

The Sunplain

The innocent way, too, in which the river used to stop to look into every little corner! Great torrents always seem ~~angry~~ angry, and great rivers too often sullen; - but there is no anger - no disdain, in the Rhone. It seemed as if the mountain stream was in mere bliss at receiving itself again out of the lake-sleep, and raced because it rejoiced in racing, - fair yet to return and stay. There were pieces of wave that danced all day as if Perchita were looking on to learn; there were little streams that skipped like lambs and leaped like chamois; there were pools that took the sunshine all through them and were rippled in layers of overlaid ripples, like crystal sand; there were currents that twisted the light into golden braids, and inlaid the threads with turquoise enamel; there were steps of stream that had certainly above the lake been millstreams, and were looking busily for mills to turn again; there were shoots of stream that had once shot fearfully into the air, and now sprang up again laughing that they had not fallen a foot or two; and in the midst of all the gay glittering and coldish lingering, the noble bearing by of the midmost depth, so mighty, yet so terrorless and harmless, with its swallows skimming instead of patting, and the dear old decrepit town as safe in the embracing sweep of it as if it were set in a block of sapphire.

And the day went on, as the river: but I never felt that I wasted time in watching the Rhone.

One used to get giddy sometimes, or ~~ashamed to feel~~ ^{discontentedly} envious of the fish; then, one