

LOUIS AGASSIZ TO SIR PHILIP EGERTON.

NEUCHÂTEL, *September 10, 1839.*

. . . Under these circumstances, I thought I could not do better than to pass some weeks in the solitude of the high Alps; I lived about a fortnight in the region of the glaciers, ascending some new field of ice every day, and trying to scale the sides of our highest peaks. I thus examined in succession all the glaciers descending from the majestic summits of Monte Rosa and the Matterhorn, whose numerous crests form a most gigantic amphitheatre, which lifts itself above the everlasting snow. Afterward I visited the sea of ice which, under the name of the glacier of Aletsch, flows from the Jungfrau, the Mönch, and the Eiger toward Brieg; thence I went to the glacier of the Rhône, and from there, establishing my headquarters at the Hospice of the Grimsel, I followed the glacier of the Aar to the foot of the Finsteraarhorn. There I ascertained the most important fact that I now know concerning the advance of glaciers, namely, that the cabin constructed by Hugi in 1827, at the foot of the Abschwing, is now four thousand feet lower down. Slight as is the inclination of the glacier, this