# The New Pass

Amelia B. Edwards

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*Period Short Stories of Mystery, Crime & Intrigue*

#25

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*To me, Amelia B. Edwards (1831-92) was a rare story teller who achieved the elusive, ideal balance among the elements of fiction: action, characterization, description and dialogue. Her tales move purposefully from beginning to end, wasting little of the reader's time with unnecessary prose. Yet, they are hardy and eloquent in content—truly pleasurable reading. In short, I wish I could write like her.*

*Interestingly, Edwards' ghost story "The North Mail" (or "The Phantom Coach"), produced as #2 in our series, like this one is told from the point of view of a lawyer on holiday.*

**—DEH**

# The New Pass

The circumstances I am about to relate happened just four autumns ago, when I was travelling in Switzerland with my old school and college friend, Egerton Wolfe.

Before going further, however, I wish to observe that this is no dressed-up narrative. I am a plain, prosaic man, by name Francis Legrice; by profession a barrister; and I think it would be difficult to find many persons less given to look upon life from a romantic or imaginative point of view. By my enemies, and sometimes, perhaps, by my friends, I am supposed to push my habit of incredulity to the verge of universal scepticism; and indeed I admit that I believe in very little that I do not hear and see for myself. But for these things that I am going to relate, I can vouch; and in so far as mine is a personal narrative, I am responsible for its truth. What I saw, I saw with my own eyes in the broad daylight. I offer nothing, therefore, in the shape of a story; but simply a plain statement of facts, as they happened to myself.

I was travelling, then, in Switzerland with Egerton Wolfe. It was not our first joint long-vacation tour by a good many, but it promised to be our last; for Wolfe was engaged to be married the following Spring to a very beautiful and charming girl, the daughter of a north-country baronet.

He was a handsome fellow, tall, graceful, dark-haired, dark-eyed; a poet, a dreamer, an artist—as thoroughly unlike myself, in short, as one man having arms, legs, and

a head, can be unlike another. And yet we suited each other capitally, and were the fastest friends and best travelling companions in the world.

We had begun our holiday on this occasion with a week's idleness at a place which I will call Oberbrunn—a delightful place, wholly Swiss, consisting of one huge wooden building, half water-cure establishment, half hotel; two smaller buildings called *Dépendances*, a tiny church with a bulbous steeple painted green; and a handful of village—all perched together on a breezy mountain-plateau some three thousand feet above the lake and valley. Here, far from the haunts of the British tourist and the Alpine Club-man, we read, smoked, climbed, rose with the dawn, rubbed up our rusty German, and got ourselves into training for the knapsack work to follow.

At length, our week being up, we started—rather later on the whole than was prudent, for we had a thirty miles' walk before us, and the sun was already high.

It was a glorious morning, however; the sky flooded with light, and a cool breeze blowing. I see the bright scene now, just as it lay before us when we came down the hotel steps and found our guide waiting for us outside. There were the water-drinkers gathered round the fountain on the lawn; the usual crowd of itinerant vendors of stag-horn ornaments and carved toys in wood and ivory squatted in a semi-circle about the door; some half-dozen barefooted little mountain children running to and fro with wild raspberries for sale; the valley so far below, dotted with hamlets and traversed by a winding stream, like a thread of flashing silver; the black pinewood half-way down the slope; the frosted peaks glittering on the horizon.

"*Bon voyage*!" said our good host, Dr. Steigl, with a last hearty shake of the hand.

"*Bon voyage*!" echoed the waiters and miscellaneous hangers-on.

Some three or four of the water-drinkers at the fountain raised their hats—the ragged children pursued us with their wild fruits as far as the gate—and so we departed.

For some distance our path lay along the mountainside, through pine woods and by cultivated slopes where the Indian corn was ripening to gold, and the late hay-harvest was waiting for the mower. Then the path wound gradually downwards—for the valley lay between us and the pass we had laid out for our day's work—and then, through a succession of soft green slopes and ruddy apple-orchards, we came to a blue lake fringed with rushes, where we hired a boat with a striped awning, like the boats on Lago Maggiore, and were rowed across by a boatman who rested on his oars and sang a *jodel*-song when we were halfway across.

