

generally granitic, while the outlying hills are for the most part composed of ancient stratified rocks, tossed up into all sorts of inclinations. The most careless visitor observes the bed form of many of the mountain masses, the strange contortions to which strata have in some places been subjected, like the foldings of an ill-put-up piece of cloth in a draper's warehouse, and that we owe many of the prominent peaks to the hardness of some of the vertical strata, while neighbouring beds have been wearing down under the influence of the weather, and from other causes. There are, however, formations connected with the Alps, as high as the chalk and even the tertiary, and thus it has been ascertained that they are comparatively young hills—*younger than the Pyrenees, younger than the Scottish hills, and even the Mendips*—having necessarily been thrown up into their present arrangement subsequently to the deposition of those modern rocks. I somewhat startled a party of ladies and gentlemen in an Interlaken pension, by one evening quietly mentioning this deduction of M. Elie de Beaumont, which may certainly be regarded as one of the most interesting results of scientific investigation developed in our time. It was with no wish to exaggerate the very natural wonder of our table, but in the hope of kindling a love of or reverence for science, that I proceeded to advert to the fact, that all these strata had originally been detrital matter deposited at the bottom of the sea; that, as proof of this, my friend might find the shells of sea animals (nummulites) on the top of Mount Pilatus; and it might be said of several of those overpowering hills themselves that they had been built up to the praise of the Creator of heaven and earth by the immediate agency of animalcules, limestone being regarded as a detritus from coral reefs. It is surely as well to know a few such particulars when one goes to see grand sights; for while it would doubtless be pedantic to analyse the Alps geologically at every step, there is no necessary incompatibility between a sense of their picturesque effects and the apprehension of a history of their formation, which is even more of a marvel than their astounding magnificence.

The Alps spring from a general level of country, which is far from low on the side of Switzerland; at least it is generally very much above the elevation of any inhabited ground in Scotland, Wales, or any other part of the British Islands. Coming from a land where 800 feet gives an ungenial climate even in valleys, we are somewhat surprised to find Swiss villages looking sufficiently comfortable at 2500 feet, and even more. A great part of the surface, however, ranges between 1200 and 1500 feet, and here the vine grows with tolerable luxuriance in the less-exposed situations. The vast abundance of wood and water throughout the whole country—the former extending up the hills to 6000 feet—the profusion of quaintly-fashioned wooden houses scattered everywhere almost as high as the trees; the exquisite economy of the people, giving to the whole landscape a trimness which reminds one of gentlemen's parks in England—these things, even without the gleaming broad-bosomed lakes, or the peaks shooting up amongst the everlasting snows, would make Switzerland a delightful country for a rambler. Everybody, however, travels with some leading idea in his mind respecting the country which he visits. Mine in Switzerland was—the glaciers. I had pored over Saussure's speculations on this subject in a family copy of the Encyclopædia Britannica, with which I formed acquaintance in early boyhood; and since then, the more surprising speculation of Agassiz, and the accurate deductions of Professor Forbes, had deepened my interest in the subject. It therefore appeared an essential part of my visit to Switzerland that I should form some sort of personal acquaintance with the 'ice-falls' of the Alps.

It was early on one of the sunshiny days of the beginning of September that our party left their excellent quarters in the Hotel Berg at Geneva, and proceeded in the Sallenches diligence along the valley of the Arve on their way to the neighbourhood of Mont Blanc. The road, after leaving the skirts of the lake, passes over an elevated alluvial plain, bordered by ranges of low hills, and intersected by a deep though narrow valley, in which runs the river. Here comes the first intimation of the snow of the Alps, for, the water being so strangely milky or turbid as to provoke inquiry, the stranger is informed that it is so from the infusion of pounded rock which the glaciers wear of the hills in their descent. The first few miles present no other wonder, besides the massive alluvial terraces bordering the river, along which the road proceeds. It seems difficult to conceive, yet it is unquestionably true, that these are composed of gravel brought down from the Alps, and which water has been concerned in depositing; the intermediate space having once been filled up, so as to make the whole one floor of small matters extending from side to side of the valley. At a place called Cluses these features are no more seen, at least in the same degree; and we then begin to traverse a narrow part of the valley, with sides of prodigious height and boldness; also to get peeps of the monarch of European mountains, though it is still a good way distant. After thirty-six miles of the coach, we have to transfer ourselves, at the small town of Sallenches, into a light rude vehicle called a *char-a-banc*, fitted for the more arduous character of the fifteen miles which remain. This portion of the journey is along a narrow road of no exemplary sort of construction, over which we are understood to be driven by the most civil and good-natured of

