

## SWITZERLAND, THE CRADLE OF LIBERTY

Interlaken, Switzerland, 1891.

It is a good many years since I was in Switzerland last. In that remote time there was only one ladder railway in the country. That state of things is all changed. There isn't a mountain in Switzerland now that hasn't a ladder railroad or two up its back like suspenders; indeed, some mountains are latticed with them, and two years hence all will be. In that day the peasant of the high altitudes will have to carry a lantern when he goes visiting in the night to keep from stumbling over railroads that have been built since his last round. And also in that day, if there shall remain a high-altitude peasant whose potato-patch hasn't a railroad through it, it would make him as conspicuous as William Tell.

However, there are only two best ways to travel through Switzerland. The first best is afloat. The second best is by open two-horse carriage. One can come from Lucerne to Interlaken over the Brunig by ladder railroad in an hour or so now, but you can glide smoothly in a carriage in ten, and have two hours for luncheon at noon--for luncheon, not for rest. There is no fatigue connected with the trip. One arrives fresh in spirit and in person in the evening--no fret in his heart, no grime on his face, no grit in his hair, not a cinder in his eye. This is the right condition of mind and body, the right and due preparation for the solemn event which closed the day--stepping with metaphorically uncovered head

into the presence of the most impressive mountain mass that the globe can show--the Jungfrau. The stranger's first feeling, when suddenly confronted by that towering and awful apparition wrapped in its shroud of snow, is breath-taking astonishment. It is as if heaven's gates had swung open and exposed the throne.

It is peaceful here and pleasant at Interlaken. Nothing going on--at least nothing but brilliant life-giving sunshine. There are floods and floods of that. One may properly speak of it as "going on," for it is full of the suggestion of activity; the light pours down with energy, with visible enthusiasm. This is a good atmosphere to be in, morally as well as physically. After trying the political atmosphere of the neighboring monarchies, it is healing and refreshing to breathe air that has known no taint of slavery for six hundred years, and to come among a people whose political history is great and fine, and worthy to be taught in all schools and studied by all races and peoples. For the struggle here throughout the centuries has not been in the interest of any private family, or any church, but in the interest of the whole body of the nation, and for shelter and protection of all forms of belief. This fact is colossal. If one would realize how colossal it is, and of what dignity and majesty, let him contrast it with the purposes and objects of the Crusades, the siege of York, the War of the Roses, and other historic comedies of that sort and size.

Last week I was beating around the Lake of Four Cantons, and I saw Rutli and Altorf. Rutli is a remote little patch of meadow, but I do not know

how any piece of ground could be holier or better worth crossing oceans and continents to see, since it was there that the great trinity of Switzerland joined hands six centuries ago and swore the oath which set their enslaved and insulted country forever free; and Altorf is also honorable ground and worshipful, since it was there that William, surnamed Tell (which interpreted means "The foolish talker"--that is to say, the too-daring talker), refused to bow to Gessler's hat. Of late years the prying student of history has been delighting himself beyond measure over a wonderful find which he has made--to wit, that Tell did not shoot the apple from his son's head. To hear the students jubilate, one would suppose that the question of whether Tell shot the apple or didn't was an important matter; whereas it ranks in importance exactly with the question of whether Washington chopped down the cherry-tree or didn't. The deeds of Washington, the patriot, are the essential thing; the cherry-tree incident is of no consequence. To prove that Tell did shoot the apple from his son's head would merely prove that he had better nerve than most men and was skillful with a bow as a million others who preceded and followed him, but not one whit more so. But Tell was more and better than a mere marksman, more and better than a mere cool head; he was a type; he stands for Swiss patriotism; in his person was represented a whole people; his spirit was their spirit--the spirit which would bow to none but God, the spirit which said this in words and confirmed it with deeds. There have always been Tells in Switzerland--people who would not bow. There was a sufficiency of them at Rutli; there were plenty of them at Murten; plenty at Grandson; there are plenty today. And the first of them all--the very first, earliest

banner-bearer of human freedom in this world--was not a man, but a woman--Stauffacher's wife. There she looms dim and great, through the haze of the centuries, delivering into her husband's ear that gospel of revolt which was to bear fruit in the conspiracy of Rutli and the birth of the first free government the world had ever seen.