Being landed on the opposite bank, we found our road at once begin to trend upwards; and here, as the guide informed us, the ascent of the Hobenhorn might be said to begin.

"This, however, *meine Herren*," said he, "is only part of the old pass. It is ill-kept; for none but country folks and travellers from Oberbrunn come this way now. But we shall strike the New Pass higher up. A grand road, *meine Herren*—as fine a road as the Simplon, and good for carriages all the way. It has only been open since the Spring."

"The old pass is good enough for me, anyhow!" said Egerton, crowding a handful of wild forget-me-nots under the ribbon of his hat. "It's like a stray fragment of Arcadia."

And in truth it was wonderfully lovely and secluded—a mere rugged path winding steeply upwards in a soft green shade, among large forest trees and moss-grown rocks covered with patches of velvety lichen. A little streamlet ran singing beside it all the way—now gurgling deep in ferns and grasses; now feeding a rude trough made of a hollow trunk; now crossing our road like a broken flash of sunlight; now breaking away in a tiny fall and foaming out of sight, only to reappear a few steps further on.

Then overhead, through the close roof of leaves, we saw patches of blue sky and golden shafts of sunshine, and small brown squirrels leaping from bough to bough; and in the deep rich grass on either hand, thick ferns, and red and golden mosses, and blue campanulas, and now and then a little wild strawberry, ruby red. By-and-by, when we had been following this path for nearly an hour, we came upon a patch of clearing, in the midst of which stood a rough upright monolith, antique, weather-stained, covered with rude carvings like a Runic monument—the primitive boundary-stone between the Cantons of Uri and Unterwalden.

"Let us rest here!" cries Egerton, flinging himself at full length on the grass. "*Eheu, fugaces!*—and the hours are shorter than the years. Why not enjoy them?"

But the guide, whose name is Peter Kauffmann, interposes after the manner of guides in general, and will by no means let us have our own way. There is a mountain inn, he urges, now only five minutes distant—"an excellent little inn, where they sell good red wine." So we yield to fate and Peter Kauffmann and pursue our upward way, coming presently, as he promised and predicted, upon a bright open space and a brown chalet on a shelf of plateau

overhanging a giddy precipice. Here, sitting under a vine-covered trellis built out on the very brink of the cliff, we find three mountaineers discussing a flask of the good red wine aforesaid.

In this picturesque eyrie we made our mid-day halt. A smiling *Mädchen* brought us coffee, brown bread, and goats'-milk cheese; while our guide, pulling out a huge lump of the dry black bread from his wallet, fraternized with the mountaineers over a half-flask of his favourite vintage.

The men chattered merrily in their half-intelligible patois. We sat silent, looking down into the deep misty valley and across to the great amethyst mountains, streaked here and there with faint blue threads of slender waterfalls.

"There must surely be moments," said Egerton Wolfe after a while, "when even such men as you, Frank—men of the world, and lovers of it—feel within them some stirrings of the primitive Adam; some vague longing for that idyllic life of the woods and fields that we dreamers are still, in our inmost souls, insane enough to sigh after as the highest good."

"You mean, don't I sometimes wish to be a Swiss peasant-farmer, with *sabots*, a *goître*, a wife without form as regards her person, and void as regards her head; and a *crétin* grandfather a hundred and three years old? Why, no. I prefer myself as I am."

My friend smiled, and shook his head.

"Why take it for granted," said he, "that no man can cultivate his brains and his paternal acres at the same time? Horace, with none of the adjuncts you name, loved a country life and turned it to immortal poetry."

"The world has gone round once or twice since then, my dear fellow," I replied, philosophically. "The best poetry comes out of cities nowadays."

"And the worst. Do you see those avalanches over yonder?"

Following the direction of his eyes, I saw something like a tiny puff of white smoke gliding over the shoulder of a huge mountain on the opposite side of the valley. It was followed by another and another. We could see neither whence they came nor whither they went. We were too far away to hear the sullen thunder of their fall. Silently they flashed into sight, and as silently they vanished.

