

the ridge running S.E. towards the Store Riienstind and walked along the ridge, crossing three small peaks. The ridge is narrow but not difficult, and affords some capital though easy rock-work. There were no signs of any previous visits until the last peak before the Store Riienstind, where there is a cairn said to have been built by Carl Hall. The views of the Austabottind and of Store Riienstind are very fine from this ridge. The precipice of the latter towards the N.W. and W. appears to be quite unassailable. After walking round them near the upper edge of the Berdalsbræ the party traversed the rocks just above the Gravdalsbræ, and ascended by a small cascade to the east ridge of Store Riienstind, and thence to the summit by the north-east face, the usual route. The summit was reached at 6 P.M.

SKAGASTØLSTIND was also climbed by the same party on August 22 in 9 inches of new snow.

## ALPINE NOTES.

NEW EXPEDITIONS IN SPITZBERGEN IN 1896.—The notices of these in the preceding number of the 'Alpine Journal,' p. 258, were written before the map was drawn or the altitudes computed. It is now certain that the peak climbed from Flower Pass (p. 260) is the Mount Lusitania of 'A. J.' xvii. p. 310. The following are the corrected altitudes:—Mount Starashchin, *c.* 3,000 ft.; Fox Peak, 3,176 ft.; Bunting Bluff, 2,477 ft.; Fox Pass, 2,552 ft.; Bolter Pass, 1,397 ft.; Sticky Keep, 2,185 ft.; Grit Ridge, 2,180 ft.; Trident, W. prong, 2,172 ft.; Trident, central prong, 1,990 ft.; Prospect Ridge, *c.* 2,000 ft.; Ivory Gate, 762 ft.; Flower Pass, 2,667 ft.; Mount Lusitania, 3,120 ft.; Booming Peak, 2,868 ft.

W. MARTIN CONWAY.

THE GLACIERS OF MONTANA.—The following note is founded on an article in an American newspaper, dated from Blackfeet Reservation, Kipp, P.O. Montana, July 28, 1896. It gives an account of a region just purchased by the U.S.A. Government from the Blackfeet Indians. We extract the part most interesting to mountaineers:—'A few sportsmen and travellers of large experience, fortunate in obtaining permits from the India Office, have been passing the summer in these mountains for several years. They maintain that the scenery, especially about the St. Mary's Lakes, is equal to and in some respects finer than that of the Swiss Alps. The mountains, it is true, are not so high as the Alps, nor are the glaciers so extensive, but they are more rugged, some of them having sheer walls which rise from the water's edge straight up for thousands of feet. . . . The shooting and fishing in the St. Mary's country is splendid.' The account, which is signed by J. W. Schultz, relates *inter alia* how, in company with Dr. Grinnell, who has done much exploration in the district, he discovered the Blackfoot Glacier, 'by far the largest in this part of the country.'

'VISITORS TO THE GLACIERS' IN THE XVIII<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY.—Every reader remembers Gibbon's complaint in his 'Diary' of the frequent intrusion on his *coterie* of visitors to the glaciers. The recently published letters of Maria Josepha Holroyd, a daughter of Gibbon's friend Lord Sheffield, and afterwards Lady Stanley of Alderley, give a very lively picture of the company that used to assemble round the historian at a time when Lausanne seems to have been what Homburg is now to families of fashion in August. A long list of the guests, French and English, is given, including the Neckers and Madame de Staël, who is 'uglier than Lady K. Douglas, but so lively and entertaining that you would totally forget in five minutes whether she was handsome or ugly.' The descriptions of the personal appearance of the Neckers are still more cruel. The fair critic uses all the frankness of youth (she was just twenty) in dealing faithfully with her elders.

The letter from which the following descriptions are extracted is dated 'Valley of Chamouny, August 11, 1790:—

'Monday morning saw us on our route with the French Cook; the first, I dare say, who has been brought into the peaceful Valley of Chamouny. . . . On Wednesday morning we were on the road (from Geneva) a little after five. We breakfasted at Bonneville, and dined at Salanches, from which place the road is impassable for Coaches. The road from Salanches to Chamouny is beautiful; many torrents to pass, some so rapid that we were carried over, and the Char-à-bancs were held up by six or seven people. The "Torrent Noir" is very terrific. For Lady Webster's amusement there came a Thunder-Storm, attended with violent rain; which last was the most inconvenient part of the story, as the only covering to the Char-à-bancs is an Awning of Sail-cloth, which is soon penetrated by the rain. At Servoz we stopped to see a bas-relief of Mont Blanc,\* which was very well executed, and the worst part of the Storm was while we were there, but it continued raining all the evening. One of the Torrents we arrived at after it was dark, and the rain had increased it so much that the people told us it was not safe to pass it. It was a tremendous scene: the darkness relieved by frequent flashes of lightning, the roaring of the Torrent, and nearly fifty of the country people assembled round us, all talking at once, some magnifying the danger, others assuring us there was none at all. You cannot think how well Mama bore it! Lady W. thought hysterics becoming. We and our Char-à-bancs were carried safely over in the space of three-quarters of an hour, and we arrived at Chamouny at half-past nine, wet through. A dram of brandy was administered to us, and none of us found any bad effects from our adventures.

