



THE EIGNER JOCK, FROM THE WENGERN ALP.

2. THE EIGER JOCH, A PASS FROM THE WENGERN ALP TO THE ÆGGISCH-HORN, BETWEEN THE MÖNCH AND THE EIGER, MADE BY MESSRS. WILLIAM AND GEORGE MATHEWS AND THE REV. LESLIE STEPHEN ON THE 7TH OF AUGUST, 1859.

BY THE REV. LESLIE STEPHEN, M.A.

ON the 3rd of August, 1859, I was travelling on the Swiss railway, between Basle and Olten, with my friends Messrs. William and George Mathews. As we shot out of the long tunnel above Olten and descended into the valley of the Aar, the glorious range of the Bernese Oberland rose majestically into sight, some fifty miles away. While telling over the names of our gigantic friends, our eyes were caught by the broad flat top of the Mönch, which no Englishman had yet reached. It occurred to us that an attack upon this hoary pillar of the mid-aerial church would be a worthy commencement of our expedition, and it struck us at the same time that by ascending, as a first step, the ridge called by Mr. Bunbury* the Col de la Jungfrau, which connects the Mönch with the Jungfrau, we should, so to speak, be killing two birds with one stone. Mr. Bunbury indeed states, that on looking down from this ridge, he and his guide had considered an ascent from the northern side to be quite impracticable; but as "impracticable" is generally used in the Alps to signify that an ascent has never been tried, we considered ourselves fully justified in

* In the former volume of "Peaks, Passes, and Glaciers."

attempting what, if successful, would be a first-rate and completely new pass.

Accordingly, on the 5th of August we assembled at the lower of the two little inns on the Wengern Alp. The Mathews were accompanied by two Chamounix men, Jean-Baptiste Croz and Charlet, whilst I had secured the gigantic Ulrich Lauener,—not without some grumbling on his part at being joined with Chamounix guides. We now examined the work before us more closely. The Mönch is connected by two snow-ridges, with the Jungfrau on the west and the Eiger on the east. From the first of these ridges descends the Guggi glacier, and from the second the Eiger glacier, both of them pouring their torrents into the gloomy Trümleten valley, the trench which also receives the snow avalanches of the Jungfrau. These two glaciers are separated by the huge northern buttress of the Mönch, and which, I believe, is generally supposed by tourists to be perpendicular, but the long slopes of débris by which it is faced, prove the fallacy of this idea to an experienced eye, and it is in fact easy to ascend. Both glaciers are much crevassed; the Guggi, however, expands into a kind of level plateau, about half-way up the mountain, connected by long and broken snow-slopes with the Col de la Jungfrau.

The morning of the 6th having been gloomy, we spent the later part of the day in a reconnoitring expedition up to this plateau and a little beyond it. The result of our observations was not encouraging. We mounted some way above the plateau on a great heap of débris that had been disgorged by a glacier above. The blue crevasses which were drawn across the protruding nose of ice showed that at any minute we might be surprised by the descent of new masses, which would convert us into débris ourselves. Even if we surmounted this danger in the early

morning, the steep slopes of névé above us, which occasionally bulged out into huge overhanging masses, looked far from promising. Retreating to the buttress of the Mönch, we turned our attention to the Eiger glacier. Though some difficulties were obviously to be encountered, its aspect was generally more auspicious, and we accordingly resolved to modify our plans by ascending the eastern instead of the western shoulder of the Mönch. We hoped afterwards to attack the Mönch, but in any case meant to descend to the Aletsch glacier on the other side.

An additional result of our expedition had been to develop a decided rivalry between Lauener and the Chamounix men. We had already had one or two little races and disputations in consequence, and Lauener, if he could have spoken English, would have said that the Savoyards were "muffs." As, however, he could not speak a word of French, nor they of German, he was obliged to convey this sentiment in pantomime, which perhaps did not soften its vigour. I was accordingly prepared for a few disputes the next day, — an annoyance which generally attends a combination of Swiss and Chamounix guides.

