

## THE SARACENS IN THE ALPS. By W. A. B. COOLIDGE.

[Having been requested by Mr. Wethered to examine the question of the presence of Saracens in the Saasthal on the occasion of his paper on the 'Täschhorn from the Fée Glacier' in the May number of the 'Journal,' I was led insensibly to a consideration of the presence of the Saracens in the Alps as a whole. The results of my inquiry are contained in the following pages, which, apart from the immediate point at issue, may, I trust, prove of some interest to readers of the 'Alpine Journal,' and may serve to draw attention to the very interesting, but as yet scarcely-touched subject of the history of the Alps, of which the history of Mountaineering is but a single chapter. It is believed that the greater number of the facts comprised in this paper have not yet been laid before English readers.—W. A. B. C.]

**A**FTER the victories of Charles Martel and Charles the Great, we are accustomed to picture to ourselves the Saracens in Western Europe as being confined to Spain and the Spanish March. The object of this paper, however, is to call attention to the deeds of a robber-band of Saracens seventy years later, who, establishing themselves in a stronghold on the coast of Provence, ravaged that province, Dauphiné, and North Italy: who pushing across the Alpine passes, spread terror in the east and west of what is now Switzerland; and who, after having long defied the united efforts of the Eastern Emperor and of the King of Italy, were finally exterminated by the courage and devotion of one man. It is proposed to sketch the main outlines of the history of this band, and incidentally to consider whether any traces of their occupation still remain in the lands which they harried.

In the year 887 or 888 A.D.,\* twenty Saracens,† having set out in a small vessel from Spain, were cast by contrary winds on the coast of Provence. By a night attack they gained possession of the village of Fraxinetum (now La Garde-Freinet), and of the neighbouring region now called from them 'Montagnes des Maures.' This spot being conveniently situated not far from the Gulf of Saint Tropez, S. W. of Fréjus,

\* Not in 891, in which year Pertz erroneously places it, and is followed by some later writers. (Cf. E. Dümmler, 'Ostfränkisches Reich,' ii. 318, note 53.)

† Prof. E. P. Goergens, in an interesting but not wholly accurate essay, entitled 'Der Islam in der Schweiz' (Sonntagsblatt des Bund, May 5 to June 9, 1878, Nos. 18 to 23), conjectures (p. 172) that the Fraxinetum Saracens may have been Berbers, connecting their appearance with the discontent felt by the Berbers, who were only half Arabs, at the oppressive treatment they received at the hands of the Arabs of pure and unmixed lineage.

commanding the only pass to the plains on the N., and surrounded by a dense forest of ashes, whence it derived its name, was fortified by them and converted into an impregnable stronghold, whence they could sally forth and lay waste the immediate neighbourhood. Anxious, however, to increase their strength, they despatched messengers to their Spanish home, who gave such favourable accounts of the prospects of the settlement, that a hundred Saracens were persuaded to return with them. Such was the origin, according to Liudprand, Bishop of Cremona, and trusted adviser of the Emperor Otto I., of the nest of bandits, which was destined to afflict so sorely the most fertile districts of the Western and even of the Rhaetian Alps.\* Profiting by the internal dissensions of the Provençal nobles, some of whom called them in as allies, they attained the mastery over their employers, and gradually rooted them out, at the same time constantly increasing their strength by reinforcements from Spain. They became a source of terror to their neighbours, and began to undertake expeditions at a greater distance from their headquarters. It should

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\* ‘[Fraxinetum] mari uno ex latere cingitur, caeteris densissimâ spinarum silvâ munitur. Quam si ingressus quispiam fuerit, ita sentium curvitate tenetur, acutissimâ rectitudine perforatur, ut neque progressionis neque reditus, nisi magno cum labore, habeat facultatem.’ ‘Sed occulto et quoniam secus esse non potest justo Dei iudicio, viginti tantum Saraceni lintre parvulâ ex Hispaniâ egressi, nolentes istuc (sc. Provinciam) vento delati sunt. Qui piratae noctu egressi, villamque (sc. Fraxinetum) clam ingressi, Christicolas, pro dolor, jugulant, locumque sibi proprium vindicant, montemque Maurum villulae cohaerentem contra vicinas gentes refugium parant; spineam silvam hoc pacto majorem et spissioem suâ pro tuitione facientes, ut si quis ex eâ vel ramum incideret, mucronis percussione hominem exiret; sicque factum est ut omnis praeter unius angustissimae viae aditus demeretur. Loci igitur asperitate confisi, vicinas gentes clam circumquaque perlustrant. Accersitum quam plures in Hispaniam nuntios dirigunt, locum laudant, vicinas gentes nichil se habere promittunt. Centum denique tantummodo secum mox Saracenos reducunt, qui veram rei hujus caperent assertionem.’ (Liudprandi Antapodosis, i. 2, 3, smaller Pertz.)

‘Circa haec tempora maxima pars Saracenorum mare navium vehiculis transfretantes, ingressi sunt Fraxinetum ad habitandum, ubi plurimos annos commorantes, inexpugnabilem reddiderunt. Erat enim circumseptus nemore perdenso, maxime silvarum plurimarum.’ (Chronicon Novaliciense, iv. 22, smaller Pertz.)

According to Reinaud, 160, note 1 (‘Invasions des Sarrasins en France, et de France en Savoie, en Piémont, et dans la Suisse.’ Paris : 1836), there are at present no more ash trees in the district.

always be borne in mind that these incursions of the Fraxinetum Saracens were not undertaken with any political aim in view, but were solely actuated by the coarser motives of pillage and robbery.\* It is simply the history of Monaco, repeated on a wider scale.†

As early as 890 the Council of Valence mentions the ravages committed by the Fraxinetum Saracens.‡ The chronicle of the great abbey of Novalesse on the southern slopes of the Mont Cenis, states that the Saracens of Fraxinetum harried Burgundy, the Arelate, the neighbourhood of Nice, Italy, and all 'Subalpine Gaul.' §

This great house itself was fated soon to become the prey of the marauders. Climbing by side paths to the summit of the pass of the Mont Cenis,|| they surprised the monks, Domnivertus, the abbat, having retired to Turin on the first news of their approach, for which the chronicler severely rebukes him. The monks were driven out, but managed to convey much treasure and no less than *six thousand books* to Turin. The abbey was sacked, burnt, and long remained desolate. Two aged monks who had been left to guard the church were brutally wounded and flogged to death. A number of fugitives who had taken refuge in the monastery of Oulx were also butchered; ¶ and the robber band retired, laden with spoil.\*\* All this took place in 906. In the same year they sacked Acqui in the Italian plain.†† But the troubles of the poor monks of Novalesse were not yet over. Not having any place wherein to deposit their treasure in Turin, they committed it to the care of Riculfus, the 'pre-

\* F. Keller. 'Der Einfall der Sarazenen in die Schweiz um die Mitte des X. Jahrhunderts,' p. 6. ('Mittheilungen der antiquarischen Gesellschaft in Zürich.' Band xi. Heft i. 1856.)

† J. R. Green. 'Stray Studies,' p. 61.

‡ Léon Ménabréa. 'Des Origines féodales dans les Alpes Occidentales,' p. 31. ('Académie Royale des Sciences de Turin.' Serie 2, vol. xxii. xxiii. Turin: 1865.)

§ 'Chronicon Novaliciense,' iv. 23, 26.

|| Not the Mont Genève. Vide Oehlmann, 'Die Alpenpasse im Mittelalter,' p. 207-8. ('Jahrbuch für Schweizerische Geschichte,' vol. iii. 1878.)

¶ This spot was later called 'Campus plebis Martyrum' 'Ulcienis ecclesie chartarium,' published by Rivantella at Turin, 1753, p. x. 151. (Apud Reinaud, p. 163, note 2.)

\*\* 'Chronicon Novaliciense,' iv. 25, 26.

†† Liudprand, 'Antapodosis,' ii. 43, who adds: 'Tantus enim timor invaserat universos, ut nullus esset, qui horum praesentiam nisi forte tutissimis prestolaretur in locis.'

positus' or steward of the bishop. But in the confusion following on the incursions of the Saracens, when Riculfus died, the monks lost most of their treasure and books, which the negligent Domnivertus did not recover or reclaim.\* A few years later, in 910, some Saracen prisoners, in an attempt to escape, set fire to the church, through which, as the chronicler laments, the monks lost much treasure and many charters and books, some of which were still shown in his time in a half-burnt condition.†

These successes still further increased the terror with which the Fraxinetum Saracens were regarded, and emboldened them to still more daring exploits. S. Majolus, later Abbot of Cluny, of whom we shall hear again, was forced with his parents to retire from Provence into Burgundy.‡ The Maurienne, and especially the Upper Valley of the Durance, suffered severely from the incursions of these marauders.§ In 916 the town of Embrun was sacked and burnt, and many of the inhabitants massacred, including the archbishop, S. Benedict, and also the bishop of the Maurienne, who with many fugitives had taken refuge within its walls.|| The Porte Sarrasine at Embrun still preserves the memory of this frightful catastrophe.¶ The invaders then settled themselves in Embrun,

\* 'Chr. Novaliciense,' iv. 30.

† 'Chr. Novaliciense,' v. 1, 2. The manuscript here is nearly illegible, and it is impossible to recover the details of this episode.

