

SOME HOUSE-INSCRIPTIONS FROM THE UPPER LOETSCHENTHAL.

BY WALTER LARDEN.

OF late years I have found in the deciphering of the inscriptions carved outside and inside Swiss chalets and other wooden buildings a pursuit of increasing fascination; and this last summer (1911) I sought to make my work more complete by the aid of photography.

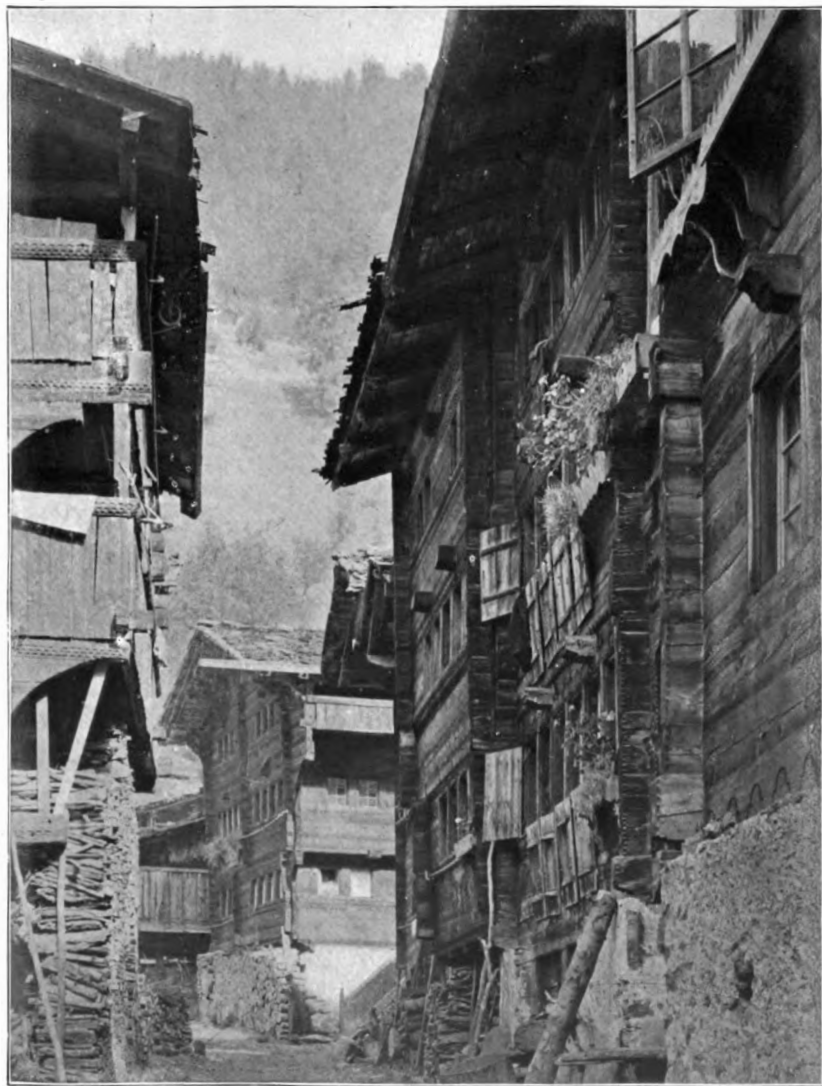
My work in both departments has resulted in a fairly large illustrated collection, which I had hoped to persuade some publisher to convert into a book. But, alas! fears that the public interested in such a subject would be but a small one have so far prevented anyone from making the venture; and all that I have been able to do has been to get a few (some thirty only) published without illustrations in one chapter of my 'Recollections of an Old Mountaineer.'

I am now availing myself of the kindness of the Editor of the ALPINE JOURNAL to put into print a selection of those collected in one district only, viz. the Loetschenthal; and to give with them reproductions of a few of the typical photographs there obtained.

There would, of course, be much to say as an introduction to the complete collection; indeed such an introduction, dealing among other things with the characters and language employed, with the types of verses found, and with the functions of the various persons (as *Zimmermeister*, *Wandknechte*, &c.) whose names are recorded, has already been written. But for reasons of space I must, in the present article, confine myself to a very few remarks.

(1) *Carved, and painted inscriptions.*—I limited myself to carved inscriptions only. These were necessarily made while the beams or boards lay on the ground. No one would have attempted, as no one at the present day attempts, to carve up against the face of a house; still less on a beam or ceiling overhead. These carved inscriptions remain as they were originally, save that those exposed to the weather have become more and more illegible with the passage of time. When one has deciphered a carved inscription, one has the satisfaction of knowing that it is really as old as it professes to be; and further, weathered though it may be, there is usually some trace at least left of the deep carving. Painted inscriptions, on the other hand, can be and have often been renovated *in situ* later on; what one sees may not be the

Fig. 1.



W. Larden. photo.

Swan Electric Engraving Co., Ltd.

STREET IN KIPPEL.

original inscription, and mistakes (even as regards the date) may have been made by the renovator. Moreover portions of painted inscriptions may be clean wiped out so that no trace whatever is left, a fact which renders the deciphering of them quite heartbreaking.

(2) *Outside and inside inscriptions.*—In those parts of the *Berneroblerland* where I worked, the houses were on the whole much scattered, and each house belonged to one family. The inscriptions were external, and belonged to the house as a whole. Though the capital (initial) German letters were often fanciful and adorned with flourishes, they were of normal relative size, and there was little in the way of extraneous carved ornamentation. The main interest of the photographs, to my mind, lay in the fact that they gave the actual forms of the letters, and showed also the weathering and the difficulty of deciphering the words.

In the *Loetschenthal* I found that the inhabitants, for reasons indicated to me by the President of Kippel, had drawn together in villages; and the larger houses had usually two inhabited stories occupied by different families. The best inscriptions were internal; and one sometimes found fancifully carved initial capitals of relatively enormous size, as well as carved ornamentations usually of a floral type. The stories were often of different dates, and each story had its own inscriptions.

(3) *The question of dates.*—I learned to be careful not to assign to any inscription a date that was given elsewhere in the house. Especially did I avoid assuming that two stories were of the same date, or assigning to a room the date of a door, bed, or stove found in it.

(4) *Where internal inscriptions were found.*—In the *Loetschenthal*, the beams running across the ceiling almost always had inscriptions on them. These beams serve the double purpose of supporting the floor above, and of tying together the (wooden) walls of the house; they are called *Binde*, or tie-beams. Inscriptions might be found also on the ceilings, on or over the door, on beds, and on cupboards.

(5) *Characters used.*—Speaking generally, all old inscriptions (say before 1640 or so in the *Berneroblerland*, or before about 1700 in the *Loetschenthal*) would be entirely in capital Roman characters. In the *Berneroblerland*, inscriptions of later date than 1740 or so would be entirely in German characters; but in the *Loetschenthal* Roman characters were often used in relatively modern inscriptions.

(6) *The verses that occurred.*—Many of these were known far and wide, in Tirol as in Switzerland. The master-carpenters too sometimes wandered from place to place, and no doubt carried their stocks of verses with them. In Catholic *Loetschenthal* the tone was on the whole more pious than in Protestant *Bernerobersland*.

