like a huge cataract of liquid silver, glittering in the sunbeams, and spent itself on the surface below over which it spread. Its roar, like that of thunder, reverberated from peak to peak, and many seconds elapsed before it completely died away.



Page 34

My situation was perilous. Of the extent of the glacier I could not determine. In following after me, my companions might have been buried underneath its fall; or the guides might think that there was no possibility of my escape, and thus give up the attempt to rescue me. All this and more passed through my mind. What if I should never reach my home, should never look into the faces of those I love! One quiet look upward, and peace filled my heart. God was above me, and around me; this terrible solitude spoke of his majesty, his might, his power. These mountains were in my Redeemer's hands. His eye was upon me, and I was safe.

The sun fell behind the western mountains, but his splendors deepening as they died away, were succeeded by the softer beams of the moon that rose full orb'd above the lofty horizon. At first their mild effulgence was only seen on the hoary head of the monarch of the Alps: but as I gazed, summit after summit caught the silvery lustre, till all above and below me was enveloped in the same glorious light.

Chateaubriand says that mountain elevations are no place for contemplation; and certainly, surrounded by great dangers, it may seem incredible that I indulged in it. Still, I cannot but attribute my safety to this very state of mind—looking away from myself, holding fast to my pike-staff, and rising spontaneously to the adoration of that Being who commanded these mighty masses to take their form and place. Every object seemed in silent but impressive eloquence to celebrate His praise. The moon, with her attendant stars, the spotless dome of Mont Blanc, the glittering glaciers and the roaring torrents all seemed endowed with a voice to touch the heart of man, and to assure him of a hearing from God.

The moon was rising higher: forced to keep one position, I was growing stiff and weary, the wind chilled me, and there were ringing noises in my ears: the enthusiasm that had sustained me grew less. Would they ever find me? Glancing downward, I tried to discover lights. In listening I grew numb, the mountains began to reel around me, the moon and the stars danced before me, my senses began to wander. Should I attempt to go forward? Would it not be better to throw myself down? Once more I looked over the precipice, and just then a horn rang out far below; then a voice apparently nearer. I tried to answer, but no sound came; I tried to move, but was fast. The next I remember, a guide was rubbing my breast with his rough hands; while another forced open my mouth and poured something from a flask. How we got down, I never knew. But the next day as Dr. Kemper told me of the excitement of the guides as soon as my absence became known to them, and the fall of the glacier, of the fear that I was buried beneath it, and of my state when found, I could only adore still more His goodness that had preserved me, while a still firmer purpose thrilled my being to live for Him.



Page 35

A prisoner in my room, Dr. Kemper told me the manner in which Saussure made the ascent. A party of guides going up from Chamouni, one of them by some means was far ahead of the others, when suddenly darkness enveloped him. Cut off from his companions, he was obliged to pass the night at the immense elevation of twelve thousand feet above the level of the sea. Chilled, but not overcome, he had strength sufficient in the morning to reconnoitre, and thereby found an access to the mountain-top comparatively easy. On reaching Chamouni, he was seized with severe illness, and in return for the kind care of his physician, he told the doctor of the path he had discovered, and that if he felt a desire to be the first man to stand upon the summit of Mont Blanc, he would lead him to it. The doctor readily accepted, and on the seventh of August, 1786, they began the ascent. Twice the physician, overcome by fatigue and cold, turned his back upon the goal; but the guide, more accustomed to hardships, urged him on, and at length he was privileged to set his foot upon the loftiest elevation in Europe, a triumph never before enjoyed by man.

From Berne To Basle.

Before leaving Lausanne I received an invitation from a friend in the university at Basle to visit that city. To do this, we had to pass Berne. The approach to this place is very pleasing: the country is beautifully undulating, and in the highest state of cultivation. The neighborhood indicated by its noise and bustle that we were approaching a capital, and as we entered the city we found the streets crowded with people in their gayest attire, and filled with corn and cattle, and almost every article of commerce, it being market day. It is a magnificent city. The houses are all built of stone, with arcades in the principal streets, and rows of well-furnished shops. Fountains are numerous, and streams of water flow through the centre of the spacious streets, in deep and broad channels cut for their reception. The city had a very gay appearance. The costume, the expression, the language—all were new. I was greatly interested in my excursions round the walls. The cathedral is a magnificent pile of gothic architecture, occupying a bold elevation above the Aar. We found here a remarkably fine organ, of great size, stretching across nearly the whole breadth of the church.

Climbing up to the loft, we were told the story of a former organist, a famous musician, somewhat independent, and yet sensitive and quick to feel. Under the papal power Louis Steinway incurred the displeasure of one of the dignitaries of the church, and his position as organist was taken from him. Overcome with sorrow he at once proceeded to the house of the bishop to make an explanation. Trembling with excitement he so poorly explained the misunderstanding, as to give the prelate even a worse idea of it than he had at first: the consequence was that hard words were added to the burden already laid upon him.