‡ 'Acta Sanctorum' (ed. 1680), Maii, tom. ii. 659. 'Cum violenta Saracenorum manus a finibus ebuliens, Provinciam occuparet, vastaret, dirueret atque diriperet; relictis fundis qui sibi ex paterno jure numerosiores obvenerant, Matisconam (Macon) Burgundiæ civitatem advenit.' Cf. a general sketch of ravages of the Saracens, *ibid.* p. 669.

§ 'Pedestri itinere Alpes ingressi, valles et Ebrodunensem terram, Maurienam etiam cis citraque destruxerunt.'—Vit. S. Romuli Episc. Genicensis, apud Gingins-la-Sarra, ix. 121, n. 210. Cf. Flodoardi Annales sub anno 928 (Pertz, 'Monumenta Germaniæ Historica Scriptorum,' iii. 378). 'Odalricus Aquensis (sc. Aix) quidam episcopus in ecclesiâ Remensi recipitur.' In his 'Historia Remensis,' iv. 22, Flodoard gives the reason of the bishop's flight: 'qui ob persecutionem Sarracenorum a sede suâ recesserat.'

|| 'Gallia Christiana' (ed. 1656), i. 275: 'S. Benedictus (sc. Episcopus Ebrodunensis) martyrium subiit a Saracenis una cum episcopo Maurianensi in civitate Ebrodunensi et numerosâ plebe ex Segusianâ (sc. Susa) valle, Novalisiâ atque Maurianensi dioecesi transfugâ,' 916. Piolin, the editor of the new edition (1876) of the 'Gallia Christiana,' thinks the date is most probably 920. (G.C. iii. 1067.)

¶ J. C. F. Ladoucette, 'Histoire, Topographie, Antiquités, Usages,

and forced the two succeeding archbishops (elected to the see 'in partibus infidelium') to live far from their cathedral city.\* Ladoucette gives a long list of names, which prove, if any further proof were wanted, the presence of the Saracens on the Upper Durance, e.g., Montmaur, Puy de Maure, Torrent du Sarrasin, Freissinières. Various towers and buildings are also attributed to them.† The name of the Valley of the Arc, the Maurienne, appears in the works of Gregory of Tours (sixth century), and must therefore have a different origin. Some of the numerous Freneys in Savoy and in Dauphiné are probably so named from the Mediterranean stronghold of this robber band. And in the tangled group of mountains between the valley of the Arc and that of the Romandie, the writer has himself visited a Combe des Sarrasins and a Col des Sarrasins (in neither case do these names appear on the French Ordnance Map), opposite which, very curiously, is the pass of the Col Lombard.‡

The Saracens were now practically the masters of the two great Alpine passes of the Mont Cenis, and the Mont Genève, though probably they did not maintain a guard on either. Hence we have frequent complaints on the part of pilgrims and travellers approaching one or the other through the Maurienne or the Valley of the Durance. In 911 the Archbishop of Narbonne, on his way to Rome, was unable to pursue his journey across the Alps.§ In 921 a large band of English pilgrims on the way to Rome were stoned to death by the Saracens in the defiles of the Alps.|| This was probably on the Great St. Bernard or on the Mont Cenis, the two passes principally frequented in the Middle Ages by the English, Norwegians, and Icelanders, journeying to the threshold of the Apostles.¶

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Dialectes du Département des Hautes Alpes.' 3ème édition. Paris: 1848, p. 39.

\* F. Gingins-la-Sarra. 'Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire des royaumes de Provence et de Bourgogne Jurane' (in 'Archiv für Schweizerische Geschichte'), ix. p. 122, note 212. 'Gallia Christiana,' i. 275.

† Ladoucette, pp. 44-47.

‡ Cf. Reinaud, 184, n. 1.

§ Catel, 'Mémoires de l'histoire du Languedoc,' p. 775. (Apud Reinaud, p. 164, n. 2.)

|| Flodoardi Annales (Pertz, 'Monumenta Germaniae Historica,' iii. 369). 'Anglorum Romam proficiscentium plurimi inter angustias Alpium lapidibus a Sarracenis sunt obruti.'

¶ Oehlmann, 209, n. 5, quotes an interesting passage from Gervase of Canterbury: (English pilgrims are in the habit of going 'apud Ivoricam (? Ivrea) et castrum Toringum (? Turin), quas ingredientibus

In 923 another band of English pilgrims were massacred by the Saracens on their way.\* In 929 we read that the Saracens held the Alpine passes, so that many intending to visit Rome were forced to turn back.†

The kings and nobles in the west seem either to have been paralysed with fear at these daring incursions, or were too much divided among themselves to be able to resist their common foe. Curiously enough the first attempt to exterminate the nest of marauders at Fraxinetum, was made by the Greeks of the Eastern Empire, who had suffered much in Southern Italy from Saracens, though possibly not the Fraxinetum Saracens. In 931, so Flodoard tells us, a Greek fleet, perhaps in pursuit of some Saracen ships which had been engaged in piratical enterprises, sailed to Fraxinetum, surprised, and probably by means of the terrible 'Greek fire,' destroyed many of them, and established order in Italy.‡

It is clear, however, that this victory is exaggerated, for a few lines lower, Flodoard tells us that Robert II., Archbishop of Tours, and all his company were slain by robbers (though it is not expressly said that these were Saracens), who surprised them in their Alpine encampment, as they were returning from Rome.§ The same authority continues the sad tale of the occupation of the Alpine passes by the Saracens, and of other ravages committed by them.||

Longobardiam primo occurrunt. Ivorica, via quae venit de Monte Jovis : Toringum, via quae venit de valle Marianâ.' As to the pilgrimages of the Icelanders to Rome, see Oehlmann's remarks, pp. 259-267, which afford much curious information.

\* Flodoard (Pertz, iii. 373): 'Multitudo Anglorum limina Sancti Petri orationis gratiâ petentium inter Alpes a Sarracenis trucidatur.'

† Flodoard (Pertz, iii. 378): 'Viae alpium a Sarracenis obsessae, a quibus multi Romam proficisci volentes impediti revertuntur.' Cf. Liudprand, 'Antapodosis,' ii. 44. 'Nemo etiam ab occasu sive ab arcturo orationis gratia ad beatissimorum apostolorum limina Romam transire poterat, qui ab his (sc. Sarracenis) aut non caperetur aut non modico dato pretio dimitteretur.'

‡ Flodoard (Pertz, iii. 379): 'Graeci Sarracenos per mare insequentes Fraxinetum saltum ubi erat refugium ipsorum, et unde egredientes Italiam sedulis praedabantur incursibus, Alpius etiam occupatis, celeri, Deo propitio, internecione proterunt, quietam reddentes Alpius Italiam.'

§ Flodoard (Pertz, iii. 379): 'Robertus, episcopus Turonensis, Româ remeans sub Alpius noctu infra tentoria cum comitatibus secum interimitur a latronibus.'

|| Flodoard (Pertz, iii. 381) 933: 'Sarraceni meatus Alpius occupant, et vicina quaeque loca depraedantur.'

Up to this time there is no room for dispute. The pillaging of the Saracens had been hitherto confined to Provence, Dauphiné, North Italy, and the Alpine passes. We now come to the discussion of a point, which, though in the opinion of the writer capable of being well-established by authentic documents, yet has excited some controversy. Mr. Freshfield, in his 'Note on the Saracens,' in the May number of this Journal, inclines to the opposite view to that which the present writer has adopted after careful consideration. The question is as to the presence of the Saracens in what is now Eastern Switzerland.

Under date of 936, Flodoard of Reims, whom we have often cited above, and who is distinguished by the exactness and trustworthiness of his statements,\* sets down in his 'Annals' (Pertz, iii. 383), 'Sarraceni in Alamanniam praedatum pergunt, et revertentes multos Romam petentes interimunt.' By 'Alamannia' it is generally agreed that the diocese of Cur and the Upper Valley of the Rhine is to be understood.† Nothing could be plainer than this simple statement. It is, however, a fair question by what route the Saracens reached these distant regions. We must admit at once that we have no evidence bearing directly on this point. They cannot have taken the route across the Great St. Bernard, up the Rhone Valley, and over the Furca and Oberalp passes to the Vorder Rhein Thal, because we only hear later of their having crossed the S. Bernard, and we have no narrative of the plundering of the great abbey of Dissentis, which would certainly have taken place had the Saracens passed near it.‡ It is on the whole more probable that they passed on the south side of the main chain of the Alps, either through the plains of North Italy,§ or keeping close to the southern slopes of the Alps.|| Keller's doubt is due to the fact that he could not find any traces of the sack by the Saracens of the numerous towns which lay along their route. There are, however, two passages, which raise a presumption that the marauders *may* have taken this route. The first occurs in Liudprand, and tells us

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\* Wattenbach, in his invaluable work, 'Deutschlands Geschichtsquellen,' 4th ed., 1877, i. p. 330, praises the fulness of his narratives and notes, especially his 'fleckelose Wahrheitsliebe und Zuverlässigkeit.'

† Oehlmann, 211. Keller, 8. Dümmler, 'Otto der Grosse' (Leipzig: 1876), p. 114. Conradin von Moor, 'Geschichte von Curraetien' (Cur. 1870), 192.

‡ Oehlmann, 212. Keller, 9.

