

## REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

*Die Gefahren der Alpen: praktische Winke für Bergsteiger.* By Dr. Emil Zsigmondy. (Fribourg: Leipzig, 1885. 4s.)

The last number of the 'Alpine Journal' contained a very full account of the deplorable accident by which the author of this book lost his life on the Meije last summer. By a grimly ironical coincidence the work, which we propose now to review, had only been published a few weeks previously. We are not unmindful of the saying, 'De mortuis nil nisi bonum:' but we should not be doing service either to our own or to Dr. Zsigmondy's readers did we not discuss this book purely on its merits.

The author deals with the subject of Alpine dangers in a tolerably exhaustive manner; thus chapters are devoted to the perils resulting from (1) falling stones, (2) snow and ice avalanches, (3) storms, cold, and mist, (4) lightning, (5) on-set of night, (6) accidents from slipping off rocks, (7) breaking through snow. Chapter 8 deals with the use of the rope.

A few other dangers are just alluded to—some of them rather fanciful, such, for instance, as wild beasts—but the work relates entirely to mountaineering in the Austrian, Swiss, and Italian Alps, and the author wisely does not discuss such perils. It is evident that the author, as was natural, was most attracted by the Dolomite Alps, and he draws principally on his recollection of adventures in these regions. It would be hard to find a better training-ground for the climber; and not a few mountaineers, we fancy, who have ascended most of the 'first-rate' peaks in the Swiss Alps might find themselves in undignified trouble on these curious and difficult rocks. But the author's experience was wide, and he writes with equal facility, though not perhaps with quite the same fervour, of the snow fields and ice world.

Throughout we find that the author has a good mastery of his subject, although his acquaintance with Alpine literature does not appear to be particularly large. Some may turn to this book in search of instruction, but a larger number probably will do so in the hope of learning something of the experiences of the author and his companions in the high Alps. The latter class will certainly not be disappointed, but the former, we fear, will. Indeed, the cover of the volume is an epitome of the whole work. On it the words 'Die Gefahren der Alpen' are printed very large, and the words 'Praktische Winke für Bergsteiger' are printed very small. We are not sure that it ought to be quite possible for an author to write such a book as this chiefly from his own experiences, and we feel that not a few of the dangers which our author met with might have been avoided had guides been employed. No doubt the experience gained was very remarkable and extensive—we hope almost unique. But it seems to have been forgotten that such feats are not wholly praiseworthy, seeing that they involve unnecessary risk. The self-taught painter or musician, whatever his natural genius, cannot fail to improve himself by taking

instruction in the ordinary way, and profiting by a digest of the accumulated experience of others perhaps equally gifted. A man might as well, when desiring to write and publish a book, commence his labour by endeavouring to invent his own system of printing.

Turning now more directly to the subject matter of the volume, we find much that is good, and an infinite deal that, to put the matter gently, does not fulfil expectation. The adventures are everywhere told in a graphic but yet modest manner, and the author writes with an enthusiasm which carries us along, but is yet subdued within proper limits. Every line reveals that true love of the mountains which is the real bond that unites together the members of the various Alpine brotherhoods. Still it is most disappointing to find that the author makes so little real use of his experience. Take, for instance, Chapter I., which is devoted to the subject of falling stones. Some seventeen accidents or narrow escapes are here described which occurred to the author or his party. Six of these were due to the dislodging of stones by members of the party themselves. The author was struck on three occasions, and in three instances other members of the party were hit. In some of the expeditions it is clear that the party ought not to have persevered, or might probably have varied their route with advantage, though no doubt in the case of the ascent of Monte Rosa from Macugnaga the latter alternative would be difficult to follow out practically. The length of the list is still more curious when we consider that, according to a summary recently published in the 'Echo des Alpes,' four persons only were killed by falling stones out of a total of 134 lives lost in sixteen years—that is, between 1859 and 1885. Some rather imaginary dangers are alluded to in this as in other chapters—as, for example, the risk to the traveller in the high Alps due to dislodging of stones by chamois above, one case of which the author cites from his own experience. In the Alpine midlands there is real risk from falling stones started by browsing goats; but this, which at any rate is more common, is made light of. An unsatisfactory answer is given to the question of how best to avoid falling stones, apart from the undoubtedly sound advice not to go on mountains where stones are known to fall; counsel which the author's own example rather sets at naught. Undue importance too is attached to the influence of high winds in causing stones to fall, and the counsel to traverse places liable to be swept by stones only at night is but partly wise; for we most of us know of many places in the high Alps where stones fall chiefly at such a time, though such are of course exceptional. The suggestion that falling stones may be parried with the axe does not seem a very practical one. As to the dislodgement of stones by companions, the author points out that the more practised a mountaineer is the less likely is he to be a source of danger to others. Precisely: but let him practise with guides, remembering the advice given to Mr. Winkle when he proposed to practise his shooting, commencing at short ranges, and drawing the proper moral from Mr. Samuel Weller's parable.

The chapters on avalanches and on the dangers arising from bad weather, cold, and mist consist chiefly of a series of misadventures,

some from the author's own experience and others of well-known instances from various sources. The amount of practical inference drawn is very meagre.

The author has been able to collect but few cases of accident by lightning, but narrates one from his own experience. We may infer indeed, though the author does not, that a man is as safe on the whole from lightning-stroke in the high mountains as anywhere else. It is curious to note, in this connexion, the strange dread that guides, as a class, have of lightning, a dread not wholly unconnected with superstition. In the summary already referred to, in the 'Echo des Alpes,' not a single death is ascribed to lightning-stroke, unless, indeed, any be included in the fourteen cases ascribed to 'unfavourable weather.'

