

THE ST. GOTHARD RAILWAY.

The St. Gothard Railway is the great international highway between North and South, a commercial route comparable to the Suez Canal or the Straits of Gibraltar,—and no doubt many of those who travel by it are bent on business of the highest importance; but some of its passengers have, like ourselves, nothing further in view than to enjoy the beauties of the mountains, and to pass a few days in the upland solitudes through which the railway leads.

After leaving the Lucerne station, the train passes in quick succession through two tunnels, crosses the rapid Reuss opposite the last Musegg tower, and enters a third tunnel leading round the city, from which we emerge into day-light on the lake shore. From this point we pass through a beautiful country,—luxuriant meadows interspersed with picturesque villas and farmhouses. At frequent intervals we obtain charming glimpses of the lake and mountains. Suddenly the scenery undergoes an abrupt change, as we reach the first station on the new line:

Meggen, occupying a situation of unequalled beauty, an open terrace on a fertile slope, with the clear blue waters of the lake below, and on the opposite shore the idyllic hamlet of Greppen, with the Rigi rising steeply above it. Meggen itself is a favourite summer resort. In a few minutes the train traverses this delightful district, and reaches:

Küssnacht, at the end of the lake, a favourite tourist resort nestling at the foot of the Rigi, amid lovely surroundings. From here the Rigi can be ascended, over the Seebodenalp, in three hours. Half an hour's walk from Küssnacht is the celebrated *Hohle Gasse* or Hollow Way, with a chapel marking the spot where Tell slew the tyrant Gessler. Leaving Küssnacht, the railway intersects the neck

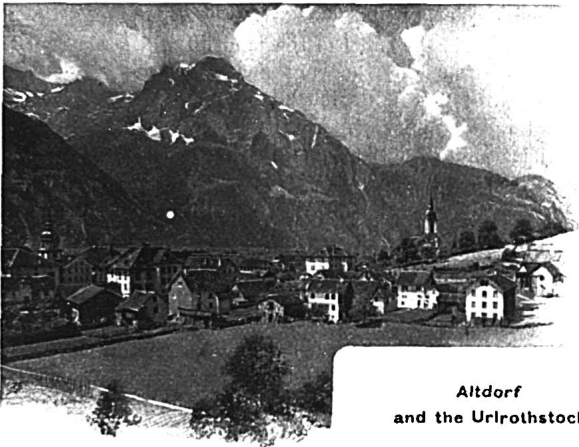
of land separating the Lake of Lucerne from the Lake of Zug, and in a few minutes we arrive at:

Immensee, at the foot of which gleam the dark-green waters of the Lake of Zug. Opposite it is the wooded mountain-ridge known as the Zugerberg, and to the south the lofty flanks of the Rossberg. Immensee is a favourite resort of excursionists and health-seekers. In the north-eastern corner of the Lake of Zug lies the town of the same name, but our way leads us southwards, along the rocky slopes of the Rigi. We next reach:

Goldau, in the midst of the landslip which, on Sept. 2nd, 1806, fell from the Rossberg and overwhelmed an entire village, with 489 of its inhabitants. Goldau is now an important railway junction. Here the direct line from Zurich to Zug joins ours, and the Süd-Ost Railway, branching off to the left, leads to Einsiedeln and the Lake of Zurich, while the Arth-Rigi Railway, which leads on the one hand to the village of Arth, pleasantly situated on the Lake of Zug, and on the other hand up the mountain through Rigi-Klösterli to Rigi-Kulm, connects with the St. Gotthard line. Leaving the station we cross a chaos of huge rocky fragments, the débris of the above-mentioned landslip, and passing the little Lake of Lowerz on our left, and the pretty village of Steinen, we reach *Seewen-Schwyz* station. The beautiful watering-place of Seewen lies on the right of the railway, Schwyz on the left, and the two places are connected by an electric tramway.

