

direction to the Kartsh-Chal Peaks. Position of Otingo: latitude, $41^{\circ} 18' 24''$; longitude, $42^{\circ} 8'$.

The entire group of mountains forms a curve, but the main ridge runs from N. to S. The north-western summit is called Batum Peak, and southernmost elevation Artwin Peak. There is a small glacier with Bergschrund on the N. side of a small pass between Batum Peak and main central ridge. From the latter a number of couloirs descend, some filled with snow and ice; lower down on the W. side small snow-fields and old moraine.

August 8.—Harry Runge and W. Rickmer-Rickmers ascended Batum Peak, about 11,800 ft. Left Otingo 7.30 A.M., reached summit by S.W. arête at 4.15 P.M.; returned to camp at Otingo 10 P.M. The Batum Peak is the highest point of the entire group.

August 11.—Same party started 7.30 A.M.; ascended N. pillar of main central ridge, making use of a series of couloirs and traversing W. face of rocks; finally gaining summit by S.E. rock arête, 5.25 P.M. Height about 11,650 ft.

August 15.—Same party, with addition of F. Hacker, of Vienna, left camp on high-lying pastures above Otingo at 4 A.M.; ascended, amongst others, the highest point in the centre of main ridge; called it Central Peak. Height about 11,700 ft. Returned to starting-point 9 P.M.

Excellent views of the entire range of Central Caucasus were obtained from these peaks. Their heights are given subject to correction.

ALPINE NOTES.

NEW EDITION OF STUDER'S 'UEBER EIS UND SCHNEE.'—We are very pleased to be able to announce that a new edition of this invaluable history of the Swiss Alps has been undertaken. The first bit of vol. i. (the Oberland vol.) was issued last November, and the second bit (Jungfrau, &c.) appeared early in 1896. Part 1 contains a life of Studer (with portrait), a general introduction, and the history of the Finsteraarhorn and the Aletschhorn. The old text has been preserved as far as possible, but the editors have brought it completely up to date, and have not scrupled to make many changes and additions—wisely, we think. The excellence of the revision may be easily judged from the names of the editors—Dr. H. Dübi and Herr Wüber-Lindt, the present and former editors of the 'S. A. C. Jahrbuch.' It is hoped to complete vol. i. in about four parts, the price of the volume to be 6 francs at the most. It is sincerely to be hoped that the editors may receive sufficient encouragement to take the two other volumes in hand, for it would be a pity to have only a portion of the work in its new and thoroughly satisfactory form. The publishers are Schmid, Francke, & Co., the well-known booksellers of Bern.

NEW MAPS OF THE ALPS.—We have great pleasure in announc-

ing, on the best authority, that M. Kurz's map of the Mont Blanc group* will be issued to subscribers in the early spring of 1896, perhaps in the course of March. Its publication will fill a great gap in Alpine cartography. We shall hope to speak of this fine map more in detail after its publication.

It may be convenient to point out here that with the issue of Part 45 (October 1895) of the great Siegfried map of Switzerland practically all the mountain portion of that great work is now completed. There remain only one sheet containing the hills just S. of Château d'Oex, several representing those near the head of the Lago Maggiore, and one sheet, with two small outlying bits, depicting the valley of Samnaun (the most easterly valley in Switzerland) and the group of the Gross Litzner. Some of these missing sheets are, we are informed, in the engraver's hands, and will doubtless soon make their appearance. We regret much to learn of the death (in the early part of January) of Herr Leuzinger, the most capable engraver of the Siegfried map and also of M. Kurz's map.