The most interesting passage in the chapter devoted to accidents arising from causes such as slipping on rocks relates to the use of crampons. These appliances find considerable favour in the author's eyes, approval which we fancy the Alpine Club code of mountaineering morality will not permit many of our readers to endorse. Crampons with six spikes only are recommended. Their use and value and their disadvantages, on rock and snow respectively, are well pointed out. One great objection, however, to the use of crampons by beginners is not mentioned. The mountaineer has to acquire, like the skater or the bicyclist, the art of 'balance.' He will never do so properly if he begins by employing crampons, and when he has learnt 'balance' he is able to dispense with their aid. The man who has learnt to use crampons has gone through a considerable amount of labour in learning an unnecessary accomplishment; he might just as profitably have practised walking on stilts, as far as mountain climbing is concerned.

To the chapter on the use of the rope many will no doubt turn with a special interest. It is almost impossible to avoid the temptation to find in the author's views on the subject some explanation of the sad accident which befell him. Leaving, however, this inquiry to others, we may say of the chapter as a whole that, while much in it is good and practical, the paramount necessity of using the rope—and using it in the right way—in all difficult places is not insisted on as it should be. Careful editing would have much increased the value of this chapter. It is of course extremely difficult to describe in words the varied uses to which the rope may be put and its proper mode of employment on rocks. An hour's walk with an experienced companion and two good guides would teach more than a volume of written advice. The inexperienced, however, may be expected to turn to this book for counsel and information, and on their account we regret to find such a statement as this: that on mountains like the Zermatt Breithorn or Monte Rosa the rope may be dispensed with. In our opinion such a suggestion is a most dangerous one, and the author is but adding another to his already long list of Alpine risks. No amount of experience will make a snow bridge harder or a crevasse less deep, and the rope is as essential on the Théodule Pass or the Cima di Jazi as on the Jungfrau Joch or the Col delle Loccie. The whole matter is really summed up in the thoroughly sound advice given by Mr. Ball: 'With a sufficient inducement, and if it were impossible to find a com-

panion, I would not hesitate to cross the Théodule Pass or some other high passes alone; but if I were in company I would insist on the use of the rope.'

No doubt too there are many places on rock mountains where the use of the rope renders progress rather slow and tedious, and amateurs alone will not go so fast as when they are with guides; but surely the proper counsel to give in a general work like this is that the rope should be called into requisition earlier and more used when there are no guides in the party than when there are guides. With proper care and attention the rope ought never to be allowed to remain in a situation where it is liable to be cut on a sharp edge of rock. Such knife-edges are, as a matter of fact, not often met with, and the author gives a remarkably long list of instances from his own experience. A member of a party is responsible to the whole party for the length of rope between his next companion in front of and behind him, paying particular attention to the length in front in ascending and to that behind in descending. It is impossible for the leader to see that the whole rope is in proper use, especially on rocks, even when the party consists of no more than three. Detaching a block of stone by a loose coil, or allowing the rope to become wedged in a rock crevice, is as bad a mountaineering error as dislodging with hand or foot a loose boulder, and far worse than breaking through a snow bridge.

In the long list of the Alpine dangers mentioned in this volume, some of which are rather far-fetched, we find no mention of the greatest risk of all—viz. undertaking expeditions which are beyond the strength of those, or any single member, of the party undertaking them, and this risk is doubled in guideless expeditions. We have said it elsewhere, and we repeat it again, that the good mountaineer is he who has full confidence in his own powers and absolute knowledge of the limit of his own powers. We should gladly have seen the author lay stress on this fact, which his own experience must have taught him, but to which, unfortunately, we cannot even find an allusion.

The work is illustrated by several woodcuts, one of which, apparently taken from a photograph, shows the author's route up the Italian side of Monte Rosa,\* but two other illustrations only deface the volume and should have been omitted. One (facing p. 120) is apparently intended to show the right manner of cutting steps up and across a steep snow-slope, and the proper attitudes of mountaineers while so engaged. We confess that at first sight we thought that it was intended to indicate exactly the reverse. The leader is represented with axe poised in mid-air high above his head. The second figure crouches, with knees bent, leaning towards the slope, and not standing upright in his steps; and, further, presumably to give additional security in case of a slip, he has driven the pick of his axe into the snow on a level with his head.

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\* In our opinion the unavoidable risks attending this expedition are such that it is more than doubtful whether it ought ever to be undertaken again, and we regret that recently the Italian Alpine Club has thought fit to construct a *cabane* some five or six hours' walk from Macugnaga, in order to facilitate the ascent. We cannot hold that it is the province of an Alpine Club in any way to popularise an expedition which is simply dangerous.

In case of a slip occurring his feet would infallibly be jerked out from the step on which he stands, and he would have to support the weight of a falling companion solely by the precarious grasp of his axe. If the snow were soft, he should be drawn with the stick driven vertically deep into the snow: if the snow were too hard to admit of this being done, he should be represented as standing upright and with the axe held horizontally with the spike in the snow on a level with his waist, and the arms straight and rigid, thus converting himself into a species of tripod and extending his base of support. The designer of the illustration had evidently no knowledge of mountaineering. Some may remember Mr. H. G. Willink's admirably graphic sketch in the last picture exhibition of the Club at Willis's Rooms. This drawing represented a party on much the same sort of slope. But it was the real thing, chiefly because it was the work of a practical mountaineer, with observation and power to draw what he observed. Illustrations to a book of this nature ought to be accurate even at the cost of artistic value; and the designer of our author's illustrations is not an artist, but more fitted to draw pictures in illustrated journals representing royal personages laying foundation stones or receiving the freedom of provincial cities.

The illustration facing p. 164 represents a traveller horizontally disposed in mid-air, having fallen apparently from an overhanging rock, access to which is given by a slope of highly exaggerated steepness. The description in the text, which relates to an adventure on the Marmarole, brings out into stronger relief the artist's imaginative power.