The old town of Schwyz is well deserving of a visit; its situation at the foot of the steep, barren Mythen being wonderfully fine; the place is also of considerable historical importance, the perpetual league of the Swiss Cantons having been concluded here on the 1st August, 1291. Schwyz afterwards gave its name and arms to the entire country. The ancient Rathaus is well worth inspection, also the Church of St. Martin.

From here we can ascend the **Grosse Mythen**, the mountain which rises so abruptly above the town as to seem inaccessible. A bridle-path, affording lovely views of Schwyz and the Lake of Lucerne, leads through meadows and woods in two hours to the verdant heights of *Holzegg*, and in an hour more, by a path of 48 zig-zags, blasted in the rock, we reach the summit (6233 feet), which commands an extensive view in all directions. From the *Holzegg* we



Altdorf
and the Urloothstock

can descend to Einsiedeln and return by the Süd-Ost Railway to Goldau and Lucerne. This makes a delightful day's excursion.

Another charming trip from Schwyz is to the grassy **Muotatal**, whose inhabitants still retain many of their primitive customs. Unless it be our intention to cross the *Pragel Pass* by the bridle-path leading in 10 1/2 hours to Glarus, we shall do best to walk (or still better to drive) only as far as the village of Muotathal, 2 1/2 hours from Schwyz,—a very enjoyable trip.

Somewhat higher up the valley there is a widely branching stalactite cavern known as the Hölloch, which has not yet been thoroughly explored.

The St. Gothard Railway now conveys us through the green valley of the *Muota*, past the handsome church and monastic institute of *Ingenbohl*, in which nurses are trained, to *Brunnen* on the Lake of the Four Cantons; we already have some acquaintance with this little place, from which so many delightful excursions can be made that an entire chapter must be devoted to them. We barely have time for a glance at the village, the blue waters of the lake, *Sonnenberg* and *Seelisberg* on the mountains beyond it, and *Rütli*, the cradle of Switzerland's liberty, when the train plunges into the heart of the rocks; another brief glimpse of the lake and the snows of the *Urirotstock*, followed by another tunnel,—and so it continues until we reach *Flüelen* and—ten minutes later—*Aldorf*.

The little town of *Aldorf*, the capital of the Canton of Uri, figures conspicuously in the story of William Tell. Here Gessler ruled, and here the famous cross-bowman pierced the apple with a well-directed bolt. Two fountains mark the spots where Tell and his son are said to have stood. Immediately in front of the tower stands the *Tell Monument*, unveiled in 1895, a masterpiece



Monument to William Tell,
Aldorf

of the Swiss sculptor R. Kissling; admirably conceived and executed, it is a worthy representation of the national hero of Switzerland, and a standing testimony of the Switzer's love of liberty and independence. Altdorf, a place of patriotic pilgrimage of the Swiss youth, is much frequented by tourists and pleasure-seekers, and is also of importance as being situated at the entrance to the Klausen road. In a picturesquely situated theatre, built for the purpose, representations of Schiller's famous play of "William Tell" are given on almost every Sunday during the summer-season by the people of the locality. These performances excite considerable interest even beyond the borders of Switzerland. In the town-hall are exhibited various trophies of the victories which gained the Swiss their independence. From the *Capuchin Convent* at the foot of the Grunberg, where once stood the castle of Zwinguri, a superb view may be obtained

A magnificent mountain tour, either on foot or by carriage, leads from Altdorf eastward into the romantic valley of the *Schächental*, which runs along the foot of the lofty Rossstock chain.

Scarcely 30 minutes walk from Altdorf, in a beautiful situation by the boisterous torrent of the Schächen, stands the village and summer resort of Bürglen, the birthplace of Tell, whose house is said to have stood on the spot now occupied by a little chapel. Beyond the Schächen the road leads through romantic scenery to *Wyterschwanden* and the loftily situated hamlet of *Spyringen* (after passing which we soon obtain a superb view of the Ruchen, Scheerhorn and Clariden), reaching the valley of Unterschächen, a health-resort beautifully situated in a stupendous rocky cirque, 3 hours after leaving Altdorf. In the background of the valley the cascade of the *Stäubibach* attracts our attention. The picturesque new road over the Klausen Pass leads up the precipices of the Balmwand, along the Glatten and over the Urnerboden, in 7 hours to *Linthtal-Stachelberg*, in Canton

Glarus. Posthaus Pension Urigen above Unterschächen, about halfway, is the stopping place for refreshments. From here it takes about 2 hours to reach the Klausen-Pass-Hotel (1238 m. a. s.). From Lucerne to Altdorf and Unterschächen and back is a very enjoyable day's excursion.