From this Victoria Hotel one looks straight across a flat of trifling width to a lofty mountain barrier, which has a gateway in it shaped like an inverted pyramid. Beyond this gateway arises the vast bulk of the Jungfrau, a spotless mass of gleaming snow, into the sky. The gateway, in the dark-colored barrier, makes a strong frame for the great picture. The somber frame and the glowing snow-pile are startlingly contrasted. It is this frame which concentrates and emphasizes the glory of the Jungfrau and makes it the most engaging and beguiling and fascinating spectacle that exists on the earth. There are many mountains of snow that are as lofty as the Jungfrau and as nobly proportioned, but they lack the fame. They stand at large; they are intruded upon and elbowed by neighboring domes and summits, and their grandeur is diminished and fails of effect.

It is a good name, Jungfrau--Virgin. Nothing could be whiter; nothing could be purer; nothing could be saintlier of aspect. At six yesterday evening the great intervening barrier seen through a faint bluish haze seemed made of air and substanceless, so soft and rich it was, so shimmering where the wandering lights touched it and so dim where the shadows lay. Apparently it was a dream stuff, a work of the imagination,

nothing real about it. The tint was green, slightly varying shades of it, but mainly very dark. The sun was down--as far as that barrier was concerned, but not for the Jungfrau, towering into the heavens beyond the gateway. She was a roaring conflagration of blinding white.

It is said the Fridolin (the old Fridolin), a new saint, but formerly a missionary, gave the mountain its gracious name. He was an Irishman, son of an Irish king--there were thirty thousand kings reigning in County Cork alone in his time, fifteen hundred years ago. It got so that they could not make a living, there was so much competition and wages got cut so. Some of them were out of work months at a time, with wife and little children to feed, and not a crust in the place. At last a particularly severe winter fell upon the country, and hundreds of them were reduced to mendicancy and were to be seen day after day in the bitterest weather, standing barefoot in the snow, holding out their crowns for alms. Indeed, they would have been obliged to emigrate or starve but for a fortunate idea of Prince Fridolin's, who started a labor-union, the first one in history, and got the great bulk of them to join it. He thus won the general gratitude, and they wanted to make him emperor--emperor over them all--emperor of County Cork, but he said, No, walking delegate was good enough for him. For behold! he was modest beyond his years, and keen as a whip. To this day in Germany and Switzerland, where St. Fridolin is revered and honored, the peasantry speak of him affectionately as the first walking delegate.

The first walk he took was into France and Germany, missionarying--for

missionarying was a better thing in those days than it is in ours. All you had to do was to cure the savage's sick daughter by a "miracle"--a miracle like the miracle of Lourdes in our day, for instance--and immediately that head savage was your convert, and filled to the eyes with a new convert's enthusiasm. You could sit down and make yourself easy, now. He would take an ax and convert the rest of the nation himself. Charlemagne was that kind of a walking delegate.

Yes, there were great missionaries in those days, for the methods were sure and the rewards great. We have no such missionaries now, and no such methods.

But to continue the history of the first walking delegate, if you are interested. I am interested myself because I have seen his relics in Sackingen, and also the very spot where he worked his great miracle--the one which won him his sainthood in the papal court a few centuries later. To have seen these things makes me feel very near to him, almost like a member of the family, in fact. While wandering about the Continent he arrived at the spot on the Rhine which is now occupied by Sackingen, and proposed to settle there, but the people warned him off. He appealed to the king of the Franks, who made him a present of the whole region, people and all. He built a great cloister there for women and proceeded to teach in it and accumulate more land. There were two wealthy brothers in the neighborhood, Urso and Landulph. Urso died and Fridolin claimed his estates. Landulph asked for documents and papers. Fridolin had none to show. He said the bequest had been made to him by

word of mouth. Landulph suggested that he produce a witness and said it in a way which he thought was very witty, very sarcastic. This shows that he did not know the walking delegate. Fridolin was not disturbed.

He said:

"Appoint your court. I will bring a witness."

The court thus created consisted of fifteen counts and barons. A day was appointed for the trial of the case. On that day the judges took their seats in state, and proclamation was made that the court was ready for business. Five minutes, ten minutes, fifteen minutes passed, and yet no Fridolin appeared. Landulph rose, and was in the act of claiming judgment by default when a strange clacking sound was heard coming up the stairs. In another moment Fridolin entered at the door and came walking in a deep hush down the middle aisle, with a tall skeleton stalking in his rear.

Amazement and terror sat upon every countenance, for everybody suspected that the skeleton was Urso's. It stopped before the chief judge and raised its bony arm aloft and began to speak, while all the assembled shuddered, for they could see the words leak out between its ribs. It said:

"Brother, why dost thou disturb my blessed rest and withhold by robbery the gift which I gave thee for the honor of God?"