§ So Keller doubtfully, p. 9.

|| So Oehlmann, 213.

how, in 936, a large number of the Fraxinetum Saracens attacked Acqui (which they had already sacked in 906), and were utterly cut to pieces.\* The interest of this lies in the fact that we here find Saracens from Fraxinetum in the Italian plains in the same year in which they are said to have harried Alamannia. The other passage comes from the 'Chronicon Novaliciense.' † The author of the chronicle says that an uncle of his, who was a soldier, was one day hastening to the town of Vercelli, having heard of the approach of the Saracens, though they were believed to be still far off. But passing through a wood he was set upon by them and with his servant and his companions and team of oxen was made captive. It so happened that about the same time his brother passed by on his way to the bishop, and seeing the servant bound together with one of the oxen, he learnt on inquiry that his relative had been carried off by some Saracen scouts; on which he returned to the town, and, making a collection among his friends and relatives, ransomed his brother.‡ We may take this event as a specimen of what must often have occurred.

These two cases may, in the absence of direct evidence, justify us in assuming that the Saracens passed through the Italian plain on their way to Alamannia. If so, they probably reached Cur by the Septimer or the Bernardino, the old Roman roads over which were much frequented in the Middle Ages.§

The scanty documents relating to the presence of Saracens in Alamannia, or what is now the Canton of Graubünden, furnish few details of their doings in that region: but that they really did come there and commit depredations

\* Liudprand, 'Antapodosis,' iv. 4: 'Dum haec aguntur (sc., the war between Hugh of Provence, titular King of Italy, and Alberic, Patrician of Rome), Saraceni Fraxinetum inhabitantes, collectâ multitudine, Aquas, L miliaris Papia distans, usque pervenerant. Horum *πρωβωλος*, (provolos), id est predux, Sagittus, Saracenus pessimus impiusque extiterat. Deo tamen propitio, pugna commissa *ταλέπορος* (taleporos), id est miser, ipse cum omnibus suis interiit.' Dümmler, the editor of 'Liudprand,' in Pertz's smaller collection seems to connect this attack on Acqui with the raid of the Saracens into Alamannia, as he refers in a note to Flodoard, sub anno 936, where this is the only mention of the Saracens.

† 'Chronicon Novaliciense,' v. 9.

‡ Oehlmann, page 212, dates this soon after 961, without giving his authority. There is no date in the Chronicle itself.

§ As to the fact that Saracen names are frequently found in the neighbourhood of Roman roads, see Keller, p. 9, note 8.

may be established beyond dispute. There is a document still extant, dated August 8, 940, by which Otto the Great, the future Emperor, at the request of Herman, Duke of Alamannia, grants two churches to Bishop Waldo, of Cur, for his life, the bishop 'conquerens nobis suum episcopium continuâ depredatione Sarracenorum valde esse desolatum.\*' In 952 Otto crossed the Alps, probably by the Septimer, and could see for himself the districts wasted by the Saracens. Another charter granted by Otto, and bearing date December 28, 955, makes over to Bishop Hartpert, of Cur, at the prayer of Otto's brother, Bruno, Archbishop of Cologne, a great number of churches, 'ad aliqua ejusdem infortunia recuperanda, quia loca ad eandem ecclesiam pertinentia ab Italiâ redeundo invasione Sarracenorum destructa ipsi experimento didicimus, ipsiusque ecclesiae paupertati compatiendo votumque in ipsâ peractum solvendo.'† Here we have the evidence of Otto himself as to the ravages of the Saracens, who probably did not dare to attack him and his large retinue on their journey in 952, or on his passages of the Septimer in 965, and Bernardino in 966. These documents prove beyond possibility of contradiction that the Saracens did appear in the diocese of Cur, probably in consequence of the treaty of 942 with Hugh, King of Italy, of which we shall shortly speak, though their route thither cannot be clearly made out. That they also extended their raids to the great monastery of St. Gallen is clear from Ekkehart's (IV.) account‡ of the successful attack made by Dean Walto in 954, on a band of Saracens, who coming 'e parte australi,' had fallen upon the Alpine pasturages belonging to the monastery. It must be allowed that Ekkehart is not always accurate or trustworthy; but in

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\* Von Mohr, 'Codex Diplomaticus Raetiae,' i. 66 (No. 44). Keller, p. 12, quotes another charter of Otto, as granting in 953 various lands to Bishop Hartpert as a compensation for losses at the hands of the Saracens. But in the original document (v. Mohr, i. 73, No. 51) there is no mention of the ravages of Saracens, nor are the lands restored for any similar reason. Many other grants were made by Otto to the see of Cur or to Bishop Hartpert, and it may be conjectured that they had something to do with the incursions of the Saracens.

† Von Mohr, *ibid.* i. 74 (No. 52). This passage is repeated word for word in the confirmation of this gift by Otto at Constanz, Aug. 28, 972 (v. Mohr, i. 91, No. 64).

‡ Ekkeharti (IV.) 'Casus Sancti Galli,' in Goldast's 'Alamannicarum Rerum Scriptores aliquot vetusti' (Frankfurt, 1606) p. 99, or in the new edition prepared for the Historical Society of St. Gallen, by E. Meyer von Knonau (S. Gallen, 1877), pp. 408-11.

this case local tradition may be presumed to have preserved the fact of the Saracen incursion, though the details may be a later addition. Ekkehart relates this as merely a specimen of what the monastery suffered at the hands of these freebooters, for he adds, 'si miseriam omnem, quam *nostrates* a Saracenis sunt passi percurrerem volumen efficerem.' Two touches in his narrative deserve mention, as they help to explain the rapidity with which the Saracens moved. He speaks of them as men, 'quorum natura est in montibus plurimum valere,' and says that they roamed through ('percurrerint') the mountains 'capris (sc. chamois) fugatores.' The chief modern historian of St. Gallen, Arx, states that the Saracens plundered Sargans, the Toggenberg, and Appenzell, but without citing his authorities.\* In the life of St. Majolus, Abbot of Cluny, written by his successor St. Odilo, we find the following passage in a description of the ravages of the Saracens: 'crudelissima Sarracenorum ingens multitudo . . . ad terminos usque Italiae atque Provinciae pervenit . . . urbes, vicos, villasque depopulans, et sic *per Alpes Julias usque ad juga Penninarum Alpinum*, rapido cursu pervenit.' †

From these accounts of the Saracens in the east of modern Switzerland, it will be seen that they came thither solely for purposes of plunder, and not to settle. Hence we should not expect to find many traces of them in local nomenclature or tradition. The present writer cannot lay claim to either a sufficiently intimate acquaintance with these districts, or such a knowledge of philology as would enable him to enter into an examination of possible Saracenic traces in names of places. For these reasons, and because he conceives that the presence of the Saracens in Eastern Switzerland has been abundantly proved from authentic written documents, it will suffice to mention but one instance of a local name, which seems to be connected with the Saracens. That name is Pontresina. In three documents of 1139 we read of property situated 'ad pontem Sarisinam.' In another of 1244 'Tobias de Ponte Zarisino' appears. In others, dated 1291 and 1296 occurs the name of 'Casparus de Ponte Sarraceno.' The same authority ‡ whence these items are taken, mentions a massive tower still standing near Pontresina, which probably served to guard the

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\* I. v. Arx, 'Geschichte des Cantons S. Gallen (1810),' i. 226 (apud Keller, p. 13, note 20).

† 'Acta Sanctorum,' ed. 1680; Maii, tom. ii. p. 689.

‡ J. H. Hotz, in 'Anzeiger für Schweizerische Geschichte und Alterthumskunde,' 1856, p. 10.

bridge, and which is attributed by local tradition to the Saracens. This derivation is, however, rejected by the late Z. Pallioppi, of Celerina, a local antiquarian, and by Mr. F. S. Reilly (the translator of Dr. Ludwig's Guide to Pontresina), who refer the name to a Rhaetian or old Cymric root; and Mr. Reilly goes so far as to doubt the existence of a bridge there in the Middle Ages, but Herr Hotz expressly mentions that a shield is still to be seen on several houses in the place, in which a bridge is clearly distinguishable, and adds that the family of 'Sarraz,' which still flourishes there, is popularly said to descend from the Saracens.

But however it may be with these philological considerations, the evidence cited above in proof of the Saracens in eastern Switzerland is clear and convincing. An attempt has been made by some writers, among others by Mr. Freshfield in his 'Note,' p. 210, to discredit this evidence by suggesting that it may be possible that the Magyars or Hungarians and Saracens may have been confounded under the common appellation of 'Saraceni,' a term which was used very loosely in the Middle Ages. No doubt the ethnology of the mediæval writers is wanting in precision and exactness. Flodoard, however, mentions the 'Ungari' repeatedly, and always quite apart from the Saracens (Ann. 919, 922, 924, 926, 927, 933, 934, 937, 951, 954, 955), and in fact never mentions any but the Fraxinetum Saracens, according to the index to Pertz's edition. Ekkehart (cap. 51) describes in great detail the Magyar attack on his own monastery in 926, quite independently of his narrative of Dean Walto and the Saracens, in 954. He sets them in the strongest opposition when telling the story of Conrad of Burgundy, and his stratagem to rid himself of both his enemies (cap. 65), to which we shall refer later on. Finally he states very clearly his own opinion on the subject: 'qui Ungros Agarenos putant, longâ viâ errant' (cap. 82). The same view of the distinction between the two is found also in a gloss on Orosius: \* 'Ungri, quos longè a vero lapsi idiotæ nostri quidam nunc Agarenos vocant, sed et scribunt.' Even if the name 'Saraceni' is taken as a generic name for marauder, its occurrence in Eastern Switzerland would go far to prove that Saracens were the chief marauders of the district.†

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\* Dümmler, Ekkehart, p. 19 (in Haupt's 'Zeitschrift für Deutsches Alterthum,' Neue Folge, Band ii.) The 'Annales Sangallenses Majores' (formerly called 'Annales Hepidanni'), however, constantly use the two names as synonymous.