The next station on the St. Gothard Railway, Erstfeld, in the valley of the Reuss, is well known to mountaineers as the starting-point for an excursion into the romantic *Erst-*



Entrance to the Maderanertal

feldertal, 9 miles long, with beautiful waterfalls, pastures, fir-woods, lakes, and a grand view of two glaciers,—affording, in short, every kind of scenery that can be looked for in an Alpine valley (Kröntenhut S. A. C. 4 hours).

At Erstfeld the mountain locomotive is attached to the train, which soon reaches Amsteg,—famous for its trout,—at the foot of the huge Bristenstock, a striking view of which has just been afforded us.

Here opens on the east side the beautiful Maderanertal, traversed by the *Kerstelenbach*, with the magnificent Hüfi Glacier gleaming at its upper extremity. One of the

most charming excursions that Central Switzerland affords leads from Amsteg through a narrow wooded defile into this valley, which abounds in swift-flowing torrents, foaming cascades, green Alpine pastures, and noble forests. In its recesses, 3½ hours from Amsteg, the *Hotel Alpenklub* stands among majestic surroundings in proximity to the Hüfi Glacier, which is easy of access. An excursion from Lucerne to the Maderanertal and back can, if time presses, be made in one day, especially if we ride on horseback from Amsteg to the Hotel Alpenklub, but it is decidedly preferable to extend it over two days.

Beyond Amsteg the difficulties with which the St. Gotthard Railway has to contend begin to multiply; the train

crosses the foaming Kerstelenbach by a lofty bridge, tunnels at frequent intervals intercept the view of the valley, and then again we are afforded magnificent vistas of the rugged mountains and their gorges; new tunnels follow, in which the train works its way upwards in a spiral course. Tumultuous mountain-torrents pour their seething waters down the ravines and beneath the bridges, and in the



The Hüfi Glacier in the Maderanertal

midst of the grandest section of the railway we reach **Wassen**, with its church commanding a view of the entire valley.

From Wassen the bridle-path of the *Susten Pass* leads into the wild *Maiental*, encircled by mountains from which descend seventeen glaciers. From Wassen a bridle-path leads



Wassen and Kleine Windgelle

in 1½ hours to the little village of *Maien*, and in 11 hours across the *Susten Pass* (7421 feet) and through the *Gadmental*, amid glorious Alpine scenery, to *Meiringen*.

Beyond Wassen the railway becomes extremely interesting, and displays to us the greatest triumphs of railway engineering in Switzerland. After circling twice round Wassen by means of spiral tunnels, and crossing the *Maiental* three times by bridges at different levels, the line crosses the *Göschenenreuss* and brings us to the village of **Göschenen**. The peaceful and pleasant landscape of the hills of *Lucerne* and *Schwyz* have given place to the bleak and rugged scenery of the high Alps, of which vastness and grandeur are the predominating characteristics.

Göschenen, at the northern mouth of the great St. Gotthard Tunnel, is the starting-point for many delightful summer excursions; in naming some of them we may remark that, as they take one day from Göschenen, they may easily be made from Lucerne in two days.

First comes the magnificent tour to the Göschenenalp, demanding 3 hours' walking, the fatigues of which are amply



Göschenen and the Damma Glacier

repaid, however, by the scenery of this wild valley, in the background of which glaciers descend on all sides. The valley, which is famous for its crystals, is traversed by the Göschenenreuss, which half-way up forms a kind of cascade; here, too, a view opens of the wildly romantic Voralptal, and further on some copious springs of crystal clearness issue from the mountain close to the path. The Göschenenalp, where accommodation can be found in the newly erected little Dammagletscher Hotel, opposite the

magnificent Damma Glacier, as also of a plainer kind in the old Kaplanci (curate's house), presents a typical picture of the recesses of a secluded Alpine valley.