Attention may be drawn here to an interesting article by Professor E. Richter, whose name is well known to our readers, on the subject of an historical atlas of the Alpine districts now included within the empire of Austria. Among other points of interest, such an atlas would enable a student of the history of the Alps to see how the higher valleys were gradually colonised, and also to explain, from the names in the original documents, the meaning of those still existing, which in some cases have assumed very different forms. The essay may be found at pp. 49-65 of a volume (containing seven papers by his pupils) presented to Professor Franz von Krones on the occasion of his jubilee, November 19, 1895, and published at Graz by Leuschner & Lubensky. It would be a great boon if Swiss, French, and Italian historians would start a similar atlas for their respective bits of the Alps. Then it would become more possible than it is at present to sketch out an authentic territorial history, at least, of those districts. The materials are scattered far and wide, and are very abundant, but can only be brought together and made available for historians by the combined efforts of many workers well acquainted with the local topography, and willing to carry out their researches according to a common plan devised by some recognised authority on the intricate subject of historical geography, such as Professor Richter himself.

THE FIRST WINTER ASCENT OF THE FINSTERAARHORN.—Those who have followed the history of the winter ascents of the great peaks of the Bernese Oberland are well aware that the loftiest summit of all, the Finsteraarhorn, had not hitherto been attacked successfully at that season. Several attempts had been made, but the great cold encountered in the couloir leading up to the Agassizjoch prevented the adventurers from attaining the top of the mountain. The feat was, however, at last accomplished on January 3 last by Herr Andreas Fischer, one of the teachers at the

* See *Alpine Journal*, vol. xvii. p. 275.

Secondary School at Grindelwald, and Ulrich Almer. The following details have been very courteously communicated to us by Herr Fischer, to whom we are much indebted:—‘On January 2 we left Grindelwald at 9 A.M. and went up the Lower Glacier. The snow was very good and hard as far as the Eismeer, where we left the glacier in order to ascend by the new path to the Schwarzegg Club hut. Very soon we discovered that the snow could hardly be worse; there was much more fresh snow than we had expected, and it was bad and powdery. Fortunately we came across numerous avalanches which had fallen during the recent rains, otherwise the work would have been too much against the grain. We toiled slowly up, each most willingly giving up the “*place d’honneur*” to the other every twenty minutes. But, notwithstanding, we were rewarded for our pains, for all the walls and towers of the Schreckhorn and the Eiger were plastered over with the whitest of snow, and looked as bright and wintry as I have ever seen them. The last three hours of this first day were the worst of the whole expedition. The hut was reached at 5.30 P.M. There was no snow in it, and we spent some very pleasant hours by a good fire.

‘We started at 1 A.M. on January 3, and, keeping pretty high up on the slopes below the Strahlegg, forced our way up to the Finsteraarjoch through very deep powdery snow. But it was a walk not soon to be forgotten. There was a brilliant moon, and never did mountain scenery look grander in its bright light and the ever-changing shadows. We got up to the Finsteraarjoch at 6.30 A.M. The wall up to the Agassizjoch was very good, first good hard snow then nice rocks, but for about an hour it was cold there, much colder than in the early morning and afternoon. At 9 A.M. we were on the Agassizjoch. There it was quite warm again, no wind, and we climbed the rocks above the pass in less than an hour, and without gloves. But the next bit, up to the Hugi Sattel, was much harder work, as all the snow had been blown away, and for 1½ hr. we had to cut steps in very hard ice. The rocks from the Sattel to the summit of the peak were much better than we had expected. There was some snow on them, but no ice. The cairn was gained at 1.20 P.M., and we spent 20 min. there in the enjoyment of the most glorious winter scenery. Even the Matterhorn looked quite a snow mountain. I had taken a thermometer with me. It indicated + 14° Réaumur (64° Fahr.) in the sun, but only — 4° Réaumur (— 23° Fahr.) in the shade, and not the slightest breath of wind was to be felt.

‘We made a pretty quick descent down to the Finsteraarjoch, and had left the last crevasses behind us when night came on. During our absence the wind had been busy there, and our morning’s tracks had in part disappeared, so that we had to set to work again in the snow. The hut was gained at 8 P.M., but we had to wait till after 11 for the moon. We went down the left side of the glacier, and at 4 A.M. on January 4 were back in Grindelwald again. Let

me tell you that our success was chiefly due to Ulrich's wonderful energy and strength.'