It seems a strange thing and most irregular, but the verdict was actually given against Landulph on the testimony of this wandering rack-heap of unidentified bones. In our day a skeleton would not be allowed to testify at all, for a skeleton has no moral responsibility, and its word could not be believed on oath, and this was probably one of them. However, the incident is valuable as preserving to us a curious sample of the quaint laws of evidence of that remote time--a time so remote, so far back toward the beginning of original idiocy, that the difference between a bench of judges and a basket of vegetables was as yet so slight that we may say with all confidence that it didn't really exist.

During several afternoons I have been engaged in an interesting, maybe useful, piece of work--that is to say, I have been trying to make the mighty Jungfrau earn her living--earn it in a most humble sphere, but on a prodigious scale, on a prodigious scale of necessity, for she couldn't do anything in a small way with her size and style. I have been trying to make her do service on a stupendous dial and check off the hours as they glide along her pallid face up there against the sky, and tell the time of day to the populations lying within fifty miles of her and to the people in the moon, if they have a good telescope there.

Until late in the afternoon the Jungfrau's aspect is that of a spotless desert of snow set upon edge against the sky. But by mid-afternoon some elevations which rise out of the western border of the desert, whose presence you perhaps had not detected or suspected up to that time,



began to cast black shadows eastward across the gleaming surface. At first there is only one shadow; later there are two. Toward 4 P.M. the other day I was gazing and worshiping as usual when I chanced to notice that shadow No. 1 was beginning to take itself something of the shape of the human profile. By four the back of the head was good, the military cap was pretty good, the nose was bold and strong, the upper lip sharp, but not pretty, and there was a great goatee that shot straight aggressively forward from the chin.

At four-thirty the nose had changed its shape considerably, and the altered slant of the sun had revealed and made conspicuous a huge buttress or barrier of naked rock which was so located as to answer very well for a shoulder or coat-collar to this swarthy and indiscreet sweetheart who had stolen out there right before everybody to pillow his head on the Virgin's white breast and whisper soft sentimentalities to her in the sensuous music of the crashing ice-domes and the boom and thunder of the passing avalanche--music very familiar to his ear, for he had heard it every afternoon at this hour since the day he first came courting this child of the earth, who lives in the sky, and that day is far, yes--for he was at this pleasant sport before the Middle Ages drifted by him in the valley; before the Romans marched past, and before the antique and recordless barbarians fished and hunted here and wondered who he might be, and were probably afraid of him; and before primeval man himself, just emerged from his four-footed estate, stepped out upon this plain, first sample of his race, a thousand centuries ago, and cast a glad eye up there, judging he had found a brother human being

and consequently something to kill; and before the big saurians wallowed here, still some eons earlier. Oh yes, a day so far back that the eternal son was present to see that first visit; a day so far back that neither tradition nor history was born yet and a whole weary eternity must come and go before the restless little creature, of whose face this stupendous Shadow Face was the prophecy, would arrive in the earth and begin his shabby career and think of a big thing. Oh, indeed yes; when you talk about your poor Roman and Egyptian day-before-yesterday antiquities, you should choose a time when the hoary Shadow Face of the Jungfrau is not by. It antedates all antiquities known or imaginable; for it was here the world itself created the theater of future antiquities. And it is the only witness with a human face that was there to see the marvel, and remains to us a memorial of it.

By 4:40 P.M. the nose of the shadow is perfect and is beautiful. It is black and is powerfully marked against the upright canvas of glowing snow, and covers hundreds of acres of that resplendent surface.

Meantime shadow No. 2 has been creeping out well to the rear of the face west of it--and at five o'clock has assumed a shape that has rather a poor and rude semblance of a shoe.

Meantime, also, the great Shadow Face has been gradually changing for twenty minutes, and now, 5 P.M., it is becoming a quite fair portrait of Roscoe Conkling. The likeness is there, and is unmistakable. The goatee is shortened, now, and has an end; formerly it hadn't any, but ran off

eastward and arrived nowhere.

By 6 P.M. the face has dissolved and gone, and the goatee has become what looks like the shadow of a tower with a pointed roof, and the shoe had turned into what the printers call a "fist" with a finger pointing.

If I were now imprisoned on a mountain summit a hundred miles northward of this point, and was denied a timepiece, I could get along well enough from four till six on clear days, for I could keep trace of the time by the changing shapes of these mighty shadows of the Virgin's front, the most stupendous dial I am acquainted with, the oldest clock in the world by a couple of million years.

