

sometimes out on the green meadows, but oftenest in the same old room at home, the tired fingers ply the needle for the miserable pittance of a couple of francs a day. The work is unhealthy in the extreme, as the great number of crooked spines, pale, wan cheeks, and spectacled eyes, attest. Though living on fair country meadows and breathing the pure mountain air, the embroidery girl has lost the red rose from her cheek and the brightness from her eye. Her breast is weak and, though she sings her mountain songs, her voice is low and the strain seems dull and sad.

The husband, in many of these peasant homes, is not the one who earns the bread. His life is one of comparative ease. He drives the goats, he mows a little hay, and wanders about as guide to tourists in the summer time. In the winter, he bakes himself upon the porcelain stove, or, with his lazy chums, lounges about the house, tells sailors' yarns, and smokes and puffs the long days and the long evenings through; while the female members of the house stitch, stitch continually before the little lamp that casts its concentrated rays upon the pattern and the gliding thread.

The life of the embroiderer is not only hard and irksome, but her food is scanty and very poor. Goats' milk, coffee, and potatoes, morning, noon, and night, is the common ration, year in, year out. A little honey now and then is a luxury, and an occasional bit of meat on a Sunday is a greater luxury still. With such work and with such living, there can be little heart or strength left to enjoy fully the extreme beauty and grandeur that nature has bestowed so lavishly upon the country. It is the wandering tourist who enjoys the picturesque villages, the bright costumes, the pleasant valleys, and the bracing atmosphere most. The one who enjoys Swiss country places most, is he who takes his little knapsack and staff and wanders away to the mountains alone, avoiding, as far as possible, the great hotels and the eager, rushing crowds. He will, if back from railroads and steamers, see Swiss village-life, and this village-life is the real one by which to judge the people of this mountain country. He will see that the farmers seldom live on farms, but in clusters of houses, hamlets, and villages. He will find the people early risers, simple and economical in life, and usually industrious. He will find that, as in Germany and France, the women work in the fields beside the men. He will find the people honest, though the greatest sticklers for little things. Patriotic he will find them all, and that to an extent not equalled elsewhere in the world. He will find a church in every hamlet, in every town—a pretty, comfortable