along the track which I followed, and Sulitelma be ascended from my camping-place on the Pieska Jaur.

One final word of caution let me still give. Do not go too early in the year; for 'summer comes slowly up that way.' On July 12, Herr Wahlenberg found the Lommi Jaur still frozen over with its winter's ice, and clothed besides with snow an ell in depth. The climate is much less severe on the eastern than on the western side, and the different zones of vegetation climb as a rule a thousand feet higher in Lapland than in Norway. But the country from which the larger glaciers would be explored is fairly represented by the bleak shores of the lifeless lake which reflects the snows of Sulitelma.

Ascent of Myrdals Jökull. By W. L. Watts.

ONE of the principal parts of my programme during my visit to Iceland this year was the investigation of Myrdals Jökull and its crater Kötlugia.

Myrdals Jökull, with Godalands, Merker, and Eyjafjalla Jökulls, comprise the chief southern mountain section of Iceland. They are, doubtless, all of volcanic origin, although the greater part of the evidence of the force which called them into being is buried beneath a deep covering of ice and snow. With one exception, the only crater of this mountain series that has been in eruption during historical times is the huge lateral crater of Myrdals Jökull, viz., Kötlugia. This volcano has been in eruption fifteen times since the year 900. It is, as Mr. Poulet Scroope says, 'a baranco crater of extraordinary dimensions.'

This volcano has devastated the whole tract of land known as Myrdalssandr; it is essentially paroxysmal, and Kötlugia is but a breached lateral crater of Myrdals Jökull, the breach being first formed, in all probability, during 'the eruption of Myrdals Jökull in 1580, when the mountain is reported to have been rent asunder.' Its last outburst was in 1860.

One great peculiarity in connection with this volcano is that it has never been known to emit lava, all the known eruptions producing but large floods of scalding water and sand, while from mountains in close proximity have flowed some of the largest lava streams in the known world.

Upon the adjacent hills, however, I found traces of ancient lava flows, and upon the glacier itself many fragments of lava; thus proving conclusively that these mountains must at one time have been no exception to other volcanoes around

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them. It was to explore this crater, and to determine more exactly the character of the mountain in which it occurs, that Mr. W. and I, this year, set out from Hethi, a small farm upon the south base of the mountain, in company with two Icelanders, named Sigurd and Brenyolver, whom we had hired as attendants; we took with us two baggage-horses, besides those we rode. We went a short distance along the track leading to Hoffdebrekka, a farm about twelve miles east of Hethi, until we were level with the mountain Arnastakka, where we turned up a gorge to the north, along the bed of a glacial river. Rocks of great height rose upon either side, composed, like most of the neighbouring hills, of a volcanic agglomerate,[1] through which masses of basalt protruded.

We followed the river for about an hour, and climbing up the eastern side of the ravine, we reached a grassy plateau, upon which a tent was pitched, belonging to some farmers, who had come there to cut grass; here we drank some coffee, and hired one of the men to accompany us as far as it was practicable to ride, in order that he might take back the horses.

We soon caught sight of the black sandy plain of Myrdals Sands, the greater part of which, as I have before mentioned, had been caused by the volcano we were going to inspect. To the north was the snowy Jökull, and before us, to the east, the broad plain, its black sand uniting in the distance with the purple sky. Again we followed the bed of the river, which branched off into two arms, one coming from the north, and the other from the west. We took the northern direction. The bed of the river rapidly narrowed, and it was not long before we came to a halt before a good-sized cave upon the western side of the stream; it was perfectly dry, and had often been the resort of shepherds. At this point we left our saddles and bridles, and sent the man who had accompanied us back with the horses, with instructions to hobble them upon the grass land near their tent, to await our return.

Our man Sigurd was young, short, and strong, the very personification of sturdy doggedness; Brenyolver was a man of fifty years, who talked much of his mountaineering. As we reached the cave I began to entertain great doubt as to the soberness of the latter, and he was so impudent, that, had it not been late, and that I was determined to get all my things up to the foot of the glacier that evening, I should decidedly have sent him back. We made our way up the gorge, whose perpendicular sides rose sometimes to an elevation of four or

[1] Palagonite tufa, although 'volcanic agglomerate,' I think more precisely expresses the heterogenous character of the rock.