Page 36

The poor organist went home and was immediately taken down with severe illness, and a few days afterward eluded his attendants and flew along the streets to the cathedral, from which the people soon heard tones of the organ issuing majestic and ravishing but unspeakably sad. As soon as the wife knew of her husband's absence, she went to the cathedral. Her husband was in his old place, his hands upon the keys, as if in the act of playing, his head bent forward and drooping. He was dead!

From Berne the road climbs a hill immediately on leaving the gates of the city, and passes between rows of trees, with a gentle slope on either hand, covered with a soft fresh green and smooth as the finest lawn. The glimpses of the city through the trees, with the windings of the Aar, were extremely interesting. But a far nobler scene was unfolded to the south, where an immense chain of Alps appeared like the boundaries of some new world, to which their fearful precipices, glittering peaks, and summits of untrodden snow for ever barred the approach of man. The purity of the atmosphere gave them peculiar distinctness of outline, while the beams of the setting sun gilded their lofty brightness, that seemed to have more of heaven in it than earth. Oh! if natural scenes can appear so lovely, what must that purity and lustre be of which they are only the shadowy emblems?

We slept, and set out again at an early hour. Our route lay through the finest portion of Switzerland. The land is chiefly pasturage, and the meadows are extremely rich. Traversing a rocky pass, we came to the castle of Kluss. Issuing from the pass we entered a smiling valley, the hills gently rising to the right, clothed with forests of fir; while on the left, rocks towered to an amazing altitude. On the summit of what seemed to be an inaccessible crag, perched the ruins of Falkenstein, and a few miles on, those of Wallenberg.

Soon after stopping to lunch, we came in sight of the Rhine, with the dark woods of the Black Forest forming a background, and also the frontier of the Austrian territory. Weary and still delighted with the day, I was glad to hear the guides exclaim that Basle was before us. The Rhine divides the city into two parts. Crossing the bridge, we proceeded at once to the University. Bonnevard was there, and in the society of my friend I forgot for the time every other consideration.

It was two weeks before I left, and in that time I had learned many things, attending lectures with my friend, and enjoying the society of some of the most illustrious names in literature and science.



Page 37

After the lectures, Bonnevard was to go to Fribourg; and it was with a view to accompanying him that I remained in Basle. Passing over the bridge and through the little city, we left the canton, and entered Germany by the territories of the grand duke of Baden. The Rhine was on our left, the Black Forest, covering a series of rugged hills, at some distance on our right; and we found a rich and beautiful landscape at every step. Climbing the brow of a hill about twelve miles from Basle, we obtained a charming view of the windings of the river—the broad valley through which it passes, the dark undulations of the forest, the towers and spires of the distant city, and the long line of Alps in the background, rising in inexpressible grandeur and glittering in the beams of the morning sun.

This was our last of the Rhine; our road taking the direction of the Black Forest, and skirting it all the way to Fribourg. On the way, Bonnevard gave me many sketches of real life, one of which, from having seen the person in Basle, interested me deeply. The Black Forest was formerly, and is now at certain seasons, greatly infested by wolves. It so happened that a government officer, passing to Vienna, was pursued by a ravenous pack of these animals; the postilion spurred his horses until they began to flag, and the wolves were gaining upon them. The officer feeling assured that all was lost, was about giving himself up to be devoured, when a woodcutter and his son emerged from the forest, armed only with knives or short daggers. The hungry pack were diverted, and in the struggle that followed, the postilion whipped up his horses and escaped. On reaching Vienna, the officer sent back to see what had been the fate of the woodcutter. A desperate battle had been fought; the father killed five of the largest wolves, and then, seeing that escape was impossible, implored the boy to fly, saving the life of his son by the sacrifice of his own. In admiration for this deed, the people placed the family of the woodcutter beyond want; and the lad showing a rare aptitude to learn, and expressing only a wish to study, was sent to Basle, where he soon distinguished himself as a scholar, and bids fair to become a man of mark.

Fribourg is a fine old town, famous for its minster, and its university. The minster is of gothic architecture, magnificently carved, and of fine proportions. It is after the model of that at Strasbourg, and is said to be one of the finest edifices in Germany.

Early in the morning, we took occasion to visit the cathedral. The gates were open, and early as we considered it, many were kneeling before the different altars. The interior of the church is grand and magnificent, and abounds with sculptures and paintings of the most costly description. In a small chapel in one of the aisles of the church, we found an ordinary table covered with white linen, with images of the Saviour and the twelve apostles seated around it, figures of marble, as large as life. The expression of each face is admirably given, especially those of John, who leans upon Jesus' bosom, and of Judas, seated the last in the group, and grasping the bag in his hand. It was so real and lifelike, that I could with difficulty understand that the genius of man had fashioned it out of cold and senseless stone.

Page 38

From the cathedral we visited the library. It is a rare and valuable collection, and belongs to the university. Here Bonnevard met with many of his associates, and soon after we parted from him, with regret. How pleasant it is to meet and talk with those we love; but the parting makes it sweet to think of that world where there will be no need of adieus.