† The passage cited by Mr. Freshfield from Theobald's 'Das Bund-

The general conclusion, then, as to the presence of Saracens in Eastern Switzerland, at which the writer has arrived, is that it can be established as an historical fact by authentic documents, in which special pains are taken to distinguish the true Saracens and the Hungarians from each other.

Reverting to our main subject after this long digression, we come to another passage of Flodoard, which again records the destruction by the Saracens of a band of pilgrims bound to Rome in 939.\* This may apply to the Rhaetian passes, or may be connected with the important event recorded in the following year, 940, viz. the sacking and burning of the great abbey of St. Maurice, in the Rhone valley, then one of the most famous houses in Christendom, by the Saracens, who for that purpose must have crossed the Great St. Bernard, this being the first mention of their ravages on the north side of the central chain of the Pennine Alps.† Flodoard tells us that a band of pilgrims, English and French, could not cross the Alps, as the

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ner Oberland' (p. 89) is based on a misconception. In 926 the Hungarians attacked St. Gallen (Ekkehart, cap. 51, sqq.), and in the same year Bishop Waldo of Cur got a charter from Henry I. conferring on him for his life certain lands and possessions, possibly to make up for the damage inflicted on his diocese by Hungarian freebooters. (Von Mohr, i. 61, No. 41.) Planta, 'Das alte Raetien,' 402. Gelpke, 'Kirchengeschichte der Schweiz,' ii. 482. In 940 Bishop Waldo received certain churches from Otto I. in consideration of the ravages of the Saracens (vide supra). Theobald thus has made a mistake in the date of the Hungarian raid, and assumes a special plundering of the abbey of Dissentis, which is not mentioned by the original authorities, though Bishop Waldo was also abbat of that house (Gelpke, ii. 480.) Cf. in general Von Moor, 'Geschichte von Curraetien,' 190. It may be noted that all the archives and manuscripts of the abbey of Dissentis perished when it was burnt by the French, May 6, 1799, and this may explain the rarity of early documents relating to that district (V. Moor, 'Geschichte von Curraetien,' 1322). It may be added that the great fight on the Lechfeld took place in 955, and *not* before 940, as Theobald assumes.

\* Flodoard, ann. 939 (Pertz, iii. 386): 'Collecta diversorum hominum quae Romam petebat a Sarracenis pervasa et interempta est.' Cf. sub ann. 936: 'S. in Alamanniam pergunt et revertentes multos Romam petentes interimunt.'

† Flodoard, ann. 940 (Pertz, iii. 388): 'Collecta Transmarinorum sed et Gallorum, quae Romam petebat, revertitur, occisis eorum nonnullis a Sarracenis, nec potuit Alpes transire propter Sarracenos, qui vicum monasterii Sancti Mauricii occupaverant.' Ekkehart, cap. 65, alludes to this event. It is remarked by Goergens (pp. 148, 179) that the name by which the entire chain of the Alps was known to the Arabs was simply a corruption of 'Mons Jovis,' viz., 'Mont Dschaus,' to

Saracens had 'occupied' the monastery of St. Maurice; and St. Ulrich, bishop of Augsburg, on his visit in 940, found that it had been 'recently' burnt, and that there was but a solitary monk left in charge of the ruins.\* A letter has been preserved, addressed by the abbat, Rudolf II., to King Lewis from-beyond-Sea (Louis d'Outremer), enumerating the gifts heaped on the abbey by the king's predecessors, and beseeching him to restore to its original splendour the great house which had been so cruelly used by the barbarians.†

But by this time the harryings of this band had stirred up Hugh of Provence, the titular king of Italy, to make an attempt to expel them from their strongholds. In 941 he sent an embassy to Constantinople to request the emperor Romanos I. to furnish him with the celebrated Greek fire, and with some 'chelandia,' in order that these might blockade Fraxinetum by sea, and cut off all reinforcements from Spain, whilst the king himself would assail them from the other side by land.‡ This the emperor agreed to do, on the condition that Hugh married one of his daughters to Romanos, grandson of the emperor, and son of Constantine Porphyrogenitus, an arrangement which was carried out by the marriage of Bertha, Hugh's illegitimate daughter.§ Meanwhile Hugh had come to terms with Alberic, the Patrician of Rome, and husband of his only legitimate daughter Alda.||

which, in ignorance of the meaning of 'mont,' was often prefixed the Arabic equivalent 'dschebel.' This fact tends to show that their occupation of the Great St. Bernard must have been more important than would appear from the contemporary authorities, and that this portion of the range of the Alps was by far the best known to them.

\* Gerhardi, 'S. Oudalrici Vita,' (Pertz, iv. 404), c. 15: (S. Oudalricus) 'Monasterium (sc. S. Mauricii) noviter a Saracenis exustum invenit, et nullum de habitantibus ibi conspexit nisi unum aedis aedilem combustum monasterium custodientem.'

† 'Gallia Christiana,' xii. 793: 'Nostra ecclesia, quae cumulus (forte tumulus) sanctorum martyrum est, cum universis aedificiis ad eam pertinentibus per manus barbarorum ita in cineres redacta est, ut etiam muri ex magnâ parte corruerint. Ad sanctorum igitur sepulcra restauranda et ornanda, sicut regiae congruit pietati, totis misericordiae visceribus affluatis, de vestrà mammonâ amicos vobis sanctos martyres faciatis, ut ab ipsis in aeterna tabernacula recipi valeatis.' This letter is supposed to have been written the same year as the sack of the abbey.

‡ Liudprand, 'Antapodosis,' v. 9. Gingins-la-Sarra explains 'chelandia' as meaning 'bateaux plats,' Archiv, ix. 200.

§ Liudprand, 'Antapodosis,' v. 14.

|| Flodoard, ann. 942. Cf. Gingins-la-Sarra, Archiv, ix. 200.

In accordance with these arrangements, in 942 Hugh led his army in person towards Fraxinetum, whither the Greek ships had sailed. The Greek fire soon destroyed all the vessels of the Saracens: the king attacked Fraxinetum itself, and forced the Saracens to take refuge in the range of hills, now known as the Montagne des Maures, immediately overhanging their fortress. He then surrounded them, and would without doubt have completely exterminated them, and thus saved the Alpine districts from great distress, if he had not had reason to believe that his rival for the crown of Italy, Berengar, Marquis of Ivrea, who had fled to the court of Otto I. in 941,\* had at last succeeded in procuring an army from him in order to enforce his claims. For this reason Hugh resigned the splendid prize which was within his grasp, dismissed his Greek allies, and concluded a treaty with the Saracens, who could never have expected such favourable terms, 'hâc ratione, ut in montibus qui Sueviam atque Italiam dividunt, starent,' his object being 'ut si forte Berengarius exercitum ducere vellet, transire eum omnibus modis prohiberent.'† Suevia is probably used here to mean 'High Germany' generally; and the result of the treaty was thus to hand over the legal possession of all the Alpine

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\* According to Liudprand, v. 10, Berengar fled over the Great St. Bernard in 941, to Duke Hermann of Swabia, and his wife Willa, who was far advanced in pregnancy, over the Bernardino in the depth of winter, to join him. Liudprand, v. 11, has some furious verses upbraiding the mountains with having allowed Berengar to pass them, though they were so fatal to all holy men who approached them, and served as a refuge for those bloodthirsty robbers the Moors. To which ever of the two passes this may refer, it is an instructive passage, as Liudprand does *not* mention elsewhere the Saracens on the Mons Jovis (Great St. Bernard), or on the Mons Avium (Bernardino).

† Liudprand, 'Antapodosis,' v. 16: 'Rex itaque Hugo, congregato exercitu, classibus per Tirrenum mare ad Fraxinetum directis, terrestri ipse eò itinere pergit. Quo dum Greci pervenirent, igne projecto Sarracenorum naves mox omnes exurunt' (Flodoard, ann. 942; Pertz, iii. 389: 'Idem vero rex Hugo Sarracenos de Fraxineto eorum munitione disperdere conabatur'). Sed et rex Fraxinetum ingressus, Sarracenos omnes in Montem Maurum fugere compulit; in quo eos circumsedendo capere posset, si res hæc, quam prompturus sum, non impediret. 17. Rex Hugo Berengarium, ne collectis ex Franciâ et ex Sueviâ copiis super se irrueret regnumque sibi auferret, maxime timuit. Unde non bono accepto consilio, Græcos ad propria mox remisit; ipseque cum Sarracenis hæc ratione foedus iniit, κ. ρ. λ.; cf. Gingins-la-Sarra's commentary, 'Archiv,' ix. 203. The treaty was so far successful that Berengar was not able to regain Italy till 945 or 946, and then only by the long roundabout route by Landeck and Trent (Liudprand, v. 26). Cf. Dümmler, 'Otto der Grosse,' p. 138.

passes to the freebooters, who had so narrowly escaped utter ruin. Liudprand bursts out into lamentations over this shameful treaty, and compares Hugh disadvantageously with Herod.\* The crossing of the St. Bernard in 940, and this treaty of 942, mark the highest point of the power and daring of the band of freebooters, the fortunes of which we have traced out in this paper. They now held the passes by a lawful title, and though the eastern were less closely guarded than the western, it is clear that it was no light matter to cross them, both from the various authorities cited above, and because Berengar did not succeed in recrossing the Alps till 945, and then only by a long *détour* by Landeck and Trent, though on his flight in 941 he had traversed the Great St. Bernard, seemingly without being molested. It was no doubt in consequence of the treaty of 942 that the harryings in eastern Switzerland took place, which we find referred to in the second charter granted by Otto I. to the see of Cur. Their unlooked-for deliverance seems to have led them to resume their plundering with renewed zeal.