(7) *Limitations in reproduction.*—It is impossible, without going to great expense in having special type cast, to reproduce the quaint or fanciful appearance of these old records. Letters of fanciful or antique form, reversed letters, inverted letters, and the curious contractions that occurred so frequently when Roman capitals were used—all these peculiarities have to disappear; one has to be content with the types that the printers have in stock.

The IHS, that so often occurred, had usually a cross rising from the cross-bar of the H, and a (conventional) burning heart underneath; the MARIA was given in a most ingenious monogram-form; while both might have a circle round them, and there might be floral decorations as well. I cannot get all this represented in the text; but fig. 5 gives one good example.

[* * In deciphering the inscriptions, a very difficult matter in the case of old *external* inscriptions, I had to rely on my own powers entirely; I found that the greater knowledge of the language possessed by educated Swiss or German friends did not count for much as compared with practice. In translating them also I had to rely on myself in the main; but in some cases I consulted Dr. E. Hoffmann-Krayer of Bâle, and Dr. H. Dübi of Berne, as to the probable 'point' of some verse; and I would here acknowledge my obligations to them for the trouble they so kindly took and for the useful criticisms and suggestions that they made. The priest also (the 'Herr Prior'), and the President, of Kippel took a lively interest in my work; and their knowledge of patois, and of local customs and history, was helpful to me. The friendliness of these two made my stay at Kippel much less solitary than it would otherwise have been.]

In giving my selection of inscriptions I will take the several villages in turn.

I. Kippel (see figs. 1 & 2).

(1) The following was an *outside* inscription on the basement of a house, and it was very difficult to read. I take its date to have been 1620, since this date was carved on the same

Fig. 2.



W. Larden, photo

Swan Electric Engraving Co., Ltd.

KIPPEL AND THE LÖTSCHENLÜCKE.

Fig. 3.



W. Larden, photo.

Swan Electric Engraving Co., Ltd.

story on the other side of the house. [The upper story had the later date of 1707 carved on a tie-beam.]

Most of the D's, N's, and S's were reversed.

HERE . MEIN . HAVS . FOLCK . WAS . ICH . EICH . SAG .
DAS . SELB . IN . EIWEM . HERTZEM . PRAGT .
LIEBET . GOT . OB . ALEN . DINGEN .
SO . KAN . ES . EICH . NIT . MISLINGEN .

Translation.—‘Hear, O my House-folk, what I say unto you, and stamp the same in your heart. Love God above all things; so can nothing miscarry with you.’

(2) Passing over two rather short ones of 1633 and 1640 respectively, I take next an *outside* one in which there are two points of interest. The first part shows how the master-carpenters sometimes wandered far afield (Meister is certainly Zimmermeister or Baumeister); and the second part is a verse that occurred often, in various forms, in this valley. The SIG is, I find, Middle High German for *sei*; I only found it in one other inscription, viz. one of 1620 near Adelboden. The date is 1651. Reversions of letters &c. are not given.

DAS . IST . GEMACHT . IM . NAMEN . IESV . VND . MARIA . DER .
MEISTER . HANSS . STOFER . VON . LVCEREN . VND . IACOB .
ENGELBERGER . VON . VNDER . WALDEN . 1651 . IAR .

ALSO . SOLT . DV . WONNEN . IN . DINNEM . HVS .
ALS . OB . DV . MIESTEST . MORGENS . DRVS .
LVG . DAS . DIR . SIG . EIN . HVS . BEREIT .
DAS . STAND . IN . EWIGKEIT .

Translation.—‘It (or this) is made in the name of Jesus and Maria. The (Zimmer)-meister was Hans Stofer of Lucerne and Jacob Engelberger of Unterwalden. In the year 1651.

Thou shalt so dwell in thy house as though thou hadst to quit it to-morrow. See that there be a house ready for thee that may endure to Eternity.’

(3) The following came from the house of my friend Eligius Rieder, the President of Kippel, and the date was 1665. In one room was an old stove with the initials, and what I took to be the arms, of Melchior Werlen, as well as the date 1666, engraved on it; it was of a stone that took a good polish. I secured a beautiful photograph of this stove.

Inside, in a lower room, on the tie-beams—

WOHNE . ALSO . IN . DISER . WOHNUNG .
 DAS . DIR . WERDE . ZVR . BELOHNUNG .
 DIE . HIMMELISCHE : WOHNUNG .
 OMNIA . VIRTUTI . POSTPONE . TVAQUE . SALUTI .
 ET . VIVES . IN . ÆVVM .

(Here, as in another, it was *tuaque* and not *tuæque*.)

In an upper room, on the tie-beams, I found—

QVIDQVID . AGIS . PRVDENTER . AGAS . ET . RESPICE . FINEM .
 TABERNACULA . JVSTORVM . GERMINABVNT.—PROV. 14.

DEVS . CARITAS . EST . QVI . MANET . IN . CARITATE . IN .
 DEO . MANET . ET . DEVS . IN . EO .

Outside the house came—

ICH . LEB . WEIS . NIT . WIE . LANG .
 STERBEN . MVOS . ICH . VND . WEIS . NIT . WAN .
 ICH . FHAR . VND . WEIS . WOHNIN .
 WAN . ICH . IN . TVGENT . FLEISSIG . BIN.¹

MELCHIOR . WERLEN . VEXILLIFER² . DESENI³ . RARONIE .
 ANNO . DOMINI . MDCLXV .

¹ This is an altered form of an old verse, widely known. The more usual form is—

*Ich leb', ich weis nit wie lang,
 Ich sterb', ich weis nit wan,
 Ich fahre dahin, ich weis nit wohin ;
 Mich wundert dass ich so fröhlich bin !*

² The *vexillifer*, or *Bannermann*, was the second officer in a *Zehnten*.

³ *Desenium* (which I imagine should be written *decenium*) is the Latin form of *Zehnten*, and this was a division such as is our county or parish.

Translation.—‘So dwell in this house that thou mayest be rewarded with the heavenly dwelling.’

‘Put all second to virtue and to thy salvation ; and thou shalt gain eternal life.’

‘Whatever thou doest, do prudently ; and consider the end.’

‘The dwellings of the righteous shall flourish. Prov. 14.’

‘God is love. He who dwells in love dwells in God, and God in him.’

‘I live, I know not how long. Die must I, and I know not when.

I am on a journey ;—and I know my destination, so long as I be diligent in virtue.’ [A modification, this last, of ‘and I know not whither. I am amazed at my own light-heartedness!’]

‘Melchior Werlen, Bannermann of the *Zehnten* of Raron. In the year of our Lord 1665.’

(4) As a rule it was the two different stories of a house that were occupied by different families. But in the present case the division was vertical. The President occupied half a house from ground-floor to attic ; another man the other half. The whole house appeared to be of one date, viz. 1665. (See note (3)). In this other half also was a stove of 1666.

