

REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

Ueber Eis und Schnee. Von Gottlieb Studer. Band iv. (Bern: Dalp. 6 francs.)

In this addition to his valuable work, Herr Gottlieb Studer collects most of the climbs and new routes made amongst the higher *Swiss Alps* since the publication of the well-known original three volumes in 1869-71. Like its predecessors, the fresh volume classifies round each of the great peaks its recent history, here and there reverting for correction's sake to more ancient days. A careful examination of the new work confirms the opinion already formed by all who have had occasion to consult the old, that on the whole a laborious task has been faithfully executed, and that the book may be relied on as singularly accurate and complete.

Owing to the enormous increase of late years in the number of alpine publications, this last instalment must have given its author disproportionate trouble. Indeed, such a task could only have been undertaken and carried through as a labour of love by a man possessed of unusual general and topographical knowledge and abnormal alpine enthusiasm. No one better qualified in these respects could have been found than Herr Studer, himself one of the first explorers of many parts of the Alps. Younger generations of climbers must feel deeply indebted to the veteran author for the pains he has been at to place at their disposal his accumulated stores of knowledge.

With the merits the new volume has also the defects of its foregoers. Herr Studer, in his graceful postscript, has been the first to disclaim any pretension to literary art. Possibly no artist would have undertaken such a task. Yet, compared to M. Durier in his 'Mont Blanc,' the Swiss writer shows a defective sense of proportion, he frequently allows irrelevant or minor details to take up too much space, he does not always succeed in stating with decisive clearness the results of discussions by common consent long since closed, and he is no judge of evidence. In one matter, indeed, Herr Studer lapses into indiscretions surprising in an author of so much experience. Not only does he revive the whole controversy as to Brantschen's death, he also enters at great length into the still more remote argument—which was set out fully in the 'Oesterreichische Alpenzeitung' of the time—as to the first cause of the poor man's illness; whether it was (as in Jakob Anderegg's case) the result of a chill, or, as some Swiss preferred to imagine, of a strain caused in saving the lives of his companions on a previous occasion. In these discussions Herr Studer has not risen above his environment, and consequently his good sense has been to some extent sacrificed to his patriotism. Moreover the sacrifice has been unavailing; for he has succeeded only in furnishing yet another instance of how much harder an injudicious apologist can hit than the bitterest critic. We most sincerely condole with the two Swiss gentlemen against whom Herr Studer places on record a comparison we are far from thinking they deserve. Englishmen, we can assure Herr Studer, have long abandoned the pleasant illusion, which some of the smaller nations of the Continent still seem to cling to, that no fellow-countryman can behave disgracefully.

So far as regards new ascents elsewhere and previously recorded in type, the book is probably as nearly complete as possible; and constant use will alone reveal what gaps may exist. We have, however, while turning the leaves, made a few notes. Mr. Conway's 'Zermatt Pocket Book' seems, strange to say, to have escaped Herr Studer's notice up to the last moment, when he has made the best use he could of it in a supplement. Otherwise the information is generally brought down to the eve of publication—that is, to last March. In endeavouring to keep pace with ladies' ascents an author attempts the impossible, since many ladies are too modest to record their exploits. Thus, where three ladies are named as having climbed the Finsteraarhorn, the number ought to our knowledge to be *at least* doubled. Miss Walker in July 1871 was the first lady to climb the Matterhorn, the lady mentioned on page 174 only the first to *cross* the mountain.

Three of the earlier ascents of the Dent Blanche—namely, the fourth by Mr. J. Stogdon, on September 2, 1868; the fifth by Mr. Coolidge, on July 26, 1870; and the seventh by Mr. R. N. Fowler, on September 13, 1871—are omitted; nor do we find any notice of the direct ascent of the Aletschhorn from the Ober Aletsch glacier, made in 1874, nor of the second ascent of the Finsteraarhorn by M. Cordier's route made some years ago. The reference to the 'S. A. C. Jahrbuch' (xvi. 521), as to certain of the Bregaglia peaks, might with advantage have been more precise.