The see of Maurienne was frequently overrun, especially in the year 943.† Grenoble in 954 had been ‘*diu*’ occupied by them,‡ and Bishop Isarn was compelled to transfer his residence to St. Donat, between Vienne and Valence.§ Nice and the country around was repeatedly wasted as well as the coast up to Genoa.||

We may mention here a marvellous tale related by Ekkehart concerning King Conrad of Transjurane Burgundy, who,

\* Liudprand, ‘*Antapodosis*,’ v. 17 : ‘*Eò* (sc. in montibus) constituti quam multos Christianorum ad beatorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli limine transeuntium sanguinem fuderint, ille solus scit numerus qui eorum nomina scripta tenet in libro viventium. Quam inique tibi rex Hugo regnum defendere conaris! Herodes, ne terreno regno privaretur, innocentes multos occidit; tu ut obtineas, nocentes et morte dignos dimittis.’

† ‘*Gallia Christiana*,’ iii. 1067–68.

‡ Reinaud, 181, n. 1, gives an inscription on a tower built at St. Donat by Bishop Isarn, which is dated 954, and runs thus :

‘*Per Mauros habitanda diu Granopolis ista (al. esset),  
Lipsana sanctorum præsul aborbe tollit (al. præsul cavere habet).’*

§ This comes out clearly in a dispute between St. Hugh, Bishop of Grenoble, and Guy, Archbishop of Vienna in 1094, as to the possession of the priory of St. Donat, where the bishop was admitted to have lived during the occupation of Grenoble by the Saracens; but the point in dispute was whether he was a fugitive in another diocese, or whether the priory belonged to his see. Reinaud, 199, n. 1.

|| Reinaud, 180.

when the Saracens and Hungarians poured into his land, persuaded the Saracens to attack the Hungarians on his behalf, and the Hungarians to assail the Saracens on the same ground; and, when a great massacre had taken place, came down with his own army on the survivors, slew many, and sold the rest into captivity at Arles.\* That the Hungarians on their return from a freebooting expedition passed through Burgundy is well known; but Ekkehart's story is rejected by the best authorities as bearing marks of a later origin.† If there be any fragment of truth in it, the event must have taken place between 937, the year of Conrad's accession, and 954, the last time they are recorded to have overrun Burgundy.‡ Even if a legend, it clearly shows that Saracens and Hungarians were clearly distinguished from one another in popular belief. In 951, Flodoard mentions for the last time an attack by the Saracens on pilgrims crossing the Alps, and these were treated in a milder way than earlier bands, probably because of the treaty of 942, and were allowed to pursue their journey on paying a toll.§ In connection with this new aspect of the character of these bandits, we may mention a confused statement of Ekkehart (cap. 65) that they settled ('conseederant') in a certain valley, 'paceque petitâ uxores filias gentis ducunt: vallem maximae ubertatis parvis regi reeditibus datis incolunt.' Keller (p. 14) conjectures that this valley may have been the Valais or the Val d'Abondance in Savoy; Furrer || that it was the Val de Bagnes. The fact that some of the marauders settled down and married native wives is of importance with reference

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\* Ekkehart, cap. 65; Flodoard, ann. 954, says that Conrad made a treaty with Hungarians, after pillaging in northern districts of modern France: 'Burgundiam intrant, quorum non parva manus tam praeliis quam morbis interiiit; ceteri per Italiam revertuntur in sua.' The 'Ann. Einsiedlenses,' ann. 954 (Pertz, iii. 142) merely state, 'Ungari per Noricos et Francos in Italiam.'

† Dümmler, 'Otto der Grosse,' 235. G. Meyer von Knonau in his edition of Ekkehart, note 821.

‡ Ekkehart, note 821. There is no ground for believing the battle to have been fought near Neuchâtel. This erroneous notion is probably derived from Johannes von Müller's statement ('Die Geschichten schweizerischer Eidgenossenschaft,' ed. Leipzig, 1825, i. 251) that the king's mother with a bishop (probably St. Ulrich of Augsburg) fled for refuge from the invaders to a solitary tower near the site of the present Neuchâtel.

§ Flodoard, ann. 951 (Pertz, iii. 401): 'Sarraceni meatum Alpium obsidentes, a viatoribus Romam petentibus tributum accipiunt et sic eos transire permittunt.'

|| 'Geschichte von Wallis,' ii. 143 (Sitten, 1854).

to the question (to be discussed later on) of Saracens in the Saasthal. That, however, the Saracens were still troublesome we see from the sending of John, a monk of the abbey of Gorze, to Abderrhaman III., Khalif of Cordova, as an ambassador from Otto I. John reached Cordova in 953, but, his credentials being understood to contain reflections on the religion of Islam, was not admitted to an audience of the Khalif. The Khalif sent Recemund, Bishop of Elvira,\* to Otto, and he succeeded in inducing Otto to order John of Gorze to suppress the obnoxious expressions; and John was received by the Khalif in July 956. One of the principal objects of his mission was that he ‘amicitiam pacemque de infestatione latrunculorum Saracenorum quoquo pacto conficiat.’† The result of this mission is not known; but that the Saracens were becoming weaker appears from several incidents, which show also an increasing desire on the part of the natives to rid themselves of their troublesome visitors. We find in 960 Bishop Giso of Aosta putting forth certain regulations as to tolls on all traders and merchants crossing the Great St. Bernard. Yet, as we shall see very shortly, the St. Bernard was the scene of the last act of brigandage of the Saracens in the Alps; while, on the other hand, the list of articles taxed shows that the stream of traffic across the pass was beginning to revive.‡

In 965 Bishop Isarn of Grenoble appealed to the nobles and

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\* ‘Vita Joh. Gorz.,’ cap. 130, in Mabillon’s ‘Acta Sanctorum ordinis Sancti Benedicti,’ Saec. v. p. 404 *sqq.*; cf. Dümmler, ‘Otto der Grosse,’ p. 279. Reinaud (pp. 187–193) gives a high-flown and not quite accurate account of the proceedings. As to the continued connection of the Fraxinetum Saracens with Spain see Liudprand, i. 3, and v. 9, ‘ne ab Hispaniâ victus eis (sc. Saracenis) aut copiarum subsidia provenirent.’

† It is a curious fact that it was to this dignitary that Liudprand dedicated his ‘Antapodosis’ (written 958 to 962): ‘Reverendo totiusque sanctitatis pleno, domno Recemundo, Liberritanae (sc. Illiberitanae) ecclesiae episcopo’ (i. 1). He says that the bishop, whom he addresses as ‘carissime pater,’ stirred him up to write this work, but that he put off beginning it ‘biennio,’ so that it was very probably on occasion of this visit to the court of Otto that Recemund induced Liudprand to write this his chief historical work. He apologises for describing the position of Fraxinetum thus: ‘Cujus (sc. Fraxineti) ut cernentis liquido pateat situs, quemadmodum temet latere minime reor, immo melius scire, sicut ab ipsis qui vestri sunt tributarii regis, Abderahmem scilicet, potestis conjicere, κ. ρ. λ. (i. 2).

‡ Besson, ‘Mémoires du diocèse de Genève,’ p. 473 (apud Oehlmann, p. 248, n. 4). Reinaud, p. 195, wrongly assumes that from this time the St. Bernard was entirely cleared of Saracens.

people, and succeeded in freeing his cathedral city from the infidels, in honour of which he began to build the present cathedral church. The reconquered lands were divided among the victors, and certain noble families of Dauphiné, such as the Mont Eynards, are said to have owed their wealth to this crusade on a small scale.\*

Liudprand has preserved to us a curious incident, which he places in 963. He states that King Adalbert, son of Berengar, titular King of Italy, alarmed at the conduct of the emperor, abandoned Italy and joined himself to the Saracens at Fraxinetum.†

On January 18, 968, the Emperor Otto I. addressed a letter to the chief nobles of Saxony from Capua, stating his intention, if the ambassadors from the Eastern Emperor, who were then expected at his court, offered suitable terms, of that summer going to Fraxinetum to destroy the Saracens on his way home.‡ But having been long delayed by the war with the Greeks in South Italy, and hearing of the death of his mother, his son, and some of his chief nobles, he resolved to hurry home in April 972, and gave up the idea of the expedition against Fraxinetum.§

We now come to the last and crowning achievement of this band of robbers, which, though probably their most successful exploit, yet raised such a storm of indignation against them that their stronghold was finally broken up and the neighbouring districts freed from their savage harrying. We refer to the capture in 973 of St. Majolus, the abbat of Cluny, and his companions on descending from the Great St. Bernard to the

\* Reinaud, 198; cf. charter, quoted in note 1 of p. 199 ('Notum sit . . . quod post destructionem paganorum, Isarnus episcopus aedificavit ecclesiam Gratianopolitanam'), and another charter, quoted from Chorier ('Estat politique de la province du Dauphiné,' ii. 377), by which Isarnus grants certain lands to Rodolf, head of the house of Eynard, as a reward for his valour.

