

there came on so violent a storm of rain, accompanied by snow and hail, that they were compelled to renounce their enterprise, and defer it until the following year.

It was on the 1st of August 1787 that De Saussure, accompanied by eighteen guides and a servant, accomplished the first ascent of Mont Blanc undertaken for scientific purposes. The first day was spent in ascending the Montagne de la Côte, and they passed the night on its summit. De Saussure slept under a tent, with his servant and a couple of guides, in the very place where Jacques Balmat and Dr. Paccard had passed the first night in their expedition; a place which, as we have already stated, now bears the name of the *Grands Mulets*, and serves as a night-



FIG. 55.—HUT ERECTED ON THE GRANDS MULETS. (After a Photograph by Tuirraz.)

station for travellers ascending Mont Blanc. The other guides disposed themselves among the granite boulders, so as to obtain some slight shelter from the piercing cold.

In Figure 54 we delineate the rock of the *Grands Mulets*, with the modern hut which has been erected there, and which serves as a night-hostelry for excursionists *en route* to the mountain. Figure 55 is a view of the hut.

The difficulties of our adventurers did not begin until the second day; for, on setting out from the *Grands Mulets*, they were compelled to traverse the ice and snow.

On this second day they commenced by traversing the *Glacier de la Côte*—a