

The sublimest aspect of Mont Blanc, I think, is when illumined with the golden glow of sunset. It seems converted into a transparent chrysophrase, burning with an internal fire. But, as the daylight fades, the fire pales to rosy red, and palest pink, and ashen gray, and ghastly white, against the darkening sky. Through a strong telescope I could see the silhouette of a chamois goat sharply defined against the lighted window of the hut at Grands Mulets, five miles distant on the mountain slope. In the afternoon—after sweeping up its successive zones of pine forest, bare rock, glacier, and everlasting snow—I could see four black figures like emmets, which, I was told, were men climbing the mountain. But with all its grandeur, Mont Blanc will not compare with the immortal loveliness of the Jungfrau, the Virgin Queen of the Bernese Oberland.

It is remarkable that Mont Blanc, which is visited by 15,000 persons every year, was almost unknown till 1742, when it was explored by Martel, a geographical engineer from Geneva. He strangely named it the accursed mountain, *Montagne Maudit*. The previous year Pooke and Windham, two English travellers, climbed by a rugged path to the sources of the Arveiron, and named the Mer de Glace, but said not a word about Mont Blanc. The love of the sublime seems an entirely modern emotion. Among ancient and mediæval travellers such sublime mountains and gorges inspired only feelings of terror and aversion.

The next day, to our utter dismay, the grim old monarch had swathed himself in his robe of cloud and withdrew in sullen mood from our gaze. Worse still, a dreary rain had set in which threatened to keep on, and did keep on all day. A conditional bargain had been made for four-and-twenty mules to carry us up the Montanvert, and then to meet us at the Chapeau, after we had crossed the Mer de Glace and Mauvais Pas on foot. But amid the dreary downpour, no one was courageous enough to make the attempt but three gentlemen—Dr. Hare, Dr. Barr and Mr. Rowan. Amid much badinage and cheers, they set off in the rain; while the rest of us wrote letters, paddled about the quaint little village in search of Alpine curios, alpenstocks, etc. In the afternoon we all took covered carriages to the Glacier de Bossons, scrambled up a narrow "hog's back" ridge through the dripping woods to the glacier, and entered a grotto hewn in the glacier for nearly a hundred yards to its very heart. The effect of the azure light struggling through the sapphire-hued crystalline ice was exquisite. The musical trickling of the water through the veins of the glacier had a strange unearthly sound. Some of the ladies, despite my protest, scrambled over the glacier. There was little