

a distinguished engineer and writer, but occupies a high post in the Société des Touristes du Dauphiné, and is the editor of its *Annuaire* lately reviewed in these pages.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE 'J. E. M.' GUIDE TO SWITZERLAND.

We have received the following letter:—

The Rev. W. A. B. Coolidge.

'SIR,—As the Editor of the above, and as "a person of large assurance, and still larger ignorance," I take the liberty to enclose a few "Opinions of the Press," so that you may observe that I have not done you the honour to quote the fearful and wonderful review (sic) which appears in the August issue of the Mutual Admiration Society's Publication—"The Alpine Journal." I would further take the liberty to inform you, that while I do not lay claim to the transcendent genius which distinguishes yourself, I nevertheless appeal to a public as far-seeing and quite as intelligent as that for which you condescend to scribble; and I will venture on the prophecy that long after the Rev. W. A. B. Coolidge and his works, and the "Alpine Journal," are dead and forgotten, the "J. E. M." will be looked upon as a standard guide-book.

'It may surprise you to learn that the work is written entirely from personal experience and knowledge of Switzerland, and in the whole 480 odd pages of text there are not six pages of reprint. The editing was done abroad, and often during the most acute physical and mental suffering due to infirm health. Its faults—which, after all, are venial ones—might well have been touched lightly when dealing with a first edition of a comprehensive work of this nature; for an editor who would fail to correct them in a subsequent issue would be an ass, or something worse. Not only has the getting up of the book involved the expenditure of many hundreds of pounds, but two years of hard work, anxiety, and worry. An honest man, therefore, who was something more than an amateur scribbler, would have taken these things into consideration, even while burning to display his wonderful knowledge. That all the faults you pointed out exist I readily admit; but at the same time I must believe that the "J. E. M." guide is not without merits, seeing that I have received 175 letters from the general public, and, included amongst my correspondents are clergymen, doctors, artists, a minor canon or two, and no doubt *you* will be shocked to hear that even some Oxford and Cambridge men are amongst these non-discriminating people. Without exception every one of these 175 writers has something favourable to say; though no doubt they and the editors of the various journals in which reviews have appeared are simply persons of "great assurance or greater ignorance" when compared with your own august self.

'In conclusion I would simply remark that people who can only see their neighbour's errors, are almost invariably humbugs or hypocrites. In which of the two categories you ought to be classed I will leave you to decide. Yours truly,

'J. E. MUDDOCK.'

In placing before our readers this remarkable protest, we have only to add that the 'J. E. M. Guide' was reviewed in these pages at the special request of its editor and by one of our most experienced contributors, whose judgment of it we emphatically endorse.

It is to be regretted that Mr. Muddock has not thought fit to offer any answer to the serious charge brought by our reviewer of passing off on the public old maps for new.