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five hundred feet; fanciful masses of agglomerate towered above us, in the form of turrets, pinnacles, and embattled walls, while numerous caves and rounded ledges showed plainly the way the stream had worn a path for itself, down this long grand defile of threatening heights. Throughout the course of the stream were masses of rock which had fallen from above, and many others seemed to totter in their giddy elevation, ready to join their companions below. The gorge terminated in a small 'foss' (waterfall), and the stream disappeared in the dark rift through which it struggled.

Now commenced a hard scramble up the precipitous sides of the ravine, over beds of loose stuff and shifting pieces of rocks which had collected wherever the sides were not too steep for them to rest upon. Such ground is very tiring to climb, but is both easy and pleasant to descend. A little more hard work brought us to a cave, where we rested for a few minutes; upon resuming our journey we crossed an incline of pebbly stones, upon which were masses of rock bearing glacial scratches. The most remarkable feature of our excursion now stood before us; it was a long and narrow strip of mountain called Errin's Sands. Upon the west it had been cut off from the main body of the mountain by the stream above mentioned. In many places at the top it was scarcely three feet wide, while an incline of some 80°, upon the east, made it a narrow and dangerous peninsula of rock, girt upon either side with terrible precipices, one of which was 250 feet, and the other, I should say, 700 or 800 feet deep. Our course lay over this seemingly impracticable road, and as I had more than once entertained great fear concerning Brenyolver, who carried our methylated spirit for use in cooking, lest he should fall and break his neck, it was not without some misgivings that I led the way over this awkward piece of mountain. In this critical spot he, unfortunately, manifested a desire to wrestle, and it was as much as we could do to keep out of his way.

By means of this unpromising path, at the height of 3,300 feet above sea level, we reached a plateau, which sloping upwards, joined the high glaciers of Myrdals Jökull, at 3,600 feet. The irregular surface of the plateau was covered with slabs of basalt and patches of snow. We went along the eastern terminal edge, bounded by a precipice of 300 feet, at the bottom of which the glacier swept like a frozen stormy ocean, its icy billows, in places black with sandy moraine, piled over one another, rifted and contorted with the force by which they were driven against the immovable and seemingly eternal walls of rock we stood upon.

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Brenyolver became more and more intoxicated, but I could not ascertain by what means, until I reached the plateau upon which our camp was to be pitched; he had lagged much behind, and upon turning to find out the reason for his doing so, I found him seated upon a large stone drinking the methylated spirit which he was carrying. He was in a state of complete incapacity, and all that I could get from him, in answer to my exhortations to go on, was 'Mikid slimt fyri gamlan Islanding' (very bad for old Icelander), which he reiterated in a plaintive voice, and at length began to cry. I took his load from him, and left him to himself. We camped about a quarter of a mile from the point whence I had determined to attack the Jökull, upon the edge of the plateau before described. Here we built up four walls of stones, and roofed them with the sheet of canvas I had brought for that purpose; while building the hut a hailstorm burst upon us, the spherical little pieces of ice, as large as a good-sized pea, pelted us unmercifully. During the course of our operations our drunken servant came up, and lying down, at once went to sleep. We could see the rifted and thickly-crevassed glacier beneath us, and a black mass, which was evidently a small volcano, whose grim mouth gaped at us from the opposite side of the ice; by 11 P.M. night closed in.

