

Montanvert at 3.40 a.m., and went straight up the glacier without difficulty ; when about half-an-hour from the ridge, snow came on, they went too much to the right, and following a steep but easy couloir, found themselves at 12.30 at the top of the Aiguille de l'Eboulement. The weather slightly clearing they descended to the true Col de Pierre Joseph, and looked down on the groin of the Tuolet glacier. In such weather it was impossible to attempt the descent on the Italian side, the pass therefore yet remains to be effected, but the Chamouni side presenting no particular difficulty, future attempts ought to be made from the side of Courmayeur.

Mont Blanc District.

On 14th July, Rev. Geo. C. Hodgkinson, with Ambroise Couette, of Chamouni, and Joseph Obrozenn, of Champéry, leaving the Grands Mulets at 2.26 a.m., reached the summit of Mont Blanc at 8.6 a.m., remained there, making actinometrical observations under a cloudless sky, until 11.1 a.m., getting back to the Grands Mulets at 1.46 p.m. Simultaneous observations of the instruments were made at Chamouni.

The temperature on the summit during the observations ranged from 22° to 24° F., and in the valley at the same time from 63° to 77° F. In the valley at 2.10 p.m. the temperature reached 82°.

A detailed report of the work will be made to the Royal Society.

NOTES AND QUERIES.

ALPINE BYWAYS. XV.—*From Engelberg to Altdorf by the Rothgrätli.*—I have in a former year crossed the Surenen between these two places ; but the route above mentioned is so superior in interest and scenery, and so little known, that some description can hardly fail to be of use. It is but just alluded to in 'Central Alps,' p. 174, and the way I took (14 Sept. 1865) was not, as there mentioned, 'through the Horbisthal,' but it mounted directly from the Engel to the Blankenalp, and circled round the head of that valley without touching it ; then after the Alp was passed, the wide expanse of the Griessen Glacier (the Rothstock Glacier of Mr. Ball) lay on the right all the way to the summit, the Engelberger and Uri Rothstöcke standing almost in front. The joch is between the former of these peaks on the right and the Wallenstöcke on the left ; it is a narrow ridge, with the glacier just named S. and the Rothgrätli Glacier N. Its height is about 8,500 feet, and the ascent occupied nearly four hours. Towards the N. there is a sea of hills, with Pilatus, the Rigi, and the Mythen prominent among them, and on that morning (it was not much past eight) the whole shape of the Vierwaldstätter See could be traced by the dense and motionless white mist that filled the hollows where it lay. The splendour is, however, on the other side ; here the fine range across the Engelberg valley forms the first line, rising above which are the Spitzliberg, most to the left, and the mountains bounding,

and far beyond, the Mayenthal, till the dark face of the hooded Titlis (seen from hence in admirable profile) intercepts the view. From the Titlis the eye followed the oblique chain of the Gadmentuh, over whose last summits soared the Finsteraarhorn, and to the right the Schreckhörner, and the three equilateral triangles of the Wetterhörner, and thence to the distant Blümlis Alp. The Engelberger Rothstock is not 800 feet above the joch, but I believe that the better way of attaining it is to strike on to the Griessen at a much lower level. The route is now across the Rottegrätli Glacier, a very easy half hour-usually; but in this sunny, snowless year the ordinary point of access was separated from us by a wide bergschrund, and the glacier could only be gained more immediately under the Hasenstock, and this necessarily led among some crevasses which are generally left quite to the W. On quitting it a steep and rough descent at once begins, which leads into the lateral valley that opens into the Gross Isenthal. The N. boundary of this lateral valley is the Oberalpgrat—a long and regular wall of rock like that above the Segnes Pass, pierced, too, by a circular tunnel exactly like the famous Martinsloch. This tunnel I have never heard spoken of; but probably a comparison of it with the Martinsloch would help to settle the controversy as to the cause and origin of that strange perforation.

The descent is into the head of the Gross Isenthal, a very fine cirque formed by the two Rothstöcke with the broad Blümlisalpfirm between them. The valley all through is beautiful, opening at last on to the Bay of Uri. From the joch to the village of Isenthal takes $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours of very steady going, and thence to Altdorf two quite 'starke stunden' more. From Altdorf I drove to the Stern at Amstäg, which is *freundlich*, inexpensive, and clean as a lighthouse.

Of the Adler at Isenthal I wish to add a few words, because it and its master have been praised in 'Peaks, Passes, and Glaciers,' and in 'Central Alps,' also, and because it is the only house in Switzerland of which, after a pretty wide experience, I have ever cared to make serious complaints when a month was over and gone. I had slept there on the 10th Sept., wishing to go on to Engelberg next day; but I changed my plan and went round by the Lake and Stans, because I could get no guide whom I chose to employ. Imfanger, the landlord (Joseph by baptism, I believe), asked a most unfair sum for his very forbidding knecht, and when I found a man in the village who was most anxious to go with me for less than one half, he was waylaid on the stairs by the host, and thereupon changed his mind and altogether refused to go. Next, the Landlady, after telling me a direct falsehood in order to induce me to pay for the refreshment of a man who had accompanied me from Sonnenberg over the Nieder Bauen, charged so preposterously (e. g. 3 f. for my bed) that I laid on her table about two-thirds of her demand, and carried off my own knapsack (for the only time that season), resolving, if I ever turned up in Isenthal again, to give the 'Rebstock' a trial, albeit undeniably the 'little' house of the place.