Wolfe sighed heavily.

"Poor Lawrence!" said he. "Switzerland was his dream. He longed for the Alps as ardently as other men long for money or power."

Lawrence was a younger brother of his whom I had never seen—a lad of great promise whose health had broken down at Addiscombe some ten or twelve years before, and who had soon after died of rapid consumption at Torquay.

"And he never had that longing gratified?"

"Ah, no—he was never out of England. They prescribe bracing climates now, I am told, for lung disease; but not so then. Poor dear fellow! I sometimes fancy he might have lived, if only he had had his heart's desire."

"I would not let such a painful thought enter my head, if I were you," said I, hastily.

"But I can't help it! My mind has been running on poor Lawrence all the morning; and, somehow, the grander the scenery gets, the more I keep thinking how he would have exulted in it. Do you remember those lines by Coleridge, written in the Valley of Chamouni? He knew

them by heart. 'Twas the sight of yonder avalanches that reminded me. . . . Well! I will try not to think of these things. Let us change the subject."

Just at this moment, the landlord of the chalet came out—a bright-eyed, voluble young mountaineer about five or six-and-twenty, with a sprig of Edelweiss in his hat.

"Good day, *meine Herren*," he said, including all alike in his salute, but addressing himself especially to Wolfe and myself. "Fine weather for travelling—fine weather for the grapes. These *Herren* are going on by the New Pass? *Ach, Herr Gott*! a grand work! a wonderful work!—and all begun and completed in less than three years. These *Herren* see it today for the first time? Good. They have probably been over the Tête Noire? No! Over the Splugen? Good—good. If these *Herren* have been over the Splugen, they can form an idea of the New Pass. The New Pass is very like the Splugen. It has a gallery tunnelled in the solid rock, just like the gallery on the Via Mala, with this difference that the gallery in the New Pass is much longer, and lighted by loop-holes at regular intervals. These *Herren* will please to observe the view looking both up and down the pass, before entering the mouth of the tunnel—there is not a finer view in all Switzerland."

"It must be a great advantage to the people hereabouts, having so good a road carried from valley to valley," said I, smiling at his enthusiasm.

"Oh, it is a fine thing for us, *mein Herr!*" he replied. "And a fine thing for all this part of the Canton. It will bring visitors—floods of visitors! By the way, these *Herren* must not omit to look out for the waterfall above the gallery. Holy St. Nicholas! The way in which that waterfall has been arranged!"

"Arranged!" echoed Wolfe, who was as much amused as myself. "*Diavolo!* Do you arrange the waterfalls in your country?"

"It was the Herr Becker," said the landlord, unconscious of banter; "the eminent engineer who planned the New Pass. The waterfall, you see, *meine Herren*, could not be suffered to follow its old course down the face of the rock through which the gallery is tunnelled, or it would have flowed in at the loopholes and flooded the road. What, therefore, did the Herr Becker do?"

"Turned the course of the fall, and brought it down a hundred yards further on," said I somewhat impatiently.

"Not so, *mein Herr*—not so! The Herr Becker attempts nothing so expensive. He permits the fall to keep its old couloir and come down its old way—but instead of letting it wash the outside of the gallery, he pierces the rock in another direction—vertically—behind the tunnel; constructs an artificial shoot, or conduit in the heart of the rock, and brings the fall out below the gallery, just where the cliff overhangs the valley. Now what do the English *Herren* say to that?"

"That it must certainly be a clever piece of engineering," replied Wolfe.

"And that having rested long enough, we will push on and see it," added I, glad to cut short the thread of our host's native eloquence.

So we paid our reckoning; took a last look at the view; and, plunging back into the woods, went on our way refreshed.

The path still continued to ascend, till we suddenly came upon a burst of daylight and found ourselves on a magnificent high road some thirty feet in breadth, with

the forest and the telegraph wires on the one hand, and the precipice on the other. Massive granite posts at close intervals protected the edge of the road, and the cantonniers were still at work here and there, breaking and laying fresh stones, and clearing debris. We did not need to be informed that this was the New Pass.