When the camp was fitted up, and the residue of the spirit put into the lamp, I found to my dismay, that my 'waterproof' matchbag was wet through, and most of my matches were spoilt. We succeeded at length in getting a light, and cooked some soup and lamb, but the wind drove the rain, hail, and sand through the crevices of our habitation, and made our night's lodging anything but a bed of roses. Brenyolver awoke in the middle of the night, and mingled with the flapping of our roof his old cry of 'Mikid slimt fyri gamlan Islanding;' he groaned and rolled about until I began to fear he was suffering from delirium tremens. The rain, which was falling fast, had found its way through our extemporised roof, and as we were lying in sandy slush, our surroundings were by no means agreeable; the storm increased in fury, and gust after gust seemed as though it would sweep us and our temporary abode away, and the idea of perhaps having to struggle with one of the dirtiest of dirty Icelanders in a fit of delirium, upon the edge of a precipice on such a night, was scarcely a thing to look forward to with anything like complacency. The night, however, passed away without such a realisation of my imaginings, and the morning showed us the beginning of a stormy day.

Friday, July 30.—Peering down the precipice on the brink

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of which our house was built, the eye fell at once upon the glacier, black with volcanic sand. At every step was a dark rift, that seemed to unite the terrors of the volcano and glacier. On the opposite side of this ghastly valley was the small black volcano, its funnel-shaped sides of sand and ash catching the clouds that crept along the dark wreaths of detritus which spread out from Kötlugia in inky waves; huge cracks and snowy clefts extended upwards towards the high glacier and summit of Myrdals Jökull, now dim with gloom, presiding over all, and breathing from her icy lips a freezing breath, which, standing there that stormy morning, looking into the gulf at my feet, made me almost think I was gazing into one of Dante's abodes for evil spirits, where they are tortured alternately by fire and frost. I cannot conceive any place more calculated to disturb the mind of anyone at all inclined to be superstitious. I conferred with W. as to whether we had not better dismiss our 'gamlan Islanding,' and seek another attendant, and in doing so procure a fresh supply of matches. He fully concurred with me that it would be best to do so, and as he preferred inspecting the surroundings of our hut, and improving its construction if the weather permitted, to making a descent of the mountain, Sigurd, Brenyolver, and I returned to Hethi, where I obtained some matches and a fine young fellow named Johan Magnaldson, the counterpart of our man Sigurd. We loaded ourselves with a fresh supply of provisions and spirit, and set out on our return journey in the evening; a hurricane had been blowing all day, the hail and rain had increased, it was very foggy, and was growing dark.

Heavily laden as we were, it was as much as we could do to make any headway. It is needless to relate the many troubles of that awkward and severe struggle up the sides of that storm-wrapped mountain. I must say the Icelanders behaved remarkably well; the peremptory manner in which it had been necessary to act with Brenyolver evidently had a beneficial effect, and although it was as much as flesh and blood could do to climb that mountain in such a tempest, they did it, without a murmur from either of them.

I was anxious to push on to my companion above, who had now been left some fifteen hours alone. Upon reaching the plateau, the clouds were so thick, and the storm so violent, that we passed within fifty yards of the hut without perceiving it, nor did we discover our mistake until we found ourselves confronted by the slopes of nevé leading to the Jökull. We returned, following along the edge of the precipice by which our hut was located, and right thankful was I to see the figure

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of my friend standing to welcome us to our now much improved abode. He had heard the sound of our alpenstocks against the rocks, and had come out to look for us; our roof by W.'s labour was rendered almost waterproof, and the chinks and crannies being stopped up, it was less airy and far more comfortable; rude as it was, it was a haven of rest, which I appreciated more than I had often done the best accommodation in my native land, and having lighted a candle, as I stirred up some soup over my spirit lamp, I warmly entered into the feelings of the Esquimaux in his affection for his oily fireside.

The light of our wax candle, a pipe, some good Scotch whisky, and a song alternately in English and Icelandic, quite banished the memories of the toil and travail of the day, the terrors without, and the solitary waiting on the part of W., creating upon the storm-blasted rock upon which we were perched a brighter spot than had ever laughed in the face of Kötlugia. But our half candle went out, our songs ended, and our grog was consumed; the rain beat down more furiously than ever, and by morning sufficient water had found its way into our habitation to suggest the thought that Myrdals Jökull had regarded its intrusive visitors as creatures of an amphibious order in creation.

