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:

Küsnacht, 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 Küsnacht is the celebrated Hohle Gasse or Hollow Way, with a chapel marking the spot where Tell slew the tyrant Gessler. Leaving Küsnacht, 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 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 Urirostock, followed by another tunnel, and so it continues until we reach Flüelen and—ten minutes later—Altdorf.

The little town of Altdorf, 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
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 Swiss’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 Grünenberg, where once stood the castle of Zwingguri, 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 Schächchen, 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 Schächchen 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 Unterschächchen, 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 Urligen 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](image)

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 (Kröntenhüt 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 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 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 Maienreuss 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 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 Kaplanei (curate's house), presents a typical picture of the recesses of a secluded Alpine valley.

Far better known than the excursion to the Gösschenen-alp 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.

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
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 Suworoff, 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;
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 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 Schüllenen. 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.
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 since the construction of the St. Gotthard fortifications and the Calmout road in connection with them. Near the summit of the pass, 1 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. Gotthard 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 Gösgen, Andermatt and Oberalpsee is a delightful day's excursion.

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. Gotthard 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 im-
mediately 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 Nägelisgratli to the Grimsel Hospice
(5 hours), up the Furkahörner (2 1/2 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 Hospen-
thal the road, which pedestrians can abbreviate by numerous
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 Prosà, 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 Prosà (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 Gösgen, — 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-Goesschenen and back 1st cl. fr. 16.75, 2d cl. fr. 10.95, 3d cl. fr. 7.60.