Far better known than the excursion to the Göschenentalp is that through the Schöllenen into the Urserental and to Andermatt on the St. Gothard Road. In its way it is not less grand than the tour just described. The road leads over the entrance to the St. Gothard Tunnel and —leaving the deserted *Langenbrücke* on our right — across the *Sprengibrücke* into the wild ravine of the Schöllenen, through which the Reuss flows at a rapid pace. The sides of the ravine are formed by precipitous granite rocks devoid of vegetation; as we proceed they approach nearer to each other and become steeper and steeper.



Monument Suwarow

Suddenly, at a bend in the road something attracts our attention. In the lofty wall of rock above the right bank of the river Reuss an immense niche has been excavated containing a monument, in the form of a gigantic Greek cross of St. Gothard granite. It commemorates the famous passage of the Pass of St. Gothard by the Russian army under the famous general Suwarow, in September, 1799. Clambering down the precipitous rocks in the face of a

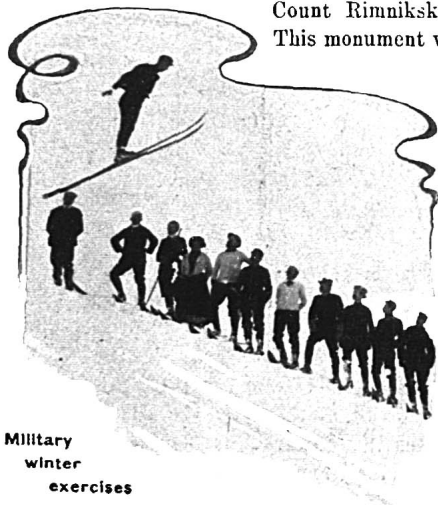


Gothard Troup in winter-time at Andermatt

destructive fire, the Russians turned the almost impregnable position held by the French at the Urnerloch, and compelled them to retreat. The niche is 92 feet in height, and the arms of the cross are 39 feet in length. The pedestal, hewn out of the living rock, is 26 feet high and 39 feet wide, and bears a Russian inscription to the following effect: "To the brave fellow-combatants of Field-marshal Prince Suvoroff, Count Rimnikski, Prince Italinski."

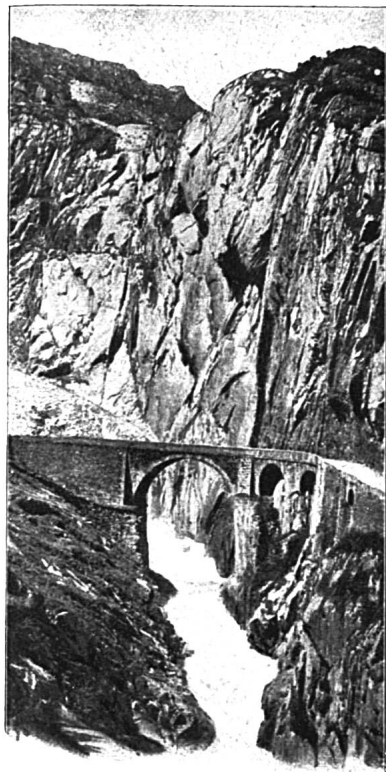
This monument was unveiled on September 26, 1898.