Friday, August 1.—We rose to a dubious morning, but the wind was NW., the only wind with which one is certain of fine weather in Iceland. Our first work was to enlarge and improve our shelter; I then took a few observations, and found the compass was seriously affected, the attraction varying sometimes within a few yards, but I made out Hatta to be SSW. and Haversey a trifle to the north of east, which would make Kötlugia about five English miles due north. Our height was 3,500 feet, the thermometer registered 2° of frost in the night, outside our hut. The ground immediately around us was strewed with fragments of basalt, and masses of it stood out in the ledges over the side of the precipice. In a SW. direction, and at no great distance, was a perfectly conical mountain, but I could not find it had any local name. We stopped up all the crevices of our hut with moss, which grew abundantly in various places. At 11 A.M. there was a fine view of Orefa Vatna and Skapta Jökulls. Upon Vatna I could see two black cones, they were Hagaungn Hnujukur, but I could discover no signs of activity through my telescope. We set out for Myrdals Jökull at 12 A.M., and were soon plunged into a considerable depth of snow, which in many places concealed fissures in the ice. I therefore adjusted the

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rope, placing myself first and W. between the two Icelanders.

Immediately upon leaving the fjall I ascended to the NE., going round the valley below our camp. My Icelanders, who had never before been upon a Jökull, behaved well, exhibiting no signs of fear, although they were passing, for the first time in their lives, some large and ugly crevasses. I ascended to the height of 5,500 feet, nearly the summit of the Jökull, up some steep snow slopes. This elevation afforded a glorious view of the surrounding country. Vatna, Skaptar, and Orefa were now obscured, and a strong NW. wind was raising large clouds of sand upon the plains to the east, but the fjalls, and the tops of Godalands and Merker Jökulls, stood out clear and sharp in the cold transparent atmosphere. Godalands and Merker, with the mountain we stood upon, appeared to hold between them the accumulated snow of ages, but a small proportion of which had been allowed to escape their grasp, to feed the numerous glaciers that fringed their snowy heights, and swept down in broad seas of ice to a much lower level than the last snow patch upon the fjall beneath. Upon the summit of the mountains there was only pure snow, though the glaciers to the east and south were black with a sandy moraine, they all three appeared to be smooth and rounded eminences, which perhaps, beneath the deep covering of many a winter's snow, might have been conical. To the E. lay a horseshoe-shaped valley cutting into the centre of Myrdals Jökull, round which protruded black elevations of no great height; the sandy detritus upon the glaciers had evidently all come from this direction. Could this be Kötlugia? It was very unlike what I had pictured to myself of the yawning chasm which had to account for all the devastation eastward. I had expected to find it in perhaps a state of solfatara, and it was not on the spot indicated upon the map. This was a valley choked with the sudden birth of an immense glacier within it, around which enormous cliffs of indurated snow had risen, and appeared as if they had stood there for ages. It was so utterly different from what we had expected to find, that we at once dismissed the idea of its being Kötlugia, remarking, that doubtless it was a similar ancient crater of much larger size. We made some sage comments upon the magnitude of ancient volcanic disturbances as compared with those of historic date, but did not in the least recognise the fact that we were looking into Kötlugia itself.

We proceeded along the SW. and W. edges of the valley at these points girt with slopes of snow, which split up and divide

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into immense consolidated masses where they first descend into the valley, rapidly passing into the truer glacier, with which this depression was filled.

In many places the glacier was fearfully crevassed and blackened with commingled ice and sand. We returned to camp amid a storm of hail; the little globules of ice danced around us, glancing from the now frozen surface of the snow, and were swept by the wind into bewildering eddies and wreaths around us. The sky clouded over as we arrived at our little habitation, and the wind increased, but it was blowing NNW., and I did not fear for the morrow, as we gave an Icelandic 'scoll' (success) to our intended prolonged excursion upon Myrdals Jökull the next day; nor was I surprised, when I looked out the last thing before going to sleep, to see a brighter sky and a warmer glow through the heavens, and as I lay down to rest, the certainty of fine weather acted as a gentle soporific, which counteracted the disturbing influences of many a drenching week.