If we have felt it our duty to deal somewhat severely with this book the unfavourable nature of some of the comments we have made may be softened by one consideration—that the author's reputation and experience fully entitle him to be considered so good an authority on the subject of which he treats that his work might be accepted as a text-book. Such a value it does not deserve. Experienced mountaineers will learn little that they cannot gather equally well and in more concise form from Mr. C. E. Mathews's paper in the 'Alpine Journal;'\* while to the inexperienced the volume would form but a dangerous text-book, save, perhaps, for the one fact that it alludes to more risks in mountaineering than they had probably even dreamt of, or, it may be added, are ever likely to meet with. C. D.

*Tartarin sur les Alpes: nouveaux exploits du héros tarasconnais.* By Alphonse Daudet. (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1885. 8s.) Coloured plates and woodcuts. Large 8vo. 334 [xiv.] pp.

It is almost as perilous to judge of a continuation as to write it. The weight of experience has begotten a standing prejudice. From 'Paradise Regained' to 'Tom Brown at Oxford' authors who have committed themselves to sequels have, on the whole, not been justified of their children; and on general principle the champion of Tarascon, made immortal for us by M. Daudet, who went forth to slay wild lions

\* Vol. xi. p. 78.

and came back with the skin of a tame lion, would seem not more capable of a sequel than Bunyan's pilgrims or Defoe's mariner. But M. Daudet has achieved the adventure of the siege perilous. Tartarin's performances in the Alps deserve, no less than his lion hunt in Algeria, to be known by all men who can read French and have the sense of humour, and especially, as in private duty bound, by those who are mountaineers.

There are differences to be noted, as might be expected, but they are appropriate to the new conditions. The bold and masterful strokes of the original '*Aventures prodigieuses*' could not be repeated; they are replaced by a treatment not less entertaining, but riper and more fully rounded off. Tartarin is now an old friend, and M. Daudet, with a true artistic ingenuity, leads us into the deeper workings of his character by showing him in intimate contact with his associates of Tarascon—Bézuquet, the chemist; Bravida, the retired captain; Costecalde, the envious gunsmith, Excourbanis the brazen-throated, and others. Of these, too, several are old acquaintances, on whom various new lights are thrown in the course of the story. Bompard, the Tarasconese courier, who becomes the unwilling partner of Tartarin's last and most formidable Alpine exploit, is a new and brilliant creation. '*Qualifié d'imposteur à Tarascon; jugez ce que cela doit être!*' And here comes in the subtle secret of Tarascon, which must be received with faith and meditation by those who would fully enter into the spirit of either the former or the latter adventures of Tartarin, or of the memorable defence of Tarascon in the war of 1870, recounted elsewhere by the same chronicler. The men of Tarascon are all endowed with a fatal gift of imagination, and they all know it: nevertheless they are perpetually imposing not only on themselves but upon one another; so that Bompard explains to Tartarin, with the most convincing air, that the Alps have been thoroughly tamed from summit to base, and are under the management of a company which has made mountain accidents as mythical as William Tell, and engineered all the famous expeditions with just enough practicable crevasses to keep up the excitement; and, what is more, Tartarin believes every word of it, and by reason thereof shows on the Jungfrau a combination of inexperience and valour that greatly puzzles his guides. We hold this the capital invention of the book. Even the author of Tartarin's being cannot hope to surpass the delightful surprise of that 'hour before the hour of dawn' when the hero for the last time assumed the Moorish garb to usurp the muezzin's office, and took a magnificent revenge on all Africa and Islam by making Algiers resound with his '*joyeuse malédiction tarasconnaise.*' But the tale of Bompard may well stand on the same level; and in one way it has greater artistic perfection, for it is not an episode, but one of the main points on which the development of the action depends.

The judicious reader will observe that the mighty man of Tarascon is no vulgar fool or coward. He is boastful, ignorant, and credulous beyond all northern measure; but his actions are not absurd or unbecoming with reference to his beliefs, and even of his words it may be said that he more than half believes them at the time. He is a

man of more than fair bodily energy, a stout walker (though no mountaineer), and a good shot. In the presence of real danger his conduct and courage are not below the common; they appear mean, partly by contrast with his high-flown pretensions, partly because his exuberant imagination and imperfect knowledge are always leading him into situations from which no dignified issue is possible. Take away the magical influence of Tarascon, and there would remain, not our Tartarin of Tarascon, but another Tartarin who would be a very good sort of ordinary southern Frenchman. The substructure, if one may so call it, of Tartarin's character is more fully brought out here than in the former book. As in Africa so in the Alps, he falls into the temptation of a love passage, which delays and almost frustrates his achievements until he is recalled to his more ambitious self by the voice of his expectant fellow-citizens. In this case the enchanter is a Russian girl—young, but already an expert and determined Nihilist—by whose party Tartarin is first taken for a clumsily disguised police agent and then for a possible convert and ally. This episode is perhaps a little too grave for the general tone of the book; there are passages which M. Daudet might have written in a serious romance. It is worked in, however, with great ingenuity, and the consequences to Tartarin and his colleagues of the Tarascon Alpine Club are sufficiently comic.