† Liudprand, 'Gesta Ottonis,' cap. 4: 'Adeo enim eundem Adelbertum, ecclesiarum dei ejusdemque papae Johannis persecutorem, imperator sanctus terruerat, ut, omnem Italiam deserens, Fraxinetum adiret seque Sarracenorum fidei commendaret.' Ibid. cap. 7: 'Adelbertus . . . a Fraxineto rediens.'

‡ Widukindi 'Res Gestae Saxonicae,' cap. 70 (continuatio): 'Si vero voluntati nostrae (nuntii Constantinopolitani regis) paruerint, ut praesenti aestate . . . per Fraxanetum ad destruendos Sarracenos, Deo comite, iter arripiemus et sic ad vos, disponimus.'

§ Widukind, cap. 75: 'Igitur imperator, auditâ morte matris et filii, caeterorumque principalium virorum . . . judicavit ab expeditione Fraxaneti abstinere, et dispositis in Italiâ rebus, patriam remeare.'

plains.\* St. Majolus, as we have before noted, had been forced in his youth to fly with his parents from his home in Provence to Burgundy. In 970 he crossed the Alps safely by way of Cur on his way to Rome. Having long tarried in the capital of Christendom, he was moved by his fervent desire to see his monks again to start on his journey homewards. Perhaps encouraged by letters from Bishop Giso of Aosta, he chose the Great St. Bernard as the most convenient route to Cluny. Having overcome with great labour all the natural difficulties of the pass, his party descended on July 22, 973 † (twenty-four days before the feast of the Assumption), to the little plain at the junction of the two Dranses, on which the village of Pons Ursariae (or Ursarii), or Orsières, ‡ is built. They had crossed the stream, and were beginning to descend the narrow zigzag path which would lead them down to Martigny, when they were suddenly set upon by the Saracens, who had been lurking behind the rocks near the path. Many of the travellers, who had come with St. Majolus thinking that there would be safety in numbers and in the company of so holy a man, took to flight, but were hotly pursued, captured, and manacled. St. Majolus could easily have escaped, but this his anxiety for

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\* The following narrative is constructed out of the three lives of St. Majolus (by Nalgodus, one of his disciples, by Syrus and Aldebaldu, and by St. Odilo, his successor at Cluny) printed in the 'Acta Sanctorum,' ed. 1680; Maii, tom. ii. pp. 657-690. Some incidents, specially noted, come from Rodolfus Glaber (Pertz, iv.).

† Reinaud, 205, and Oehlmann, 222, wrongly date it 972; Ladoucette, p. 42, in 974. See Dümmler, 'Otto der Grosse,' 485, note 1, and Keller, 15, note 23.

‡ Nalgodus, in his life of St. Majolus (loc. citat., p. 663) expressly says that the event took place on the 'Mons Jovinus,' that is, the Mons Jovis, or Great St. Bernard. Reinaud, 201, and Ladoucette, 42, maintain that St. Majolus crossed the Mont Genève to the valley of the Durance, and then the Col d'Orcières to the valley of the Drac; Pons Ursariae being the Pont du Fossé in the gorge of Orcières, and the Drancus the Drac. But there seems to be no documentary authority in support of this theory. Ladoucette mentions a mound with ruins still called 'Château Sarrasin,' near the mouth of the gorge of Orcières, above Ricoux, and another hard by, known as the 'Champ des Morts,' where broken weapons and crucifixes are said to have been dug up several times; and in the neighbouring village of St. Laurent du Cros there is a quarter called St. Mayol (or St. Mayoou), and a legend that the messenger sent to convey the ransom to St. Majolus rested there on his way. Opposite the Château Sarrasin there is a bridge called Pont de Mailloou or Mayoou, the construction of which is attributed to the Saracens (cf. Ladoucette, 640-649).

and sympathy with his fellow-travellers would not allow him to do. The robbers, returning from the pursuit in high spirits, found him sitting on a stone by the wayside praying that none of his companions might perish, and immediately put him in chains and carried him off to a dungeon cut out of the living rock, though not before he had had time to save one of his companions from receiving a sword-stroke, by himself stopping the blow, and being grievously wounded thereby. But, as his biographer remarks, his good act did not go unrewarded, for the wound was healed at once, though he ever after had a scar on his hand. He tried in vain to soften the hard hearts of his captors by preaching to them the Gospel of Christ; but they only mocked and jeered at him the more, though a few are said to have been impressed with his words.

Two incidents of his captivity are preserved by Rodulfus Glaber (= Calvus), i. 4 (Pertz vii. 54-5). One day for breakfast he was offered the same fare as the Saracens, 'carnes panemque admodum asperum,' but declined it on the very different grounds that God would feed him, and that he had never been used to such coarse food. One of the Saracens, inspired with respect for him, washed his hands and proceeded to prepare some dough on his shield, 'satis mundissime,' which he baked and offered to the holy man, who accepted it and consumed it, after saying grace.

On another occasion, one of the band, engaged in shaping a bit of wood with his knife, placed his foot upon a copy of the Scriptures which the saint was accustomed to carry about with him. Majolus, on seeing this act, heaved a deep sigh, on which some other Saracens severely rebuked their companion for treading under foot the writings of great prophets. It is added that later in the same day the offender irritated his comrades in some way, so that they fell upon him and cut off his foot, which Rodulfus Glaber considers a judgment of God on him. But the abbat's faith was not shaken. When his captors had taken away all his books from him, he found under his cloak a copy of St. Jerome on the Assumption of the Virgin,\* the reading of which greatly cheered him. Finding that it was only twenty-four days before the feast of the Assumption, he prayed earnestly that he might celebrate it among Christians, and his prayer was heard. Wearied with the fatigues of the day, he then fell asleep. That night there appeared to him a vision of

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\* This probably alludes to a treatise—'De ortu et nativitate Virginis,' formerly attributed to St. Jerome, but now believed of much later origin. ('Acta Sanctorum,' loc. citat., p. 666.)

the pope in his pontifical robes, holding a censer filled with burning incense, which he took as a sign of his speedy deliverance. Again while asleep his chains were miraculously unfastened, awe-struck by which wonder the Saracens contented themselves with guarding him, and treated him in a more courteous fashion. On being questioned as to what property he possessed, he replied that he possessed nothing of his own, nor did he wish to own anything, but he allowed that many of those under his jurisdiction were very wealthy. The brigands then settled on a ransom of one thousand pounds of silver, 'ut videlicet singulis libra una in partem perveniret,\* and allowed him to send by one of his monks taken with him a letter to Cluny, which ran as follows:—'To the officers and brethren of Cluny, Majolus, the unfortunate prisoner in bonds. The pains of hell have come upon me: the snares of death have overtaken me. If it be your will, send a ransom for me and for those who have been taken with me.' The receipt of this letter caused great grief at Cluny, though they rejoiced at the thought that he had not been brutally put to death, and might still be restored to them by payment of a ransom. The required sum was got together with great difficulty by selling the ornaments and even the ordinary utensils belonging to the abbey, to which were added gifts from pious men. Several of the older monks then journeyed to the place of captivity, and had the joy of setting their beloved abbat and his companions at liberty, the Saracens returning to Fraxinetum ('propria cubilia') 'per consueta devia.'† He was received with every mark of respect and affection on his arrival at Cluny, where, according to his prayer, he was able to celebrate the feast of the Assumption among his beloved brothers. It is added that when the Saracens were overtaken and defeated, and the booty divided, the books belonging to the saint were found and were set apart for him.

This daring act of violence excited the greatest consternation throughout Christendom, and we hear of several local risings against the Saracens before the final attack on their stronghold. Such, for instance, were the expulsion of the in-

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\* Rodulfus Glaber, i. 4. (Pertz, vii. 54.) The ransom would amount to about 700,000 francs (28,000*l.*) current value, taking the pound at 700 francs (Reinaud, 203, n. 1). It is curious that this is the only occasion, save in the case of their first attack on Fraxinetum, on which any information is given by our authorities as to the number of the Saracen marauders.

† Life by Syrus and Aldebaldu, p. 680.

vaders from the environs of Sisteron by Bobo,\* and from Gap by a certain chief named William,† perhaps the same as the Count of Provence next to be spoken of.‡

It was in 975 that William I., Count of Provence, destroyed the robber-nest of Fraxinetum. In conjunction with Ardoin, marquess of Ivrea, he took the fortress by storm and put all the garrison to the sword, not sparing a single man. All honour to brave Count William, who dared to face and succeeded in crushing so formidable a foe,§ thus sweeping from the face of the earth a band of brigands, who had inflicted incalculable damage on the inhabitants of the Alps for a space of nearly ninety years, who had successfully resisted the attacks of an Eastern Emperor and of a King of Italy, and who had determined the mighty Otto the Great, the second restorer of the empire, to come against them in person.