Saturday, August 2.—No one awoke till 8 A.M., although we had proposed starting early; but it was not surprising that our sleep was so deep and sound, considering the roughness of the two previous nights, and the hard work of the last three days. The index of my thermometer registered 6° of frost during the night. Immediately after breakfast we set out for the Jökull, and were soon in the broad glaring sunlight of the glacier; we ascended westward, as we wished to reach the top of Myrdals Jökull, and thence to determine which was really Kötlugia. Owing to the heat of the sun, and to the disturbing influences of our progress, the snow was continually shifting; this somewhat startled our Icelanders, as each shift formed a small crack, which disclosed pure white snow beneath, and emitted flashes of dazzling white light, which were very trying to the eyes. We attained the summit of the Jökull at a height of 5,750 feet, a snowy valley separating us from Godalands Jökull upon the NW., and Merker Jökull more to the north.

The sun was intensely hot, and we now rested to take a few observations. The grim valley beneath our encampment now bore a very different aspect to what it did upon the stormy morning when we first gazed upon it; now there was a beauty in those dark waves and sombre banks of sand, where before we could discern nothing but the terrible. The crater before us awoke a keen interest, instead of exerting a feeling of repulsion. The dread horseshoe valley, which seemed to penetrate to the very bowels of the mountain, appeared in all its symmetry of shape,

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with light and shade beautifully blending amid its wild confusion, and the dark chasms now made darker than ever by the contrasted light, tempted us to peer into the fathomless unknown. Oh how circumstances alter the colour and character of the scenes through which we pass!

We descended into the huge reservoir of frozen matter lying between Myrdals, Godalands, and Merker Jökulls, almost environed by snowy eminences, from which various glaciers extended towards the streams and rivers which in their turn restore to earth the precious gift of water, which the all-creating power of nature has ordained alternately to quench the thirst of arid lands, to swell the seas, to hang awhile in space, to fall in dew or rain, or else to be stored up in these inconceivably vast reservoirs of frost and snow. Here side by side, and in the same identity, we have the vivifying and destroying powers of nature. Look eastward at that black weary waste of sand—it has all been caused by the unequal distribution of the elements of heat and water: heat, which when equally distributed, restores from these frozen Jökulls the rivers and the streamlet, when unequally dispensed produces the paroxysmal outburst of the slumbering volcanoes, which belch forth destroying floods, caused by the same elements which bestow the gift of life.

We lunched with Eyafjalla Jökull due west, and as we were due north of Hethi we came to the conclusion that the horseshoe-shaped valley which was now to the east of us could be none other than Kötlugia. We continued our course to the north, intending to strike for Mælifell sands, but at 5 P.M. a fog closed down upon us; our last bearings were Eyafjalla Jökull SSW. It soon began to snow, and we could not prevail upon our Icelanders to strike for Mælifell sands, which could not have been very far distant. We rigged up a shelter with mackintoshes spread upon ice-axes, and took some refreshment; in the course of the evening the snow ceased and the fog cleared, as the sun set at about 10.30 P.M. As the fog was dispersing a beautiful fogbow appeared to the SE.; a rainbow-coloured cross, partially encircled between two segments of a circle, was visible for probably a quarter of an hour. We did not reach Myrdals Jökull till the sun had set, and a sharp frost had hardened the crust through which our feet no longer sank, and frosted our hair, freezing stiff every part of our garments that had been wetted during the snow-storm.

Somewhat large and beautiful crystallizations formed upon the ground in tiny flower and leaf-like forms, and as we stood

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upon the crest of Myrdals, the moon broadened upon the now dark evening sky, throwing a flood of light across the sea towards the black coast of Myrdals sands, sharpening the outlines of the thousand crags before us, deepening the shadows, and spreading its silver light over the glaciers and snow.

