

The Orphans' Friend.

VOLUME II.

OXFORD, N. C., WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 1876.

NUMBER 45.

HELP FROM THE HELPLESS.

I caught the murmur of the billowy wheat,
That rolled its wealth of waves along the plain;
"I tremble, for I wait the thresher's beat,
And the hard stones that grind the hapless
grain;
Yet by my silent pain the world is fed;
I die to give its famished millions bread."

Bare hung the plundered vine; it sighed—"I
mourn
My grapes, that hid not from the vintner's eye
The summer in their hearts; now crushed and
torn,
They yield their life, and yet it will not die;
The years shall guard for its fate benign,
To be poured out anew in generous wine."

Brother, borne down by sorrow, have not we
Given to the thresher's hand both chaff and
grain?
And did we not our latest fruitage see
Crushed in the wine-press for the vintner's
gain?
May some sad heart but win from thine and
mine
Bread for its hour of need, and soul-inspiring
wine!

THE GLACIERS OF SWITZERLAND.

BY REV. C. C. SALTER.

The most remarkable feature in Alpine scenery are the glaciers which cover 900 square miles or one twentieth the area of Switzerland. There are other mountain chains surpassing the Alps in magnitude, but which lacks this characteristic.

As looked upon from the valley the glaciers seemed to be a motionless body of ice heaped over in the dirt and stones.

This soiled and begrimed portion, however, is but the termination of a frozen river fifteen miles long, three quarters of a mile wide, and fifteen hundred feet deep, coiling serpent like along its rocky bed. The glaciers are literally rivers.

"Their cold and restless mass
Moves onward day by day."

The rate of their motion depends upon their volume or also upon the bed of the Shraim, and its inclination. Where the valley is more level the glacier is termed a Merde glace, or Sea of Ice. There are glaciers that move but 20 feet annually, while others advance more than ten times this distance. It has been estimated that two hundred years would pass before a stone now at the source of the Merde glace, would reach the vale of Chamony. The remains of certain mountaineers who fell into one of the upper crevasses of an Alpine glacier, forty years ago, have been recently discovered near its foot.

Ascending the banks of one of these ice-streams, as (for example) the magnificent Gorner Glacier in Termatt, you see that the main current is swollen by tributaries as stiff and frozen as itself. The boundaries of the principal river, and of its branches are for some distance defined by piles of rock and sand, resembling the bed of a railway or turnpike. This mass of debris which has been ground from the mountains by each of the glaciers, and which is thus heaped together along the line of their confluence, is called the Medical Moraine. The Lateral Moraine consists of the same wild confusion of mountain waste, tossed up on either shore by the waves of the herculean river.

These moraines are the result

of the attrition of the ponderous ice-masses against their rocky banks, (an effect clearly seen upon the higher walls which in ages past were grooved by the now receding stream;) and in part also of the avalanches which have heaped rocks of prodigious size along the borders of the glacier.

The moraines are often hundreds of feet in height, forming a steep though convenient path from which to note the outline, and the serrated billows of the glacier.

They are made up in part of the finest sand, called *stone meal*, (the best grist of this glacier-grinding;) while their surface is fir and pine trees often covered with mosses and delicately tinted flowers.

Those who visited the Rhone glacier in the Merde glace ten years ago are surprised to find that the familiar ice grotto has receded up hill more than half a mile, while huge projections of rock which were then concealed by the ice-stream are now visible.

On the other hand in 1818 the terminal moraine of a certain glacier advanced more than one hundred and fifty feet, driving before it every conceivable barrier.

Like all the great mysteries of nature, the glacier is to be approached with cautious step.

It is never safe to cross or ascend these ice-rivers without an experienced guide.

Freshly fallen snow often arches the crevasse with a bridge beautiful to look upon, but treacherous to the step. Sometimes, too, the width of the crevasse makes it necessary to descend and ascend by steps cut in the ice. Such ice-ladders are termed *seracs*. It is usual for a company to be roped together before starting upon a glacier exploration.