As to Tartarin's ascent of the Jungfrau and attempted ascent of Mont Blanc, we presume that M. Daudet did not write specially for mountaineers. Making a fair allowance for this, and for the deliberate extravagance of the whole thing, we can say that the incidents are quite plausible enough, the local colour generally correct, and the illustrations remarkably good. Nay, our old friend Couttet (dit Baguette) of Chamonix is lightly but truly touched under the name of Baltet. The gravest improbability is in the behaviour attributed to the guides on Mont Blanc. It is almost beyond the limits even of tarasconnade in a tarasconising world to suppose any Chamonix guides capable of leaving two out of three inexperienced travellers to find their way back to the Grands Mulets in a snowstorm without escort, and taking on the third against their own decided opinion. Hypercritical persons may doubt whether Tartarin and Bompard could have got off so cheaply as they did (how that was the reader must see in the original), supposing their guideless situation possible; but this we consider a detail in which the interests of art must prevail. Tartarin and Bompard are men, but of Tarascon; and we have to consider what is tarasconically rather than what is humanly possible. As well descend to asking whether Mr. Kennedy (or for that matter any English climber) has ever recommended climbing-irons; or complain of the slight conventional exaggerations introduced into the passing figures of divers of our own countrymen and countrywomen. 'Entre gens de Tarascon, pas moins, on sait bien ce que parler veut dire.' We must not be understood to suggest that the droll though lugubrious glimpse of the Salvation Army given at a certain point is exaggerated at all. And we conceive that M. Daudet, if not a climber himself, looks with proper respect on true mountaineering; for he has avoided every temptation to jest or to moralise at its expense, and we have not

met with a single phrase in the book which any sensible member of the craft will take otherwise than in good part. F. P.

*Jahrbuch des Schweizer Alpenklub*, vol. xx., 1884-5. (Bern.)

This volume cannot be expected to contain much that is absolutely new from a mountaineer's point of view. One of its articles, however, is of thrilling, almost of fearful interest. The attempt on the Bietschhorn from the south by Professor K. Schulz, with the guides Burgener and Perren, in August 1883, was sufficiently dangerous, as was plain from the remarks of Herr Schulz and the expressions of the guides. But the ascent of this mountain which was effected in September 1884 by Herr Schulz with the two brothers Zsigmondy and L. Purtscheller, without guides, was even more dangerous, and the details supplied in this volume can only heighten the opinion of the rashness of the expedition. It can hardly be matter of surprise to any that a series of desperate attempts to find new routes up the most difficult mountains terminated last August in the sad accident in which Herr Emil Zsigmondy lost his life. The only new ascents recorded are those of the Galmihörner (3,524 mètres and 3,482 mètres) and the Schönbühlhorn (3,864 mètres), both from the Oberaarjoch, by Messrs. Kurz and Barbey, July 12 and 13, 1884. The former was only a pleasant walk; the latter gave rather more trouble, as for some thirty yards they had to pass with the right arm over the arête. Dr. Ludwig, of Pontresina, with a young friend, Clo Saratz, climbed the Piz Cotschen (2,950 mètres), between Val Bevers and the Albula Pass, a rough and difficult rock passage like those of the Fluors or Sruors. On August 16, 1884, Professor K. Schulz climbed the Stammerspitze (3,256 mètres) above Remüs, in the Unter Engadine, long reputed inaccessible. Mr. J. P. Farrar,\* August 4, 1881, climbed the western and lower peak of this mountain from the Samnaun side, but the ridge between the two peaks seemed impracticable. Professor Schulz started from the Alp Pragiand, on the S. side, and reached the E. summit without particular difficulty by a couloir immediately under the peak. The descent was made on the same side by the ravine between the two peaks.†

Of ascents by new routes the chief is that of the Bietschhorn from the S., on September 2, 1884, referred to above. The couloir by which the ascent was made the year before was found to be in a wholly different and very dangerous condition. The party crossed it with much caution below the point where it narrowed, and climbed to the crest of the W. ridge. Further progress here was impossible, and, in spite of the danger, they descended into the couloir and followed it for 25 minutes, till the increasing falls of stones compelled them to leave it. The ascent henceforward was continued on or near the W. ridge, which was reached only by great efforts. This consisted of a series of rock towers, separated by deep notches, and presented enormous difficulties. L. Purtscheller and E. Zsigmondy, one of whom always led, distinguished themselves by feats requiring all a gymnast's skill in

\* *Alpine Journal*, vol. x. p. 360.

† *Ibid.* vol. xii. p. 124.

places where there was little hold for the hands and none for the feet. Herr Schulz thinks they outdid the performances of the best guides. He himself slipped in crossing a couloir, and owed his life to the rope which he had only just put on. In the descent Herr Purtscheller slipped on the snow arête, and was only saved by catching at the rope (from which he was detached) between the second and third man. The ascent of 1,300 mètres took them 12 hours 25 minutes. The top was reached at 3.55 p.m., and left at 4.30. The descent was greatly facilitated by the steps cut in an ascent by Messrs. Holzman and Cullinan the day before. Darkness prevented them from finding the Club hut on the Schafberg, and Ried was not reached until 12.25 a.m. on September 3.

The opinion of Hegetschweiler in 1820, that the ascent of the Tödi from the N.W. was not only practicable but easy, was sufficiently astonishing to later mountaineers. The ascent by this route was effected (after an attempt had been made in 1881) by H. Gröbli, with Salomon Zweifel, of Linththal, August 9, 1884. Starting from the Ober Sand Alp at 3.10 a.m., they approached the mountain from the N.N.W., and by 6.20 had reached a height of about 3,000 mètres. From this point the difficulties were formidable, and it was not until 10.40 that the Sand Gipfel was attained, whence the Rusein was easily reached in 30 minutes. Herr Lindt, in an ascent of the Lauterbrunner Breithorn, effected a variation of the ordinary route, descending by the W. ridge to the Wetter Lücke. Herr Stoos on September 25, 1884, passed from the Dossen Hütte to the Grimsel by a combination of the Rosenegg Pass and the Lauteraar Joch, which can hardly be possible except in years when snow is abundant. Herr Bodenehr contributes an account of the rarely made ascent of the Finsteraarhorn from the E., and Frau Tauscher-Geduly of an ascent of the Blümlisalphorn.