Always ascending, we continued now to follow the road which at every turn commanded finer and finer views across the valley. Then by degrees the forest dwindled, and was at last left far below; and the giddy precipices to our left grew steeper, and the mountain slopes above became more and more barren, till the last Alp-roses vanished and there remained only a carpet of brown and tan moss scattered over here and there with great boulders—some freshly broken away from the heights above—others thickly coated with lichen, as if they might have been lying there for centuries.

We seemed here to have reached the highest point of the New Pass, for our road continued at this barren level for some miles. An immense panorama of peaks, snow-fields, and glaciers lay out-stretched before us to the left, with an unfathomable gulf of misty valley between. The hot air simmered in the sun. The heat and silence were intense. Once, and once only, we came upon a party of travellers. They were three in number, lying at full length in the shade of a huge fragment of fallen rock, their heads comfortably pillowed on their knapsacks, and all fast asleep.

And now the grey rock began to crop out in larger masses close behind our path, encroaching nearer and nearer, till at last the splintered cliffs towered straight above our heads and the road became a mere broad shelf along the face of the precipice. Presently, on turning a sharp

angle of rock, we saw before us a vista of road, cliff, and valley—the road now perceptibly on the decline, and vanishing about a mile ahead into the mouth of a small cavernous opening (no bigger, as it seemed from that distance, than a good-sized rabbit hole) pierced through a huge projecting spur, or buttress, of the mountain.

"Behold the famous gallery!" said I. "Mine host was right—it is something like the Splugen, barring the much greater altitude of the road, and the still greater width of the valley. But where is the waterfall?"

"Well, it's not much of a waterfall," said Wolfe. "I can just see it—a tiny thread of mist wavering down the cliff a long way on, beyond the mouth of the tunnel."

"Ay; I see it now—a sort of inferior Staubbach. Heavens! What power the sun has up here! At what time did Kauffmann say we should get to Schwartzenfelden?"

"Not before seven, at the earliest—and it is now nearly four."

"Humph! three hours more—say three and a half. Well, that will be a pretty good first day's pedestrianizing, heat and all considered!"

Here the conversation dropped, and we plodded on again in silence.

Meanwhile the sun blazed in the heavens, and the light, struck back from white rock and whiter road, was almost blinding. And still the hot air danced and shimmered before us; and a windless stillness, as of death, lay upon all the scene.

Suddenly—quite suddenly, as if he had started out of the rock—I saw a man coming towards us with rapid and eager gesticulations. He seemed to be waving us back; but I was so startled for the moment by the unexplained

way in which he made his appearance, that I scarcely took in the meaning of his gestures.

"How odd!" I exclaimed, coming to a halt. "How did he get there?"

"How did who get there?" said Wolfe.

"Why, that fellow yonder. Did you see where he came from?"

"What fellow, my dear boy? I see no one but ourselves."

And he stared vaguely round, while all the time the man between us and the gallery was waving his right arm above his head, and running on to meet us.

"Good heavens! Egerton," I said impatiently, "where are your eyes? Here—straight before us—not a quarter of a mile off—making signs as hard as he can. Perhaps we had better wait till he comes up."

My friend drew his race-glass from its case, adjusted it carefully, and took a long, steady look down the road. Seeing him do this, the man stood still; but kept his right hand up all the same.

"You see him now, surely?" said I.

"*No.*"

I turned and looked him in the face. I could not believe my ears.

"Upon my honour, Frank," he said earnestly, "I see only the empty road and the mouth of the tunnel beyond. Here, Kauffmann!"

Kauffmann, who was standing close by, stepped up and touched his cap.

"Look down the road," said Wolfe.

The guide shaded his eyes with his hand, and looked.

"What do you see?"

"I see the entrance to the gallery, *mein Herr.*"

"Nothing else?"

"Nothing else, *mein Herr.*"

And still the man stood there in the road—even came a step or two nearer! Was I mad?

