

Specimens of these rural Alpine towns are found in easy tramping reach of almost every place where tourists congregate. The villages differ in character of architecture and style, as do the people who live in them, in custom, character, and life. Two classes of houses, however, wood and stone, may, in one sense, be said to represent them all. In Swiss towns, the two principal houses are the country inn and the white stone church. There is no street. The country road leads past, not through, the groups of a dozen or so brown houses, scattered around upon the green grass. The houses are two, or two-and-a-half stories in height, with low ceilings, lined with pine. They are built with small pine or hemlock logs, dressed smooth and square, laid close, and dovetailed together at the corners, the projecting ends being often carved. The clapboard or shingle roof is kept in place by heavy stones and projects from four to eight feet beyond the walls of the house, which are sometimes covered with little round-ended shingles, a couple of inches broad. The ends of the rafters projecting beyond the walls are also dressed and sometimes carved. The windows, though very many in number, are very small in size. A little, shingled shelf, fastened to the front or gabled end, supports the family bee-hive, made of heavy braids of straw and conical in form. Two to three families usually live in a single house, and the silk loom finds a busy place in many a peasant's home. There are few or no fences, and only little, narrow, stony goat-paths lead over the grass that grows to the doorways of the houses. No paint is now, or ever has been, used in all the village; but time and sun and smoke have given every house, inside and outside, the very colour of a well-cured ham. The surroundings of the village are sloping meadows, high mountains, steep waterfalls, a fair, blue lake, walled to the clouds, grazing goats, and half-contented poverty. The summer, always short, is spent in cultivating a few potatoes, herding the goats, pressing the cheese, and cutting and carrying in the grass. The winter, always long, is spent in eating up the little that the summer gave, and in a struggle to keep from freezing. Both sexes work in the open air, and, notwithstanding their scanty rations and the sour wine, live long and heartily.

To save the trouble and expense of each one herding his own goats during the summer, a single shepherd is employed, who leads the whole drove into the higher Alps every morning and down to the huts at night. When the flock comes down at evening, each goat seeks out its own familiar hut and enters, to be milked and stalled till morning. When winter comes, the goats, with their increase, are returned to their respective owners, and