

PLEASANT HOURS

A PAPER FOR OUR YOUNG FOLK

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THROUGH SWITZERLAND AFOOT.

BY THE EDITOR.

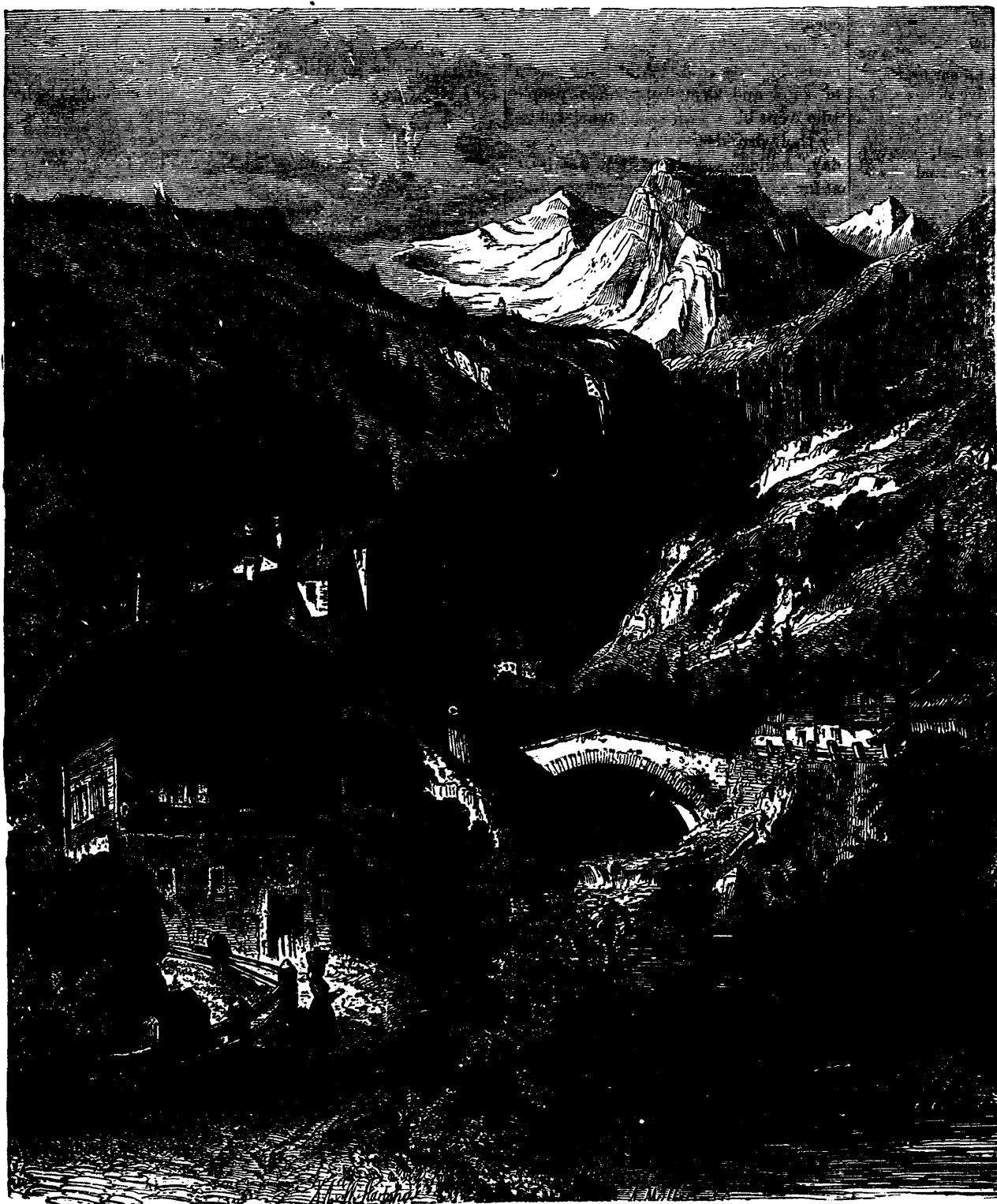
I LEFT Lucerne in a pouring rain for a trip through the Bernese Oberland, most of which I made afoot. The clouds hung low on Mount Pilatus, and threatened a very dismal day. The lovely landscape loomed dim and blurred through a thick veil of rain. I went by boat and diligence to Meiringen. I could hardly find a dry spot for myself or knapsack on the little steamer. At Alpnach the boatload of dripping tourists pattered about in the rain and mud, till assigned their places in the diligences. The local guides stood around, under the overhanging eaves of the houses, in a very disconsolate manner, each pulling away at a big pipe, like an overgrown baby at a sucking-bottle.

A pleasant-faced Swiss fraulein climbed on the step of the diligence as we rode along, and offered sweet wild strawberries, goat's milk, cheese, and cakes for sale. Her garrulous chatter wheedled each of the party into the purchase of her simple refreshments. I was charmed with the affable manners of the Swiss. Even the little children by the wayside would respectfully salute one with "Gut Morgen," or "Gut Abend, Herr,"

"Good morning," or "Good evening, sir." If I made a trifling purchase they would say with a frank familiarity, "Dank you, goot-bye, or *Merci, Monsieur; au revoir.*" A pleasant-voiced landlady came out in the rain while we changed horses to invite me

to take a glass of wine or *cognac*, and when I declined, bade me a kind "goot-bye." They all tried to speak English, however imperfectly. "I dinks it will be wetter," said one in a pouring rain which seemed to make the prognostic impossible.

higher and higher till we reach the summit of the pass. Then it sweeps down in long curves, through sublime scenery, to the charming village of Meiringen. This quaint old village is the most picturesque that I have seen. The engraving shows very well its general character.



SWISS VILLAGE.

The rain soon ceased, however, and the ride through the Unterwald and Brünig Pass was very grand. We rattled through quaint villages with old churches crowned by bulbous spires, the houses covered with scale-work of carved shingles, often with a pious inscription or Scripture text engraved upon the timbers. The farm-houses looked comfortable, with broad eaves, outside stairs and galleries, but with very small lattice windows, and frequently with great stones on the roof to prevent the wind from blowing the shingles off. But, especially in the higher Alps, not unfrequently the lower story was occupied by the cows and goats, and the garret by the fowls.

The women wore short skirts of home-woven stuff, which made them look like girls, and the girls often had old-fashioned long dresses, which made them look like little women. The men wore jackets or short bob-tailed coats of coarse frieze.

The road winds