"You still think you see someone yonder?" said Egerton, looking at me very seriously.

"I *know* that I do."

He handed me his race-glass.

"Look through that," he said, "and tell me if you still see him."

"I see him more plainly than before."

"What is he like?"

"Very tall—very slender—fair—quite young—no more, I should say, than fifteen or sixteen—evidently an Englishman."

"How is he dressed?"

"In a grey suit—his collar open and his throat bare. Wears a Scotch cap with a silver badge in it. He takes his cap off, and waves it! He has a whitish scar on his right temple. I can see the motion of his lips—he seems to say, 'Go back!' Look for yourself—you *must* see him!"

I turned to give him the glass, but he pushed it away.

"No, no," he said, hoarsely. "It's of no use. Go on looking. . . . What more, for God's sake?"

I looked again—the glass all but dropped from my hand.

"Gracious heavens!" I exclaimed breathlessly, "he is gone!"

"Gone!"

Ay, gone. Gone as suddenly as he came—gone as though he had never been! I could not believe it. I rubbed

my eyes. I rubbed the glass on my sleeve. I looked, and looked again; and still, though I looked, I doubted.

At this moment, with a wild unearthly cry, and a strange sound as of some heavy projectile cleaving the stagnant air, an eagle plunged past us upon mighty wings, and swooped down into the valley.

"*Ein Adler! Ein Adler!*" shouted the guide, flinging up his cap and running to the brink of the precipice.

Wolfe laid his hand upon my arm, and drew a deep breath.

"Legrice," he said very calmly, but with a white, awestruck look in his face, "you described my brother Lawrence—age, height, dress, everything; even to the Scotch cap he always wore, and the silver badge my uncle Horace gave him on his birthday. He got that scar in a cricket-match at Harrogate."

"Your brother Lawrence?" I faltered.

"Why you should be the one permitted to see him is strange," he went on, speaking more to himself than to me. "Very strange! I wish . . . but there! Perhaps I should not have believed my own eyes. I *must* believe yours."

"I will never believe that my eyes saw your brother Lawrence," I said resolutely.

"We must turn back, of course," he went on, taking no notice of my answer. "Look here, Kauffmann—can we get to Schwartzenfelden tonight by the old pass, if we turn back at once?"

"Turn back!" I interrupted. "My dear Egerton, you are not serious?"

"I was never more serious in my life," he said, gravely.

"If these *Herren* wish to take the old pass," said the astonished guide, "we cannot get to Schwartzenfelden

before midnight. We have already come seven miles out of the way, and the old pass is twelve miles farther round."

"Twelve and fourteen are twenty-six," said I. "We cannot add twenty-six miles to our original thirty. It is out of the question."

"These *Herren* can sleep at the chalet where we halted," suggested the guide.

"True—I had not thought of that," said Wolfe. "We can sleep at the chalet, and go on as soon as it is day."

"Turn back, sleep at the chalet, go on in the morning, and lose full half a day, with one of the finest passes in Switzerland before us, and our journey two-thirds done!" I cried. "The idea is too absurd."

"Nothing shall induce me to go on, in defiance of a warning from the dead," said Wolfe hastily.

"And nothing," I replied, "shall induce me to believe that we have received any such warning. I either saw that man, or I laboured under some kind of optical illusion. But ghosts I do not believe in."

"As you please. You can go on if you prefer it, and take Kauffmann with you. I know my way back."

"Agreed—except as regards Kauffmann. Let him take his choice."

Kauffmann, having the matter explained to him, elected at once to go back with Egerton Wolfe.

"If the *Herr* Englishman has been warned in a vision," he said, crossing himself devoutly, "it is suicide to go on. Obey the blessed spirit, *mein Herr*!"

But nothing now would have induced me to turn back, even if I had felt inclined to do so; so, agreeing to meet next day at Schwartzenfelden, my friend and I said goodbye.

"God grant you my come to no harm, dear old fellow," said Wolfe, as he turned away.

"I don't feel like harm, I assure you," I replied, laughing.

