

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 boat load 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 frauloin 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 refresh-

ments. I was charmed with the affable manners of the Swiss. Even the little children by the wayside would respectfully salute me 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, gut-

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 wester," said one

in a pouring rain, which seemed to make the prognostic impossible. The rain soon ceased, however, and the ride through the Unterwald and Brunig 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, which, but for the inevitable pipe, made them look like big boys.

The road winds higher and higher, through solemn pine-woods, and beneath great precipitous cliffs, 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, nestling at the base of lofty



SWISS VILLAGE.

mountains, is the most picturesque that I have seen. The engraving shows very well its general character. In the evening the Falls of the Alpach were lighted up with coloured fires, with charming effect. They flashed against a background of dark rock and darker forest, like a starburst of