I should say that my guide was Crispin Imfanger, brother of poor Eugen, who died, with Dr. Hüpner, on the Titlis. If I may express an

opinion from a single day's journey, Crispin is as pleasant a fellow, and as competent, as one would wish to travel with.

N.B. No relation to the Adlerwirth.

THOMAS BROOKSBANK.

Fatal Accident to Irish Ladies in Switzerland.—We regret that we have to record an accident, by which three ladies have lost their lives, in Switzerland, on the road between Ragatz and the baths of Pfeffers. This road is about two miles in length, and follows the course of the Tamina river through one of the grandest and most remarkable gorges in Switzerland. It rises from fifteen to thirty-five feet above the bed of the river, which it often overhangs, and is in most places unprotected by wall or barrier. The Tamina is a wildly rushing turbulent river, varying from three to five feet in depth. On the 3rd of July, three ladies, unaccompanied by a gentleman, arrived at Ragatz by train about 2 p.m. They were—Mrs. Delffs, wife of Professor Delffs, of Heidelberg University; Miss Hollywood, of Bath Lodge, Ballycastle, Ireland; and her niece, Miss Walker, of the same place. They went at once to the Hotel Ragatz, where they dined, and then ordered a carriage to take them to the baths of Pfeffers. This was a one-horse vehicle, provided by the proprietor of the hotel, and driven by a man called Mogg, who is said to have had several years' experience as driver on this road. They reached the baths in safety, were shown all the curiosities of the place, and started on the return journey a little before six o'clock. They had got about a quarter of a mile on their way back when their pleasure-trip came to its fatal termination. They were going at a trot down an incline, where the road is quite unprotected on the river side, when the horse (though an old one), seeming to have taken fright unaccountably at something, made a sudden turn towards the precipice. The driver half leaped and half was thrown from the box on the road, and when he recovered himself he was horrified to find that the horse, carriage, and its occupants had been precipitated into the Tamina, a fall of 30 feet. The river was swollen at the time to the depth of 4 or 5 feet, and flowed so rapidly that at this spot the strongest man could scarcely keep his legs, so the unfortunate ladies were carried off in its resistless current and were never afterwards seen alive. There were few witnesses of the melancholy occurrence. A carriage, in which sat one English lady, followed at a distance of about 50 yards. The coachman of this seems (like the driver of the unfortunate ladies) to have been so overcome by terror as to be unable to render any assistance. Indeed, he says he did not see the ladies after the fall, but only heard their cries. He drove forward to Ragatz for help, which came, but too late. It would scarcely seem possible, however, that the promptest aid could have availed to rescue any of them. Miss Hollywood's body was recovered within three-quarters of an hour, 300 yards below the spot, and Mrs. Delffs' two days afterwards, somewhat lower down the Tamina. The corpse of Miss Walker was not found for some days, but was at length discovered in the Rhine, some little distance below the junction of the Tamina with that river. Mrs. Delffs and Miss Hollywood were buried side by side in Ragatz, on Saturday, the 7th of July. The crowd around the graves seemed moved by feelings deeper than mere curiosity, and the resident magistrate and

the inhabitants of Ragatz generally have shown every consideration and sympathy in their efforts to recover the bodies, and attentions to the relatives of the deceased, who have since arrived.

THE DENT BLANCHE.—In our last number was published a narrative of an ascent of this mountain, from which it might be inferred that the expedition was a new one. At the time of making the ascent, the writer fully believed that the Dent Blanche had not been climbed, never having read Mr. Kennedy's narrative; and he ascended by an entirely different route. Some of the guides at Zermatt having spread a report that Mr. Kennedy's party, who ascended in a fog, never reached the actual summit, doubt has sometimes been cast, most unjustly, upon the accuracy of that gentleman's account. But Mr. Finlaison confirms it entirely, and leaves no room for the smallest uncertainty as to Mr. Kennedy's having been really the first to scale this difficult peak. Unfortunately a paragraph in which this opinion was expressed, was omitted from Mr. Finlaison's narrative, in consequence of great pressure upon our space. We regret this the more, because it is possible that some colour may have seemed thereby to be given to the utterly unfounded statements of the Zermatt men.

SPANISH MOUNTAINS.*—This does not profess to be an Alpine work. But it recalls to us the fact that there are in Spain mountains of an elevation said to approach 13,000 feet. O'Shea, in his 'Guide to Spain,' gives the following heights for peaks in the Sierra Nevada :—

	Feet.
Picacho Mula Hacén	12,792
Picacho de la Veleta	12,459
Cerro de la Alcazuba	12,300
Cerro de los Machos	12,138

If these heights be correct there ought, even in that climate, to be not only considerable quantities of snow, but even some glaciers. O'Shea, however, throws some doubt on the point in a note, in which he states that the first peak, by Boissier's measurement, is only 10,980 feet; and a friend who has ascended the second informs us that he saw only patches of snow and no glaciers. Will not some member of the Alpine Club visit and explore these mountains, and give us more certain knowledge on the subject? He will find in Mr. Blackburne's book the latest information about routes and railways on his way to the country, and he may reach Granada, in the immediate neighbourhood of the range, in four days from London. He will also enjoy the advantage of seeing Spain before it is quite transformed from the unique aspect which it has worn for so many centuries to the ordinary humdrum type of European countries—a change which our author tells us is now rapidly going on.

Mr. Blackburn's description of his journey is lively and interesting, and his book is illustrated with some very pretty cuts, after drawings by Phillips, Lundgren, and others.

* *Travelling in Spain in the present Day.* By Henry Blackburn. London: Sampson Low & Marston, 1866.