We believe that Herr Fischer and his comrade had long planned and even tried this expedition, and we beg to offer them our most sincere congratulations on their splendid performance described in such vivid yet modest language.

OTHER WINTER ASCENTS.—The winter of 1895-6 seems to have been exceptionally favourable for the ascent of the higher peaks. Besides the Finsteraarhorn, mentioned in the preceding note, we hear of the following climbs round Grindelwald. On January 4, the Mönch was ascended by the Rev. J. Outram and Mr. F. W. Oliver, with Hans and Peter Almer, and young Ulrich Almer (Ulrich Almer's eldest son), who thus made his *début* as a climber—the ascent being repeated next day by Mr. Clayton, with the two Rudolf Kaufmanns, and on January 7, by the Rev. E. H. Kempson and Mr. C. E. Ashford, with Hans Bernet and Peter Brawand. On January 7, Messrs. Outram and Oliver, with Ulrich, Hans, and young Ulrich Almer, succeeded in making the second winter ascent of the Eiger * by a new route, of which particulars are given under 'New Expeditions.'

The 'Alpine Post' announces that on January 7 Piz Bernina was ascended by Prince Borghese, with Martin Schocher and Schnitzler. The night was spent at the Marinelli hut, the Crast' Agüzza Sattel crossed next morning, and then the usual route on the Engadine side followed to the summit, the descent being made to Pontresina. This is stated to be the second winter ascent of this peak. On February 6 Mrs. Main, with Martin Schocher and Schnitzler, made the first winter ascent of the Crast' Agüzza peak. Some difficulty was encountered in crossing the bergschrund, and on the hard ice-slope just above, but the upper rocks were quite free from snow and ice and easier than in summer. The party took 8 hrs. 20 mins. in all from the Boval hut, the ascent from the foot of the peak to the summit occupying but 1 hr. 50 mins. Even the Dolomites have not escaped invasion, for on December 4 Signor G. Garbari, of Trent, made the first winter ascent of the Cimon della Pala. The same day an English party, consisting of Mr. and Miss Wilberforce, succeeded in climbing the Zuckerhütli, the highest peak of the Stubai group. Probably other ascents have been made this winter of which no account has yet reached us.

LAUTHOR, AND DESCENT OF THE MÖNCH TO THE WENGERN ALP.—On August 10, 1895, with Christian Jossi, and Peter Bernet as porter, I started from the Roththal hut for the Lauthor at 2.10 A.M. We found snow in excellent condition after a very cold night, and went straight up the 'stone shoot' (the southernmost of the two couloirs divided by the great rock rib seen from the hut). This we found dangerous, but, with great care, quite feasible. We reached the summit of the pass at 6.40, and, having the day before us, decided to try the Mönch and descend to the Wenger Alp. We reached

* *Alpine Journal*, vol. xv. p. 78

the top of the Jungfrauoch at 8.45, and climbed the Mönch from there, reaching the summit at 12. We then descended the same way for 80 min. to where three arêtes meet, and took the N. arête. Rocks difficult, but good. The rocks ended at 1.45 P.M., and we then cut down a steep ice slope till 3 P.M., when, as the ice became steadily worse, we cut westward again and took to the rocks till 3.55. At the foot of these rocks (which are somewhat loose and, at this time of the afternoon, dangerous from falling stones) we crossed the bergschrund, 4 P.M.; then easy snow for 20 min. Then, the 'Abfall' getting steeper and steeper, we bore east, having tried the western side and found a drop of some 200 ft. After much step-cutting (one man cutting to the full length of the rope, while the two others, seated in an enormous 'Stufe,' held him) we got off on to the arête below, at 8.30. Between the end of the 'Abfall' and the arête, where the old ladder, a rickety affair, was set up, there is now a gap of several yards, and the ladder is, in descending, therefore perfectly useless. Once on the lower part of the arête, we were not long in reaching the rocks and the Guggi hut, eventually getting to our destination at 2 A.M. Times, of course, include halts.

