

We have now reached the field where everlasting war is carried on between heat and cold, summer and winter. Below us, verdure clothes the valleys, and climbs up the slopes of the hills; and there the shepherd watches his flocks. Above us there are fields of ice stretching many a league, save where some needle-shaped summit of naked rock, too steep for snow to rest upon, shoots up in lonely grandeur thousands of feet, and defies the raging elements. From these oceans of ice shoot forth down the valleys enormous glaciers, appearing like vast rivers of ice, winding among the hills, and pushing, at the rate of a few inches each day, far into regions of vegetation; one year encroaching upon the shepherd's pasture ground, and anon, by the access of heat, driven back towards the summit; hurling down, from time to time, as they push forward, the thundering avalanche.

Without difficulty at Montanvert we can enter upon the glacier, and in spite of the deep *crevasse*, and the elemental war, which always rages in those lofty regions, we may make our way to their source. Nay, human feet, as already suggested, have pressed even the top of Mont Blanc; and should we reach this summit of the Alps, we should stand upon the loftiest point of Europe, and behold a scene which but few eyes ever have, or ever will, rest upon. We should

"breathe  
The difficult air of the iced mountain's top,  
Where the birds dare not build, nor insect's wing  
Flit o'er the herbless granite."

We should, in fact, have reached the climax of the sublime in natural scenery.

Thus far I have described, almost without exception, only what I have seen. But let us now venture into regions where we have only the description of others to guide us. Let us enter the region of ancient Armenia, a country composed of wide plains, bounded and intersected by precipitous mountains. As we journeyed south-easterly over one of these plains, a remarkable conical summit would arrest our attention, at the distance of sixty miles. Day after day, as we approached, it would creep up higher and higher above the horizon, developing its commanding features, and rivetting more intensely the attention upon it. As we came near its base, we should see that its top rose far into the region of eternal ice, whose glassy