A fuller account of the progress of alpine photography would have been welcome; and a revised edition of the very useful tabular view of first ascents given with the earlier volumes, expanded so as to give at a glance an outline of the various routes up each of the great peaks, might have worthily crowned the edifice.

Herr Studer himself holds out grounds for hoping that he may some day be in a position to issue a final revised and rearranged edition of the whole book; and on this account we have not scrupled to offer here every suggestion that on a first perusal has occurred to us. He has done a good work for the fraternity of climbers; we hope to see him make it as far as possible perfect.

The High Alps in Winter; or, Mountaineering in Search of Health.
By Mrs. Fred. Burnaby. (Sampson Low. 14s.)

We must confess that with regard to this book our expectation has been grievously disappointed. Mrs. Fred. Burnaby had a great chance. Her subject was novel, at least to the general public; and her feats of winter mountaineering were so spirited that alpine climbers looked forward with interest to their recital. It is a disappointment to find only a collection of slight and hasty sketches filled out into a volume by the use of the largest type, and in themselves made up with an altogether undue proportion of the details of small mishaps and smaller jokes which have been the bane of so much alpine literature. The critic, after searching in vain for more satisfying matter, has to remind himself that he is dealing with a lady's book, and the book of a lady who has written to amuse an idle hour. Her narrative, he gladly allows, is simple, intelligible, and, as to difficulties and dangers, free

from most of the exaggerations of tourists. But he is bound also to note that winter mountaineering is hardly the peculiar and personal revelation the authoress seems to fancy it, that its earlier history might have been alluded to in less passing fashion, and that her own experience of the Alps hardly justifies the confidence with which the law is throughout laid down to her readers. He is grieved to find the Aiguille du Géant going so rapidly down the inevitable Peak's Progress (from *Inaccessible* to *Lady's Mountain*) as to form the fourth day in one of Mrs. Burnaby's ideal high-level routes—though he must admit that the prophecy has been too speedily justified. And he has to protest against such new forms and genders as 'Tête Noir,' 'Aiguille Vert,' 'Salanches,' 'Marquinaz,' 'Gorne Glacier,' and 'Monte Rose.'

Enough has been said to show the manner of 'Winter Mountaineering.' As to its substance, it opens with an account of a night out, spent on the Grandes Jorasses after a successful ascent of that peak in the summer of 1882. The winter expeditions that follow have already been summarised in our last number, and need not therefore be again catalogued. They form a remarkable series, and that they were carried through without serious mishap says much for the judgment and skill of Mrs. Burnaby's guides, as well as for her own perseverance. But she has chosen to record them in a volume which is probably the flimsiest and most trivial that has ever been offered to the alpine public.

Auf den Oetzthaler Fernern. Von Julius Meurer. (Vienna: R. Spies.)

In these articles, reprinted from the 'Oesterreichische Alpenzeitung,' Herr Meurer gives a lively and interesting account of three days' wanderings in the glaciers near Vent, comprising an ascent of the Wildspitze, and one of the Weisskugel by a new and direct route from the Langtauferer Thal. The party were lucky in their weather, and Herr Meurer contrives to make his readers share in the enjoyment of himself and his companions. Herr Diener appends a useful alpine history of the two peaks, the giants of the Oetzthal group.

OBITUARY.

MR. WILLIAM SPOTTISWOODE.

IN Mr. William Spottiswoode, the late President of the Royal Society, the Alpine Club has lost one of its most distinguished and earliest members. Mr. Spottiswoode was elected in 1858 with Professor Tyndall. His chief qualification was scientific, for he did not take any prominent share in the work of alpine exploration. But he had two years previously visited Eastern Russia and the Ural Mountains, and described his travels in 'A Tarantasse Journey.'

He subsequently became Honorary Secretary of the Geographical Society, to whose 'Journal' he contributed a paper on 'Typical Mountain Ranges,' which was thus described by one of his audience, who, referring to the established opinion of M. Elie de Beaumont, that there have been successive epochs of elevation of the earth's crust, each of which produced some evidence of the direction of its action, said:—