I suppose I should not have noticed the forms of the shadows if I hadn't the habit of hunting for faces in the clouds and in mountain crags--a sort of amusement which is very entertaining even when you don't find any, and brilliantly satisfying when you do. I have searched through several bushels of photographs of the Jungfrau here, but found only one with the Face in it, and in this case it was not strictly recognizable as a face, which was evidence that the picture was taken before four o'clock in the afternoon, and also evidence that all the photographers have persistently overlooked one of the most fascinating features of the Jungfrau show. I say fascinating, because if you once detect a human face produced on a great plan by unconscious nature, you never get tired of watching it. At first you can't make another person see it at all, but after he has made it out once he can't see anything else afterward.

The King of Greece is a man who goes around quietly enough when off duty. One day this summer he was traveling in an ordinary first-class compartment, just in his other suit, the one which he wears when he is at home, and so he was not looking like anybody in particular, but a good deal like everybody in general. By and by a hearty and healthy German-American got in and opened up a frank and interesting and sympathetic conversation with him, and asked him a couple of thousand questions about himself, which the king answered good-naturedly, but in a more or less indefinite way as to private particulars.

"Where do you live when you are at home?"

"In Greece."

"Greece! Well, now, that is just astonishing! Born there?"

"No."

"Do you speak Greek?"

"Yes."

"Now, ain't that strange! I never expected to live to see that. What is your trade? I mean how do you get your living? What is your line of

business?"

"Well, I hardly know how to answer. I am only a kind of foreman, on a salary; and the business--well, is a very general kind of business."

"Yes, I understand--general jobbing--little of everything--anything that there's money in."

"That's about it, yes."

"Are you traveling for the house now?"

"Well, partly; but not entirely. Of course I do a stroke of business if it falls in the way--"

"Good! I like that in you! That's me every time. Go on."

"I was only going to say I am off on my vacation now."

"Well that's all right. No harm in that. A man works all the better for a little let-up now and then. Not that I've been used to having it myself; for I haven't. I reckon this is my first. I was born in Germany, and when I was a couple of weeks old shipped to America, and I've been there ever since, and that's sixty-four years by the watch. I'm an American in principle and a German at heart, and it's the boss combination. Well, how do you get along, as a rule--pretty fair?"

"I've a rather large family--"

"There, that's it--big family and trying to raise them on a salary. Now, what did you go to do that for?"

"Well, I thought--"

"Of course you did. You were young and confident and thought you could branch out and make things go with a whirl, and here you are, you see! But never mind about that. I'm not trying to discourage you. Dear me! I've been just where you are myself! You've got good grit; there's good stuff in you, I can see that. You got a wrong start, that's the whole trouble. But you hold your grip, and we'll see what can be done. Your case ain't half as bad as it might be. You are going to come out all right--I'm bail for that. Boys and girls?"

"My family? Yes, some of them are boys--"

"And the rest girls. It's just as I expected. But that's all right, and it's better so, anyway. What are the boys doing--learning a trade?"

"Well, no--I thought--"

"It's a big mistake. It's the biggest mistake you ever made. You see that in your own case. A man ought always to have a trade to fall back

on. Now, I was harness-maker at first. Did that prevent me from becoming one of the biggest brewers in America? Oh no. I always had the harness trick to fall back on in rough weather. Now, if you had learned how to make harness--However, it's too late now; too late. But it's no good plan to cry over spilt milk. But as to the boys, you see--what's to become of them if anything happens to you?"

"It has been my idea to let the eldest one succeed me--"

"Oh, come! Suppose the firm don't want him?"

"I hadn't thought of that, but--"

"Now, look here; you want to get right down to business and stop dreaming. You are capable of immense things--man. You can make a perfect success in life. All you want is somebody to steady you and boost you along on the right road. Do you own anything in the business?"

"No--not exactly; but if I continue to give satisfaction, I suppose I can keep my--"

"Keep your place--yes. Well, don't you depend on anything of the kind. They'll bounce you the minute you get a little old and worked out; they'll do it sure. Can't you manage somehow to get into the firm? That's the great thing, you know."

"I think it is doubtful; very doubtful."

"Um--that's bad--yes, and unfair, too. Do you suppose that if I should go there and have a talk with your people--Look here--do you think you could run a brewery?"

"I have never tried, but I think I could do it after a little familiarity with the business."

The German was silent for some time. He did a good deal of thinking, and the king waited curiously to see what the result was going to be. Finally the German said:

"My mind's made up. You leave that crowd--you'll never amount to anything there. In these old countries they never give a fellow a show. Yes, you come over to America--come to my place in Rochester; bring the family along. You shall have a show in the business and the foremanship, besides. George--you said your name was George?--I'll make a man of you. I give you my word. You've never had a chance here, but that's all going to change. By gracious! I'll give you a lift that'll make your hair curl!"