After passing through a gallery built to protect travellers from the avalanches, the winding road brings us to the Teufelsbrücke (*Devil's Bridge*), thrown boldly across the turbulent river, which here forms a fine waterfall;



Military
winter
exercises

some feet lower are the remains of the old bridge. The scene is truly awe-inspiring, and the absence of every form of vegetation renders it sombre to the extreme. A short

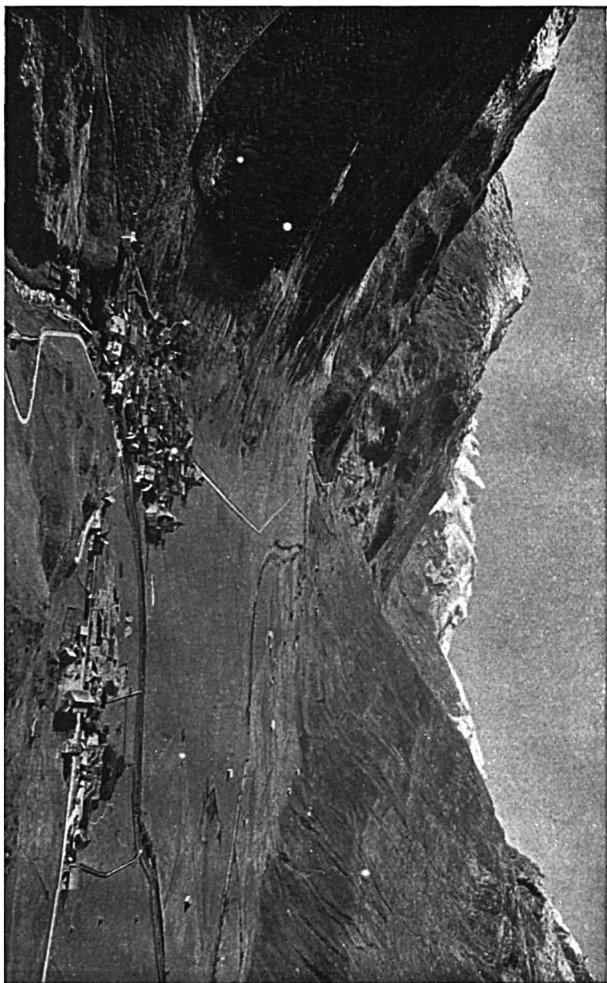


The Devil's Bridge

distance further on, and about an hour's walk from Göschenen, the tunnel (75 yards in length) known as the *Urner Loch*, opens, and on issuing from it the grassy meadows of the pleasant *valley of Urseren* lie before us, embedded

between rocky mountains, and all the more beautiful from the contrast it presents to the desolation of the Schöllenen. This valley is situated at an altitude of nearly 5000 feet above the sea. Soon we reach the famous health-resort of Andermatt. It lies at the junction of three of the most important Alpine highways, and also forms

the key of the fortifications of the St. Gothard, which are in part visible from the valley.



ANDERMATT AND HOSPENTHAL IN THE VALLEY OF URSEREN

In the valley of Urseren four great highways intersect, and from here the diligence or a private carriage will convey us in any direction. At Andermatt the road over the Oberalp Pass branches off to the east, leading through flowery Alpine pastures and along the quiet *Oberalp Lake* (well stocked with trout), and beyond it into the highlands of the Grisons (summit of the pass 7239 feet). Traffic on this road has increased greatly during the last few years



Oberalp Hotel and Lake

since the construction of the St. Gothard fortifications and the Calmet road in connection with them. Near the summit of the pass, $1\frac{1}{2}$ hours above Andermatt, stands the commodious *Hotel and Pension Oberalpsee*, commanding a magnificent view of the Furka road and the heights of the Furka Pass, the Muttenhorn, the St. Gothard group, and the St. Anna and Gurschen Glaciers; the hotel also forms a starting-point

for some delightful mountaineering excursions. An excellent carriage-road leads in one hour to the summit of the Calmot, commanding a prospect as far as Coire, and in 2 hours we can reach the source of the Rhine, the Lake of Toma, and the Fellilücke, affording a grand panorama.

From Lucerne to Göschenen, Andermatt and Oberalpsee is a delightful day's excursion.



