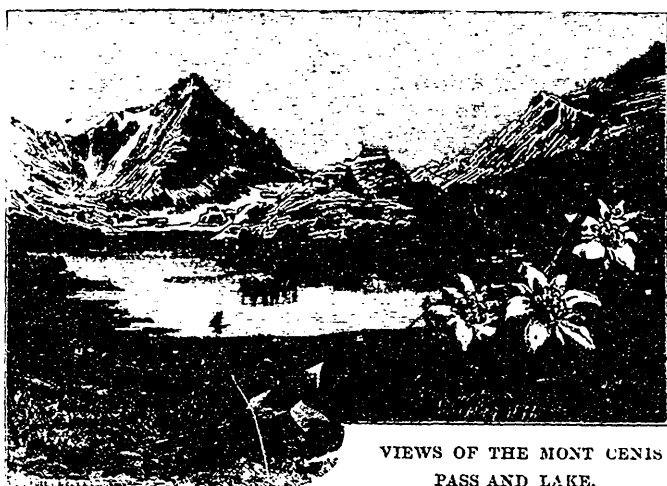


splendid forests of larch, is pregnant with poetic melancholy. At the summit of the difficult ascent we are rewarded by a beautiful Alpine panorama; the snowy summits of Mont Ambin, and various zones of vegetation decreasing in luxuriance as the altitude increases. Below the line of perpetual snow spread pastures, dotted only with the dwarf variety of rhododendron, known as the alpenrose; then come forests of coniferous trees, and lower down various kinds of cultivated plants, until we reach the narrow zone in which the grape attains maturity.

Before the construction of the fine road over Mont Cenis, under Napoleon I., the travelling carriages were taken in pieces at Lanslebourg by quick and skilful workmen, to be transported in



VIEWS OF THE MONT CENIS
PASS AND LAKE.

separate pieces, packed on the backs of mules, across Mont Cenis to Novalesa in Piedmont, where other workmen put them together again with equal celerity.

St. Anthony is highly venerated in these mountain districts; numerous chapels are dedicated to him, and he is looked upon as the guardian of the flocks and herds. The ancient custom of blessing all the animals in the parish on the festival of this saint has been retained at Lanslebourg. Each owner of an ass or a mule gives a wax taper to the church, and leads his beast in front of the sacred edifice. After saying mass, the curé gives his benediction to all those who have been present at the ceremony.

At Bonneval cultivation has completely ceased, the forests we have left behind us, and we meet with nothing but a few stunted trees which furnished the inhabitants with a scanty supply of fuel during the winter, which is, of course, extremely severe at