

1 We reached the hotel "Glacé du Rhone" and discharged our carriage. The hotel is nearly 1 mile
2 from the edge of the glacier, and we set out on foot to have a near view of it. We saw some
3 persons in the distance walking across the ice, and as it did not appear very difficult by their
4 movements, we tried it. I did not venture very far as I found what appeared to be a smooth
5 surface were round hummocks, separated from others by wide and deep cracks or fissures
6 forming very respectable chasms of perfectly solid blue ice. I had no notion of slipping down
7 into one of those beautiful cracks, so I incontinently backed out -- but the girls would go
8 farther, but finally getting a little frightened, they were glad to get back, sometimes sitting
9 down and hitching along until they reached a safe place on terra-firma. An enterprising
10 individual had excavated a grotto in the edge of the glacier and charged ½ a franc each for
11 entering it. We all went in. A short passage led into a room about 12 feet square and 8 feet
12 high, all of which had been cut in the solid ice. There was plenty of light to see to get around.
13 The whole thing was ingenious and worth our trouble to see. I thought it would make a first
14 class refrigerator. The "Mer de Glace," a glacier near Chamonix being vastly more extensive
15 than this, and as I purpose to visit that, will not now stop to describe this one more particularly.

16 Sept. 2nd. Rose early this morning and had breakfast. Hired horses and guides last night to
17 cross the Grimsel Pass and down the valley of the Aare to Imhof. Mounting our horses, we
18 started up a steep zig-zag trail. The turnings & windings of the path gave us fine views of the
19 Rhone Valley. 1 ½ hours of very steep climbing brought us to the summit of the pass. From this
20 point 2000 feet above the valley of the Rhone, we had an extensive view of the jagged peaks of
21 the high alps and the glaciers that form the sources of the River Aare. We commenced our
22 descent. We soon come to a small black lake called Todtensee (Lake of the dead). In the
23 summer of 1799 it was used as a burial place by the French and Austrians. The Austrians
24 fortified this pass, but it was taken by the French. It must have been a rough and tumble fight
25 on these steep slopes and break-neck precipices. The path soon becomes so steep that we
26 dismounted as the road was paved with smooth stones and the horses were liable to slip and
27 fall at any moment, and in such a case it would be difficult to tell very exactly how many feet
28 down a fellow would go before he had a chance to alight. We soon reached the Grimsel
29 Hospice, about 900 feet below the summit of the pass. Stopped a few minutes and got some
30 refreshment. We now reach the river Aare coming down a valley from the west. We follow the
31 banks of this stream or torrent to Imhof. Soon after leaving the Hospice, the river passes into a
32 savagely wild and very narrow gorge, the bridle path formed on the slight projections of the
33 rocks, and in many places is a mere shelf hewn into the rocky wall. Arriving at Handeck, we
34 dismounted and walked down the revine to get a look at the celebrated falls. The river is here
35 wedged in between the walls of rock and the space is so narrow that it is obliged to turn up
36 edgewise to get through. We cross the chasm on a foot bridge to a sort of pavilion formed on
37 top of a projecting rock. A rude railing is fixed around the edge of the pavilion to prevent
38 accident. A splendid view of the fall is obtained from this point. The water of the Aare rushes
39 from the narrow gorge and makes an unbroken plunge of 250 feet into the dark abyss. The
40 Erlenbach, a fine stream, precipitates its waters into the Aare, so near to the first mentioned