CLAUDE A. MACDONALD.

SÜDLENZSPITZE, NADELHORN, AND ULRICHSHORN IN ONE DAY.—On August 19, 1895, Mr. E. A. Broome, with Josef M. Biener and a Saas porter, crossed these three peaks in one day from Fee for the first time. Leaving a poor gîte on the Schwarzhorn (between the Hohbalen and the foot of the Fall Glacier), at about 4 A.M., the Südlenzspitze was climbed by the E. arête and the summit reached at 11.15 (6½ hrs. actual going). The difficult rocks were iced and the whole ascent in anything but good order. From the Südlenzspitze along the snow arête to the Lenzjoch, and thence up the grand S.E. rock-ridge to the Nadelhorn occupied 2½ hrs., and the easy descent by the snow-ridge to the Windjoch and the climb up the Ulrichshorn 1¼ hr. more. The descent to Fee took 3 hrs., the village being reached by 7.30, and the whole expedition 13 hrs. actual work. This climb can be recommended as certainly affording both safer and better rock-climbing than the Dom or Täschhorn from that side. The former peak was traversed from Fee to Randa by the same party a few days later, and found dangerous by reason of falling stones.

THE AIGUILLE DE CHAMBEYRON.—In a very interesting article by Signor P. Gastaldi in the 1894 'Bollettino' of the Italian Alpine Club I find three passages of my paper on the first ascent of this fine peak badly translated (no doubt unintentionally), and an argument based on them which falls to the ground when my phrases are correctly rendered. On p. 202 of the 'Boll.,' lines 18-19, I am made to say that two couloirs on the N. face of the peak 'lead up respectively to the highest E. and W. summits.' What I really wrote* was, 'which led up the N. face to the E. and W. of the highest peak respectively.' A few lines below (lines 21

* *Alpine Journal*, vol. x. p. 131, line 18.

and 25) the same mistranslations are repeated. The importance of these slips is this: Signor Gastaldi, when preparing his article, wrote to ask me certain questions as to the peak. He quotes in a note* a sentence of my reply, from which it would appear that I had quite forgotten what I wrote in my article (and also in my original notes †). This apparent inconsistency entirely disappears when the true text of my article is restored.

In 1879 I distinguished two summits—one, the W., a lower point on the W. ridge of the Aiguille, and the other (E. summit) the culminating peak. Signor Gastaldi now wishes to call my E. peak the W. summit, because he has climbed a point, to the E. of my E. peak, which is about 20 mètres lower, and stands on the ridge between the Aiguille and the point at which the great buttress on which rises the Aiguille joins the frontier ridge at the Tête de l'Homme. It is a mere detail whether different points on the ridge should be raised to the dignity of separate summits. I christened my W. summit for the sake of topographical clearness. I am quite ready to recognise Signor Gastaldi's E. summit for the same reason, and to admit that it is a good deal higher than my W. peak. But I still hold to the words of my letter, which he quotes: 'J'avoue que votre cime E. me paraît constituer une "cime" ni plus ni moins que ma cime O. Ces pointes sont des dentelures de la crête.' It will be observed that there is no question whatsoever as to the supremacy of the point 3,400 m., first reached by me in 1879.

I may be allowed to add that Signor Gastaldi, in his summary of my climbs in the Chambeyron district,‡ has accidentally omitted three—the highest summit of the Rubren, 3,396 m., in 1879; § the Tête des Toillies, 3,179 m., in 1888; || and the Dents de Maniglia, 3,177 m., in 1890. ¶ The first-named was a first ascent, the others (as mentioned in my notes) only 'first ascents by a traveller.'