Inside this other half, on the tie-beams—

FIDITE . VIRTUTI . FORTVNA . VELOCIOR . VNDIS .
NON . MANET . ET . CERTAM . NESCIT . HABERE . DOMVM .

IN . OMNIBVS . OPERIBVS . TVIS . MEMORARE . NOVISSIMA¹ .
TVA . ET . IN . ETERNVM . NON . PECCABIS .

Outside the house, weatherworn and hard to read—

QVID . FACIES . FACIES . VENERIS . CVM . VENERIS . ANTE ?
NE . SEDEAS . SED . EAS . NE . PEREAS . PER . EAS² .

HOC . OPVS . FECIT . FIERI . MELCHIOR . WERLEN . VEXILLIFER
VALLIS . ILLIACENSIS³ . ET . EJVS . FILIVS .

¹ The four last things : Death, Judgment, Heaven, and Hell.

² I trust that I am not ‘imagining ill’ in the translation that I have given. I take this punning couplet to be intended as a caution to young men. [Compare No. 20.]

³ This second record may indicate that the house was not all of one date. Melchior Werlen was Bannermann of the *Zehnten* of Raron, and I cannot find out what this ‘*Vallis Illiacensis*’ was. The name suggests the *Val d’Illiers*.

Translation.—‘Put thy trust in Virtue. Fortune, swifter than the waves, abides not, nor knows how to have any fixed home.’

‘In all thy doings remember the Four Last Things, and thou shalt never sin.’

‘What shalt thou do when thou comest into the presence of loose women ? Do not sit down with them, but depart ; lest thou perish through them.’

(The puns can hardly be rendered into English.)

‘This work did Melchior Werlen, Bannermann of the Illiacean valley (?), and his son, cause to be carried out.’

(5) In a house, or rather in one story of it, inhabited at the present time by Andreas Murman, I found the following. As will be seen, the date was 1679. All was *inside*.

On one tie-beam there was carved—

MEISTER . HANS . GOTS . BONER ¹ . DIS . HVS . HAT . LAEN .
MACEN . FENDER ² . VND . MEIER ³ . PETER . PLAST . VND .
ANNA . REDER . SEIN . HAVS . FRW . IM . IAR . 1679.

[*Laen* is another form of *lassen*. Usually *Lan*.]

A second tie-beam was a rich find. At the window-end of it came the first couplet given below. Next to this came in order (i) the IHS with the cross and 'burning' heart, the flames being represented by flowers; (ii) MARIA in monogram-form; (iii) IÖS more simple in form. Each sacred name was surrounded by a circle, and there were carved floral decorations. In this one instance there was colour also. I obtained beautiful photographs of all three, and am able to have the MARIA reproduced (see fig. 5). After these came in order along the beam the other three couplets given, there being carved ornamentations of circular form separating them. My photo of the IHS included part of the first couplet.

HEILIGES . KRITZ . GESEGNE . DISES . HAVS .
VND . WENDE . ALLES . VNGLICK . DRAVS .

O . IESV . CHRISTI . GOTTES . SOHN .
NIHM . VNS . AVF . IN . HIMMELS . THRON .

O . MVTTER . DER . BARMHERZIGKEIT .
STEH . VNS . BEI . IN . LETSTEN . STREIT .

IOSEPH . STEH . VNS . BEI .
HILF . VNS . ZVR . SELIGKEIT .

On the ceiling was carved—

WAS . ICH . HABE . KOMBT . VON . DIR .
WAS . ICH . BRAVCHE . GIBST . DV . MIR .
Gott . ICH . VERDANKE . DIR . IEDE . GABE .
DIE . ICH . VON . DEINE . GIETE . HABE .

TRINK . VND . IHS . Gott . NIT . VORGIS .
ALLES . Gott . ZV . LIEB .

Fig. 4.

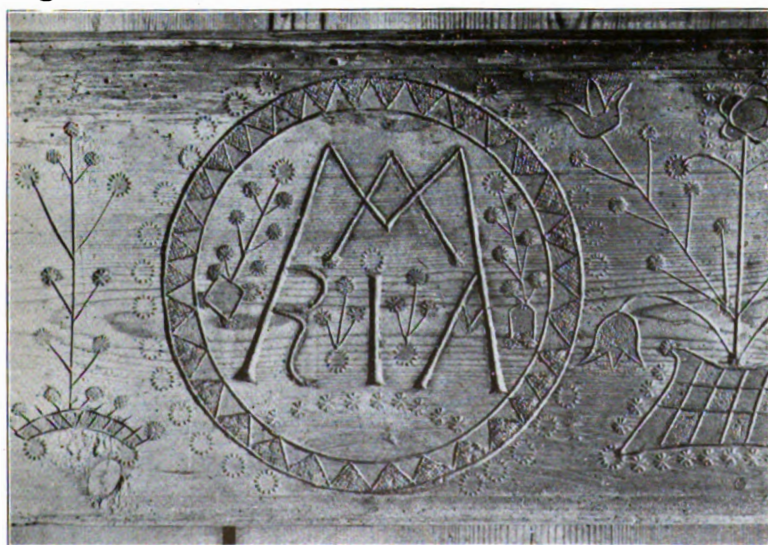


W. Larden, photo

Swan Electric Engraving Co., Ltd.

PART OF "GOTT SEI DANCK,"
from the ceiling of the "Murmanhaus."

Fig. 5.



W. Larden, photo.

Swan Electric Engraving Co., Ltd.

"MARIA,"
from a beam in a house at Kippel.

EIN . FROMES . HERZ . EIN . REINER . SINN .
SCHWINGT . SICH . BIS . ZV . DEM . HECHSTEN . HIN .

ALLES . ZV . EHR . VND . GLORI . GOTTES .
RVOHE . DEN . TODTEN . FRID . DEN . LEBENDIGEN .

- ¹ The name is *Gottspöner*, I was informed.
- ² The same as *Vexillifer* or *Bannermann*.
- ³ Here means a sort of Head-man.

Translation.—‘The Zimmermeister was Hans Gottspöner. This house Peter Plast, *Bannermann* and *Meier*, and his wife Anna Rieder had made in the year 1679.’

‘Holy Cross, bless this house, and turn from it all misfortune !
O Jesu Christ, Son of God, raise us to Heaven’s throne !
O Mother of Compassion, stand by us in our last agony !
Joseph, stand by us ; aid us to Blessedness !’
‘What I have, comes from Thee. What I need, Thou givest me.
‘God, I owe to Thee every gift that Thy goodness has bestowed
‘upon me.’
‘Drink and eat, but forget not God. All for the love of God.’
‘A pious heart and a stainless mind can soar to the loftiest heights.’
‘All to the honour and glory of God. Rest to the Dead, Peace
to the Living.’

[This prayer for ‘Rest to the Dead’ occurred also in another house, with date 1798 ; but the only other inscriptions there were records of names.]

(6) The *Prioratshaus*, or chief priests’-house.

Inside, on the tie-beams, I found—

ZV . GOTTES . VND . MARIA . EHR .
HATT . MANN . DIS . HAVSS . ERBAWEN .
DARANN . VILL . MIEHE . VND . ARBEIT . KEHRT .
VND . VIL . DER . LERCHEN . GEHAVWT .