charioteers; while in reality every one possessing any benevolence, and the use of his limbs, feels forced to walk; the ascents being such as almost to defy horsepower. It was not till evening was closing in that we began to get under the shade of Mont Blanc and his associates, and approached the end of our journey at Chamouni. I never shall forget how I was impressed, a few miles short of this point, by seeing a vast whitish projection from one side of the valley, and learning that it was the *Glacier des Boissons*, one of the outlets of the great snow-field which covers the mountain. The intrusive character of these stupendous ice-rivers was thus strikingly seen. It descends through a long hollow in the side of the mountain, far below the line of perpetual snow, through the midst of woods and verdant slopes, and starts a mile or more into the valley, where smiling farmsteads and villages sit securely by its side, as knowing that thus far it may come, but no farther.

The village of Chamouni, into which we drove after dark, is a curious establishment, as we may call it, being a place existing almost solely at the dictation of human curiosity, and composed exclusively of inns, guides' naturalists, and others making a business and a livelihood of Mont Blanc. Lying 3425 feet above the sea, inaccessible to the sun's rays for some months of the year, and enveloped in snow from October till May, it must be at some cost that the people adhere to it as a residence. The hotel-keepers actually desert the place in winter, having no customers to speak of, except in the months between June and an early period of autumn. Yet these hotels are at once very good, and far from extravagant in their charges; and while all are tolerably neat buildings, there is a new one preparing which would be styled handsome in any part of the world. It is curious to observe the groups of guides and other loungers in the street, and to hear their conversation wholly turned upon the amount, character, and appearance of the visitors; who in this inn, who has just come to that; the prospects of the weather for the ensuing day with reference to its suitableness or unsuitableness for excursions; nothing thought of but what appertains to travellers and their enjoyments. There is no struggle, however, to appropriate business among the strangers; for a public officer sees that each man, and even each mule, gets employment in strict rotation, and according to a fixed scale of charges. Of this I had an amusing proof next day when setting out for the mountain; for having determined, ere a quarter of a mile from the village, to give up my mule, and take to my feet, while my lady companion should ride, and our guide having taken back the animal accordingly, we soon after saw him returning with the same animal, together with a companion; he having now been reminded that this horse was the one next in rotation for employment. He had therefore to shift the lady's saddle to the horse which I had formerly ridden, and to send back her horse with his companion, to whom it probably belonged. They might adopt such regulations with advantage at Killarney, and some other place at home and abroad.

It was the first night after that of full moon, and the sky was without a cloud. Having rested a little while, and obtained some refreshment, we stepped out upon a balcony overhanging the garden of our hotel, (Hotel de Londres), and there found a scene of mystic sublimity prepared for us. Near one of the upper peaks of Mont Blanc—I think the *Dome du Goute*—the luminary was perched, throwing a bright light upon those lofty summits, and upon much of the more distant landscape. But the mountain face opposite to our position was a wall of darkness, which it almost appeared we might stumble against if we should advance much farther towards it—and so overwhelmingly lofty! This, assuredly, if so commonplace an expression may be tolerated, was a sight never to be forgotten. On the ensuing evening we had it repeated with little variation, besides one which gave a curious change of effect; namely, a fire lighted by some shepherd, which blazed faint and remote on the front of the wall of blackness, much like a fire balloon on the face of a dark cloud. It was difficult to suppose that this fire was not less than 3000 feet above us, and perhaps three miles distant.

At an early hour next morning I set out with one of the ladies in my charge, and a guide, to ascend to a point on Mont Blanc well known as the *Montanvert*, which is deemed a favourable spot for examining the celebrated glacier of the *Mer de Glance*. The lady, as already hinted, rode a mule, while I determined to walk. The sun was coming to his strength as we crossed the infant Arve, and commenced the ascent of the first slopes, which we found covered by little farms, and bearing much wood. A rough path, zig-zagging up the steep acclivity, ascends very nearly 3000 feet, and to master this ascent requires between two and three hours. To me it was a great exertion: to my lady friend the mule ride was something more, as every now and then the animal was passing along rude cliffs, where a false step might have endangered life. We bore it, however, with exemplary fortitude. And here, by the way, I may mention that our guide—a worthy, kindhearted fellow, Pierre Cachat by name—described the English ladies as by far the most courageous and energetic he had anything to do with in his profession; the French the least so. It was near mid-day when we reached a rude small house of stone and lime, the auberge of *Montanvert*. Gladly did we enter to rest and obtain some refreshment in its humble salle, where