W. A. B. COOLIDGE.

THE ALLÉE BLANCHE.—The two following passages are reprinted here from a very interesting article on the 'Passes of the Duchy of Aosta in the Seventeenth Century,' by Signor L. Vaccarone, which appeared in the 'Bollettino del C. A. I.,' 1881, pp. 182 n. and 187 n. respectively. The former is specially important, from the number of local names it contains (modern equivalents given in brackets) and the use of 'arête' at an early date. The latter gives an authentic account, by an eye-witness, of one of the bergfalls, so many of which have happened without any record of them having been preserved.

In a deed of April 16, 1859, granted by Count Amadeus of Savoy to a certain John of Courmayeur the latter is given jurisdiction within the following limits:—'A molendinis de sacza [*Saxe*] prout

* *Boll.* p. 202.

† *Alpine Journal*, vol. ix. p. 350.

‡ *Boll.* p. 197.

§ *Alpine Journal*, vol. ix. pp. 348-9, vol. x. p. 130.

|| *Ibid.* vol. xiv. p. 144.

¶ *Ibid.* vol. xv. pp. 290-1.

tendit mons captivus, et gallicè mons cheyty [*Mont Chétif*] per aristam seu per cretam dicti montis usque ad somitatem de Lalays Blanchy, et ab illo loco per cretam montium usque ad sommitatem montis de ferracz [*Ferret*] prout mons de sacza tendit circueundo versus sommum dicti montis de ferraycz, et etiam prout aquae pendunt seu discurrunt et labuntur inter confines predictos a sommitatibus dictorum montium usque ad dicta molendina.'

The following passage occurs in a document preserved among the parish archives of Courmayeur:—'Dum lis ingens ventilabatur de modico terrae inter possessores montium du Trioley et d'Ameiron, mons excelsissimus et rupes et glacies dicti Triolley, nocte diei duo decimi septembri, anno 1717. subito cecidit, et saxa ejus, aqua et glacie simul conjuncta, cum magno impetu irruerunt super dictos montes, sive alpes, ita ut coperti subtus ipsis abissis, omnia mobilia, centum et viginti boves seu vaccae, homines ad numerum septem, qui instanti perierunt, et credo quod aves qui ibi nidificabant non effugerint, et nunc videtis illos alpes et illam planam in hoc miserrimo statu, et hoc propter scelera nostra. ita attestor quia vidi. Michaël Joseph Pennard, notarius et scriba Curiae Majoris.' The name Ameyron has now quite disappeared, though the pastures of that name are mentioned in P. A. Arnod's attempt to cross the Col du Géant in 1689. The 1717 bergfall recalls, in many details, the Altels catastrophe of 1895.

As to the meaning of 'Allée Blanche,' and the derivation of the name, see M. A. Favre's 'Recherches Géologiques dans la Savoie,' iii. pp. 65-6.

THE MÄRWIGLÜCKE AND NEIGHBOURING PASSES.—The late Mr. E. F. M. Benecke took a special interest in these passes, which lie over the ridge between the Hockenhorn and the Petersgrat. In 1894 he entrusted Mr. Coolidge with his notes on this ridge, and a small sketch from the Gasternthal side. On July 11, 1895, with Mr. Cohen, he started from Ried, climbed the Birghorn and the Sackhorn, and compiled further notes on the ridge as seen from the Lötschthal side, Mr. Cohen making a sketch of the main features on it. The following list is made up from these two sets of notes, Mr. Benecke's own words having as far as possible been preserved:—

1. *Hockenhorn*, 8,297 m.
2. *False Märwiglücke*.—Across the N.E. shoulder of No. 1. An easy couloir and snow lead up to it on the Lötschthal side, a steep and narrow gully from the Gasternthal side. This is the pass crossed by MM. Montandon in 1882,* by Messrs. Godley and Cannan in 1889,† and by Mr. Benecke himself in 1893.
3. *True Märwiglücke*.—This is the lowest point in the ridge between the Hockenhorn and the Sackhorn. It is difficult of access on the Lötschthal side, the rocks being smooth and steep. Most probably it has never been crossed. Märwig is the Lötsch-

* S.A.C.J. xviii. pp. 89-94.