DER . FRIDT . VND . GOTTES . GNADBE . WAHR .
DEN . HIRTEN . VND . DIE . SCHÆFLEIN .
GLICKSELIG . EINIG . DVRCH . ALLE . IAHR .
ACH . LESER . MERCK . DISE . WOERTLEIN . 1710

DIE . EICH . GESETZ ¹ .
WERDT . NICHT . VERLEHTZ .
VON . KEINER . AXT . VMG’HAVEN .

DAS . ALTER . MACHT .

DAS . S'BODEN . KRACHT .

NICHT . TAVGLICH . MEHR . ZVM . BAWEN .

¹ All agree that this word *might* stand either for the substantive and mean *Law*, or for the past participle of the verb, and mean *firmly planted*, or *mature*, or *granted (that)*. I take it as the substantive.

This last verse was one of the few about which I consulted one or two Swiss scholars. I did not find agreement among them. I had myself already translated it so as to give some 'point' to its being carved in a priests'-house. Finding that Dr. E. Hoffmann-Krayer (Editor of the Swiss Folk-lore periodical in Bâle) approved of my rendering, I have ventured to give it, though everyone else was against it. One authority of great weight began his translation thus: 'The firmly-planted oak was never injured —'; another authority, 'Granted that the oak——.'

Translation.—'To the honour of God and Mary has this house been built. Much trouble and labour were expended over it, and many larches hewn down. (May) Peace and the true Grace of God (be upon) the shepherds; and (may) the sheep (live) in happy concord for ever. Ah! Reader, mark this prayer' (*lit.* 'little word or sentence'). 'The oak called Law' (or oaken Law) 'is not injured nor hewn down by any axe' (as real oaks are). (And this law is that) 'old age causes the ground to crack, of no more use for building on.'

[I take the idea to be that the priests must train the young aright; it is too late when a man is old. The same general sentiment occurred in No. 27.]

(7) The so-called '*Murman-haus.*' There are still many Murmans in Kippel, and this particular house now belongs to Ludwig Rieder; but it retains the above name. It is singularly rich in ornament. The date is 1777. First, the *inside* inscriptions.

On a bunk in a very small room is carved in beautiful letters:

Ich Geln Ins Bett Willeicht In Lo d (see fig. 9),

and over the door of this same little room—

17 Alles Gott Zu Lieb 77.

In the main living room there was, on one tie-beam—

IESVS . MARIA . IOSEPH . VNTER . EVREM . SCHVTZ . STEHT .
DIES . HAVS . HOC . OPVS . FIERI . FECIT . P'LM . R'DVS . DOC-
TISSIMVS . D'NVS . I'NES . ANDREAS . MVRMAN . CVRATVS . IN .
EICHOLL .

On the other tie-beam, the MARIA being in monogram form,
came—

✱ . MARIA . IÖS . DISES . GEBVW . HAT . GEMACHT . MEISTER .
ZIMERMAN . ALLEXIVS . MVRMAN . VND . ALLOVISIVS .
MVRMAN . IM . IAR . 1777 . DEN . 10 . WEINMONAT .

(' Wine-month ' is October.)

On the ceiling near the door was carved a skeleton holding
a scroll on which is inscribed—

QVALIS . VITA . MORT . EST . ITA .

Near this was carved a coat-of-arms with four divisions ;
each part seemed to be more or less a landscape. Also—

Ich Gehe Aus Oder Ein
So Kombt Der Tod Vnd Wartet Mein

a verse which, with *ist* for *kombt*, occurred not unfrequently near
Adelboden and Kandersteg.

Over the door of the room—

Gelobt Sei Jesus Christus
In Alle Ewigkeit Sei Gett Gebenefeit

[Distinctly *Gett*, not *Gott*. I found the spelling *Gett* elsewhere,
looking like *Hett* in one case. See fig. 3.]

On the ceiling, over the eating-table—

Trink Vnd Iß Gott Nicht Vergiß.
Wer Seinem Nächstn Die Ehr Abschneidt
Der Weich Von Meinem Tafel Weit
Gott Sei Dand (see fig. 4)

1777 Den 17 IENER

Elsewhere on the ceiling—

Alles Gott Zu Lieb.

Outside, over the entrance door at the side of the house—

ICH . GEHE . AVS . ODER . EIN .

SO . SOLL . GOTT . MEIN . BESCHITZER . SEIN .

On the face of the house there was, among other things, a short Greek sentence. In three words, the curious forms of the letters, and the contractions, imitated by me with much care, quite baffle my classical friends. What was, in the end, made out has been here printed in ordinary Greek characters.

1777

Gott Zu Lieb.

— ———¹ Θεω λατρευε² τοκέας αγάπα τοὺς ———³ τίμα
DOMVS . AMICA . DOMVS . OPTIMA . DIEV . TE . REGARDE .
PECHER .

LAVDATO . IDDIO

AVF . GOTT . BAV . VND . TRAV . BESTENDIG .

SO . LANG . DV . SEIN . WIRST . LEBENDIG .

GOTT . LIEBEN .

MACHT . NIE . BETRIEBEN .

An Gottes Segen Ist Alles Glegn.

At the bottom of all came some 'House-marks.' For these I must refer my readers to Herr F. G. Stebler's monograph on the Loetschberg (Albert Müller, Zürich, 1907). They were used to mark property in objects, to record alp-rights, &c.

X IIII IIIII II AAA . 6 . IH

¹ The first word looked like Κη; the second rather like a contracted form of μετα.

² Or λατρευι.

³ Something like προσελυζας.

Translation.—'I go to bed, perchance to death. All for the love of God; 1777. Jesus, Maria, and Joseph, under your protection stands this house. The most reverend and learned Master Johannes Andreas Murman, curate in Eicholl, had this work carried out.'

✱ Maria, Joseph. Master-carpenters Alexius Murman and Alloysius Murman have constructed this building on the 10th of October 1777.'

'As life is, so is Death.' (*Mort* for *Mors*; the carver's error.)

'I go out or in, but death comes and awaits me. Praised be Jesus Christ. May God be blessed to all eternity. Drink and eat, but forget not God. He who diminishes his neighbour's honour, let him depart far from my table. Thanks be to God. On the 17th of January 1777. I go out or in; so may God be my protector. 1777. All for the love of God. — — serve God, love your parents, honour the ——. O beloved house, O best of houses! God sees thee sin. Praised be God. Build and trust on God continually, so long as thou shalt have life. Loving God gives an untroubled spirit' (this last being a free translation). 'On God's blessing is all dependent.'

(8) *Outside* the Gemeinde-stadel. A *stadel* is a storehouse for unthreshed wheat, &c.

DER . TVGEND . HVNDERTFACH . GETREID .
SAMLE . DIR . FÜR . EWIGKEIT .

Der Eoblichen Gemeind Kipel IHS Im Jahr 1847.

Translation.—'Collect for thyself for Eternity Virtue's hundred-fold wheat. (Built for) the honourable Gemeinde Kippel in the year 1847.'