already a few pedestrian excursionists had assembled. This post derives its whole importance from the spectacle on which we look down from its windows, the magnificent *Mer de Glance*. It afforded a convenient lodging to Mr. Forbes during his laborious investigations on that glacier in 1842; and the tenant, David Couttet, points out with pride a flattering attestation in favour of the house and himself inscribed by the learned professor in his album. Certainly nothing could be more homely than the whole place, and yet one can readily imagine its appearing even comfortable to one who had forced himself to abide for a time in such a wilderness. Plain, too, as it is, it was built as an improvement upon a mere cellar, which had existed before from the days of Saussure, but which is now reduced to be only a receptacle for lumber. It was curious, at the height of 6242 feet on the skirts of Mont Blanc, to find a small merchandise of jewellery and nicknacks carried on; but such is the fact. Honest David has a few glass-cases containing bijouterie, chiefly composed of the crystals and pebbles brought down by the glaciers from the central and inaccessible places of the Alps, for such is one of the strange functions of these icy currents. One is surprised to learn that the house, with some neighbouring grazing-ground, has 1400 francs by way of rent to the *commune* of Chamouni.

(To be concluded in our next.)

I LOVE YOU.

I love you—'tis the simplest way
The thing I feel to tell;
Yet if I told it all the day,
You'd never guess how well;
You are my comfort and my light—
My very life you seem;
I think of you all day; all night
'Tis but of you I dream.

There's pleasure in the lightest word
That you can speak to me;
My soul is like the *Eolian* chord,
And vibrates still to thee.
I never read the love song yet
So thrilling, fond or true,
But in my own heart I have met
Some kinder thought for you.

I bless the shadows on your face,
The light upon your hair—
I like for hours to sit and trace
The passing changes there;
I love to hear your voice's tone,
Although you should not say
A single word to dream upon
When that has died away.

Oh! you are kindly as the beam
That warms where'er it plays,
And you are gentle as a dream
Of happy future days—
And you are strong to do the right,
And swift the wrong to flee—
And if you were not half so bright,
You're all the world to me.

TA YOUTH.—Attend to your business. Nothing so enables a man to prosper in this world as attending strictly to his business—provided he has business to attend to; if he hasn't he should make it a business to seek for some. Business can never conduct itself, any better than oxen can plough without a hand to guide the instrument. By attending to business you preserve health and accumulate wealth; but by neglecting it, you are apt to bring both bodily and mental ills upon you, and poverty is as certain a sequence as the blue devils after a jolly spree.

Dare to do right. Let no man prevent you from performing what you conscientiously think to be your duty. Many a mortal man is frightened off the track of truth and righteousness by mere scarecrows, that have no power in themselves of doing either harm or good.—Where there is a consciousness of right, there is a vast amount of might. This is the reason why I persevere in preaching. I know that I am right, and therefore go ahead like a locomotive on a wager.—*Down.*

A HIGHLAND SPORTSMAN IN AFRICA.—The Cape Frontier Times gives the following account of a sporting expedition of eleven months' duration, the hero of which is Mr. Rualyn Cumming, second son of Sir William Gordon Cumming, Bart. of Altyre, who, a few years ago, was the foremost sportsman in the North of Ireland:—"In this expedition it is said he has penetrated many hundred miles beyond the furthest point reached by any white man. He shot forty-three elephants, three of which only were females. Many of the males carried tusks of an enormous size, measuring seven feet in length, and sometimes weighing one hundred pounds each. Sixty hippopotami, the finest of the troops to which they belonged having been singled out for slaughter. Such is the abundance of this game, that with his rifle, he might have killed two hundred of them. The rhinoceros, buffalo, camelopard, eland, gemsbok, roan, antelope, waterbuck, hartebeest, sasaby, black and blue wildebeest, koodoo, pallah, zebra, rietbok, klipspringer, &c. were found by him in such great abundance, that he nearly expended his shot upon them.