† *Alpine Journal*, vol. xiv. pp. 514-5.

thal name, and is adopted on the Siegfried map: Märbeegg is that used at Kandersteg, and is given in Tschudi's 'Turist' (p. 89 of the last two editions).

4. After two small humps come *three rock towers* on the ridge towards the Sackhorn. W. of these three towers the ridge is everywhere easy of access on the Lötschthal side. Eastwards it is difficult of access, generally speaking.

(a) *The most westerly of these towers* has a snow ridge leading up to the top on the Lötschthal side ('rocks some years, perhaps, easily accessible').

(b) The gap (which might be called the *W. Hohwidenlücke*) between this tower and the central tower is accessible on the Lötschthal side by a not very easy couloir.

(c) The *central rock tower* looks like a cat on the Lötschthal side. Between it and the E. rock tower is the *E. Hohwidenlücke*, reached on the Lötschthal side by a couloir, flanked by a rock rib, both very easy.

(d) Between the E. tower and the Sackhorn is the *true Sack Pass*. This is the best-looking of all these passes: on the Lötschthal side you can get easily from the glacier on to the ridge, while on the other side there is a long couloir, in 1895 filled with snow. (In 1894 Mr. Benecke had proposed the name of *Tennbachlücke* for this pass, but in 1895 preferred that of *Sack Pass*.)

5. *Sackhorn*, 3,218 m.

6. *Tennbachlücke*.—This is the pass crossed by Mr. Benecke and Mr. Cohen on August 5, 1894,* and called by them *Sack Pass*. It might take the name of *Tennbachlücke*. It is very bad on the Gasterthal side, but easy on the Lötschthal side.

7. *Point 3,216 m. of the Siegfried Map*.—This is a snow peak, and in 1894 was ascended by the party under the impression that it was the *Birghorn*.

8. *True Elwertatsch Pass*.—The Siegfried map is wrong. This seems a good pass, probably the best across the ridge. 'The *Elwertatsch* is a long easy glacier, ending in our snow slope of 1894 and shale. Stones fall everywhere on this ridge.'

9. *Birghorn*, 3,233 m.—A snow peak.

10. *Birg Pass*.—'Probably not so bad.'

11. *Pass somewhere near Point marked 3,132 m.*—'From Ried you go over the *Tellialp* to the N. foot of the *Tellispitzen* (2,925 m.). Then bear N.E. over snow, and join the ordinary route over the *Tschingel Pass* on the moraine of the *Alpetli Glacier*. This is, I believe, the way people usually go when they say they come from *Kandersteg* to *Ried* over the *Petersgrat*. Certainly it seems a more natural thing to do than to go all the way round by the true *Petersgrat*.'

THE EARLY HISTORY OF THE COL DU GÉANT.—While looking through some eighteenth-century topographical works on the frontier between France, Savoy, and Piedmont I came across two

* *Alpine Journal*, vol. xvii. p. 348.

passages which are worth noting here, as they do not seem to be mentioned by writers who have previously dealt with the history of the Col du Géant.

In the 'Mémoires Militaires sur les Frontières de la France, du Piémont, et de la Savoie' (Berlin, 1801), by M. de Bourcet, who lived from 1700 to 1780, there is the following note at p. 349 :—

'*Col de Malay. De Morges à Chamunis.*—Nota : Quelques cartes assez estimées ayant indiqué ce col, on l'a conservé, par respect pour elles, quoiqu'on n'en ait d'ailleurs aucune connaissance, et que les glaciers du Mont-Blanc rendent son existence au moins très problématique.'