(9) Of another, I will for reasons of space merely say that it records how in 1854 a certain Anton Escher of Simpeln bought the house and ground-rights for his daughter. The blessings conferred by the Holy Sacrament are next dwelt upon; and at the end the reader is assured that he who builds on Jesus, Maria, and Joseph, builds on firm ground. I pass over also that inscribed on the Kaplan's house, with the note that it is here recorded how the Thalschaft Loetschen (*i.e.* the Communes of the valley collectively) built the house for the priests who feed their flock and pray for them night and day.

(10) A newer house. *Outside*—

Du Engel Mir Zum Schuß Gegeben,
Begleite Mich Durchs Ganze Leben,
Du Bist Gut Und Rein;
D möcht ich stets dir Ähnlich Sein!

Erbaut durch Joseph Seeberger und seine Gemahlin Viktoria
Ebner Im 1879 Jahr.

Maria wähle Dir zum Bild,
Fliehe unter ihrem Schild.
Niemand ruft vergebens
In dem schweren Kampf des Lebens.

[On a *Sennhütte* on the Fäfleralp these last four lines, slightly modified, occur again; the date being 1880.]

Inside, on a tie-beam, Alex. Ritler and his wife Barbara Lehner and their children are recorded as building the house; but the date given is the same as that outside. There was also—

GELOBT. SEIEST. DV. HERR. IESVS. CHRIST.
DER. VNSER. GOTT. VND. VATER. IST.
IETZT. VND. AVCH. ZV. IEDER. ZEIT.
WIE. IN. ALLE. EWIGKEIT.

Translation.—‘Thou angel, assigned to me as guardian, accompany me through my life! Thou art good and pure; would that I always resembled thee!’

‘Built by Joseph Seeberger and his wife Victoria Lehner in the year 1879. Take Maria as thy pattern! Flee under her shelter. No one calls (on her) in vain in the (last) grievous struggle of Life’ (i.e. in the death-agony). ‘Praised be Thou Lord Jesus Christ who art our God and Father now and at every time as to all Eternity.’

II. Blatten.

(11) On a *stadel* or *speicher* (both are storehouses, though not for the same things) I found—

ICH. HANS. IOSEPH. RIEDER. SAMBT. SEINEN¹. BRIEDREN.
IM. 1759. IAR.

IHS . MAR . IOS .

AN. DISEM. HOLTZ. AN. DEM. GEMACH. KAN. NICHT. SEIN.
EIN². LOBLICHE. GEMEIND. BEDVRT³. MIR⁴. HABENS. GE-
HAVEN. IN. VNSEREN. GVOD.⁵

¹ Should be *meinen*.

² As *Lobliche* is a formal title (see No. 8) I read *ein* as meaning ‘the.’ I do not translate ‘a Gemeinde if it be honourable.’

³ I was told that this means ‘*unzufrieden*.’

⁴ Patois for *wir*, I take it. Certainly *mer* occurs for *wir*.

⁵ *Gut*; i.e. property.

Translation.—‘I, Hans Joseph Rieder, with my brothers; in the year 1759. About the wood used in this building, the honourable Gemeinde cannot be displeased. (For) we hewed it down on our own property.’

(12) A house of date 1773. *Inside*, on one tie-beam, a record of names, all Ebiners. The present owner is a Tanast. On another—

IESVS . MARIA . IOSEPH . BEFEHLEN . MIR . DISES . HAVS .
VND . ALLES . VNGLVCK . SEI . DARAVS .

DENCK . LEBEN . WIL . ICH . ALSO . HEVT .
ALS . HET . EIN . END . MEIN . LEBEN . ZEIT .

IESVS . MARIA . IOSEPH . ALLES . EICH . ZV . EHR . DEN . 30 .
ABRIL .

ALLES . WAS . DV . DVOST . ZV . VOR . BETRACHT .
GEDENCK . WIE . ZV . LEST . DEIN . END . WIRD . GEMACHT .

(Names and dates given in both stories.)

Outside—

1773.

Gott Sieht Dich O Sinder.

After some familiar couplets and lines (as *Ich gehn aus oder ein*, &c.)—came

GOTT . BEHIETE . EVCH . VOR . VNGLICK : DEVS . TE . CON-
SERVET . AB . INFORTUNIO : DIEV . TE . GARDE . DE : MAL .
DIO . VI . GARDI . DI . MALE .

AN . GOTTES . SEGEN . IST . ALLES . GELEGEN .

Man muos in Allen Sachen
Mit Gott den Anfang Machen ;
So geht woll Alle Sachen .

CIO DCC L XX III. CONCORDIAM V SECTARE .

Translation.—‘To Jesus, Maria, and Joseph, we * commend this house; may all misfortune keep out of it. Think thou, “I will live today as had my life’s period an end now.” Jesus, Maria, and Joseph, all to your honour! The 30th of April. Consider beforehand all that thou doest. Bethink thee how at last thy life must have an end.’ *[Again the patois *mir* for *wir*.]

‘1773. God seest thee, O Sinner! I go out or in; let God be my protector. To trust in God is to build well. All to God’s

honour. God guard thee from misfortune' (in four languages). On God's blessing is all dependent. One must in all affairs make the beginning with God; so prosper all affairs. 1773. Follow Peace.

(13) The older priests'-house. *Inside—*

DISES . HAVS . BAVT . DIE . GEMEIND . BLATTEN . EVSTEN .
WEISSENRIED . VND . RIED . GANTZ . ALEIN¹ . WEIL . ES . IHR .
EVGENTHVM . THVT . SEIN .

WER . GOTT . LIEBT . OB . ALLEN . DINGEN .

DEM . KAN . UND . MAG . ES . NICHT . MISLINGEN .

Ewiges Denkmal Brüderlicher Vereinigung und der Christlichen
Aufmunterung zur Aufbauung dieses Im 1826 Gemaeüß² Hauses
nach dem Sprichtwort Froher Muth macht Arbeit Gut.

Over the door inside—

Gelobt sey Jesu Christ in Alle Ewigkeit.

Outside—

1826

Die auf den Herrn Vertrauen
Sind wie der Berg Sion.

Jesuß, Maria, und Joseph behüte dieses Haus vor Unglück.

Wer Wider Dieß Geredt.³

Mein Gutte Werk Verhindren⁴ (see fig. 6)

Wird Auch Wie Wenachrib

Sein Lohn Dort Finden.

Zum Glück Und Wohlstand Baut Man Ingemein

Für Seinen Priester Ganz Allein.

Mit Diesem Und Mit Allen Sachen

Muß Man Mit Gott Den Anfang Machen.

Im MDCCC XX [VI]⁵ CONCORDIAM .

