

Ulrich, who at first had followed in silence, got alarmed at this headlong race, asking himself what could be hoped for from the ocean of ice surrounding them on all sides. For the first time he addressed his companion. Hans simply pointed to the horizon, replying, "Onward!"

Other glaciers were crossed, more blocks and crags surmounted. At each repetition of the question, the furious hunter answered, "Onward! still onward!"

#### CHAPTER VIII.

Meanwhile, however, the sky had become clouded, dull roarings were heard in the distance, and puffs of a warm wind were felt across the ice plain. Ulrich warned his companion, but wholly engrossed in his sombre preoccupation, Hans seemed a stranger to everything passing around him. The young carver, hot and panting for breath, looked in every direction without being able to tell where they were. It was a kind of terrace formed in the bend of a glacier, and bounding gaping chasms.

He stopped for a moment, and put his hand to his forehead, which was wet with perspiration. Hans turned then; nothing about him showed that he had even noticed this long march and combat with so many difficulties and perils. His face was as cool, his step as elastic, and his breathing as free as ever.

He was one of those last Alpine savages, accustomed, like the red Indian, to sleep in the open air, to follow tracks, to endure long ambuscades, to struggle against all the dangers of a hostile nature, and to conquer everything by strength or patience.

Ulrich, on the contrary, was of the present or new race, which civilization—as formerly the lyre of Orpheus—incited to milder manners, and which, softened in its vigor, but elevated in its soul, has substituted sociability for strength, and justice for vengeance.

Ulrich sought out a rock from among those which enchain the glaciers in their solid waves, and sat upon it.

Hans glanced sneeringly at him.

"Ah! bold hunter, are you already done up?" asked he.

"Not yet," replied Ulrich, "although you seem to have no other aim than to find out how far my strength can go."

"Did you not wish to face the mountains and return to the pursuit of chamois?"

"I still wish it."

"I suppose you are not satisfied at Merengen, carving yew and maple?"

"What!" cried Ulrich, with involuntary ardour, "do not think that. I seem to breathe most freely when my knife is cutting wood. What you feel here among these heights, I feel with my tools in my hand; my eye sees clearer, my blood flows faster than even now. When we were climbing the last range, while you were showing me the tracks, I was looking at a tuft of cyclamen, spreading its leaves in the hollow of the rock, and wishing that I might copy it with my knife."

"Why then do you take up the rifle again?" hastily enquired Hans.

Ulrich was embarrassed. "It is necessary," said he, rising, "for a reason—you will know afterwards. Let us go on now."

"No, stay," interrupted Hans, stopping him with an imperious gesture. "I need not wait to know what you will not tell me. I know it all; you have turned hunter because it is the only way to get Freneli, and you love her."

"It is true," replied Ulrich, unhesitatingly. "Was it to ask me this that you waited for me at the breach of the Wengern Alp, and that you brought me here?"

Hans grasped his gun and looked fixedly at him.

"So you confess it," said he, with compressed lips, "and yet you know