With this feat of arms of Count William may perhaps be connected the story that a certain Fraxinetum Saracen named Aimo, having quarrelled with his comrades about the division of some booty, came to Rotbald to betray them, and led Count Rotbaldus thither, so that he was able to destroy them all.¶ It does not seem to have been remarked before that this Rotbald was the brother and successor of William, Count of Provence, and himself held as his share of the paternal inheritance the

\* 'Acta Sanctorum,' ed. 1680; Maii, tom v. 185. Cf. Ladoucette, 45. Reinaud, 205-6. There is much that is fabulous in the account, and the narrative of the extermination of the Saracens at Fraxinetum by S. Bobo is utterly untrustworthy. (Dümmler, 'Otto der Grosse,' 485, n. 1.)

† Bouche, 'Histoire de Provence,' ii. 44. (Apud Reinaud, 206-7.)

‡ Reinaud, 207. Ladoucette, 43.

§ 'Acta Sanctorum,' ed. 1680; Maii, tom ii. 689-690. (S. Majoli Vita ab St. Odilone scripta. According to Dümmler, 485 n. 1, the passage also occurs word for word in Odilonis Vit. S. Syri apud Mabilon.—Acta, Saec. V., 779.) 'Dominus . . . per Wilelmum, illustrissimum virum et Christianissimum principem, meritis beati Majoli, jugum Sarracenorum ab humeris Christianorum deposuit, et multa terrarum spatia, ab eis injusti possessa, ab eorum tyrannicâ dominatione potenti virtute eripuit.' Rodulfus Glaber, i. 4 (Pertz, vii. 55.) 'Ipsique denique Sarraceni paulo post in loco qui Fraxinetus dicitur circumacti ab exercitu Wilelmi Arelatensis ducis, omnesque in brevi perierunt, ut ne unus quidem rediret in patriam.' William's real title was Count of Provence. (Cf. Dümmler, 485, n. 1. 'L'Art de vérifier les dates,' ed. 1818, vol. x. 39.) The Grimaldi, now Princes of Monaco, are said to derive their wealth from lands given to an ancestor by Count William as a reward for his services against the Saracens. (Reinaud, 209.)

¶ 'Chronicon Novaliciense,' v. 18.

county of Forcalquier, of which he was the first count *eo nomine*.\*

An incident is preserved to us, which brings together the two chief actors in the closing scene of the domination of the Saracens in the Alps, viz., the death of William of Provence in 992, in the arms of S. Majolus, who invested him with the monastic habit before his death, according to the usual practice.†

But though we hear no more of Fraxinetum, all traces of the Saracens in the Alps did not disappear, but may still be distinguished, especially in local names, at the present day.

It is a plausible conjecture that the false gods and demons with whom St. Bernard of Menthon had to contend when establishing his hospice (980) on the Mons Jovis, which was later called after him, may be none other than the Saracens posted on that frequented route.‡ However that may be, there still exists in the church of Bourg St. Pierre, at the foot of the Grand St. Bernard, an inscription engraved on a stone, which since the rebuilding of the church in 1739 has served as the doorstep, a barbarism which has resulted in the almost entire destruction of the words. It records the erection of this church by Hugh, bishop of Geneva (1019–1038), an illegitimate son of Rudolf III., king of Transjurane Burgundy, at a time when the Saracens had ‘long’ been wasting the fertile Rhone valley.§

\* ‘L’Art de vérifier les dates,’ x. 395. Cf. Reinaud, 182. Oehlmann, 224.

† ‘L’Art de vérifier les dates,’ x. 395.

‡ Keller, 15, n. 23; Oehlmann, 220, who state it as a generally received theory, and as ‘almost beyond doubt.’ A ‘Vie de S. Bernard de Menthon par un chanoine du Grd. S. Bernard,’ Paris, 1862 (sold at the Hospice), suggests (p. 63) that the brigands, whether Mohammedans, Jews, or recreant Christians, set up some form of demon worship in the ruins of the old Roman temple of Jupiter, and that it is to this that St. Bernard’s struggle with the demons refers.

§ The text of the inscription given by Sebastian Briguet in his ‘Vallesia Christiana’ (Seduni, 1744) and amended in the last line by Keller 19, is as follows:—

‘Ismaelita cohors Rhodani cum sparsa per agros,  
 Igne, fame, et ferro sæviret tempore longo,  
 Vertit in hanc vallem Poeninam Messio falcem  
 Hug. Praesul Genevæ Xpti post ductus amor,  
 Struxerat hoc templum Petri sub honore sacratum;  
 Omnipotens illi reddat mercede perenni,  
 In VI decima domus haec dicata Kalenda  
 Solis in Octobrem cum fit descensio mensem.’

The third line may be interpreted as belonging to the first lines, and

Traces of the Saracens abound in the upper valley of the Durance in Dauphiné, and have been carefully collected by Ladoucette in his most interesting and valuable work.\* Among others, he notes that at the end of the tenth century the Dévoluy (so called from 'devolutum,' because when the forests were cut down the fertile soil was carried down the sides of the hills by heavy rains and the melting of the snow), a desolate district to the south-west of the great range of the Dauphiné Alps, was almost entirely peopled by Saracens.† We are thus led to the question, in attempting to answer which this paper had its origin, of the alleged presence of the Saracens in the Saas valley.

It may be admitted at once that the evidence in favour of this theory is scanty and not based on any direct evidence. In short it is a probable conjecture and not an ascertained fact. We have seen above that the Saracens first crossed the St. Bernard in 940 and that they did not finally disappear from that neighbourhood till 973. We have drawn attention to the treaty of 942, by which the passes between 'Suevia' and Italy were committed to the charge of the Saracens, which they seem to have well fulfilled, judging from the case of Berengar. And finally we have noted the passages in Ekkehart, in which he speaks of the Saracens marrying daughters of the land and settling in a fertile valley, for which they paid a small rent to the King of Burgundy.‡ Now these are all general statements, and we have no written evidence of their settling in any one valley. Under these circumstances, it is permissible to recur to other sources of information, such as etymology of local names; and, though there are great temptations to forced interpretation of names to suit a preconceived theory, the writer is convinced that there is a strong presumption, based on etymological grounds, that the Saracens did occupy the valley of Saas,§ in the Valais, and have

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referring to Saracen harryings, or connected with the fourth line, and explained with reference to the spread of Christianity in this valley.

\* Ladoucette 39-48, 202, 369, 417, 580, 606, 608-9.

† Ladoucette, p. 559.

‡ Ekkehart, cap. 65, 'pace petitâ (Sarraceni) uxores filias gentis ducunt; vallem maximæ ubertatis parvis redivibus regi datis incolunt.' That Ekkehart's statements must be received with caution has been already observed.

§ The statements of Schiner ('Description du Département du Sim-  
plon,' Sion, 1812, pp. 267-269), quoted by Mr. Freshfield, are mere conjectures. The terms of the sale (1300 A.D.) of the 'alpe Mundmar,' by Count Jocelin Blandrate, to the 'Gemeinde of Saas,' do not bear out Mr. Freshfield's supposition that it was a mere pasture valley.

left traces of their presence in many local names in that district. This theory seems to have been first stated by C. M. Engelhardt,\* was elaborated by Keller in the work to which we have so often referred, and is supported by Goergens.† The two former writers agree in deriving 'Almagell' from Arabic words (al mahall), meaning 'the watch post,' for which its position commanding the routes to the Antrona Pass and the Monte Moro would admirably qualify it. Goergens derives it from 'al maschal' (= the battle), and explains it as the 'battle-field.' While maintaining strongly that all these Saasthal names are of Arabic origin (and he is himself a distinguished Arabic scholar), he considers it difficult to determine at the present time their precise original signification (p. 162). So, too, 'Alalain' is interpreted as meaning 'above the spring,' i.e., the height on which the spring takes its rise; the Eien Alp is similarly the Alp near the spring or stream. 'Mischabel' has been explained in several ways. Engelhardt regards the original form as having been 'Misch dscheb' meaning the 'triple-peaked' mountain. Keller, on the authority of Prof. Hitzig, suggests a rather fanciful interpretation, viz., 'the lioness with her young ones.' Goergens states that the Arabic root 'schibel' besides meaning 'young lion' has the general signification of 'wild animal,' and he accordingly interprets Mischabel as 'a region haunted by wild animals.'‡ Engelhardt thinks that Balferin or Balfrain means 'the mountain with two springs.' But the village of Balen at its foot would, in my opinion, probably account better for this name. Distel and Alphubel seem to me of purely Teutonic origin. The writer is entirely unacquainted with Arabic or any of the cognate tongues, and is thus unable to offer any authoritative criticism of these interpretations. It may, however, be stated that the opinion of both the Arabic professors at Oxford is in favour of the Arabic origin of the local names in the Saasthal enumerated. Mr. Gandell, the Laudian Professor of Arabic, who speaks with authority on Semitic matters, writes: 'I have looked again at the local names you have sent me and I must say that *all* have *distinct* proofs in them of Arabic—I mean to say such evidence as is not to be controverted.' Mr. Nicholl, the

\* In 'Natureschilderungen,' p. 116, and 'Das Monte Rosa und Matterhorn-Gebirg,' pp. 127-134.