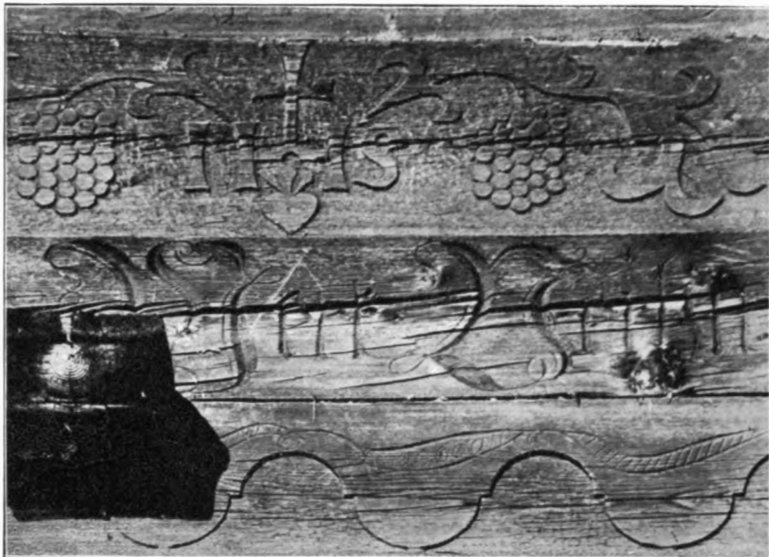
SECTARE—Alles Gott zu Lieb—Jahr.

¹ Without help from the rest of the valley; especially, independently of Kippel which had been in command of Blatten ecclesiastically.

² This word was curiously written; I have given what I took it to stand for.

³ This may have been *Beredt*. *Geredt* could be a substantive.

Fig. 6.



W. Larden, photo.

Swan Electric Engraving Co. Ltd.

FROM OUTSIDE THE OLDER "PRIESTS' HOUSE" AT BLATTEN.'

Fig.7.



W. Larden, photo.

Swan Electric Engraving Co., Ltd.

TYPICAL SENNHÜTTE; ON THE WERITZ-ALP,

in patois. I have given one possible translation ; my Swiss scholar friends were uncertain about it.

‘ This could be used for *Verhindert*.

‘ A hole had been recently made here ; the missing numerals should be VI.

Translation.—‘ The Gemeinde Blatten, Eisten, Weissenried, and Ried build this house unaided, since it is their property. He who loves God above all things, for him can and will nothing miscarry. A permanent memorial of brotherly union and of Christian stirring-up to the building of this [in 1826] Gemeinde-house according to the proverb “ A cheerful mood makes labour easy.”

‘ Praised be Jesus Christ to all Eternity.’

‘ 1826. They who trust in the Lord are even as the Mount Sion.’

‘ He who speaks against this (so as to) hinder my good work—’ [or possibly ‘ He who, against the above sentiments, hinders my good work’]—‘ will also like Senacherib find his wages there’ (i.e. will be struck dead). ‘ For our happiness and well-being we build this together, unaided, for our Priests. In this as in all other matters one must make the beginning with God. In the year 182—. Follow peace. All for the love of God.’

(14) From a very long inscription on the new priests’-house (1858) I select one verse ; I see that I shall not have space for all. This verse was *outside*.

Noch nie hat uns ein schwüler Tag

Kraft und Muth genommen.

Er sei so heiß er inder mag

Muß doch der Abend kommen.

Am Ende kömmt der Lohn

Hier und im Himels Thron.

Translation.—‘ Never yet has a sultry day robbed us of strength and courage. Be it ever so hot, still the evening comes at its close. In the End comes the Reward, both here and at Heaven’s Throne.’

III. Ried.

(15) I can find space for but one from this village. The date was 1728.

Outside, on the face of the house—

IALES . WAS . DVOST . ZVOVOR . BETRACHT .

GEDENCK . WIE . ZLETZ . EIN . END . WERD . GEMACHT .

ZVOVOR . GETAN . VND . NACH . BEDACHT .

HAT . MENCKEN . IN . GROS . LEID . GEBRACHT .

ALES . ZVO . LOB . VND . EHR . IESVS . MARIA . VND . IOSEPH . 1728 .
 IVNGES . BLVT . SPAR . DV . DEIN . GVOT .
 DAN . ARBEITEN . IM . ALTER . WE . TVOT .

Also outside, but on the side of the house in a balcony and in small letters, was the following. A native whom I met knew all about the event referred to.

IN . IAR . DA . MAN . ZALT . 1708 . DVO . IST . VNS . GOT . BEI .
 GESTANDEN . DVO . IST . DIE . BACHELÄ . ZV . BEDEN . SITEN .
 DEM . HAVS . AB . GANGEN .

Translation.—‘All that thou doest consider it beforehand. Be-think thee that at the last thy life will come to an end. Doing first and thinking afterwards has brought many a one to great sorrow. All to the praise of Jesus, Maria, and Joseph. While young put by money; for work in old age is distressful. In the year when one counted 1730, then did God stand by us. For then did the avalanche in the Bach-gorge go past the house to this side and to that.’ [It was a snow-avalanche, the native said. As regards the date, I have taken 0 with a reversed 3 to stand for 30. The house was not built in 1703; but in 1730 it was two years old.]

IV. Ferden.

There were some very old houses here, but inscriptions were rarer.

(16) In a house of date 1591. A very curious inscription! I have made sense of most of it; but the part that baffles me has baffled also my Swiss authorities and another Swiss scholar at Oxford.

Inside, on one tie-beam, was—

HOC . OPVS . FECIT . FIERI . P . H . IOHANNES . IEYZINER .
 ANNO . 1591 . DIE . VERO . DECIMO . SEXTO . SEPTEBRIS . SOLI .
 DEO . GLORIA . F¹ƒ . VEN . GOT . VIL . DEN . IST . VeR . CIL² .

On the other tie-beam (see fig. 10)—

HeGeEeNERDERBITRMANDERHATMENGbIRIGETADARcSINo
 NaChT GEBVRENDRVmGEBNGOTDSHIMERIch eVMTELDARVM
 BITERGOTMITGaE^mFLISMITKALERSQ^hTMI|DASERVTSIVERVT
 KTRNANTRI .

¹ I do not know what F is. Finis? The sign ƒ is used to separate two sentences.

Fig. 8.



W. Larden, photo.

Swan Electric Engraving Co., Ltd.

PART OF THE INSCRIPTION SEEN IN FIG. 7.

Fig. 9.



W. Larden, photo.

Swan Electric Engraving Co., Ltd.

FROM A BEDSTEAD, "MURMANHAUS," KIPPEL.

Fig. 10.



W. Larden, photo.

Swan Electric Engraving Co., Ltd.

PART OF OLD INSCRIPTION IN A HOUSE AT FERDEN

(Date 1591)

¹ This sentence being *Wann Gott will, dann ist unser Ziel* ('end of Life'), we see that *VcR* stands for *Unser*. We have *V* used for *W*, and *c* for both *S* and *Z*.

² So *GAcM* stands for *ganzem*.

³ This letter was like a *D* reversed. I have seen *O* carved thus; but Dr. E. Hoffmann-Krayer suggests that the letter is a *C* (see the illustration), and that the word is *SCHTMI* or *Stimme*.