Herr Meyer v. Knouau has gathered together a number of historical notices of the Lötschthal, commencing as early as the thirteenth century. This remote valley, for more than a century hardly known to tourists, was in earlier times the main channel of communication between Bern and Ober Wallis by the Lötschen Pass, before the construction of the Gemmi road in 1736. Remains of the old paved road are still to be seen a little above the icefall of the Lötschenberg glacier, on the Kandersteg side.

Herr Körber and others in three visits to the Schafloch \* made plans and sections of this interesting cavern, and took a series of observations of the temperature. The same gentleman gives an account of the

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\* No attempt seems to have been made to ascertain the thickness of the ice except at the terminal 'Eissee,' where Gosset found it to be 45 centimètres and Körber found it to exceed 60 centimètres. In 1867 a party visiting the Schafloch, on entering the ice cone on the left, not far from the icefall, found a hole in the ice floor which enabled them to descend into the chasm between the ice and the wall of the cavern. This was wide enough to admit of their squeezing along sideways, and in a few yards they emerged on the rubbish near the top of the icefall. During the passage the ice was generally several feet above their heads, and the thickness was estimated between 8 and 10 feet in this part, supposing the floor to be level.

descent from the Bietschhorn in a violent snowstorm, and of a passage of the Schmadrijoch. This rarely used pass seems to increase in difficulty, if we may judge by the times of the last three recorded passages—Messrs. Hornby and Philpott, August 15, 1866,\*  $8\frac{1}{2}$  hours from Gletscher Staffel to Lauterbrunnen; Herren Dübi and Wyss, July 30, 1875,†  $13\frac{1}{2}$  hours; and Herr Körber, September 29, 1884, 18 hours.

Herr Dübi's article on Roman roads in the Graian and Pennine Alps, together with that in vol. xix., will be the subject of a separate notice.

Notices of the flora of the Aversthal, by Herr Käser, and on the cultivation of Alpine plants in gardens, will be interesting to lovers of flowers. From the interesting articles by Professors Forel and Ruti-meyer we learn that thirty-four of the glaciers observed have now begun to advance.‡ From observing the position in longitude of these glaciers, and the periods at which their advance commenced, the theory is started that this change begins with the western glaciers, and is progressive towards the east. The Rhone Glacier has not yet begun to advance. In 1884 11,000 square mètres were laid bare of ice, against 24,000 in 1883. But the glacier in almost all its parts showed an increase of thickness, portending an advance at no distant period. The survey of this glacier is now approaching completion, and it is expected that the chief publications respecting it may appear before the end of 1886.

At the 1884 meeting, held at Altdorf, a paper was read on the chief forerunners of the S. A. C. in the canton of Uri, who not only ascended most of the mountains but illustrated them in the different branches of natural history and in art. The arrangement with the Zürich office for the insurance of guides having terminated, has been renewed for a further period of three years. The matter is not satisfactory, as both the number of guides and the amounts insured have steadily declined. In more than twenty per cent. of the cases the kindness of the Club in paying half the premium has been abused, the guides refusing to pay the other half when due. Many of the Club huts having fallen into decay from faults of construction, and others having been diverted to the profit of private individuals, a select committee has been appointed to consider the whole subject. The Club propose in future to issue a periodical bulletin similar to the 'Mittheilungen' and other publications of many foreign Alpine Clubs.

Amongst the illustrations attached to this volume are a map of the Stockhorn and Niesen district, constructed at the suggestion of the editor of the Jahrbuch, Herr Wäber, by the well-known mapmaker Herr Leuzinger, which combines with success the methods of contour lines and coloured shading; a panorama from the Schilthorn by X. Imfeld, &c.

\* *Alpine Journal*, vol. ii. p. 411; vol. iii. pp. 89-90.

† *S. A. C. Jahrbuch*, x. 266-281.

‡ In *Alpine Journal*, vol. xii. p. 181, line 13 from top, for 'retreat' read 'advance.'

An index will appear next year to vols. xi.—xx. inclusive. The condition and finances of the Club are prosperous, the number of members having increased from 2,560 to 2,610, and the balance to their credit from 13,142 francs to 16,100 francs. J. S.

*Annuaire du Club Alpin Français*, vol. xi. Année 1884.

The latest volume of the C. A. F. *Annuaire* contains a great number of interesting articles, though none perhaps of the first importance.

There is a remarkable group of articles on the Swiss Alps, which are not very frequently visited by French climbers. MM. Sicard and Vignon's passage of the Domjoch (the second on record) is most exciting, and the description of their bivouac is enough to deter most readers from following in their steps. M. Wiart narrates his experiences on the Combin and several of the great Zermatt peaks; while M. Bauron takes us up the Pigne d'Arolla.

Of the expeditions in Dauphiné, the Col de l'Ailefroide (crossed in 1882) by M. Duhamel (who, however, in our opinion, rather underrated the great rock wall on the S. side), the Bans by MM. Eugelbach, and the Roche de la Muzelle by M. Dulong de Rosnay, are the chief expeditions described. The Savoy Alps come off rather badly, for save M. Duhamel's account of Mont Blanc, and M. Wiart's of the Aiguille du Géant, there is only M. Pierre Puiseux's most interesting explorations in the ranges near Modane and Pralognan, described with the vigour and accuracy which we expect from such an authority. His narrative of the conception of the idea of making the first ascent of the Pointe de l'Echelle one hot morning in July, 1884, in Paris, and of its execution and return to Paris within forty-five hours is most amusing.

Count Henry Russell again describes the fascination which his cave on the Vignemale exercises over him, for in 1884 he spent nine nights there; while M. Wallon describes the chief routes of the same peak, and M. Schrader's drawing of the cirque of Cotatuero, on the Spanish side of the Pyrenees, is most striking. M. Rochat's sad experiences at Mont Louis, in the Eastern Pyrenees, his arrest by the French police and imprisonment for some time, show us that it is not Englishmen only who suffer from the excessive zeal of French gendarmes. Could not the C. A. F. move in the matter, and procure the issue of instructions to the frontier police not to molest Alpine travellers with their ice-axes and other odd luggage, who can prove their nationality and their membership of one of the great Alpine Clubs? These Pyrenean stories can be easily paralleled by other similar mishaps on the Franco-Italian frontier, where the officials are apparently unable to see the difference between an ice-axe and a pick-axe.