Thus the peril is lessened by being shared. The sense of security is heightened by this perfect solidarity which, as says a member of an Alpine club, should exist between all who join in the expedition. If one member suffers, all suffer with him. Each becomes responsible for his fellow, and the unweary step is held in check by the tension of the rest of the party.

Since at an altitude of 10,000 feet the heat is sufficient to convert the snow into ice, the upper portion of the glacier consists of snow alone and is called *Firn*.

Hence the glacier has its source in "those urns of silent snow," from whose far-off fountains of peerless purity it winds its faith like "snakes that watch their prey."

The upper snow masses are crowded down the mountain sides, until by heat and thorough pressure they are transformed into solid ice. Solid, yet a plastic and coherent stream endowed with ceaseless step as it moves on within its rocky walls.

No one should visit the Alps without looking into the glaciers' grandeur, as it is seen and left alone in the higher amphitheatres, which are girded by the giant mountains and crossed by the mysterious currents of snow and ice.

The silence of these awful solitudes is unbroken save by the

occasional thunder of the plunging avalanche, or the noise of a fallen rock as released from its ice grip, it tumbles into the dark caverns that yawn beneath you, or by the murmur of countless streams coursing the veins of the ice-minister, leaping over invisible precipices, and at last emerging from the glacier an unfettered well, whose real orifice was far above in the hidden depths of snow and ice. Nor should we forget the utility of the term-inspiring glaciers. Their mountain home is the birth-place of those noble rivers of Germany, France and Italy, which have played so wonderful a part in the history and civilization of Europe. Standing in the midst of one of these glacier fortresses, the very citadel of resistless might and merciless energy, how blessed the thought of One who represents the grandest force and the most radiant love—that personal God who is a very present help in trouble.—*Church Union*.

AN AWFUL CONFESSION.

A few days since I met an inebriate on the street, whose wife was buried but a week ago. I urged him to reform, and endeavored to hold before his mind the dreadful ruin his course had brought upon him and his family, on the one hand, and the possibility of reformation and amends on the other. He seemed to be sober and in a condition to realize the matters I presented to him. Great tears dropped in rapid succession from his eyes as I spoke to him, and for a time he was so overwhelmed that he could make no response. At last with convulsive sobs he said: "I know it all, Mr. B., and more, I have experienced the worst of it. I can never make amends for the past. I can never undo the work of rum. Rum has taken everything that is worth living for from me, and what is worst of all—a thing that torments me more than all beside—it has made me the murderer of my wife, one of the noblest women that ever lived!" Here his voice was choked off again by the most harrowing sobs. Self-condemned, he broke down before the bar of his own conscience. He had a noble wife, one who drank from the cup of sorrow and blighted hope in proportion as he drank from the cup of hell, and that without a murmur, till she found rest in the grave and in heaven. This world to her had no bright side. Christ and heaven were her solace. Before she expired she collected her family about her, a family of nine children, and commended them all to Christ. Upward of twenty years ago that woman was a rosy-cheeked girl, oblivious of any danger of such a life and such results. When admonished by her parents that the young man whom she delighted in so much, and who was known to visit saloons occasionally, might wring into her cup the bitter dregs of a drunkard's wife, she laughed at the idea, thinking he thought too much of her to prefer the saloon to his home, or to forsake her society for that of bloodshot-eyed toppers. It will be well if there are not some young ladies who

will read these lines, and yet duplicate her suicidal folly!

When Elisha told Hazeel that he would burn the strongholds of Israel, slay their young men, and dash the infants against the wall, amazed and overwhelmed he cried out: "But what! is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing?" But no sooner was he in a position to do it than he did the very thing which had shocked him at the prophet's recital. If, when this poor, wretched mortal of whom I am writing, took this blushing bride by the hand, one would have told him that the idol of his heart would in a few years become the victim of a hellish appetite at his hand, he would have been as much astonished as Hazeel. Yet such has been the sequel.

Young lady! do you wish to be murdered at the hand of your husband? Then choose for your companion a young man who occasionally takes a drink in company. Young man! do you wish to become a self-condemned murderer, a murderer of the vilest degree—a murderer of your best earthly friend—the most precious boon known in this life—an affectionate, devoted wife?—Then take an occasional drink.—*Evangelical Messenger*.