I make out the first part of the second inscription to be :
——— *Hans Gezner (i.e. Jeyziner) der Biederman, der hat Meng Biri* (patois for 'heavy lifting jobs') *gethan; dazu seine Nachbaren. Darum gebe ihnen Gott das Himmelreich zum Theil. Darum bitte* (or *bittet er*) *Gott mit ganzem Fleiss . . .*

[So far is fairly safe; though I am aware that the *DARcSIN NAcHTGEBVREN* looks like 'for the benefit of posterity.' About the rest I venture a guess; it may start someone on the right track. My guess is: *mit—stimme, das er ruht* (i.e. *ruhe*) *sich wie ruht Katrina unten* (*Katrina* being his wife, already dead). See note 4 above.]

Translation.—'This work (the very well born? Plurimum honestus?) *Johannes Jeyziner* caused to be carried out in the year 1591 on the 16th of September. To God alone the Glory. (Finis?) When God will, then comes the end of our life.'

'*Hans Jeyziner*, the worthy man, he has done a great deal of heavy work, and so have his neighbours' (who helped him). 'Therefore may God give them the kingdom of Heaven for their portion. Therefore pray' (or 'he prays') 'God with all diligence . . . ?' [According to my somewhat wild guess it may run on ' . . . and with — voice, that he may rest as rests *Katrina* in her grave.']

(17) From *inside* a house of 1693 I take the verse—

WELCHE . ES . DE . ERSTEN . BESASEN .
DE . ERSTEN . ES . MÛSTEN . VERLASSEN .
DARVM . DER . ES . WRST . HABEN . VNDANKBAR SEIEST . NIT
VND . GOT . VOR . DIE . ABGSTORNEN . BIT .

Translation.—'They who first possessed it must be the first to leave it. Therefore thou who wilt inherit it, be not unthankful; but pray to God for the dead.'

(18) The *gemeinde*-house; date 1707. *Inside* on one beam—

EXSTRVIMVSQVE . DOMOS . COELOQVE . EDVCIMVS . ARCES .
CEV . DATA . PERPETVO . TERRA . COLEND . FORET .

CRASTINA . LVX . COGET . VITÆ . STATIONE . MOVERI .
QVIS . NEGET . INSANAS . NOS . FABRICASSE . DOMOS .

On another beam—

GEMEINE . LIEB . VND . AVFRICHTIKEIT .
HABEN . MICH . ALHIER . AVS . GARBEIT .
FART . FORDT . LIEBT . GOT . IN . EINIGKEIT .
SO . BAVT . IHR . EIN . HAVS . DER . EWIGKEIT .

On a third beam—

ICH . DIEN . DER . GEMEIN
BIN . DOCH . ALLEIN .
SO . LANG . ICH . RECHT . GEMEIN .
HAT . IEDER . GNVG . ALLEIN .

In a narrow vertical column between two windows—

DAS . GOT . SEI . GOT . DAS . GLAVB . ICH . NIT . VNGERECHT .
IST . GOT . DARVM . STIRB . ICH .

Arranged on and round a carved shield was—

LIEB . GOT . IN . DER . STIL . . DAS . IST . SEIN . WIL .

Outside, on the side of the house—

CHRISTVS . ALEIN . IST . DER . WAHR . EGSTEIN .

On the face of the house high up came the date 1707. Lower down came an inscription that looked hopelessly obliterated. But after one study of it (or two), I suddenly saw that it was more or less a translation of the Latin verses above. With further study I made most of it out, but it was really a difficult bit of work.

ZVNVZ¹ . WIR . BEV . AVF . [STIZEN]² .
STOLZ . IN . DIE . LIFTEN . [WEIT]³ .
ALS . WEIR⁴ . VNS . ZV . BESIZEN .
EWIG . DIE . ERD . BEREIT .
DER . MORGEN . TAG . [BEKIMERT]⁵ .
VNS . RVCKT . DAS . LEBENS . ZIL .
WAN . DER . BAV . AVSGEZIMERT .
GENIES . ES . VNSER . NIT . FIL⁶ .

With the two words marked (2) and (5) I was not satisfied; I told Dr. E. Hoffmann-Krayer what sort of words the Latin appeared to demand, and he made suggestions about the two and about that marked (4).

¹ This is probably for *zunichts*. But it may stand for *zu Nutze*.

* The word looked like SPIAEN. The suggestion is STIZEN; i.e. *stützen*, 'props' or 'pillars.' If so, we take BEV·AVF as the verb *aufbauen*. But could not *Auf spiän* stand for *auf-spannen*? In Middle High German, *spien* is the preterite of *spannen*. If so, could we not take BEV as a substantive and read 'we extend buildings upward . . .'?

* I read this as WAN. The suggestion 'WEIT' suits rhyme and sense.

* Of course this is, here, *wär*.

* So I read it. The suggestion ERSCHIMERT would suit the Latin better.

* *Nü fil unser*, 'not many of us,' is used as a singular subject to the verb *geniese*.

Translation.—'We raise houses and build up towers to the sky as though the Earth were given us to cultivate for ever. To-morrow's sun will cause us to be moved from our station of life; and who then will deny that our houses are the work of madmen? Brotherly love and uprightness have constructed me here. Fare on; love God in unity; so build ye a house for Eternity.' The next quatrain looks easier than it is. Here is one possible translation. 'I serve the Community, and yet am but one. As long as I am really common' (i.e. not run by a clique) 'everyone finds his share in me sufficient.' A superior native told me that the next piece was intended to have a double meaning. *Eüher*—'That God is God, that I believe. Not unrighteous is God, for that I answer with my life.' *Or*, 'That God is God, that I believe not. Unrighteous is God, therefore I perish.'

Love God in quiet; that is His will.'

'To no purpose' (or 'For our use') 'we build up pillars' (or 'stretch up buildings') 'proudly (far?) into the air, as though the Earth were ours to possess for ever. The morrow distresses us' (or 'dawns resplendently'), 'and the end of our life draws near. When the building is completed, not many of us (will live to) enjoy it.'

(19) From *inside* a house of 1728 I take one verse—

GLEICHT. WOHL. DES. MENSCHEN. LEBEN.
NICHT. EINEM. BAVE. HIER?
BAVLEVTE. SIND. IA. ALLE.
BIS. AN. DAS. ENDE. WIR.
DOCH. GAR. VERSCHIEDEN. BAVEN.
DER. MENSCHEN. HERZ. VND. HAND.
DER. EINE. BAVT. AVF. FELSEN.
DER. ANDERE. NVR. AVF. SAND.

Translation.—‘Is not man’s life here like a building? In truth we are all builders to the very end. But very variously do men’s hearts and hands build! One builds on rock and another on sand.’

V. Miscellaneous.

(20) From *Weissenried*, over a chamber door. It looked unintelligible, much like the second part of No. 16, as there were no divisions of any sort between lines or words, not even dots. I have broken it up. Date 1703.

IM 1703 IAR DÿSE STVBON HAT LASEN MACHON IOSAB
BELWAT VND MARIA HASLER M K B.

ZEFEIER DING SOLT DV WOL LEGEN AN
DIE NIEMAN WIEDERBRINGEN KAN.
DIE ZEIT VND ÿVNGFROVWSCHAFT ICH SAG

[. . . a line covered up; its sense can be guessed at.]

