

we looked down on the Presena Glacier, to which we presently descended, and, crossing the Presena Pass, reached the Leipziger Hütte in about 8 hrs. from Ponte di Legno. Josef's equanimity returned as soon as he found himself again on Austrian territory, and the sight of a herd of Gamsen in the course of the afternoon effected a perfect cure, notwithstanding the fact that (although he found a rifle somewhere in the hut) he could not manage to get a shot. The pass might be called Passo Castellaccio, from the name of the peak which lies immediately to the N. of it, and of which the height is, in the last edition of Baedeker, surely understated at 3,028 mètres. It affords (bar the wet alders, which are not an essential part of it) a very pleasing variation on the usual routes from Val Camonica to Val di Genova.

IN MEMORIAM.

FRANÇOIS COUTTET.

DURING the past autumn three of the 'old guard' of the Alps have been taken from our midst. Jean Antoine Carrel and Joseph Maquignaz died on 'active service' amongst the peaks and glaciers of the great range they knew so well; and a few weeks later François Couttet took a last farewell of those who had watched by his bedside during a short but painful illness.

'Baguette,' as Couttet was always called, was born at Chamonix in 1828, and at an early age became a member of the Society of Guides. His list of new expeditions was not a remarkable one; still, as has been lately said of him elsewhere, Couttet 'was distinctly a good guide in a poor epoch.' He received a 'médaille d'honneur' from the French Government in recognition of the courage and resource he displayed as leader of the rescue party sent to the assistance of the brothers Young, one of whom perished on Mont Blanc in 1866. It was in 1862 that Couttet built a house at Chamonix, part of which he used to let as bachelors' quarters to Mr. A. A. Reilly, M. Loppé, and some of those members of the Alpine Club to whom he acted as guide. As years passed on what had originally been little more than a chalet gradually attained the dimensions of a 'hôtel du premier ordre.' Baguette caused his name to be placed on the retired list at the guide-chef's bureau, and decided to devote himself exclusively to his new calling. Still he never lost his great love for the mountains, and it is as the guide rather than as the hotel proprietor that his old friends will ever think of Baguette. On those rare occasions when he accompanied his friends on some glacier excursion it was pleasant to see how keenly he enjoyed acting as their leader; it seemed to bring to his remembrance those years of his life on which he best loved to dwell.

M. Loppé has recorded how as a guide Baguette possessed what might be described as the 'vrai instinct des glaciers;' to an equally remarkable degree he certainly showed a similar innate capacity regarding all the business transactions in which he was engaged.

Indeed, the story of his life might well be chronicled in some such work as Dr. Smiles's 'Self-Help;' for, in spite of the enormous disadvantage of having started with but little education, Couttet by perseverance and thrift, in the course of his honourable and upright career, amassed a larger share of this world's goods than almost any of his early colleagues and contemporaries. Although he seldom left his native valley, constant intercourse with the crowd who come to the foot of Mont Blanc from all parts of the world made him a shrewd judge of human nature, and nothing pleased him more than to relate his reminiscences of the widely different sorts and conditions of men he had met during the long years he had lived at Chamonix. His keen sense of humour, his quaint native wit and turns of phrase, imparted a great deal of individuality to these narratives. I doubt if there was anyone at Chamonix whose opinions on all matters regarding guides or mountaineering carried so much weight with the local authorities. Nearly everyone who has stayed under his roof must recall occasions when an appeal to old Couttet has enabled him to escape from some one or other of the irksome restrictions imposed by the *Guide-chef* or his *règlement*.

The death of François Couttet seems to break yet another of the few remaining links which join us with the early days of mountaineering; it will seem strange to arrive at Chamonix without seeing his familiar figure waiting to meet us at the corner of the Place, and we shall long miss his hearty welcome and the cordial grip of his hand. Everyone who knew 'brave Baguette' will always hold the memory of the true-hearted, kind old guide in affectionate regard. 'He was thoroughly loyal to his friends,' wrote an old office-bearer of the Club, 'and loyal also to the best traditions of his profession, one of the few who kept up the old feeling amongst a new order; he was in the best sense a true "vieux de la vieille."' C. D. C.

NEW EXPEDITIONS IN 1890.

Monte Rosa District.

CASTOR (4,222 mètres=13,852 feet). August 10.—Miss Richardson with Emile Rey and J. B. Bich crossed this peak from the Sella Club hut to Zermatt in 7½ hrs. actual walking, making two new variations *en route*. Starting from the Sella hut, the party gained a point on the E. arête, whence the summit of the peak was reached in 20 min. more. On the descent the arête was followed for two or three minutes. The party then struck down the snow-slopes (at first rather steep) of the N. face of the peak, and bearing always slightly to the left rejoined the route of the Zwillingsjoch on the snow-field above the Zwillings glacier, and followed that route to the Riffel.

Mont Blanc District.

AIGUILLE DU CHARDONNET BY THE S.E. FACE (3,823 mètres = 12,543 feet). September 5.—The same party having ascended this