

to recognize. The supposed spectre succeeded at length in making himself known as flesh and blood, in calming their emotion, and obtaining a hearing for his story of adventure. At the moment of the catastrophe he was seated in a wooden hut ; he threw himself on his knees, and engaged in prayer.

An enormous rock now fell down, leaning against the wall at whose foot his cabin was erected ; thus it formed a rampart which protected the shepherd from the masses hurtling over his head. As soon as nature recovered its tranquillity, the poor man, buried alive among piles of earth and stone, set to work to free himself. He had saved from his dinner a morsel of cheese, and the water which filtered through the rocks heaped over his head, served to quench his thirst. At the end of some days—he knew not how many, for he could take no account of time—he was able to emerge from his gloomy prison, like Jonah from the whale's stomach. His eyes at first could not endure the daylight, and he only accustomed them to it by great precautions ; but he lived many years after this strange event, a living witness of a miraculous Providence.

The traveller visiting the scene of the catastrophe sees all around him enormous rocks, shattered and cloven, which oppose an impassable barrier to the mountain-torrents. Sundry patches of pasturage remaining untouched, a few trunks of fir-trees half-drowned in the waters,—such are the sole memorials extant to-day of a formerly flourishing valley. A second landslip occurred in the same locality in 1749.

The Piz mountain, situated in the Trevisan territory, was corroded at its base by the waters which filtered through every fissure. In 1772, this mountain was cloven in twain ; a portion was projected headlong on the plain beneath, burying three villages in its fall. The ruins stopped up the course of a streamlet, which quickly expanded into a lake. The remainder of the mountain shortly afterwards fell into this lake, which overflowed its borders, and ravaged the surrounding country with its floods.

In 1740, according to the “*Mémoires de l'Académie de Stockholm*,” a storm of rain, which lasted eight hours, destroyed and swept away several eminences in the ancient province of Wenneland, on the frontiers of Norway. The Lidschure mountain split open and fell in ; its débris were carried off by the waters.

Effects of this kind are sometimes observed in Savoy. One of the best known is that which occurred, in 1751, near Sallanches, on the Chamounix road.

The heavy snow-storms of the winter of 1751, mingling with the waters of infiltration which had long been undermining the mountain, a landslip took place, and 25,000,000 cubic yards of rock fell into the valley. An immense quantity of very fine dust, which did not clear away for three days, filled the air, and so exactly resembled smoke that it was everywhere reported that a volcano had broken forth in the midst of the Alps. The king of Piedmont immediately despatched to the place the eminent geologist Donati. He arrived in time to watch the progress of the landslip, which was accompanied by a terrible crashing sound.

Horace de Saussure has preserved the curious letter in which Donati succinctly described this remarkable occurrence.*

Landslips, or the fall of mountains, may be produced by the most singular

* De Saussure, “*Voyages dans les Alpes*,” tome i., sect. 493.