

stretches a fathomless crevasse, in which a number of persons have been lost. This is the "Grande Crevasse," and for a long time it prevented all successful approach to the mountain's summit. Sometimes a temporary bridge is stretched across by drifting snow. Occasionally it becomes sufficiently solid to serve for a passage over, but it is always treacherous, and once precipitated an English lady and her companion to a depth from which they were never recovered.

From the Grande Crevasse stretches a gentle slope called the Grand Plateau at an elevation of thirteen thousand feet. This is covered with granular *névé*. Along its lower limit the snow-mass is broken into tumultuous confusion, and the passage over it is difficult and dangerous. Below this is the Little Plateau, ten thousand feet above sea-level; and then come other broken belts of snowy precipices. Now, the upper limits of two glaciers are reached in the downward flow of the ice. This common ice-field is a scene of grand confusion. The mountain slope beneath the ice-sheet presents many irregularities of pitch, and many projecting bosses. Over all these the ice-stream flows toward the lower level. In one place, nine thousand feet above sea-level, a vast pinnacled mass of rock rises some hundreds of feet above the ice. This divides the wide stream, but the parts completely coalesce again around the lower side. In other places, the underlying inequalities break the sheet by fractures large and small. Some of these crevasses extend up the general slope, and others are transverse. The ice-mass is therefore broken into innumerable prismatic fragments. The tremendous mashing together which they experience through the movements of the flow, squeeze numbers of them out of their places; and they stand as huge pyramids and columns ten, twenty, and forty feet above the general surface. The columnar forms are called *séracs*. The afternoon sun acts on them, and some are sharpened to a point; others are worked out at the sides, and stand with broad flat caps. Finally they tumble down or waste away, while new ones rise in other places. Though the ice is continually shattered by crevassing, the fissures are