The Summit of the Furka Pass and the Furka Hotel

Somewhat higher than Andermatt, in a beautiful grassy valley, lies the village of Hospenthal, to which its ancient tower, built by the Lombards, imparts quite a romantic aspect. The village, which possesses some pleasant new plantations, is the starting-point for the ascent of the Pizzo Centrale. Here the road forks, one branch leading southward to the summit of the St. Gothard Pass, the other west-

ward over the **Furka**, the loftiest, yet one of the Swiss passes practicable for wheeled vehicles. In summer there is a diligence service on the Furka road twice daily in each direction, and it is also much used by private carriages. Crossing the Realper Reuss, with the Spitzliberg rising behind us, we pass the lovely Alpine village of **Realp**, beyond which the road leads in long windings to the Tiefengletscher Inn, $\frac{3}{4}$ hours below the glacier of the same name, and past the Siedelnbach Falls, commanded by the magnificent Siedeln Glacier, to the summit of the Furka Pass (7992 feet) between the peaks of the Mutthorn and Furkahorn. Here stands the Hotel and Pension Furka, and somewhat further on, near the block-houses of the Furka fortifications, the newly-built Hotel Furkablick. From the summit of the Pass we enjoy a superb view of the mountains of the Bernese Oberland, and the St. Gothard group. The new Langsgratstrasse which begins near the hotel affords a grand view of the Bernese Alps, the Grimsel Pass and the Rhone Glacier. The Känzeli, 20 min. distant, commands a magnificent panorama of the Alps of Berne and Valais, and the huge Rhone Glacier lies immediately below us, skirted by the road leading down into Valais. At Gletsch the new road over the Grimsel, a marvel of engineering skill, branches off to Meiringen. (Diligence twice daily during the summer.) The summit of the Furka Pass is the starting-point for quite a number of mountain-tours, for example across Nägelisgrätli to the Grimsel Hospice (5 hours), up the Furkahörner ($2\frac{1}{3}$ hours), the Galenstock (5 hours), the Siedeln Glacier, the Mutthorn (3 hours), and to the Göschenenalp (4 hours), &c. An excursion from Lucerne to the Furka and the Rhone Glacier and back occupies not quite two days, and the very delightful circular tour Lucerne-Grimsel-Meiringen-Brünig-Lucerne three days.

The summit of the **St. Gothard Pass** (6866 feet) deserves the attention of all who admire sublime scenery. From Hospenthal the road, which pedestrians can abbreviate by numerous



THE FURKA ROAD AND THE RHONE GLACIER

short cuts, winds up past cascades of the Reuss and numerous shelter-houses into the upper valley of the St. Gothard; here, in utter solitude, are the sources of the Reuss and Ticino, the little St. Gothard Lakes, and in a lateral valley the Lago Lucendro, at about the height of Mount Pilatus.

A short distance below the summit of the pass stands the *Hotel Monte Prosa*, the headquarters of the mountaineers who climb the surrounding peaks of the St. Gothard, especially the Pizzo Centrale (9849 ft.), the Fibbia (8996 ft.) Monte Prosa (8983 ft.), Pizzo Lucendro (9708 ft.), and Leckihorn (10,014 ft.). Near the hotel are the *Hospice*, where poor travellers are entertained without charge, and the *Mortuary Chapel* in which the remains of those who have perished on the road through snowstorms or avalanches are kept for identification.

The road, following the course of the river Ticino, now descends into the famous *Val Tremola*, which gradually diminishes in width. Shelter-houses are seen here and there along the roadside. Passing the mouth of the Val Bedretto and enjoying a magnificent view of the *Val Tremola* (dangerous, at times, on account of its snow-whirlwinds), we come to the first village in Canton Ticino, *Airolo*, at the southern end of the St. Gothard Tunnel. The passage of the St. Gothard, either on foot or by carriage, occupies about 7 hours from Göschenen,—4 for the ascent and 2 or 3 for the descent.

From Airolo, where Italian is spoken, we return by the St. Gothard Railway to the shores of the Lake of Lucerne, where we still have a number of excursions to make; taking the train back to Brunnen.

Fare Lucerne-Göschenen and back 1st cl. fr. 16.75, 2d cl. fr. 10.95
3d cl. fr. 7.60.