Of the other more important articles we can only mention M. de Déchy's ascent of Elbruz, M. Vézian's discussion of the two chief theories as to the origin of mountains (he advocates that based on the action of a central furnace), M. Bénardeau's interesting essay on the action of water on the formation of hills, and M. Perrier's account of the great submarine mountain chains. M. Martel describes the very

curious rock phenomena of the Causse Noir in the Cévennes, while M. Bourgault-Ducoudray, a professor at the Conservatoire, contributes perhaps the most original paper in the *Annuaire*, on 'Music in the Mountains,' trying to show that primitive music is there best preserved, though in several cases mountain airs are nothing more or less than popular operatic tunes, a curious inversion of the usual course of things.

M. Porchon's paper on the wanderings of a party of two French ladies and four French gentlemen amidst the English lakes and Scotch Highlands is good light reading; but it was perhaps the irritation caused by the establishment of quarantine on the Italian frontier in 1884, and which spoiled the originally planned trip, which leads M. Porchon to bring in comparisons with the Alps in a rather contemptuous and quite irrelevant fashion.

The C. A. F. now numbers no fewer than 5,300 members, distributed among forty sections, one of the most recently founded of which bears the awe-inspiring name of 'Section de Carthage,' and has its seat at Tunis. We trust that the C. A. F. will add to the numerous services it has rendered to the cause of Alpine exploration that of taking up and carrying out, either independently or with Government sanction, the much needed reform of the Chamonix Règlement, complaints as to which are both loud and well-grounded. The very existence of Chamonix as a centre for climbers is bound up with the speedy and satisfactory solution of this question, with which the C. A. F. is specially qualified and entitled to deal.

*Annuaire de la Société des Touristes du Dauphiné*, vol. x. Année 1884.  
(Grenoble: Allier.)

The most important paper in the new volume issued by this active local society is a reprint from the 1515 edition of a tractate (originally published in 1507) by Jacques Signot, of whom little seems to be known save that he accompanied Charles VIII. on his expedition into Italy. It contains a short description of each of the passes leading from Savoy, Dauphiné, or Provence into Italy, which is interesting both historically and topographically. Hannibal is made to cross the Little St. Bernard, though it is admitted that some writers think he went over the Mont Genève, in describing which pass a detailed account is given of the three ways by which it can be reached from Grenoble—viz. by La Mure, St. Bonnet and Gap, by the Trièves, the Col de la Croix Haute and Gap, and by the Col de Lautaret, 'qui est plus court que les précédens d'une journée, combien qu'il est fort difficile.' Mention is made of the tunnel near the Col de la Traversette, which is said to have been made about fourteen years\* previously, and of the 'Mont de Pragella' or Col de Sestrières. One is surprised to find the Col de l'Agnel and the Col de la Croix ranking with the greater passes of the Alps. The Col de l'Argentière is described in great detail.

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\* There is some mistake here. Signor Vaccarone, in quoting the same passage (*Le Pertuis du Viso*, p. 14), reads 'xxiii' years, and he has shown from the original documents that the tunnel was completed by 1480.

According to the Itinerary from Paris to Rome appended to the book, the Mont Cenis seems to have then been the most frequented road. The facsimile map completes this very interesting article, for which we are indebted to M. Merceron.

M. Ferrand gives a lengthy account of some of the well-known glacier expeditions in Dauphiné; he is very enthusiastic, like all his predecessors, about the view from the Grande Ruine. His attempt on the Pelvoux was defeated by a storm; as is usual with French climbers he crossed the Glacier de Clot de l'Homme and mounted by the steep rocks on its right banks (as Mr. Whymper did in 1861), though we cannot make out why the far easier and shorter route by Mr. Tuckett's couloir on the left bank of the glacier is so frequently neglected, as it avoids the rather dangerous crossing of the little glacier. M. Ferrand also contributes an article on some new papers for photographic purposes, which seem in his hands to have yielded excellent results.

The remaining article is mainly devoted to the little-known districts of the Val Godemar and Queyras; many of the ascents described have been already mentioned in these pages.\*

The S. T. D. (including the Paris section) now numbers 637 members. Its budget for 1885 was estimated at rather over 400*l.*, a surplus of 160*l.* being hoped for. Its energies have been mainly devoted of late years to the erection of the new inn at La Bérarde, which it is hoped to open to the public next August. But it has not neglected to keep up the huts it formerly built, and has published a new Règlement and tariff for the guides and porters of the district.

We had nearly forgotten to mention the 'Revue Alpine,' or classified list of ascents made in the district in the summer of 1884. This section must cost the editor much labour and trouble, but it forms a most valuable part of the Society's publications, and its importance from an historical point is very great. It is even more accurate this year than usual, despite the fact that it covers no less than twenty-five pages.

*Bollettino del Club Alpino Italiano per l'anno 1884.* No. 51.  
(Turin: Candeletti.)

By far the most extensive article in the new Bollettino is that with which it opens. This is a most elaborate monograph on the Margozzolo—the mountain district between the Lago Maggiore and Lago d'Orta, of which the Mottarone is the highest summit. The names of Signori Baretti and Spanna are guarantees for the excellence of this treatise (for it covers 150 pages), which is above criticism. Several maps and plans help to increase its value as a guide to the district, and it might well be published in a separate shape for the convenience of intending visitors, who will certainly be drawn thither by the fine views and the good new inn near the summit opened in 1884 by the well-known Guglielmina family.

