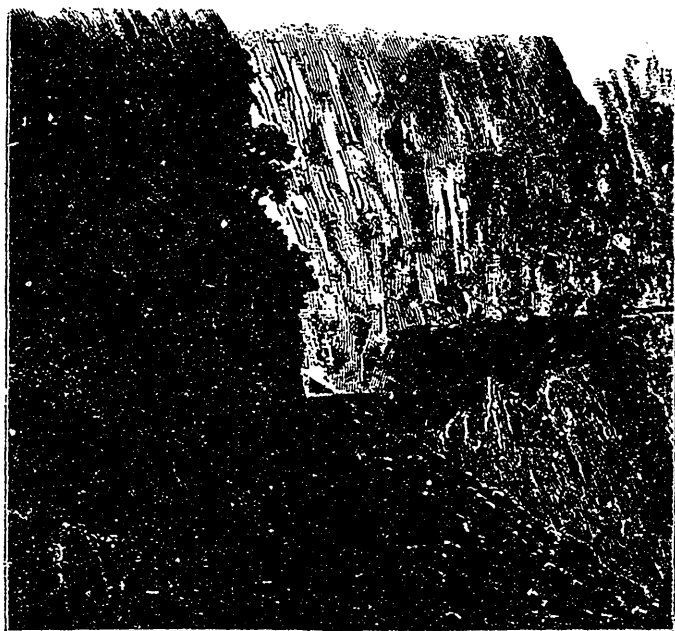


a day will pay at the little Alpine inns for all the bread and cheese, and fish and milk an ordinary man can use, and there will be relief and a pleasure in looking at God's mountains and meadows and rivers free of charge. There is a freedom from restraint, a purity of air, an elasticity of heart and limb, that make a week spent in a high Alpine village worth a whole summer spent in the ordinary country towns.

We shall devote a few lines to the colossal undertakings of the Valais, namely to their system of irrigation, which is unique in its kind, and probably more complete and carefully regulated than any existing elsewhere. It is probable that the earliest of



AQUEDUCTS.

these aqueducts were constructed in Roman times; certain names still in use seem to point to this, as do also various remains of ancient conduits, evidently of remote origin. After the expulsion of the Saracens in the tenth century, the lateral valleys of the Rhone began to be reinhabited, and the mountain-slopes to be again cultivated and irrigated.

The construction of these aqueducts is for the most part a bold and hazardous undertaking. In many places the water employed is obtained at a height of more than 8,000 feet above the sea, at the foot of the glaciers, and the conduits are often from twenty-four to thirty miles in length. Their construction and main-