

Three years later it had moved even farther, making 2,216 feet the extent of its journey. In 1840 it had advanced still another hundred feet. In 1884 the hut had travelled a mile and three-quarters since the date of the first measurement. The yearly average between 1827 and 1884 was a little over 220 feet. They say the Mer de Glace, over near Mont Blanc, moves even faster,—at the rate of almost two feet daily.

Let us consult that indispensable map again. We found before that there were four lines branching from the Furka Pass toward the west and southwest. Now we are to look over the country lying between the lower line and the second line from it, each having the number 48 at its end on the lower map margin. It is evident that we are to look beyond the territory shown on this map, No. 5. If we look at the general map of Switzerland again, Map No. 1, we find these two lines from the Furka Pass extend fully fifty miles toward the southwest to the great Monte Rosa group. We are then to turn around to the left, on the very spot where we have been standing, and look straight down the long valley of the Rhone, and beyond a full third of the distance across the whole country.

48. Magnificent View of Rhone Valley with Weiss-horn and the Monte Rosa Group fifty miles away

The Weisshorn, or white peak, explains its own name by standing up there on the horizon in the centre of our range of vision like a huge temple-roof above the hazy

vista of the Rhone valley. It signals to us across all the intervening country, calling us to come. And we shall go! That valley under the shadow of the Weisshorn,—Switzerland would not be Switzerland without it. The Matterhorn is just south from the Weisshorn though we cannot make it out clearly at this distance, in this light. It is the snowy hood of the Weisshorn that reflects the sunshine and makes it stand out so conspicuously; the rocky steeple of the Matterhorn you know is slender and bare. The huge ridge of the Monte Rosa range, gleaming white like the Weisshorn, shows up strongly against the sky more to our left. The Dom and the Tasehorn are seen just over our guide's head, with other peaks nearer Monte Rosa extending toward the south. We shall by and by be looking straight into the face of Monte Rosa from cliffs only six miles away.

It is still now up here on the Pass, but if this guide would fire his gun or blow the horn that hangs from his shoulder, we should hear the mountains calling to each other, back and forth, down the valley.

“Blow, bugle, blow! Set the wild echoes flying;
And answer, echoes, answer,—dying,—dying,—dying.”

There is a wonderful sense of uplift and exhilaration that comes with looking far, far away from heights like this. Are there anywhere dingy, commonplace, crowded towns with their earth trodden into dust and mud, their air full of smoke and smells,—or did we dream it all? This is the real world. No matter if the other is true, too. This is a glimpse of Nature's strong, sincere face, with

stern lines and kindly sunshine making one friendly whole. We may be as interested as we please in the scientific interpretation of Nature's processes. We may know all about the formation of glaciers and the erosion of river valleys and the meteorological genesis of the storm-winds, but, after all, modern science merely translates the mystery of this world into a new formula, a fresh re-statement of its own. It cannot explain. What does that long hazy perspective of the valley mean by leading our eyes away toward the far horizon? What does the Weiss-horn mean by holding up that gleaming pyramid of white against the sky? We are like children, surrounded by people talking with words we cannot understand. Shall we ever "grow up" far enough to understand?

The little, material facts of the scene we can set in order in our minds. Let us see, yes,—down there is the other end of the irregularly V-shaped road that runs down the valley from one side, across and up on the other side. Those very crooks and turns in the steep highway are set down on the map, as we shall find if we compare the two.

Here on the upper road,—one of the highest roads in all Europe,—the snow lies until mid-summer; and yet the spring winds that come blowing up this valley from the Mediterranean,—the Föhn winds,—have a heat almost tropic in its fierceness. They dread the force of those hot south winds. More than one terrible forest fire has been fanned into a rage by its cruel draught, and only a few years ago a whole village, a few miles beyond that mountain at our left, was burned to the ground in a few hours

by the spread of one innocent bit of flame when the south wind was blowing. That was especially hard on the people of Obergestelen (hardly five miles below us as the map shows), for time after time parts of the same village had been crushed by avalanches from those mountains at the right. One single avalanche had killed eighty-four of the village folk. Yet Obergestelen rose from both ruins and ashes, and this last time it has been chiefly built of stone. Farther still down the valley there is a little town (Münster) where books were printed by the monks away back in the fifteenth century,—books that would be worth now many times their weight in gold if one could find a stray copy among his grandfather's treasures. The old Romans and the early monks seem to be responsible for most of the solid beginnings of civilized life here in Switzerland.

Away up here, on this road over the pass, that queer bit of arctic vegetation that they call "red snow" has occasionally been seen. It is nearly eight thousand feet above the sea-level and there are only about three months in the year when winter takes a vacation; no wonder that some special characteristics of polar lands should crop out here and there. The peasants hereabouts used to speak of the red spots with hushed voices. They said they were drops of wine spilled from casks carried over this old road years and years and years before, and that the forlorn souls of muleteers who had died in sin came back to travel the old road seeking these ghostly drops to quench their endless, tormenting thirst.

There are no ghosts here now. The forenoon sun is shining frankly and cheerfully on the stones that the bad old mule-drivers used to tread. Let us hope the poor souls have earned rest at last. Maybe the mules too,—more sinned against than sinning,—are turned out to pasture in some suburbs of the Happy Hunting Grounds!

Forward now, down the valley. We shall follow where those gleaming summits invite. Just beyond those snow-covered summits on the right the Eggishorn stands, north-east of the Weisshorn and the Monte Rosa range. It is a mountain that stands up by itself and offers fine views from its summit in several directions. We shall first have a magnificent panorama from the Eggishorn across the valley of the Rhone toward the southern peaks of the Alps. You will find our standpoint and part of our field of vision on the map of the Bernese Alps, Map No. 5, a little north of the middle of its southern limits. Here again we shall have to turn to the general map of Switzerland to see the full length of the red lines which extend to the Fletschhorn twenty miles away.

49. *Looking south from the Eggishorn over Rhone Valley to Monte Leone and Fletschhorn*

Here we have a very interesting example of the service that is done by stereographs. Look first at this stereograph, No. 49, holding the card in your hand like an ordinary photograph. It is an attractive picture with the rocks and dark cliffs in the foreground, the distant mountains growing more and more pale and hazy as their distance