

cloud curtain would only rise we should behold, in all their glory, the magnificent range of the Mittaghorn, Jungfrau, Mönch, Eiger, Schreckhorn, and Wetterhorn. But all this we had to take on faith. The steamer wove its way like a shuttle backwards and forwards across the lake, calling at the quaint little towns, each looking very watersoaked and bedraggled. At Spiez I noticed the old castle where I breakfasted years ago when making a pedestrian tour across the Gemmi Pass—a pass so wild that one must traverse it on foot—not even a mule can essay its precipitous descent to Leukerbad. At Darligen we took train again for Interlaken, where we lodged at the Hotel Métropole, one of the finest in Europe.

Ben Johnson cynically says that one's warmest welcome is always at an inn. It is amusing to witness the affectionate solicitude of the Swiss host for his guests' welfare. As they ride up to the door, a lackey in waiting rings a large warning bell. Then three or four waiters in swallow-tails, or valets in uniform, swarm out to assist the travellers to dismount, and the *maitre d'hôtel* gives them most unctuous greeting, and assigns them rooms in turn, to which they are conducted by neat *femmes de chambre* in Bernese costume and snowy cap. At the dining table one's seat corresponds with the number of his room. At a signal from the head-waiter, his well-trained subordinates file in and out like automatic figures, with the several courses. These are almost invariably as follows: soup, fish, roast, entrees, vegetables alone, chicken and salad together, dessert and fruit. Dinner generally lasts an hour, but after a hard day's work one does not grudge the time, and it gives an opportunity to study the varied phases of tourist character, of many lands and many tongues, thus brought together. Some of our pleasantest recollections are of the numerous charming acquaintances made at the *table d'hôte*. In the evening there is frequently a parlour concert of really good music by native performers—perhaps by Tyrolese in their picturesque costume, warbling their sweet mountain airs.

Interlaken is a town of less than 2,000 permanent residents, with over a score of large hotels. I counted twenty-two omnibuses. Its position, between lakes Brienz and Thun, gives it its name and importance as a centre of travel. In summer it rivals Baden-Baden in the number of its visitors. In winter, I suppose, the people hibernate on what they have made off their victims. Like Baden, it has its Kursaal, or public concert hall, for whose behoof each traveller is mulcted in his bill.

Even though it did rain, the ladies could easily reach the elegant shops with which Interlaken is crowded—and more elegant