Accordingly we find that this col is shown on the map appended to the book as leading from Morgex to Chamonix, and passing N. of Mont Blanc and S. of the 'Mont Malay,' which seems a general name for the N. bit of the Mont Blanc chain. This notice of the pass is especially interesting when we bear in mind that in 1689 P. A. Arnod, the bailiff of the duchy of Aosta, had failed to get across this traditional pass,* and that about 1737–1740 a letter-bearer, named Ribel, was reported to have traversed it,† the first certain and authentic passage being that by Mr. Hill, an Englishman, in 1786.

On the other hand the Col de la Seigne was traversed in very remote times, but neither of the names possibly given to it in the following extracts seems to be mentioned by Signor Vaccarone ‡ in his history of the pass. The name 'Col Major' as applied to the Seigne is particularly interesting, as it disposes of an argument sometimes alleged that the pass so called *must* be the Col du Géant, whereas no doubt it might (in accordance with a general rule) have been used of any pass leading to or from the 'Col Major' or Courmayeur (Curia Major).

In the work published under the name of Bourcet, but in a section attributed by M. de Rochas (in his edition of Montannel, p. xviii ; see below) to another French engineer, La Blotière, we read on p. 160, 'De Chapières l'on peut encore entrer dans la vallée d'Aoust en passant par Gloenier, l'Allée-Blanche, le Col Major et "Doulina," d'où l'on va à Morges.' The pass is indicated under the same name in a later section of the book (p. 349) as leading from Doulina to the Allée Blanche. It is marked accordingly on the map, an examination of which leaves no doubt on the subject, as the names mentioned above are those now written Les Chapieux, Hameau du Glacier, Dollone (opposite Courmayeur), and Morgex.

In the 'Topographie Militaire de la Frontière des Alpes, par M. de Montannel,' edited in 1875 at Grenoble by M. de Rochas, we find more particulars as to the possible identity of the 'Col Major' with the Col de la Seigne, and also a second name for it. Montannel, as his editor tells us in his preface (pp. xlvi–xlvii), wrote and retouched

* Vaccarone, *Le Vie delle Alpi Occidentali*, p. 57.

† *Alpine Journal*, vol. ix. p. 88 ; Durier's *Mont Blanc*, p. 147, note.

‡ *Op. cit.* p. 45, n. 4.

his MS. between 1753 and 1788. He is here explaining how an enemy could turn the Little St. Bernard (p. 188). 'L'ennemi peut aussi venir de la Valdost au Chapuy sans passer par le Petit Saint-Bernard. Pour cet effet, il n'a qu'à passer par l'endroit appelé l'Allée-Blanche, et par celui que l'on nomme les Glacières, et tomber de là sur le Chapuy; mais il ne peut faire usage de cette route, à cause des neiges, que deux mois de l'année. Enfin, si l'ennemi accommodait le Col Major, qui est actuellement tout dégradé et impraticable, il pourrait venir par ce col de la Valdost dans la vallée de Fausigny; mais ce chemin serait toujours des plus rudes, et praticable seulement deux mois de l'année, en sorte qu'il n'est guère à craindre que cet ennemi passe jamais par le Col Major dans l'objet de venir sur le Rhône en corps d'armée.' After speaking of the Great St. Bernard he continues a few lines below thus: 'Au reste le chemin qui passerait au Col Major tomberait sur Chauminis; de là il viendrait à la Cluze, à la Roche,' &c. On p. 360 of the same work, in an enumeration of the passes from the duchy of Savoy to the valley of Aosta, the tracks over all of which meet at Fort Bard, we read of the 'Col de l'Allée-Blanche' immediately after the Little St. Bernard. A further allusion of the same nature is to be found on p. 568. There is, however, another passage which seems (as does possibly the first one quoted above) to distinguish between the two passes. This occurs on p. 9: 'Il y a encore, au delà de ce dernier col (le Petit Saint-Bernard), et sur l'arête même de la grande chaîne des Alpes, le Col de l'Allée Blanche et le Col Major. Ce dernier n'est plus susceptible de passage; les pluies et la fonte des neiges l'ont rompu. Au delà du Col Major est celui du Grand Saint-Bernard.' But it matters little as regards the interest attaching to Montannel's remarks whether he means to speak of two passes or of the same under two different names.