About 4 on the morning of the 7th of August we got off from the inn on the Wengern Alp, notwithstanding a few delays, and steered straight for the foot of the Eiger. In the early morning the rocks around the glacier and the lateral moraines were hard and slippery. Before long, however, we found ourselves well on the ice, near the central axis of the Eiger glacier, and looking up at the great terrace-shaped ice-masses, separated by deep crevasses, which rose threateningly over our heads, one above another, like the defences of some vast fortification. And here began the first little dispute between Oberland and Chamounix. The Chamounix men proposed a direct assault on the network of crevasses above us. Lauener said that

we ought to turn them by crossing to the south-west side, immediately below the Mönch. My friends and their guides forming a majority, and seeming to have little respect for the arguments urged by the minority, we gave in and followed them, with many muttered remarks from Lauener. We soon found ourselves performing a series of manœuvres like those required for the ascent of the Col du Géant. At times we were lying flat in little gutters on the faces of the seracs, worming ourselves along like boa-constrictors. At the next moment we were balancing ourselves on a knife-edge of ice between two crevasses, or plunging into the very bowels of the glacier, with a natural arch of ice meeting above our heads. I need not attempt to describe difficulties and dangers familiar to all ice-travellers. Like other such difficulties, they were very good fun whilst they lasted, but unfortunately they seemed inclined to last rather too long. Some of the deep crevasses apparently stretched almost from side to side of the glacier, rending its whole mass into distorted fragments. In attempting to find a way through them, we seemed to be going nearly as far backwards as forwards, the labyrinth in which we were involved being apparently as hopelessly intricate as it had been at first. Moreover, the sun had long touched the higher snow-fields, and was creeping down to us step by step. As soon as it reached the huge masses amongst which we were painfully toiling, some of them would begin to jump about like hailstones in a shower, and our position would become really dangerous. The Chamounix guides, in fact, declared it to be dangerous already, and warned us not to speak for fear of bringing some of the nicely poised ice-masses down on our heads. On my translating this well-meant piece of advice to Lauener, he immediately selected the most dangerous-looking pinnacle in sight, and mounting to the top of it

sent forth a series of screams, loud enough, I should have thought, to bring down the top of the Mönch. They failed, however, to dislodge any seracs, and Lauener, going to the front, called to us to follow him. By this time we were all glad to follow any one who was confident enough to lead. Turning to our right, we crossed the glacier in a direction parallel to the deep crevasses, and therefore unobstructed by any serious obstacles, till we found ourselves immediately beneath the great cliffs of the Mönch. Our prospects changed at once. A great fold in the glacier (visible in the illustration) produces a kind of diagonal pathway, stretching upwards from the point where we stood towards the rocks of the Eiger;—not that it was exactly a carriage-road—but along the line which divides two different systems of crevasse, the glacier seemed to have been crushed into smaller fragments, producing, as it were, a kind of incipient macadamisation. The masses, instead of being divided by long regular trenches, were crumbled and jammed together so as to form a road, easy and pleasant enough by comparison with our former difficulties. Pressing rapidly up this rough path, we soon found ourselves in the very heart of the glacier, with a broken wilderness of ice on every side. We were in one of the grandest positions I have ever seen for observing the wonders of the ice-world; but those wonders were not all of an encouraging nature. For, looking up to the snow-fields now close above us, an obstacle appeared which made us think that all our previous labours had been in vain. From side to side of the glacier a vast *chevaux de frise* of blue ice-pinnacles struck up through the white layers of névé formed by the first plunge of the glacier down its waterfall of ice. Some of them rose in fantastic shapes,—huge blocks balanced on narrow footstalks, and only waiting for the first touch of

