

river Arveiron in a strong and turbid stream, soon to join the rapid Arve. As we sat gazing on the sight, an American lady quoted with much feeling Coleridge's sublime hymn to Mont Blanc :

"O Sovran Blanc,
The Arve and Arveiron at thy base
Rave ceaselessly ; but thou most awful form,
Risest from forth thy silent sea of pines,
How silently.
Ye ice-falls ! ye that form the mountain's brow,
Adown enormous ravines slope amain—
Torrents, methinks, that heard a mighty Voice,
And stopped at once, amid the maddest plunge.
Motionless torrents ! silent cataracts !
Who made you glorious as the gates of heaven ?
And who commanded (and the silence came),
Here let the billows stiffen and have rest ?
Thou, too, hoar mount, with thy sky-piercing peaks,
All night long visited by troops of stars,
Or while they climb the sky or when they sink ;
Thou kingly spirit throned among the hills,
Thou dread ambassador from earth to heaven—
Great Hierarch ! tell thou the silent sky,
And tell the stars, and tell yon rising sun,
Earth with her thousand voices praises God."

The Tête Noir road in bold windings climbs to the watershed between the Rhone and Arve. We take one last long look at Mont Blanc, a supreme and mighty presence dominating the whole visible world. Next we traverse a lonely valley bounded by pine-clad mountains, the valley growing narrower and deeper till it becomes a wild ravine, through which far down brawls and raves a dark and sullen stream, the well named Eau Noire, and high above hang the crags of the impending cliffs. The chalets cling like martins' nests to the sides of the mountains, and the village church at Valorcine is protected against avalanches by a buttress of masonry. At last the grandeur culminates as we pass through a tunnel in the mountain side, and reach the Tête Noir inn, overhung by the Tête Noir mountain. Amid these picturesque surroundings we stop for lunch. The storm of the previous day had intercepted my telegram, and we have to wait till a lot of hungry tourists make way for us.

The road now turns into a dark and beautiful forest. In the valley far below is the brawling Trient. Climbing over the Col de Forclaz, 5,000 feet above the sea, there bursts upon the sight a magnificent view of the Rhone Valley as far as the castled