

torrent, or rather a river of mud, some three thousand feet in width, and several yards in depth, poured down from the mountain, inundated, and swept into the lake, a part of this unfortunate village. Happily the descent was not suddenly accomplished ; it lasted fifteen days, and thus enabled the inhabitants to save their lives and property. At the Righi-Staffel, a memorial of this event is still visible in an enormous mass of rock placed horizontally on two others which are planted vertically, so as to form a kind of portico.

In the year 1806, when the rains, as we have already related, proved so fatal to Solatré, in France, a terrible catastrophe took place at Goldau. In the centre of Switzerland, and in the canton of Schwitz, are situated the lake of the same name, and another and a smaller lake, that of Lowerz.

Between their banks extends the fair valley of Goldau. On one side towers the Righi, famous among the Alpine heights for its picturesque outlines and its panorama of the sunrise, and 4500 feet above the level of the sea ; on the other, Mont Ruffi, or Rosenberg, attains an elevation of 3700 feet. These mountains are composed of beds of sandstone pebbles and a fine-grained chalk.

On the 2nd of September, a portion of these conglomerated masses was loosened from Mont Ruffi.

Early in the morning the inhabitants of Goldau were alarmed by a frightful crash. Some hours later, the strata extending between the Spitzbuel and the Steinberger flue fell from off the mountain, and precipitated themselves, with a noise like thunder, into the valley, where their ruins accumulated in irregular heaps along the base of the Righi. These strata were nearly 4000 yards in their entire length, 100 feet high, and nearly 1000 feet in breadth. In five minutes, the valleys of Goldau and Busingen were covered with a mass of rocks 100 to 250 feet in height. The villages of Goldau, Busingen, Lowerz, Ober-Rother, and Unter-Rother, were completely buried under the débris of the mountain. Part of the Lake of Lowerz was filled up ; its waters rose more than 70 feet, and devastated all the surrounding country as far as Seewen. Two churches, one hundred and eleven houses, two hundred and twenty barns and stables were crushed, together with four hundred and eighty-four inhabitants, under the gigantic wreck. A very small number escaped the disaster—only those who through some accident were at the time away from their dwellings ; but they lost everything which they possessed in the world. The damage done was estimated at nearly £100,000. But who shall compute the amount of agony and regret which was the most terrible result of this astounding calamity !

In the midst of the stony solitude, now thinly clothed with grass and moss, and traversed by the great road from Arth to Schwytz, where formerly flourished busy villages, and arose the "hum of men," a chapel has been erected to preserve the memory of the landslip of 1806. Every year, on the 2nd of September, a commemorative religious service is celebrated within its walls.