The reflection from the ice threw out in bold relief the dark volcanic formations at our feet, the icy peaks of distant mountains, and the broad shadowy glaciers of Vatna and Skaptar, glistening with a supernatural radiance which made us pause and almost hold our breath while gazing upon the weird beauty of reposing nature. We descended at a brisk pace, taking hold of each other's hands, and sliding considerable distances upon the smoothly-frozen crusts which now covered the sides of Myrdals. We arrived at camp about 1 A.M., and heartily appreciated our supper (query breakfast), and a sound sleep rewarded us for our long day's exertion, though we had been repaid a thousandfold already by that one view from Myrdals Jökull, not only for our day's efforts, but for all the troubles, difficulties, and expense incidental to our journey from England.

We were all now confident that the horseshoe-shaped valley must be Kötlugia, although it was south-east of its position upon the map, and all traces of activity were buried fathoms deep in its icy bosom. We resolved to visit the volcano upon the opposite side of the valley beneath us, and to follow up the sand and other volcanic debris to the valley of Kötlugia. No one would believe that the little wavy line upon the map represented the Kötlugia which has wrought so much desolation, and presents such terrific proportions to those who care to climb and learn from the original. The valley of Kötlugia is, in fact, a large lateral crater of the volcano of which Myrdals and Merker Jökulls are portions. Around the sides are numerous openings, now partially obscured by ice and snow, leaving a series of banks of sand and cliffs of ferruginous and almost stratified felsite round the margin of the valley.

I started at 9 A.M. with my two Icelanders, W. wishing to explore the crags and precipices round our camp to seek for specimens of variously coloured obsidian to carry home. The Icelanders declared they would not and could not cross the valley below; so I started down the side of the precipice alone, but before I got half way across I saw them following by a different route.

The glacier was very badly crevassed, but it looked worse

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than it really was, owing to the quantity of black sand mingled with the ice. At this point I found the glacier to be 300 feet lower than the plateau upon which we were camped.

The volcano to which we were now making our way was surrounded by beds of sand and debris, and many singularly formed fragments of felsite were strewn upon the glacier, some resembling the beading of a cornice; the only traces of lava were numerous fragments of a compact species, and obsidian, most of which appeared to be more or less scratched by the glacier.

On reaching the side of the crater, the inside walls of which were perfectly perpendicular, rising to the height of 200 feet, I found them to be composed of alternate beds of black ash and tufa; the bottom of the crater was a deep pool of muddy water of about 100 square yards; the water was of no perceptible taste, and though many small streams ran into it, I could see none running out. This little volcano was breached to the south, and seemed to have sprung up between three hills of hard ferruginous basalt, now deeply covered with ejectments from the volcano; in several places the basalt was blistered. I could see no traces of recent activity, nor is there any record of its ever having been in eruption. No visible lava-streams have flowed from it, and it appears, like Kötlugia, to have ejected only water, sand, and fragments of various matters. The bottom of the crater was fifty feet below the surface of the surrounding glacier.

Many hummocks of ice and sand occurred in front of the breach, and extended eastward, stretching out at last in dark waves of sandy ice; this sand must have been scooped out from the face of the mountain, for there could be no adequate falling down of sandy detritus from the adjacent sides of the crater before named to account for that immense accumulation of sandy moraine. A series of low hills, nearly buried in sandy ice, led the way up to the valley of Kötlugia. In the middle of the valley the ice bulged up and was rifted in all directions; perpendicular cliffs of a highly ferruginous and almost stratified felsitic rock in five places protruded round the sides of the valley, and in the south corner was a rather large pool of water. I collected specimens of these cliffs and several fragments of lava, from a long sandy bank which had risen along the north-east side.

We toiled up the snowy walls on the west side of the valley, passing many large crevasses, cutting seventy steps before we reached the top; we crossed the Jökull to the south amidst a hailstorm, and returned to camp much satisfied with our

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expedition. W. had gone on down to the cave at the foot of the mountain, where we had previously arranged to follow. We took a farewell meal between the rough stone walls that had sheltered us so well, and, packing up our belongings, bade adieu to Kötlugia and Myrdals Jökull, round which the evening clouds were beginning to cluster in no very promising fashion.