the sun to fall in ruins down the slope below. Others rose like church spires, or like square towers, defended by trenches of unfathomable depth. Once beyond this barrier, we should be safe upon the highest plateau of the glacier at the foot of the last snow-slope. But it was obviously necessary to turn them; it would be impossible to force a passage through them. One plan was to climb the lower rocks of the Eiger; but, after a moment's hesitation, we fortunately followed Lauener towards the other side of the glacier, where a small gap, between the seracs and the lower slopes of the Mönch, seemed to be the entrance to a ravine that might lead us upwards. Such it turned out to be. Instead of the rough footing to which we had hitherto been unwillingly restricted, we found ourselves ascending a narrow gorge, with the giant cliffs of the Mönch on our right, and the toppling ice-pinnacles on our left. A beautifully even surface of snow, scarcely marked by a single crevasse, lay beneath our feet. We pressed rapidly up this strange little pathway, as it wound steeply upwards between the rocks and the ice, expecting at every moment to see it thin out, or break off at some impassable crevasse. It was, I presume, formed by the sliding of avalanches from the slopes of the Mönch. At any rate, to our delight it led us gradually round the barrier of seracs, till in a few minutes we found ourselves on the highest plateau of the glacier, the crevasses fairly beaten, and a level plain of snow stretching from our feet to the last snow-slope.

We were now standing on the edge of a small level plateau. (It is not seen in the illustration, but lies between the highest seracs marked there and the final snow-slope.) One, and only one, gigantic crevasse of really surpassing beauty stretched right across it. This was, we guessed, some three hundred feet deep, and its sides

passed gradually into the lovely blues and greens of semi-transparent ice, whilst long rows and clusters of huge icicles imitated (as Lauener remarked) the carvings and ecclesiastical fixings of some great cathedral. The opposite side of the plain was bounded by a great snow-ridge, which swept round it in a long semicircular curve from the Mönch to the Eiger. This ridge, in fact, forms the connecting isthmus by which the great promontory of the Eiger is joined to its brethren of the Oberland. Close to the Mönch the slopes (as shown in the illustration) are of great height and steepness, whilst, owing to the gradual rise of the snow-fields and the sinking of the ridge, they become very insignificant at the end next to the Eiger. A reference to the map will explain the geography of our position. The pass which we were attempting would naturally lie over the shoulder, where the connecting isthmus I have mentioned articulates with the lower ridges of the Mönch. Lauener had, in fact, reached this exact point from the other side. And we knew that, once there, we should be on the edge of a nearly level basin of snow, which stretches across the Mönch Joch, or ridge connecting the Mönch with the Walcherenhörner. This basin is in fact the common source of the Aletsch and Viescher* glaciers, and the mound of the Mönch Joch which divides them is very slightly defined across the undulating beds of névé. From this basin, however, the Viescher glacier sinks very rapidly, and consequently the ridge between the Mönch and Eiger, which rises above it in bare rock cliffs, is much loftier near the Eiger than near the Mönch on its south-eastern side,—the exact opposite of its form

* The best known Viescher glacier is, of course, that which descends from the Oberaarjoch towards Viesch. The glacier mentioned in the text is the great tributary of the lower Grindelwald glacier, called "Viescher" glacier in the Carte Dufour.

on the north-western side, as already mentioned. Hence, to reach our pass, we had the choice — either of at once attacking the long steep slopes which led directly to the desired point on the shoulder of the Mönch, or of first climbing the gentle slopes near the Eiger, and then forcing our way along the back-bone of the ridge. We resolved to try the last plan first.