And so we parted.

I stood still and watched them till they were out of sight. At the turn of the road they paused and looked back. When Wolfe waved his hand for the last time and finally disappeared, I could not repress a sudden thrill—he looked so like the figure of my illusion!

For that it was an illusion, I did not doubt for a moment. Such phenomena, though not common, are by no means unheard-of. I had talked with more than one eminent physician on this very subject, and I remembered that each had spoken of cases within his own experience. Besides, there was the famous case of Nicolai, the bookseller of Berlin; not to mention many others, equally well attested. That I must have been temporarily in the condition of persons so affected, I took for granted; and yet I felt well—never better; my head cool—my mind clear—my pulse regular. Well—I would never disbelieve in hallucinations again. To that I made up my mind; but as for ghosts . . . pshaw! How could any sane man, above all, such a man as Egerton Wolfe, believe in ghosts?

Reasoning thus, and smiling to myself, I tightened the shoulder-straps of my knapsack, took a pull at my wine-flask, and set off towards the tunnel.

It was still half a mile distant; for I had stopped on first sight of the figure, before we were half across the space that lay between that dark opening and the turn of the road above. And now, plodding steadily towards it, I examined the ground at every step (especially on the side

of the precipice) for any path or rocky projection of which a man could possibly have availed himself for retreat or shelter; but the smooth upright wall of solid limestone on the one hand, and the sheer, inaccessible, giddy depths on the other, made all such explanation impossible. Thrown back thus on the illusion theory, I paused once or twice, and tried to conjure up the figure before my eyes, but in vain.

And now with every step that I took the mouth of the tunnel grew larger, and the depth of shade within it blacker and more mysterious. I was by this time near enough to see that it was faced with brickwork—that it spanned the full width of the road—and that it was more than lofty enough for an old-fashioned, top-heavy diligence to pass under it. The next moment, being within half a dozen yards of it, I distinctly heard the cool murmur of the more distant waterfall (now hidden by the great mountain spur through which the gallery was carried); and the next moment after that, I had plunged into the tunnel.

It was like the transition from an orchid-house to an ice-house—from midday to midnight. The darkness was profound, and so intense the sudden chill, that for the first second it almost took my breath away.

The roof and sides of the gallery, and the road beneath my feet, were all hewn in the solid rock. A sharp, arrowy gleam of light, shooting athwart the gloom about fifty yards ahead, marked the position of the first loophole. A second, a third, a fourth, as many perhaps as eight or ten, gleamed faintly in the distance. The tiny blue speck which showed where the gallery opened out again upon the day, looked at least a mile away. The path underfoot

was wet and slippery; and as I went on, my eyes becoming accustomed to the darkness, I saw that every part of the tunnel was streaming with moisture.

I pushed on rapidly. The first and second loop-holes were soon left behind, but at the third I paused to breathe the outer air. Then, for the first time, I observed that every rut in the road beneath my feet was filled with running water.

I hurried on faster and faster. I shivered. I felt the cold seizing me. The arched entrance through which I had just passed had dwindled already to a shining patch no bigger than my hand, while the tiny blue speck on ahead seemed far off as ever. Meanwhile the tunnel was dripping like a shower-bath.

All at once, my attention was arrested by a sound—a strange indescribable sound—heavy, muffled, as of mighty forces at work in the heart of the mountain. I stood still—I held my breath—I fancied I felt the solid rock vibrate beneath my feet! Then it flashed upon me that I must now be approaching that part of the gallery behind which the waterfall was conducted, and that what I heard was the muffled roar of its descent. At the same moment, chancing to look down at my feet, I saw that the road was an inch deep in running water from wall to wall.

Now, lawyer as I am, and ignorant of the first principles of civil engineering, I felt sure that this much-praised Herr Becker should, at least, have made his tunnel watertight. That it leaked somewhere was plain, and that it should be suffered to go on leaking to the discomfort of travellers was simply intolerable. An inch of water, for instance, was more than . . . an inch did I say? Gracious heavens! Since the moment I looked, it had risen to three—

it was closing over my boots—it was becoming a rushing torrent!