We found W. awaiting us at our trysting-place, and passed a very cold night in the cave, for to my mind a cave is the most unpleasant place to camp in; its cold, grave-like feeling is more suggestive of rheumatism than a comfortable night's lodging, and unless the weather is very bad, I always prefer the open air. After returning to Hethi we again experienced the hospitality of the clergyman who owns the farm, and proceeded to the Vatna Jökull, an account of which from my pen has already appeared in the December number of 'Fraser's Magazine.'

There is a great field in Iceland for the man who loves to investigate the unknown corners of the earth, and I know of no country so close to our own shores which does so amply repay investigation.

It is however, a matter of great regret, that men who visit Iceland are content with visiting the well-known points of interest, instead of exploring the unknown Jökulls and interior of the island. Men seem to think that having seen the geysers, Hecla, and Thingvalla, they have seen all that is worth noticing in Iceland; whereas these are by no means the most remarkable features of this land of wonders. The geysers are but secondary symptoms of volcanic activity; the eruptions of Hecla have been eclipsed by those of Kötlugia, Skaptar, and Vatna Jökulls; though I must say that Thingvalla combines historical interest with physical phenomena in a manner unequalled throughout the island, and is therefore especially worthy of note. But ought men, who have sufficient love of travel to visit Iceland at all, if they have the means and the time at their disposal, to stop short immediately they touch unexplored ground? Can an Englishman stand upon Hecla, gazing at the untrodden jökulls, and looking towards the mysterious interior of the island, without longing to explore the wonders that they contain? Why, ladies have climbed Hecla! and with the accustomed pluck of Englishwomen have longed to travel and explore these lands and mountains which they felt sure contained phenomena deeply interesting both to the sightseer, the geologist, and the physical geographer! Shall men who spend their lives in travel and exploration stand upon

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the same mountain-top and own that they have neither the wish nor the inclination to go farther? Is anyone in want of occupation? Here is a riddle waiting to be solved. Here is the centre of Iceland, even in these days of discovery a land of mystery; here are huge mountain tracts containing, perhaps, unparalleled volcanic phenomena, and we know comparatively nothing about them! Upon the N. of Vatna Jökull there is a volcano of pretty frequent activity, and yet the eye of man has never rested upon it. Iceland is not more than one thousand miles from our own shores. How is it that this has not been explored long, long ago? I myself have already twice attempted to do so, and deem the task perfectly feasible, and I mean to essay it again this year; but as the expense, although not very heavy when shared by others, is almost more than I can by myself afford, I should greatly like to be accompanied by three companions—*that is if they are accustomed to hardship and mountaineering, and prepared to undergo a good deal of rough work.* I propose being absent from the end of May to the beginning of September, and I think the expenses would be from 100*l.* to 150*l.* per man. If there are any such gentlemen who would like to join me, I shall be happy if they will send in their names to the president of the 'Alpine Club.'

A Narrow Escape from Lightning on the Roche Melon. By F. F. Tuckett. Read before the Alpine Club, February 2, 1875.

Celsæ graviore casu
Decidunt turres, feriuntque summos
Fulgura montes.
Hor. *Carm.* ii. 10. 12.

My campaign was drawing to a close as, after successful assaults on the Ruitor and Pourri, I descended on July 15 from the Col de la Vanoise upon Termignon, to find the weather in the valley of the Arc in such an unpromising condition as to suggest the wisdom of abandoning the final performance in my programme—the ascent of the Roche Melon near Susa—and proceeding down the valley to Modane, *en route* for Paris, where I was due in a couple of days. A comfortable dinner, however, and the discovery of a vehicle which would take us half way to Bessans, decided me to sleep at the last-named place, so as to be ready to profit by fine weather if it should come, especially as it would still be easy to catch the

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