Signor Cita describes in detail the various small industries carried on in the Vicentino, and greatly encouraged by the local section of the C. A. I., which was specially commended at the recent National

\* *Alpine Journal*, vol. xii. pp. 110-2.

Exhibition at Turin for its praiseworthy endeavours to help on the development of these industries. They consist chiefly in the manufacture of articles in wood, straw, and iron, and serve to fill up the time not occupied by agricultural pursuits, thus adding a considerable amount to the earnings of the inhabitants. Physiology is represented by the paper in which Signor Mosso gives an account of his experiments on man's breathing at great heights, the illustration to which is at once ludicrous and alarming; while Anthropology and Geology occupy the attention of Signor Sacco, in his description of some new caves in the Maritime Alps. Signor Baer's paper on the 'Law of Glaciers' is referred to on another page.

Climbing proper forms the subject of but two papers. Signor Abbate describes his ascents of the Grivola and Grand Paradis,\* the latter by a false route, and waxes enthusiastic over the beauty of the Cogne district. His paper is accompanied by two soft and well-executed illustrations of the final ridge and of the actual summit of the Grand Paradis.

Signori Ratti and Fiorio contribute the other article. Unluckily their holiday in 1884 was but short, and the quarantine prevented their leaving Italy, so they had to content themselves with the hackneyed ascents of the Tournalin, Breithorn, Zumsteinspitze, and Signal-kuppe, which are very freshly and pleasantly narrated. They lay stress on the fact that the difficulties of the two latter peaks have been greatly exaggerated, and express very strong opinions on the absurdly high prices for guides in the tariff when compared with other less known districts, *e.g.* the Lysjoch is 50 francs, while the Ecrins is only 35. It would be well if the several clubs were to reduce the rates, which may once have been equitable, but are now very exorbitant, as the ways are so well known, and the dangers thus largely done away with.

The mention of the Monte Rosa group naturally leads to what in some ways is the most valuable paper in the volume—that sent by Signor P. L. Vesco, whom we are probably right in identifying with a former 'vicaire' of Cogne, who in 1873 published some very useful notes on that valley and its neighbourhood. Signor Vesco's paper is founded on a dictated version of a German MS. by M. Louis de la Pierre, which, as Mr. D. W. Freshfield points out in the 'Alpine Notes' above, ought certainly to be published entire in the original. For it is no less than an account of the first known exploration of the glaciers around the Monte Rosa, *viz.* that of the six Gressoney men with N. Vincent in 1778, when from the 'Entdeckungsfels' the 'lost valley' of Zermatt was discovered. De Saussure mentions the expedition, with one of the members of which he conversed in 1789 on his visit to the southern valleys of Monte Rosa, and so does Von Welden ('Der Monte Rosa,' p. 123), both accounts having been noticed in these pages by

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\* It may be useful to point out that the key of the fine new club hut on the Val Savaranche side of the Paradis is only to be found at the house of Giuseppe Dayné, at the hamlet of Maisonnasse, between Dégioz and Ponte, or at that of Oberto, at Ceresole Reale.

Mr. Tuckett\* and Mr. Conway.† But the version now published is that of one of the seven adventurers, Joseph Beck by name; and though, in its present form, it does not add much to our knowledge of facts, yet is of historical interest, and deserves to be published in full as a record of an exploration which for its date was most memorable and daring.

Signor de Falkner gives an accurate and exhaustive account of the topography and nomenclature of the Brenta group, which, after proving too much for the Austrian staff, has been fairly thrashed out by the energy of amateurs. In the course of his exposition he maintains the accuracy of Mr. Ford's note ‡ against Mr. Holzmann's criticism; but we may point out that the first ascent of the Cima di Brenta was made by Mr. Freshfield, not by Mr. Tuckett.

Mr. Budden gives a full and accurate account of the various Alpine societies now in existence, though we fear that the Alpine Club has never had any official connection with Mr. Ball's 'Alpine Guide.' We take from his paper the following statistics, which are rather startling. The seven chief Alpine Clubs number no less than 33,421 members, while the local societies in Germany, Austria, Hungary, Bohemia, and Poland have 45,130, to which various minor associations add 5,180, so that the grand total of 'Alpinists' or 'Alpiners' (to borrow Mr. W. Longman's term, used in his 'Six Weeks' Journal') mounts up to the really appalling number of 83,731.

Some interesting facts as to the origin of the C. A. I. are given in the eloquent discourse of the new President, Signor P. Lioy, in honour of Quintino Sella, which is prefixed to the volume.

With this year's Bollettino there is issued a very elaborate index to the first fifty numbers of that periodical, which we owe to the industry and care of Signor L. Vaccarone. By this means the buried riches of past volumes are rendered generally accessible, and a great boon conferred on all who wish to refer to any of the numerous interesting expeditions made by Italian climbers. First comes an index of authors, followed by a minutely subdivided index of the subject matter, which has separate headings—for Guides, History, Winter Excursions, and the like—twenty-one in all. Finally we have an index of places, so that, at a single glance, we can see exactly what has been published in the Bollettino on any particular peak or pass, village or valley, and this section is perhaps the most useful of all. We have tested the index pretty severely, and have found it very accurate. It might have been well to print a table at the beginning stating the year in which each number was published, but this anyone can easily construct for himself in a few minutes. We have only to add that the index forms a pamphlet of 100 pages, and is issued apart from the Bollettino.

*Illustrierter Führer durch West-Tirol und Vorarlberg*, von Julius Meurer, with Illustrations and Maps. (Vienna: Hartleben, 1885. 5s. 6d.)

The president of the Austrian Alpine Club is an indefatigable hand-book-maker, and he finds—what English mountaineers do not—

\* *Alpine Journal*, vol. v. p. 136.

