

P.M., skirted a moraine, and then descended by grass slopes to Breuil, which we reached at 5.40 P.M., having taken  $13\frac{1}{2}$  hours in effecting the journey thither from Zermatt: it might be done in somewhat less time, as we did not hurry ourselves, and spent some time in discovering the best line to take.

The result of the observations taken by Jacomb gives 11,398 feet as the height of the pass. Perrn seemed highly pleased at the idea of another high pass being added to the number of those already existing in the neighbourhood of Zermatt; as to his conduct, I can only say that he proved himself the same cheerful companion and skilful guide that I have always found him. We were much pleased also with the conduct of Lauber, who, with a little experience and practice, will make a first-rate guide. To anyone fond of mountain scenery, who is tired of the well-trodden path over the St. Théodule, we can strongly recommend the pass as an agreeable change.

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#### MURRAY'S KNAPSACK GUIDE TO SWITZERLAND.

THE purpose for which this new handbook has been compiled is an obviously useful one, and the mode in which the work has been planned is sensible. The arrangement of routes in Murray's large guide-book has been retained, and the directions rewritten so as to make prominent the points most important to the pedestrian, viz. the distances, and the several stages, so to speak, on each route. But we regret to say that the performance has been by no means equal to the promise. Independently of mere verbal errors and misspellings of proper names, which might pass uncriticised but for the usual accuracy of Mr. Murray's handbooks in such matters, defects of a more important kind are sufficiently numerous to mar the usefulness of this knapsack guide under the very circumstances for which it was specially intended.

The ends to be attained by a knapsack guide are manifestly these:—

1. To give the traveller trustworthy information as to distances.
2. To enable him to dispense with any other guidance, at least on the beaten tracks.
3. To afford him as much information as space will allow about the scenery through which he is passing. It might naturally be supposed, by anyone who had never been concerned in the compilation of a guide-book, that the first of these requisites was very easily supplied. But away from measured high-roads this is by no means the case; and very different estimates of the same distance, as measured by time, may be given with equal correctness. Mr. Ball's *Alpine Guide* states pretty accurately the times required by good average walkers; the distances in Mr. Murray's large handbook may be equally trusted to suit the pace of ladies riding; and the other guide-books, varying between the two, make it a matter of uncertainty to each tourist whether he may rely on their estimates or must allow a margin on one side or the other. But this one, which, being intended expressly for pedestrians, is not

injudiciously made to depart from the distances of Murray, is the most uncertain of any: the times allowed would sometimes be exceeded by an active Swiss, and sometimes are longer than necessary for a caravan of ladies. The second purpose of a knapsack guide is in general very well kept in view, and greater minuteness could only be obtained by increasing the size of the book. But guides must occasionally be taken; and, if no list of trustworthy ones is to be given (a most difficult and invidious task), it is an inexcusable omission not to inform the traveller that guides almost everywhere are bound to carry a certificate-book, which ought to be the first thing enquired for by any person in treaty with a guide. As to the third requisite—detailed information—this guide-book is conspicuous as well for the accuracy and minuteness of some descriptions as for the insufficiency of others. No better test can be suggested than to compare the accounts given of the view from the *Æggischhorn* and of the *Eismeer* at *Grindelwald*.

Such a handbook as this does not profess to give much information about the High Alps; but what is afforded ought to be given on some definite principle. The *Col du Géant*, the *Strahleck*, and the *Weissthor*, perhaps the three most noted of all glacier passes, are very well described, and a very sufficient account is given of sundry others; but the selection has not otherwise been skilful, especially in the neighbourhood of *Zermatt*. No reason can be alleged why the *Col de Collon* should be described at length, while the easier and far more useful *Col d'Hérens* is barely mentioned, and the *Trift Joch* never alluded to; or why, while the *Adler* and *Allalein* passes are mentioned (inaccurately) as leading from *Zermatt* to *Saas*, the easier and more beautiful *Alphubel* pass, the direct route between the two places, is omitted altogether. The object, we presume, of giving any account whatever of the High Alps in such a guide-book as this is primarily to afford the ordinary tourist some information as to the names and relations of the mountains he has daily in sight, and, further, to give him some idea where he may most advantageously diverge from beaten tracks into the regions of peak and glacier. The former of these objects would best be attained by giving less of general description and more of actual catalogue of mountains &c. in sight; but the defects in this respect are almost atoned for by the very useful set of outline panoramas appended to the volume. The secondary purpose is, as we have shown, very unequally carried out; but most travellers intending to make expeditions in the High Alps will doubtless resort to Mr. Ball's work. We have been thus careful to point out the defects which mar this book, because there is the making of an admirable knapsack guide in it, and a revision by experienced hands will render it worthy of the high reputation for clearness, accuracy, and fullness which Mr. Murray's handbooks in general so well merit.