W. A. B. COOLIDGE.

TRIAL OF A GUIDE FOR NEGLECT OF DUTY.—On p. 566 of the November Journal a brief account of the death of Herr Modl, and of the severe injuries sustained by his guide, was given. Since that time the guide, Zacchæus Gstrein, of Sölden, has been put on his trial for neglect of duty, and so contributing to the death of his employer. He was acquitted, but, as it is said to be the first time that such a trial has taken place, it may be well to summarise here the official account given in the 'Mittheilungen' of the German and Austrian Alpine Club, 1895, p. 298. The exact charge was that Gstrein had accepted an engagement to make a difficult expedition, though he was aware that Herr Modl was imperfectly equipped for such climbs and also did not possess sufficient experience to justify him in undertaking them. Modl had no 'Steigeisen,' and wished to glissade continually, both of which points Gstrein should have noticed on their previous ascent of the Wildspitze, while the official regulations require *two* guides for that particular climb. Gstrein, who is 32 years old, and has been a guide since 1888, makes the following defence through his counsel. Modl, a strongly built, young fellow of 28 years of age, had reached Sölden over the Zuckerhüt, and though no record-breaker was yet a good walker

and a capable climber; it is too not the custom in the Oetzthal to take a second guide, perhaps 2 out of 500 tourists adopting this course. Gstrein explained that, as there was ice in a gully on the way down from the Gurgler Eisjöchl, he chose another route, over grass and stones. Modl was roped, but on a broad shelf sat down, and, against the warning given by Gstrein, began to glissade; before the guide could do more but roll the rope round his ice axe, firmly planted in the ground, Modl fell over a precipice, and dragged Gstrein with him. Modl fractured his skull and died almost at once; Gstrein was much injured, but in $\frac{1}{2}$ hr. managed to crawl to a shepherd's hut. It was also urged for the defence that though Gstrein had never been over the pass before this was not unusual in the case of a guide, as Tyrolese guides often went to unknown districts of the Alps, and even to the Caucasus; that this pass was not a difficult one, according to the 'Erschliessung der Ostalpen;' and that the use of 'Steigeisen' is not at all customary in the Oetzthal. Gstrein's counsel wound up his speech by declaring that in this case, far from the tourist having been sacrificed by his guide, it was the guide who had been nearly killed by the rashness of the tourist. The court acquitted Gstrein, as we have stated, and also relieved him from the payment of all costs, meaning thereby, no doubt, to show that no blame at all could be attached to him.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

A Facsimile of Christian Almer's 'Führerbuch,' 1856-94. Reproduced under the superintendence of C. D. Cunningham, and Captain W. de W. Abney, C.B., D.C.L., F.R.S. (late R.E.). With an Introduction and a Photogravure of Christian Almer. (London: Sampson Low, Marston, & Co. 1896. Two hundred copies only printed.)

THIS little volume inspired us at first sight with dire forebodings. We saw a fearful prospect before the Alpine traveller and reader. If the law makes a distinction between certificates given for professional or particular purposes and ordinary writings, and if the authors of such certificates have no control over their literary use, what a future may be in store for some of us! Every Guide's Book, every Hotel Book, every letter of recommendation furnished to a candidate for the Alpine Club, even the Candidates' Book itself—anything, in short, which can find a printer and a purchaser may become material for the enterprise of the literary—or illiterary Autolytus. All we have—in Mr. Cunningham's words—'hastily written on the evening of victory,' every casual slip in spelling or grammar, every accidental blot, may be reproduced with the terrible fidelity of Captain Abney's machine!

Such apprehensions are, it appears, unfounded. We have received the assurance of a professional authority that there is nothing in the character of such certificates as these to take them out of the class of writings over the literary use of which their authors have by English law the control.