

Glacier without a guide. Leaving the beaten track, we strolled up the glacier, which rolled in huge ridges and hollows for miles up the valley. Many of the crevasses were filled with water—clear as crystal, blue as sapphire. I hurled my alpenstock into one, and after an interval it was hurled back as if by the invisible hand of some indignant ice gnome from the fairy grottoes of his underworld. Others were empty, but we could not see the bottom. The large stones we rolled in went crashing down to unknown depths. Into one of these crevasses a guide fell in 1820, and forty-one years later his remains were recovered at the end of the glacier, brought to view by the slow motion and melting of the mass. His body was identified by some old men who had been the companions of his youth over forty years before. Along the margin of the glacier is a moraine of huge boulders, ground and worn by this tremendous millstone.

To reach the Chapeau one must pass along a narrow ledge, with steps hewn in the face of the steep precipice, known as the Mauvais Pas—the Perilous Way, or “Villainous Road,” as Mark Twain translates it. The cliff towered hundreds of feet above our head, and sloped to a dizzy depth beneath our feet. This passage was once an exploit of much danger; but iron rods have been bolted into the face of the cliff, so that it is now quite safe. The view of the splintered pinnacles, “seracs,” and ice-tables of the glacier was of wonderful grandeur and beauty.

I stopped for lunch at the rude auberge, shown in the margin, and found the place overflowing with a hilarious company of tourists. I joined their party to descend the mountain, entered a huge ice-cave, and got well sprinkled with the falling water. From a vast arch of ice in the glacier leaps forth the



AUBERGE AT THE CHAPEAU, MONT BLANC.