In that instant a great horror fell upon me—the horror of darkness and sudden death. I turned, flung away my Alpenstock, and fled for my life. Fled blindly, breathlessly, wildly, with the horrible grinding sound of the imprisoned waterfall in my ears, and the gathering torrent at my heels!

Never while I live shall I forget the agony of those next few seconds—the icy numbness seizing on my limbs—the sudden, frightful sense of impeded respiration—the water rising, eddying, clamouring, pursuing me, passing me—the swirl of it, as it flashed past each loophole in succession—the rush with which (as I strained on to the mouth of the gallery, now not a dozen yards distant) it leaped out into the sunlight like a living thing, and dashed to the edge of the precipice!

At that supreme instant, just as I had darted out through the echoing arch and staggered a few paces up the road, a deafening report, crackling, hurried, tremendous, like the explosion of a mine, rent the air and roused a hundred echoes. It was followed by a moment of strange and terrible suspense. Then, with a deep and sullen roar, audible above all the rolling thunders of the mountains round, a mighty wave—smooth, solid, glassy, like an Atlantic wave on an English western coast—came gleaming up the mouth of the tunnel, paused as it were, upon the threshold, reared its majestic crest, curved, trembled, burst in a cataract of foam, flooded the road for yards beyond the spot where I was clinging to the rock like a limpet, and rushing back again, as the wave rushes down the beach, hurled itself over the cliff, and vanished in a cloud of mist.

After this, the imprisoned flood came pouring out tumultuously for several minutes, bringing with it fragments of rock and masonry, and filling the road with debris; but even this disturbance presently subsided, and almost as soon as the last echoes of the explosion had died away, the liberated waters were rippling pleasantly along their new bed, sparkling out into the sunshine as they emerged from the gallery, and gliding in a smooth continuous stream over the brink of the precipice, thence to fall, in multitudinous wavy folds and wreaths of prismatic mist, into the valley two thousand feet below.

For myself, drenched to the skin as I was, I could do nothing but turn back and follow meekly in the track of Egerton Wolfe and Peter Kauffmann. How I did so, dripping and weary, and minus my Alpenstock; how I arrived at the chalet about sunset, shivering and hungry, just in time to claim my share of a capital omelette and a dish of mountain trout; how the Swiss press rang with my escape for, at least, nine days after the event; how the Herr Becker was liberally censured for his defective engineering; and how Egerton Wolfe believes to this day that his brother Lawrence came back from the dead to save us from utter destruction, are matters upon which it were needless to dwell in these pages. Enough that I narrowly escaped with my life, and that had we gone on, as we doubtless should have gone on but for the delay consequent upon my illusion, we should most probably have been in the heart of the tunnel at the time of the explosion, and not one left to tell the tale.

Nevertheless, my dear friends, I do not believe, and I have made up my mind never to believe—in ghosts.

*—Amelia B. Edwards*

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South Carolina author and editor Daniel Elton Harmon has written more than fifty books. Recently published by Chelsea House are his six volumes in the "Exploration of Africa: The Emerging Nations" series; *The Titanic*, part of the "Great Disasters: Reforms and Ramifications" series; his history of the Hudson River for the "Rivers in American Life and Times" series; and juvenile biographies in the "Explorers of New Worlds" series. Other of his books are published by Wright/McGraw-Hill, Mason Crest and Barbour Publishing. His freelance articles have appeared in such periodicals as *Nautilus*, *Music Journal* and *The New York Times*. Harmon is the associate editor of *Sandlapper: The Magazine of South Carolina* and editor of *The Lawyer's PC*, a technology newsletter.

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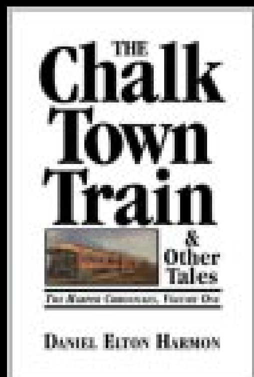


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