† 'Sonntagsblatt des Bund,' 1878, p. 162.

‡ Loc. cit., p. 162. The local derivation from 'misch-gabel' (a mixing fork, or pitchfork) is untrustworthy and philologically improbable.

Lord Almoner's Professor of Arabic, suggests certain conjectural derivations of these local names, which it might be difficult to sustain; but he is equally clear that the names are of Arabic origin, and can be explained in no other way.

Apart from any details, it cannot fail to strike every intelligent reader that the fact of the existence of so many names in one Alpine valley which can be explained from the Arabic, is a strong proof that Arabic influences have not been wanting there; and this is rendered in the highest degree probable when we find that the Saracens beyond a doubt did many times between 940 and 973 appear in the neighbouring main valleys. In no other valley have local names yielded similar results, and there is thus but one conclusion, which, though far from being certain, is yet very probable.

Besides those names which are probably reminiscences of the occupation of the valley by the Saracens, we find the Pizzo del Moro, south of Banio, in the Val Anzasca (very near the Saas valley), and the Cima del Moro, between the Val Anzasca and the Val Antrona; compare the Mont Mort (as it is now written) near the Great St. Bernard, where the Saracens certainly maintained a garrison for many years. Above all there is the Monte Moro itself, the only easily accessible pass over the main range of the Alps between the St. Bernard and the Simplon. It has been conjectured that it owes its name to Ludovico Sforza, surnamed *Il Moro* (from his device—a mulberry tree), who crossed it in (?) 1449;\* or that the word is derived from the Celtic word 'mor,' meaning great, though it is not a high peak, but a pass.† It is much more natural, however, to interpret it with reference to the Saracens or Moors,‡ who may very probably have occupied it under the treaty of 942. It is true, no doubt, that it is not mentioned by any 'tenth century chroniclers,' who are fewer in number and not so given to mention the minor passes over the Alps as Mr. Freshfield in his 'Note,' p. 211, seems to assume. Engelhardt thought that he had found traces of a Roman road across it.§ In a document of Aug. 16, 1291, concerning disputes between the men of Saas and Zermatt on one side, and those of Val Anzasca and Macugnaga on the other, special provision is made that either party should have the right of passing through the ter-

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\* Engelhardt, p. 131. The date must be wrong, as Ludovico *il Moro* was only born in 1451. Perhaps it should be 1499.

† Albrecht Schott, 'Die Deutschen Colonien in Piedmont,' (Stuttgart und Tübingen, 1842), p. 62.

‡ So Goergens, 162. Keller, 21.

§ P. 63.

ritory belonging to the other, and that the Val Anzasca people should use their own 'alpes' without being molested by the men of Visp. All this points to frequent intercourse over the mountains, though the names of the passes are not mentioned. It is probable that the Monte Moro, as the easiest pass, would be the most frequented.\* Herr P. I. Zerbruggen, of Saas, who held a benefice at Padua, in a MS. history of Saas, states in a passage cited by Venetz,† that as early as 1440 the Monte Moro and Antrona Pass are mentioned as 'uralte Pässe,' a very strong expression. On the other hand it cannot be denied that the name by which we first heard of the pass is 'Mons Martis' or 'Magganaberg' (? Macugnaberg).‡

An isolated name will not prove anything by itself; a number of names of similar origin occurring together, leaves a strong presumption which can be confirmed or refuted by the existence or absence of evidence as to the presence of the race in question in the immediate neighbourhood. It is the cumulative evidence which is of weight in the case of the Saracens at Saas.

Mr. Freshfield suggests that some of the 'Mors' have to do with the root which lurks in 'moor, morass, marsh,' and says just before, 'one guess is surely as good as another, and perhaps better.' The writer concurs with him entirely in both points; but as Mr. Freshfield seems to suppose that the advocates of the survival of traces of Saracens in the Alps are bound to refer *every* 'mar,' 'mor,' or 'mur,' to Moorish origin, the writer may fairly claim that Mr. Freshfield should defend his supposition by a similar extension of the discussion. If he can do this, he will do much to settle the question at issue.

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\* 'Mémoires de la Société d'histoire de la Suisse Romande,' vol. xxx. pp. 425-429.

† In his 'Mémoire sur les variations de la température dans les Alpes de la Suisse, redigé en 1821' (published in 'Denkschriften der allg. Schweizerischen Gesellschaft für die gesammten Naturwissenschaften,' i. 2, Zürich, 1833), apud Schott. l. cit., p. 63. As to Zerbruggen or Zurbrücken's MS. history, see Engelhardt's 'Monte Rosa' (p. 20, note), who had it for some time in his hands. The author had made extracts from more than 100 (not 300) documents.

‡ In a document of 1300, by which the 'Gemeinde' of Saas buys the high pastures in the valley from Count Jocelin Blandrate, we read of the 'alpe Mundmar,' which Zerbruggen says should properly be 'Mont Mar,' and which is now 'Matmark' (Engelhardt, 131). Stumpf's Chronik (Zürich, 1606), p. 659. J. Simler, 'Descriptio Vallesiae' (Lugd. Batav. ex officinâ Elzevirianâ [1633]), p. 55, who is copied by Scheuchzer, 'Itinera Alpina' (Lugd. Batav. 1723), p. 303.

With all due deference, it may be pointed out, the derivation of Alalain from 'à la lei' assumes that the inhabitants of the Saas valley were French-speaking, or at least used a modern French preposition, whereas it was distinctly within the limits of the Teutonic Upper Wallis, or even if it be allowed that an earlier Celtic population existed there (*of which there is absolutely no evidence whatever*), it is not generally believed that the Celtic language was so nearly identical with modern French.

The conclusion then to which the writer has come is, that there is a strong probability, both from what we know of the history of the neighbouring districts, and from the evidence afforded by local names, that the Saracens did settle in the Saas valley, and formed a possibly not inconsiderable portion of the population. More than this it is impossible to say; such evidence as there is, is in favour of this theory, and Mr. Freshfield has, in the opinion of the writer, failed entirely to rebut it or to establish an opposite theory on any solid grounds.

Finally, the positions which the writer has taken up, and which he conceives himself to have established by historical evidence, may be summed up thus:—

1. That the Saracens, starting from their stronghold at Fraxinetum, committed great depredations in the Alps between 888 and 975.

2. That they penetrated as far as Rhaetia (Cur. S. Gallen), which they ravaged repeatedly.

3. That there is an *à priori* probability, grounded on historical evidence, supported by etymological evidence, and not contradicted by any distinct facts, that the Saracens occupied the Saas valley, either as settlers or as marauders.

Such then, are the results of the investigations of the writer as to this very interesting but little known and obscure episode in Alpine history in the Early Middle Ages. We have traced the doings of a set of marauders from their first attack on and occupation of a vantage post to their final expulsion and destruction. It is, perhaps, not often that the story of one band can be told so completely from contemporary authorities; but the writer is convinced that much that is new and valuable for the history of the Alps might be discovered by carefully going through old documents and bringing scattered notices together.\* Anyone who is specially interested in, or

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\* One example may be given. In documents contained in Zurler's 'Urkunden für die Geschichte der Stadt Bern' (1851) or in the

has a minute acquaintance with, the topography of any Alpine district may do much in this way, as local knowledge is of the highest importance in this matter. He ventures to hope that the preceding sketch may be considered to have contributed in some small degree to the advancement of so good a cause, and that it may encourage others to take up the subject and work it out more fully.

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THE SARACENS AT SAAS. By the EDITOR.

THE readers of the 'Alpine Journal' will, I am sure, be grateful to Mr. Coolidge for the very interesting and almost exhaustive paper he has contributed on a subject which, though of special interest to Alpine travellers, has hitherto (in England, at any rate) been treated only in a fragmentary and incomplete manner.

Of the three conclusions Mr. Coolidge seeks to establish, the first I imagine to be undisputed and indisputable. For the second, Mr. Coolidge has been able to produce what appears to me to be convincing historical evidence of the visits of Saracenic marauders to Eastern Switzerland, evidence which no longer leaves in my mind any room for the doubts which, without an intimate knowledge of the original authorities, it seemed to me reasonable to entertain and express.

With respect to Mr. Coolidge's third conclusion, however, with the best will in the world to believe in a colonisation which would add a new interest to one of the noblest of the northern valleys of the Alps, I must confess that I remain unconvinced, and that, if anything, I am rather hardened in my scepticism by the failure of so competent an advocate either to bring forward any new evidence, or materially to strengthen the old evidence. Mr. Coolidge is far too fair and cautious as an historian to allege that this evidence amounts to proof. The difference between us, fairly stated, amounts to this: that the conjecture as to the settlement of the Saaethal which he considers the most probable of any, I look on as possible, but, as far as we yet know, highly improbable.

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'Fontes Rerum Bernensium' (vol. ii. 1877), we find repeated mention of the Lower Grindelwald glacier, in 1146, 1220, 1273. In 1246 and 1247 both glaciers are mentioned, and the alp between them, 'qui dicitur Metenburch;' in 1252, 'mons qui dicitur Scheitecca.' In 1180 we hear that the church at Grindelwald had formerly been built of wood, but had now been rebuilt of stone. Similar instances may be multiplied without end.