Accordingly, after a hasty breakfast at 9.30, we started across our little snow-plain and commenced the ascent. After a short climb of no great difficulty, merely pausing to chip a few steps out of the hard crust of snow, we successively stepped safely on to the top of the ridge. As each of my predecessors did so, I observed that he first looked along the arête, then down the cliffs before him, and then turned with a very blank expression of face to his neighbour. From our feet the bare cliffs sank down, covered with loose rocks, but too steep to hold more than patches of snow, and presenting right dangerous climbing for many hundred feet towards the Grindelwald glaciers. The arête offered a prospect not much better: a long ridge of snow, sharp as the blade of a knife, was playfully alternated with great rocky teeth, striking up through their icy covering like the edge of a saw. We held a council standing, and considered the following propositions: — First, Lauener coolly proposed, and nobody seconded, a descent of the precipices towards Grindelwald. This proposition produced a subdued shudder from the travellers and a volley of unreportable language from the Chamounix guides. It was liable, amongst other things, to the trifling objection that it would take us just the way we did not want to go. The Chamounix men now proposed that we should follow the arête. This was disposed of by Lauener's objection that it would take at least six hours. We should have had to cut steps down the slope and up

again round each of the rocky teeth I have mentioned; and I believe that this calculation of time was below the mark. Finally, we unanimously resolved upon the only course open to us, to descend once more into our little valley, and thence to cut our way straight up the long slopes to the shoulder of the Mönch.

Considerably disappointed at this unexpected check, we retired to the foot of the slopes, feeling that we had no time to lose, but still hoping that a couple of hours more might see us at the top of the pass. It was just 11 as we crossed a small bergschrund and began the ascent. Lauener led the way to cut the steps, followed by the two other guides, who deepened and polished them up. Just as we started, I remarked a kind of bright track drawn down the ice in front of us, apparently by the frozen remains of some small rivulet which had been trickling down it. I guessed it would take some fifty steps and half an hour's work to reach it. We cut about fifty steps, however, in the first half-hour, and were not a quarter of the way to my mark; and as even when there we should not be half-way to the top, matters began to look serious. The ice was very hard, and it was necessary, as Lauener observed, to cut steps in it as big as soup-tureens, for the result of a slip would in all probability have been that the rest of our lives would have been spent in sliding down a snow-slope, and that that employment would not have lasted long enough to become at all monotonous. Time slipped by, and I gradually became weary of a sound to which at first I always listen with pleasure,— the chipping of the axe, and the hiss of the fragments as they skip down the long incline below us. Moreover, the sun was very hot, and reflected with oppressive power from the bright and polished surface of the ice. I could see that a certain flask was circulating with great steadiness amongst the

guides, and the work of cutting the steps seemed to be extremely severe. I was counting the 250th step, when we at last reached the little line I had been so long watching, and it even then required a glance back at the long line of steps behind to convince me that we had in fact made any progress. The action of resting one's whole weight on one leg for about a minute, and then slowly transferring it to the other, becomes wearisome when protracted for hours. Still the excitement and interest made the time pass quickly. I was in constant suspense lest Lauener should propose a retreat, which would have been annoying, and listened with some amusement to the low moanings of little Charlet, who was apparently bewailing his position to Croz, and being heartlessly chaffed in return. One or two measurements with a clinometer of Mathews' gave inclinations of 51° or 52° , and the slope was perhaps occasionally a little more.

At last, as I was counting the 580th step, we reached a little patch of rock (visible in the illustration), and felt ourselves once more on solid ground with no small satisfaction. Not that the ground was specially solid. It was a small crumbling patch of rock, and every stone we dislodged went bounding rapidly down the side of the slope, diminishing in apparent size till it disappeared in the bergschrund, hundreds of feet below. However, each of us managed to find some nook in which he could stow himself away, whilst the Chamounix men took their turn in front, and cut steps straight upwards to the top of the slope. By this means they kept along a kind of rocky rib, of which our patch was the lowest point, and we thus could occasionally get a footstep on rock instead of ice. Once on the top of the slope, we could see no obstacle intervening between us and the point over which our pass must lie.