[Comparing with another of 1894 found on the Weritzalp, one can supply a line something like

‘KEHREN NIT WIEDER IN ALLE TAG.’]

Translation.—‘In the year 1703 did Joseph Bellwald and Maria Hasler have this room (or story?) constructed.’ [M.K.B. = ‘(Zimmer) Meister Kristian Bellwald’?] ‘Two things shouldst thou set store on, that no man can bring again; — Time and Virginity, I tell you . . .’ (once lost, never return).

(21) From *outside* another house in *Weissenried*, date 1791, I take two lines only—

Laß Reider Reider (i.e. *Neiden*) und Hasser Hassen
Was Gott mier gibt muß man mier lassen.

Translation.—‘Let enviers envy and haters hate; what God gives me must man let me keep.’

(22) On a *Sennhütte* in the *Telli-alp*. (A typical *Sennhütte* is shown in fig. 7.) Date 1814. I omit part.

Im Jahr 1814. Gott Gefegne Menschen und Sich In diser
Hitten vor Allem Befem Ungewiter.

ARBEIT . IM . WEINBERG . BETRACHT . DEN . LOHN .
GOTT . ES . ZALET . MIT . DER . HIMMELS . CRON .

Translation.—‘God bless men and cattle in this hut against all dangerous bad weather. Labour in the vineyard; consider the reward; God pays it with the Heavenly crown.’

(23) On and in one *Sennhütte* on the *Hockenalp* there was a good deal. The date was 1849–50. I have room here for but one verse. The others contained (i) an appeal to Mary for support in the last hour, (ii) a deprecation of criticism (so common in the Berneroblerland inscriptions), and (iii) a hope that the building would be blessed to the welfare of the builder’s soul. The verse I select is from *inside*.

DER . ZVFAL . HEIST . ER . HAT . GETAN .
WIES . OFTMALS . SCHON . GESCHEHEN .
SONST . IST . IM . GANZEN . NICHTS . DARAN .
BALD . WARDES . ALLE . SÄHEN .

Translation.—I adopt Dr. E. Hoffmann-Krayer’s view as to the ‘point.’ The lines may mean ‘What we call Chance has done it; a common occurrence. Yet there is not much in this; as soon everyone will see.’ [*I.e.* what we call ‘Chance’ often turns out to be quite regular—following Law.]

(24) From *outside* a *Sennhütte* on the *Fafleralp*. Date 1884.

Du verwelcktes braunes Blatt auf meinem Schoos,
Was willst du mitten mir in Sommer sagen ?
Noch ist dein Leben jung, die Freude groß,
Und fröhlich siehst du jeden Morgen Tagen !
Wie lange währt’s, ein herbftlich kalter Hauch
Knickt die Blätter und die Menschen auch !
Bald wird auch dir das letzte Stündlein schlagen.

Translation.—‘Thou brown and withered leaf upon my bosom, what is it that thou, in the midst of summer, wouldst say to me ? “Still is thy life young; Joy is great; and glad thou seest each day dawn. But how long will it be before the chill breath of autumn nips men and leaves alike? Soon for thee too will strike the last short hour of thy life.”’

(25) From *outside* a *Sennhütte* on the *Laucheralp*, date 1890. The first two lines occurred elsewhere. In one form or another the verse is well known, occurring in Tirol also.

Dieß Haus ist mein, und doch nicht mein.
Der nach mir komt, dem wirds auch nicht sein.
Ach, Gott! wer wird der letzte sein?

Translation.—‘This house is mine, and yet not mine. He who possesses it after me will yet not possess it. Ah, God! who will be the last?’

(26) From *outside* another *Sennhütte* on the *Laucheralp*; date 1897.

Hoffnung schlummert tief im Herzen
Wie im Liliencelch der Thau.
Hoffnung thaucht wie aus den Wolken
Nach dem Sturm des Himmels Blau.

Translation.—‘Hope slumbers deep in the heart, as lies the dew-drop in the lily’s chalice. Hope reappears ever, as does, after storm, Heaven’s blue from behind the clouds.’

(27) From *outside* a house in Wyler of date 1905. This village had been burned down and all the houses were new. The first verse contains the advice that I read into that verse of No. 6 which begins ‘DIE . EICH . . .’ The last sentence occurred more than once; I found it, with advice ‘to be ready’ added, in Latin, on a house in Ferden of date 1670.

In der Nähe Maria baue ich Peter Bellwald zum zweiten mal.

Des Glaubens Baum bringt Frucht der Tugend
Drum pflanze ihn in zarter Jugend.

Gewiß ist der Tod; ungewiß der Tag u. die Stund, Zeit und Ort.

Translation.—‘Near (the chapel of) Maria, I, Peter Bellwald, rebuild my house.’ ‘The tree of Faith bears Virtue as its fruit; therefore plant it in tender youth.’

‘Certain is Death; uncertain the Day and the Hour, the Time and the Place.’

It is possible that there were some good verses in some of the locked-up Sennhütte; though in any case these inscriptions would have no antiquarian interest, since all the huts seemed relatively modern—a hundred years old at most. Apart from this I think I can say that the above are the most interesting of the Upper Loetschenthal inscriptions; though I should have liked to have had room for more.

MR. COLLINS' TRIANGULATION OF TERAM KANGRI.

By T. G. LONGSTAFF.

IN the January number of the *Geographical Journal* (vol. xxxix. p. 71) I published a communication from Colonel Burrard on this subject. By inadvertence this did not appear in the *Alpine Journal*. Having since received through the further courtesy of the Surveyor-General, Mr. V. W. B. Collins' report, computations, triangulation sketch and photographs, I now take the opportunity of sending some further details of his remarkable mountaineering achievements, which I believe will be of interest to readers of the *Alpine Journal*.

Mr. Collins is a junior member of the Survey of India and had had no previous mountaineering experience. His achievements are all the more noteworthy, though they are only in keeping with the traditions of his Department. The long series of mountain ascents carried out by the officers of the Survey of India has been often alluded to in this Journal (cf. A. J. vol. xxiv. p. 133 and vol. xxv. p. 398).

Mr. Collins commenced operations by visiting six stations of Montgomerie's Indus Series on either side of the Indus about Leh, namely, Pachuspha 19,557 ft., Tayar 19,625 ft., Arzu 18,659 ft., Parchakanri 18,362 ft., Himis 18,719 ft., and Lasirmau 18,270 ft. No satisfactory sight of Teram Kangri being obtained from any of these he crossed the Kardong Pass 17,500 ft. to the Shyok River and attempted the ascent of Skanpuk 20,288 ft., a station of Johnson's tertiary triangulation shown as Skanpak No. 1 Stn. 20,302 ft. on the map. The G. T. S. maps of Kashmir 45 S.E. 45 N.E. and 44A S.E. on the scale of 4 miles to one inch should be consulted, or my sketch map (A. J. vol. xxv. p. 488). Mr. Collins continues:—

'Bad weather came on by the time I had reached the snow-line at 17,600 ft. and I had to camp at this spot, just under the