

ALPINE NOTES AND NEW ROUTES.

AIGUILLES ROUGES D'AROLLA (CENTRAL AIGUILLE) FROM THE VAL D'HÉRÉMENCE SIDE.—August 19, 1890: Mr. R. C. Gilson, with Pierre Maître, of Evolena, and a porter, crossed the Col des Ignes from Arolla, and skirting the slopes of rock and débris above the head of the Darbonneire glacier for about half an hour, reached a largish couloir ascending in the direction of the N. gap. The couloir was climbed for 50 or 100 feet (probably danger of falling stones after sunrise), and then quitted for the rocks on the left. These led to an arête, well marked higher up, of surpassing steepness, but excellent rock. One apparently insurmountable gendarme has to be turned on the S. face. The arête joins the main ridge of the mountain about five minutes S. of the summit.

MONT COLON (descent by N.E. arête).—August 12, 1890: the same party having reached the summit by the usual S. arête made the descent to the Arolla glacier by a well-marked ridge intermediate between the E. face,* and the difficult N. face climbed by Mr. J. Hopkinson and Jean Maître on the following day.† The arête, though steep and in places a little rotten, would probably present little difficulty in pleasant weather. The party were involved in the same thunderstorm which afforded Messrs. Slingsby, Solly, and Haskett Smith their 'Night Adventure on the Dent Blanche.'‡

ALMAGELLHORN ('No information,' 'Eastern Pennine Guide').—Approached from the Furggalp, this is probably little more than a 'Schafspitze,' but an interesting climb may be made by attacking it from the S.E. On August 9, 1891, Mr. R. C. Gilson with Pierre Maître, of Evolena, left Saas Fee at 3 A.M., and at 6.20 reached the foot of a sharp ridge, prominently marked in the Swiss map, forming the E. boundary of the Weissthal glacier. This took 2¼ hours to climb, and is strongly recommended. The summit ridge was then followed over the point, 3,311 mètres, to the top of the Almagellhorn in about 2 hours. The view of Monte Rosa and the entire Saas-Grat is unrivalled. A cairn was found on the top, perhaps built by hunters of chamois, which are said to frequent the mountain, though none were seen on this occasion. In descent the W.N.W. arête was pursued for some distance, and then a direct line made for the châteaux in the upper Almagell valley. A collection of nasty slabs was encountered half-way down, among which feasible chimneys were picked with some difficulty. It would probably be better either to adhere longer to the rather tiresome main ridge, or else to effect a retreat from the summit on to the Weissthal glacier.

ORTLER GROUP.—The carriage road from Gomagoi to St. Gertraud was opened to traffic at the beginning of July. A formal 'inauguration' will take place early in September, when a memorial to the late Baron von Hofmann, formerly Austrian Finance Minister, who

* *Pennine Guide*, Route 3.

† *Alpine Journal*, vol. xv. p. 305.

‡ *Ibid.* vol. xv. p. 404.

interested himself greatly in the Suldenthal, and left by will 15,000 fl. towards the construction of the road, will be unveiled. The Hamburg Section of the D.Ö.A.V., which has also borne a large share of the cost of the road, is enlarging the Schaubach hut, at the head of the valley, and a new hut (the need for which is somewhat hard to discover) is being erected in the Zaithal. The telegraph has now been carried up to St. Gertraud, and a post office has been established in Herr Angerer's inn, 'Zum Ortler.' Intending visitors to this most agreeable of 'high Alpine' stations will do well to arrive early in the day, as the demand for quarters is at present greatly in excess of the supply. Next year a large new hotel will, it is hoped, be opened, and one at least of the existing inns will have been enlarged.

The well-known Vienna climber, Herr Louis Friedmann, has repeated the alleged feat of Corbinian Steinberger,* by ascending the Königspitze from the Stelvio Pass. With a guide, and all modern advantages, the ascent occupied over 9 hrs. Herr Steinberger (or we should perhaps say Father Corbinian) is, we believe, still living, as abbot of a monastery in Bavaria; but attempts to 'draw' him on the subject of his youthful exploit do not meet with success.

