

bridge of only a few inches in thickness, which conceals their perilous character, but is not of sufficient consistency to bear the foot-tread of a man. Over such treacherous traps the traveller must necessarily proceed with the greatest caution, constantly sounding the soil with his iron shod staff, and implicitly obeying the directions of his guide.

In a few rare cases the crevasses extend downward to the very bottom of the glaciers; they then constitute a complete rupture of the entire mass. Such may be seen, in the summer months, at the source of the Aar.

When numerous crevasses strike across one another at the same point, the ice divides into an infinity of prisms and "needles," which alternate, break up, and disappear under the destructive influence of the atmospheric agents, or melt into chaotic groups of the most fantastic outline. In Professor Tyndall's "Glaciers of the Alps"—a work of pre-eminent merit and great

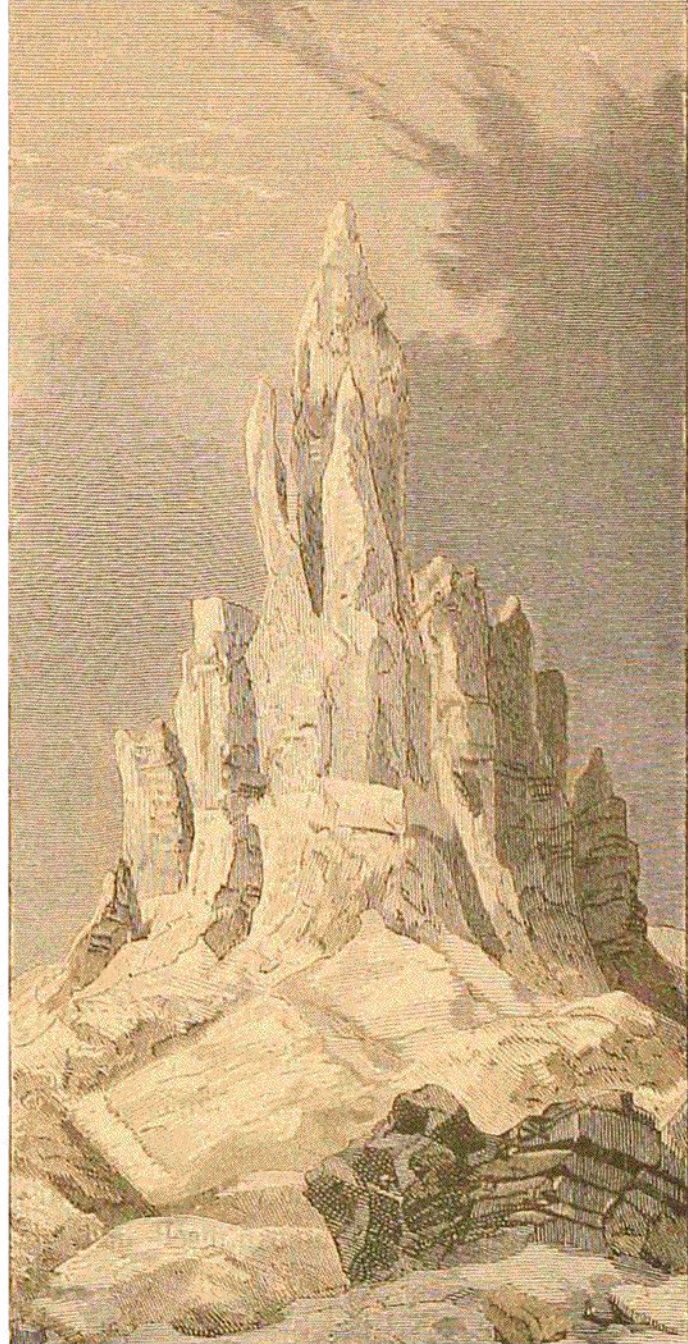


FIG. 102.—AN "AIGUILLE," OR NEEDLE OF ICE.

vigour of style—may be seen a drawing of one of these capricious formations, discovered on the Glacier des Bois, the terminal part of the Mer de Glace of Mont Blanc.*

* Tyndall, "Glaciers of the Alps," p. 316.