Meanwhile we meditated on our position. It was already 4 o'clock. After twelve hours' unceasing labour we were still a long way on the wrong side of the pass. We were clinging to a ledge in the mighty snow-wall which sank sheer down below us and rose steeply above our heads. Beneath our feet the whole plain of Switzerland lay with a faint purple haze drawn over it like a veil, a few green sparkles just pointing out the lake of Thun. Nearer, and apparently almost immediately below us, lay the Wengern Alp, and the little inn we had left twelve hours before, whilst we could just see the back of the labyrinth of crevasses where we had wandered so long. Through a telescope I could even distinguish people standing about the inn, who no doubt were contemplating our motions. Meanwhile the Chamounix guides had cut a staircase up the slope, and we prepared to follow. It was harder work than before, for the whole slope was now covered with a kind of granular snow, and resembled a huge pile of hailstones. The hailstones poured into every foot-step as it was cut, and had to be cleared out with hands and feet before we could get even a slippery foot-hold. As we crept cautiously up this treacherous staircase, I could not help reflecting on the lively bounds with which the stones and fragments of ice had gone spinning from our last halting-place down to the yawning bergschrund below. We succeeded, however, in avoiding their example, and a staircase of about one hundred steps brought us to the top of the ridge, but at a point still at some distance from the pass. It was necessary to turn along the arête towards the Mönch. We were preparing to do this by keeping on the snow-ridge, when Lauener, jumping down about six feet on the side opposite to that by which we had ascended, lighted upon a little ledge of rock and called to us to follow. He assured us that it was granite,

and that therefore there was no danger of slipping. It was caused by the sun having melted the snow on the southern side of the ridge, so that it no longer quite covered the inclined plane of rock upon which it rested. It was narrow and treacherous enough in appearance at first—soon, however, it grew broader, and, compared with our ice-climb, afforded capital footing. The precipice beneath us thinned out as the Viescher glacier rose towards our pass, and at last we found ourselves at the edge of a little mound of snow, through which a few plunging steps brought us, just at 6 o'clock, to the long-desired shoulder of the Mönch.

I cannot describe the pleasure with which we stepped at last on to the little saddle of snow, and felt that we had won the victory. We had made a pass equal in beauty and difficulty to any first-rate pass in the Alps,—I should rather say to any pass and a half. For, whereas most such passes can show but two fine views, here we have three. From the time of our reaching the summit of the ridge we had been enveloped in a light mist. Shortly after we had gained the col, this mist suddenly drew up like a curtain; and as mountain after mountain came out in every direction from a point of view quite new to me, I felt perfectly bewildered. We were on the edge of three great basins. Behind us the plain of Switzerland stretched away to the Jura. On our left a huge amphitheatre of glacier sank down, marked in long concentric curves by tier after tier of crevasses to the level of the Grindelwald glacier. Beyond rose the sheer cliffs of the Wetterhorn, and further back from the plain the black cluster of rocks of the Schreckhörner. This view is invisible from the Col de la Jungfrau, and is so eminently beautiful that I should recommend visitors from the Æggisch-horn to prefer this col to the other. It is as easily reached from the southern

side, and is alone worth the trouble, if it be not profane to speak of the trouble of such a walk. But the finest part of the view remains. We were standing at the edge of a great basin of snow. From its further side the great Aletsch glacier stretched away from our feet like the reach of some gigantic river frozen over, and covered from side to side with a level sheet of pure white snow, sweeping gradually away in one grand curve till it was lost to sight in the distance. Beyond it rose the Monte Leone and the ranges that look down on Italy. On each side rose some of the noblest mountains in Switzerland,—the Jungfrau, Mönch, Aletschhorn, and the long jagged range of the Viescherhörner, with the needle-point of the Finsteraarhorn overlooking them. So noble and varied a sweep of glacier is visible nowhere else in the Alps.

We had a little discussion during our halt as to the name which we should give as first discoverers. One of the party, with a glance down the long snow-slope, suggested Teufels Joch as an appropriate name. Lauener, with more piety but less point, proposed Engels Joch, in gratitude to the good angels who had brought us up. The name, however, clearly ought to be Eiger Joch. The ridge connecting the Mönch to the Jungfrau is known as the Jungfrau Joch,—that between the Mönch and the Walcherehörner has been christened Mönch Joch, probably for the sake of euphony. It is in analogy with these names, and suggests also, that, as our pass was ascended from the Eiger glacier, it should be called Eiger Joch.