† *Ibid.* vol. xii. p. 75.

‡ *Ibid.* x. 162.

publishers ready to back him up. Following on his 'Oertler Group' and 'Dolomites,' we have this comprehensive, compact volume of 300 pages, covering the country between the Swiss and Italian frontiers on the west and the line of the Brenner railway on the east—Vorarlberg and West-Tirol. We have only one fault to find with Herr Meurer's arrangement, that he has accepted on the west the frontier lines of political in place of those of physical geography, thereby bisecting in a manner awkward for tourists the Adamello and Silvretta groups. Mr. Ball was curiously in advance of the time in his admirably scientific subdivision of the Alps for handbook purposes. The recent completion of the Arlberg railway opens out not only the Bavarian highlands but the fine glacier group of the Silvretta Ferner and the pastoral recesses of the Montafun to English climbers, an unexhausted, we might almost say an unknown, region of no slight attractions. From these we pass by Innsbruck to the Stubai Thal, sunniest of Alpine valleys, crowned by a group of peaks which to climbers who trust to their own 'instinct' to find a way, and only bring a foreign guide to help them in the mechanical labour of step-cutting, will afford plenty of sport. The Oetzthaler Ferner are better known, more severe in scenery, and to our thinking less beautiful, though the glorious panorama of the Weisskugel is hardly to be surpassed by any peak that does not look down on Italy.

The Brenta group is more thoroughly worked out than in Herr Meurer's dolomite volume, and we see nothing omitted except *the* excursion from Pinzolo or Campiglio over the Bocca dei Camuzzi. The Adamello group is newly done; Val di Genova is praised as highly as it seems to deserve in a memory which dates back over twenty years to a time before it was shorn of half its noble pines. Val di Fum and Val di Borzago are rather curtly dealt with, and the political division of the group interferes with the completeness of its treatment as a whole. This is really all the criticism we have to offer.

The technical construction of the book seems, as might be expected from Herr Meurer's experience, as nearly perfect as possible. Granted, what is now universally held, that guide-books are to be constructed on the *multum in parvo* principle, as compressed as a meat lozenge, we do not see how it could be better done. In old days the tourist was supposed to require a dilution of Byron or Schiller with his facts and figures. However we rejoice to say his successor is not without some human weakness. If Herr Meurer is right, it lies in the direction of a desire for a large number of rather poor woodcuts, which suffer by contrast with some half a dozen admirable little heliographs. We should like to have replaced the woodcuts by district maps of the Silvretta, Oetzthal, Stubai, Oertler, Adamello, and Brenta groups. A novel invention of doubtful utility is a large *Distance Map* in which the 'times' are inserted on every route.

*Valle Bavona: Impressioni e Schizzi dal Vero*, per F. Balli. (Turin: Candeletti, 1885. 2 fr. 50 c.)

Signor Balli has done a considerable service to travellers by opening an excellent Hôtel-Pension in a valley which is still comparatively

unknown, though within a few miles of the great central route across the Alps. His guests will be further indebted to him for catering to their minds, as well as to their bodies, in a monograph on Val Bavona. It naturally contains appreciative descriptions of the scenery of this remarkable dale, one of the most picturesque granitic trenches in the Alps. But in this part of his subject Signor Balli had been anticipated. It would be hard to improve on the general descriptions given by Mr. Ball more than twenty years ago. The most interesting pages in Signor Balli's work are those devoted to the customs of the inhabitants—their emigration to Holland; the curious 'vicinanza,' or tenure of lands in common by several families; their habit of changing from one hamlet to another, according to the season, thus leading a more or less migratory life even within the limits of their own mountains. The little book has attached to it the portion of the Siefried-karte, or new Federal map, which covers the neighbourhood of Bignasco, and Herr Studer's panorama from the Basodine from an old S.A.C. Jahrbuch. It is further illustrated by several reproductions of photographs of waterfalls and glaciers.

It is to be desired that a complete work should be written on the Valleys of Ticino, either by a native or by one who, like Mr. Cust, has lived long among the countryfolk, who gave to France her late ruler. Léon Gambetta's grandfather was born at Intragna, close to the mouth of Val Maggia, and the village is still full of his relations.

D. W. F.

*Locarno et ses Vallées*, par J. Hardmeyer, avec 58 illustrations par S. Weber et deux cartes. (Orell Füssli & Cie., Zürich, 1885. 1 f. 50 c.)

Since the sentence that concludes the preceding notice was written, the desire expressed in it has been partly fulfilled by the publication of this pretty pamphlet of 117 pages, which forms part of Messrs. Orell Füssli & Cie.'s series of 'L'Europe illustrée.' It is needful to say 'pretty,' for mountaineers will still look for fuller details of the mountain recesses and heights than are here afforded. But the ordinary traveller will find all he wants in the way of a light and readable sketch of the beauties of a district now within less than 30 hours of London.

One preliminary warning is needful. Let him not be repelled if Locarno and its hotel do not at first sight attract him so much as other halting-places on the lakes. If he has legs and eyes—nay, if he has energy enough to drive in a carriage and pair—he is within reach of a series of excursions hardly to be matched elsewhere. As a centre for moderate walks Locarno is unrivalled in the lake region. On one side are the hill-villages, 'the Monti,' behind the town, with roads stretching up to the heights overlooking the gorge of Val Verzasca. On the other, the road across the Maggia leads to the old path from Losone to Ronco, an exquisite Italian Trossachs. The upper valleys, Onsenone, Centovalli, and Verzasca, are within easy reach, and in the farther recesses of Val Maggia, Bignasco and Fusco offer comfortable retreats.

The illustrations to this volume are graceful and characteristic, and do as much, perhaps, as can be done without colour to suggest the charm of a land where colour is a ceaseless delight.

D. W. F.