ACCIDENTS.—So far no serious accident seems to have occurred this year above the snow-line. The death of Mr. Ribbons, an American, near Grindelwald, on July 29, though occurring on a glacier, was in no sense an incident of what is commonly called a 'glacier expedition.' From the Austrian Alps, however, about the usual number of falls in rock-climbing, mostly in the neighbourhood of the Ennsthal, are reported. Among them we must with much regret record that by which Herr Ferdinand Geyer, father of the President of the Austrian Alpine Club, lost his life on July 2. Herr Geyer, who, though advanced in years, was a skilful and active climber, had ascended the Grimming, a mountain which he knew well, with a guide, Matthäus Lieber. On the descent he slipped in crossing a small and steep snowfield, and fell on to rocks, receiving very severe injuries. The guide remained with him through the night, vainly trying to restore him, and in the morning went for assistance; but the relief party only arrived in time to see Herr Geyer expire. To add to the tragedy, the guide himself succumbed a few days later to the effects of exposure and fatigue. No rope seems to have been in use; but the party can hardly be blamed for this, as the peak, which is under 8,000 feet high, does not appear to be of particular difficulty. No glacier has to be crossed, nor even, under ordinary circumstances, would snow be found.

On Whit Sunday a party of Viennese tourists ascended the Hochschwab. Bad weather came on, and the party, who appear to have been thoroughly unskilled, lost their way. One of them, a bank clerk named Czerny, got separated from his companions, fell over a precipice, and was killed. The rest seem to have concerned themselves little about their companion's fate, for, beyond mentioning that he was missing, they took no steps towards a search. The body was found some days later.

* See *Alpine Guide*, § 37, Rte. C; *Alpine Journal*, xv. 389.

THE DISASTER AT ST. GERVAIS.—The exact cause of this has not yet been fully made out. All that is at present known will be found in a note by Mr. Freshfield, in the current number of the 'R. G. S. Proceedings.' It seems, however, certain that it was in some way due to the small Glacier de la Tête Rousse, on the N. side of the Glacier de Bionassay. Some of the circumstances, as reported by the Sous-Guide-Chef of Chamonix, seem to point to the possibility of a lake having been formed through the damming by the larger glacier of the stream from the smaller, followed by the bursting of this lake. In that case the catastrophe would be of a similar kind to those which have frequently occurred in the Alps, the latest instance being the inundation which ravaged the Martellthal in June of last year.* But from a report by M. Vallot, who has visited the spot, it would seem that two basins of water actually formed on the Glacier de la Tête Rousse. How these basins can have formed it is not easy to see. In Tyrol there is a wide-spread belief in so-called 'Wasserstuwén,' or great hollows filled with water, existing in the interior of glaciers, which ultimately work down to the end and burst; but we believe that the best authorities are very sceptical as to the existence of such things.

THE LIBRARY.—The following additions have been made since April 15, 1892 :—

- Nelle Alpi Graie, 1891. An album containing views of the Graian Alps. (Presented by Messrs. Giovanni Battista and Giuseppe Origoni, junior members of the Milan Section of the Club Alpino Italiano.)
- Meurer (Julius). *Katechismus für Bergsteiger, Gebirgstouristen, Alpenreisende.* Small 8vo. Illustrations. Leipzig, 1892. (Presented.)
- Vénéon (Jean). *Tschingel.* Pamphlet. Illustrated. n.d. (Presented by Rev. W. A. B. Coolidge.)
- Dellepiane (Giovanni). *Guida per Escursioni nell' Apennino Ligure e nelle sue adiacenze.* Small 8vo. Maps. Pubblicata per cura della Sezione Ligure del Club Alpino Italiano. Genova, 1892. (Presented by the Sezione Ligure del C.A.I.)
- Annuario della Sezione di Roma del Club Alpino Italiano. Vol. III., 1888-91. Medium 8vo. Maps and illustrations. Roma, 1892. (Presented by the Sezione di Roma del C.A.I.)
- Den Norske Turistforenings Årbog for 1891-92. Udgivet af W. v. Munthe af Morgenstjerne. 8vo. Map and illustrations. Kristiania, 1892.
- Pratt (A. E.) *To the Snows of Tibet through China.* Medium 8vo. Map and illustrations. Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1892. (Presented by the Publishers.)
- Section Lyonnaise du Club Alpin Français. *Huitième Bulletin.* 8vo. Illustrated. Lyon, 1892. (Presented.)
- Tijdschrift van het Kon. Nederlandsch Aardrijkskundig Genootschap. Tweede Serie, Deel VIII. Maps. 8vo. Leiden, 1891.
- Report of the U. S. National Museum, under the direction of the Smithsonian Institution, for the year ending June 30, 1889. Medium 8vo. Illustrated. Washington, 1891.
- Annual Report of the Board of Regents of the Smithsonian Institution to July 1890. Medium 8vo. Illustrated. Washington, 1891.

* See vol. xv. p. 489. We may mention here that in that case a tunnel is being made through the rock, which will prevent a repetition of the disaster by drawing off the water as it accumulates.