I will confess, however, that my first inquiry on the top of a new pass is neither what is there to see, nor what is the pass to be called, but — what is there to eat? Of the two requisites for a satisfactory meal, one, viz. the provisions, was abundantly present. I fancied too, at first,

that my appetite would do its part; but on trying to swallow some meat, I found that our long fast since the last meal, combined with the baking we had undergone, had so parched my mouth that the effort was useless. My thoughts turned to a refreshing cup of tea and a bed at the *Æggisch-horn*. But, alas! the inn was seven hours off: it was 6 P.M., and the sun near setting. Lauener mentioned certain *wolldecken* and some coffee, which he believed to be at the Faulberg; and the Faulberg, though we knew it to be one of those caves from which the whole of one side and the roof have been removed, immediately seemed to us to be the pleasantest hotel in Switzerland. We started off with enthusiasm to gain it. Passing rapidly round the great snow-basin between the Mönch and the Trugberg, we came to a place where the whole breadth of the glacier seems to tumble in,—a broad curve over a kind of weir. At foot of the fall, which is perhaps some fifty feet high, is a bergschrund. Lauener, planting his feet in the snow above, prepared to lower each of us by the rope. Suddenly G. Mathews lost his footing, shot down the slope like a flash of lightning, and disappeared over the edge of the bergschrund. To our great relief, we immediately heard him call out “all right,” and the next moment he appeared full of snow, but otherwise none the worse for his involuntary glistade. We followed with the help of the rope, and started down the glacier once more. We were scarcely off when the broad reach before us turned first to a glorious rose colour, and then faded to a livid hue as the light crept up the sides of the mountains. Soon they too turned pale; the glow lingered a little on the loftiest peaks, then faded, too, and left us to the light of the moon, which was still clear enough to guide us.

Lauener took this opportunity of remarking that he had

been very unwell for three days before, and was consequently rather tired. He added presently that he could not see, and did not in the least know where he was going. I do not implicitly believe either of these statements, which struck me as being rather ill-timed. However, we marched steadily forwards in a long straggling line over the beautifully even surface of the glacier, already crisp with the evening frost, anxiously watching the sinking moon, and calculating whether her light would enable us to reach the Faulberg.

We were making good progress, and the hospitable Faulberg was coming almost into sight, when we reached the point where the glacier curls over for a steep descent, just above the confluence of the glaciers from the Lötschsattel and Grünhornlücke. Here a few concealed crevasses, causing the partial disappearance of some of our party, made a resort to the rope necessary. Fastening ourselves together we again pressed on as fast as we could. But the crevasses grew more numerous and broader, and the surface of the ice more steeply inclined. In the faint moonlight we could hardly tell what we were treading upon,—treacherous snow-bridges or slippery slides of ice. A stumble or two nearly brought us all in a heap together. Moreover, the Aletschhorn had chosen to shove its head up just in the way of the moon, and at last, as we were all getting rather puzzled how to proceed, the moon suddenly dipped behind it, the great shadow of the mountain shot out over us, and we were left all alone in the dark. Looking hastily round in the faint twilight, we could just make out a great mass of rock on our right hand. This forms part of the great promontory called the Kranzberg, which divides the two main branches of the Aletsch glacier. We made for it at once, found no crevasses to stop us, and stepped once more off the ice on to dry land. We unanimously resolved