THE MOST NORTHERLY TOWN IN THE WORLD.

A correspondent of the *Alta California*, in a letter from Norway, thus refers to the most northerly town in the world:

"Next we visit Hammerfest, the most northerly town in the world. It has a population of 2,057. There are many Laplanders and Finlanders in the town. The principal business is in cod-liver oil and fish, and the odor from the oil makes it very disagreeable. Reindeer and goats abound here, while there are but six horses in the town. The sun sets here November 18, and does not rise again until January 28. Children go to school with lanterns for about six weeks. In the summer the sun does not set from the first of June till the 22d of July. There is no chance for the hotel keepers to make any money on candles, as they do in Germany and France. I had my photograph taken by the midnight sun. You get demoralized here. Mrs. K. has already. She sits up to one and two o'clock knitting socks, waiting for night to come. On the 27th of June the Laplanders brought many children into the town to have them baptized or confirmed. Reindeers you can see, fifty at a time, on the side hills, and goats by the hundred. On June 23 (called here St. Han's day) or midsummer day, they kindled bonfires on the sides of the mountains around the town, and had a jolly time. The weather is horrible. The thermometer stands from four to five Reaumur. There is one hotel here, and its management might be easily improved, although the landlady is kind and obliging. We have fish and reindeer for breakfast, reindeer and fish for dinner, and for supper some more fish and reindeer. This jumping off place is in latitude 70° 40' 11."

SCIENCE AND THE BIBLE.

The thing to be lamented is, that the moment men of science get hold of a fact they instantly begin to set it in opposition to God's Word. But the vaunted 'fact' of Tuesday often takes another shape on Wednesday, and by Thursday is found to be no fact at all. The truth is that geology, as a science, consists mainly of probable guesses. 'That field of peat,' says Sir Charles Lyell, 'has probably been 7,000 years in course of formation.' 'No,' replies a friend of his own, in a published criticism, 'I think it quite possible that it has only been 700 years in growing.' A piece of pottery is found in the valley of the Nile, and a geologist immediately argues that it must have lain there more than 20,000 years. But an antiquary soon points out marks upon it which show it to be less than 2,000 years old. Yet it is upon guesses of this kind, which do not amount to a tenth part of a proof, that the Lyells and Owens and Colensos venture boldly to assert that it is clear that Moses knew nothing whatever of the subject on which he was writing. Just in the same spirit do Bunsen and his followers unhesitatingly assert that the growth of languages proves that the world must be more than 30,000 years old. We refer to the confusion of tongues described by Moses, which at once dissipates their dream. "Oh! but that was a miracle," they reply, "and we have made up our minds never to believe a miracle." Very well, gentlemen, there we must leave you; for men who make up their minds before inquiring are not acting as reasonable beings. A dozen other little juntos are now at work in the same laudable fashion. One set is not quite certain that man was 'developed' out of an ape. Well, and what was the ape 'developed' out of? They do not know. Our comfort in all this is, that this influenza will wear itself out like the Tractarian, or like the infidel fashion of the days of Bolingbroke. Men have been striving to get rid of the Bible and its inconvenient morality for nearly these two thousand years; but they were never further off from their end than they are at present.—*The Earl of Shaftesbury*.

Bret Harte very aptly and truly says: "The rear of a house only is sincere." If the back-yard reveals a heap of ashes and rubbish, genuine neatness has no place under that roof although the entire front, from cellar window to cornice, may stand the glistening embodiment of cleanliness. Nor does true flower love dwell in that house whose rear windows face a wilderness of bricks, however artistic the display enchanting the world at the front.

—Recent diggings for the foundation of new buildings by the Russians on the Mount of Olives disclose old mosaic pavements with inscriptions (mosaic) in various languages, as well as tombs still, strange to say, unruined, at quite a little distance below the surface of the ground. In one of the rooms of the Russian convent or church there is quite a little cabinet of articles exhumed.