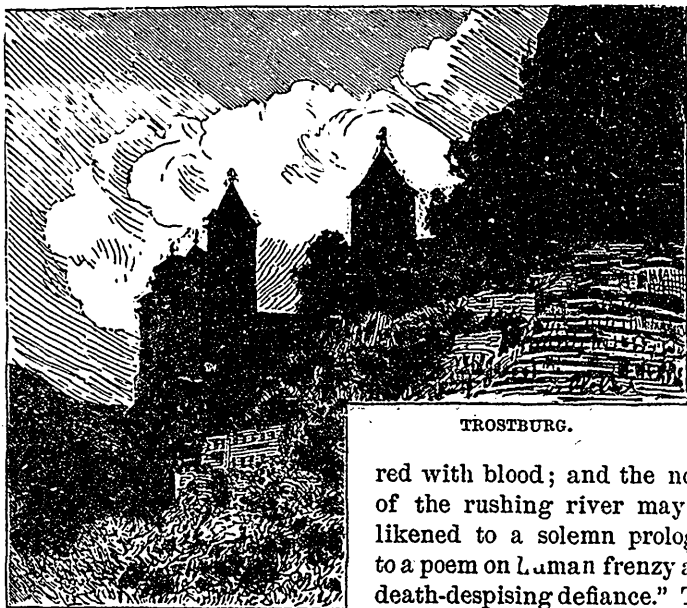


The pines and birches remind us that we have left the fig and olive behind. We climb a steep ascent, and crossing a lofty iron viaduct get a good view of the modern granite fortifications of Franzensfeste. It commands the entrances to three valleys and provinces, and would form a formidable obstacle to any hostile army. One of these valleys we enter a stern granite ravine. "Here," says Dr. Noé, "Every foot of earth is a battle-field. To the master of these defiles the way lies open to the south, to him the way to the Illyrian east is open. The gloom of the defile seems like a memory of those days when the Alpine stream ran



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red with blood; and the noise of the rushing river may be likened to a solemn prologue to a poem on Laman frenzy and death-despising defiance." The Eisack brawls ever louder, the

din of its waves drowns the roar of the train. Near here was found a huge stone carved with the emblems of the god Mithras, probably a relic of the days when the sun god was worshipped on the "high places" of the Alps. In blasting the rock in this ravine in one day two tons of powder were simultaneously exploded. Still more castles—Thurmburg and Rifinstein, Strassburg and Rapenstein, then the decayed old town Sterzing, once a rich mining town, now fallen into decay. The noise of the hammers has died away, the galleries have fallen in, the banks of ore are overgrown with grass. High over all rises the snowy summit of the Schneeberg. At the mountain hamlet of Gossensass, which means not "Goose-sauce," but "Goths' seat." The railway