to stay where we were till daylight should appear. We unfastened the ropes, took a glass of wine all round, and determined to make ourselves comfortable. I accomplished this desirable object as follows:— Having drunk my wine, and made a perfectly futile attempt to swallow a bit of bread, I put on a pair of dry stockings which I had in my pocket over my wet ones, stuck my feet into a knapsack, and sat down on some sharp stones under a big rock. My companions most obligingly sat down on each side of me, which tended materially to keep off the cold night wind, and one of them shared my knapsack. My seat may very easily be imitated by any one who will take the trouble to fill one of the gutters by the side of a paved street with a heap of granite stones prepared for macadamising a road. If he will sit down there for a frosty night, and induce a couple of friends to sit with him, he will doubtless learn to sympathise with us. Lauener carefully warned us not to go to sleep, and I think I may say we fulfilled our promise of obeying his injunctions, with the exception of a doze or two towards morning. Lauener came out very strong. His good temper and fun seemed to rise with the occasion; and after telling us a variety of anecdotes, beginning with chamois-hunting and ending (of all things in the world) with examinations,— for it seems that Swiss guides share, with under-graduates, this particular form of misery,— he retired to the nook which the Chamounix guides had selected, and, to the best of my belief, passed the rest of the night in chaffing them.

There is, of course, something disagreeable in passing a night “squirming” (to use an Americanism) on a heap of stones, and making fruitless endeavours to arrange their sharp corners into a soft surface to sit upon, by a series of scientific wriggles. I fully expected to get up in the morning stuck all over with pebbles, like a large pat of

butter dropped into a sugar basin. In other respects, I believe I really enjoyed the night. The cold was not intense, and in fact I rarely felt it at all. Partly the excitement, and partly the beauty of the perfectly still and silent night, prevented its seeming long. The huge snow-covered mountains that glimmered faintly through the darkness, the long glorious glacier, half seen as it swept away from our feet, and the perfect stillness of the scene, were very striking. We felt that our little party was in absolute solitude in the very centre of the greatest waste of ice and bare rock in the Alps. I will not deny that towards morning I got a little chilly, not to say sulky. Gradually the mountain forms became more distinct. The outlines of rock and snow showed themselves more plainly, and I was quite surprised, on looking at my watch for the first time, to find that it was half-past two, and to see Lauener coming to tell us it was time to start.

We jumped up, shook ourselves, struggled into our frozen boots, and made a futile attempt at breakfast. The dangers of the darkness had disappeared; but the pleasure and excitement had gone too, and it was a right dreary walk that morning to the *Æggisch-horn*. The *Aletsch* glacier is intersected by a number of little crevasses, just too broad to step, and wide enough to tire weary men. As we walked on down its broad monotonous surface, I was surprised to find how extremely ugly everything looked. It was a beautiful day, and before us, as we approached the *Märjelen See*, rose one of the loveliest of Alpine views,—the *Matterhorn* flanked by the noble pyramids of the *Mischabel* and *Weisshorn*. I looked at it with utter indifference, and thought what I should order for breakfast. Bodily fatigue and appreciation of natural scenery are simply incompatible. We somehow contrived to split into three parties, and the rapidity with which we lost

sight of each other was a curious proof of the vast size of the glacier. A party of our friends passed us on their way from the Æggisch-horn to the Col de la Jungfrau, but we failed to see them. The utter insignificance of a human figure on these wastes of ice is one of the first things by which we learn to appreciate their vast size.

Lauener and I found our way to some châteaux, where a draught of warm milk was truly refreshing. I need hardly say that after it we managed to lose our way over the abominable slopes of the Æggisch-horn. Shoulder after shoulder of that dreary mountain came out in endless succession, and I was glad enough to see the friendly little white house a little before 9 o'clock, and to rejoin my friends over a luxurious breakfast provided by its admirable landlord.

I have only to add that the height of the pass we thus made is, according to the Swiss survey, 12,290 feet. There are two over the same chain which deserve the attention of Alpine travellers. One is described by Professor Tyndall under the name of Lauwinen Thor, in "Vacation Tourists," and it must be a very noble pass. The other is the Col de la Jungfrau, which has not yet been crossed, though I hope at some future time to see it added to the list of the vanquished.