'Thursday we went to the Glacier des Bois and the Source of the Arviron. Rode upon mules. Friday, after many different opinions

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\* The 'bas-relief of Mont Blanc' was no doubt either the original relief model made by M. Exchaquet, who was engineer of the mines at Servoz, or a copy of it. One of the reduced copies is preserved at the Alpine Club Rooms.

and resolutions on the subject, Mama, Lady W., and Louisa agreed to let us go to the top of Montanvert without them, as everybody said the fatigue was very great. Sir John Macpherson and Mr. Hawkins, the son of an Irish Bishop, are at Chamouny and went with us. They are very pleasant, lively men, and made the expedition much pleasanter. We were four hours ascending the Mountain through Woods of Fir trees, with frequent views through the Trees of the beautiful valley and the mountains on the opposite side. Most of the way was so steep we were obliged to walk. From the top of the Montanvert we went upon the Glacier des Bois, from its size called the "Mer de Glace."

'It is a beautiful scene, and such as no description can give an idea of. The Glacier takes a fine turn among the Mountains, and has exactly the appearance of a very rough Sea. We carried a cold dinner and Champagne with us, and drank the Prince of Wales's health in Blair's Cabbin (*sic*), built by an Englishman of that name. The descent was very steep, and rendered worse by heavy showers of rain, which made it very slippery. We did not go back the same way, as we wished to see the source of the Arviron again, which bursts out of a beautiful Cave of blue Ice at the foot of the "Mer de Glace." We arrived at the Inn at six o'clock like *drowned Rats*, with some reason to be fatigued, as we had walked the whole time, an hour and a half excepted when we rode upon Mules.

'Saturday morning it was agreed that we, Sir G. and Lady Webster, and Mama, and Mr. Pelham should return by Geneva, and that we should pursue our journey over the "Col de Balme," attended by Sir J. Macpherson, Mr. Hawkins, and Levade.\* The whole day's journey having to be performed on Mules or on foot, the married Ladies thought would be too much fatigue for them. This and the next day I enjoyed the Scenes and myself thoroughly; the country was beautiful beyond all expression: everybody was in good humour, and we knew from one five minutes to another what we meant to do—a state of happiness we had not arrived at since leaving Lausanne.

'We left Chamouny at half-past six, and from that time to half-past six at night were either walking or riding à la Française upon mules, up and down almost perpendicular Mountains with the most delightful view all round us. We dined in a compleat rural style, seated upon our Portmanteaux with our cold dinner spread on the ground before us.

'At Martigny, in the Vallais, we found our carriage and good roads again, and arrived at Bex, where we slept, at half-past nine. The next day, Sunday, we arrived at Lausanne, seeing on our Way the Saltworks at Aigle and the Castle of Chillon, and passing by Clarens, the scene of Rousseau's 'Eloise,' which would interest any body who had read the work. As I have not, I did not feel the *raptures* that those would who have.'

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\* 'Levade' was Gibbon's librarian, whom the historian had lent to his young friends to act as their courier. His charge describes him as 'a very sensible man who had made the same Tour with several people.'

Miss Holroyd mentions more than once Archdeacon Coxe, the author of the then standard work 'Travels in Swisserland.' She complains, as others have since, of his lack of picturesque vivacity, particularly in his description of the Col de Balme. The compiler of the index to her letters has here fallen into error. He has not distinguished the author, whom Miss Holroyd always mentions (pp. 80, 89, 183) as Mr. Coxe, from two other Coxes, George and Edward, she mentions elsewhere by their Christian names. Archdeacon Coxe's Christian name was William. A common tour at that time, we gather, was to go to Chamonix up the Vallais and over the Grimsel to the Oberland. 'The glaciers of Bern' and those of Mont Blanc were already rivals and had their respective partisans.

Gibbon himself, after the tour of Switzerland he took as a youth, in which he studied more the manners of men than the mountains, never seems to have had any inclination to accompany his guests to the glaciers. Little new light is thrown on his Alpine travels by the volumes of his letters just issued. A letter to his father (vol. i. p. 55) shows, however, some appreciation of the Mont Cenis, and supplies some curious details.

'The roads through Savoy are very bad, but nothing could surpass the pleasantness of our passage over Mont Cenis. A very fine day, a most romantick variety of prospects, and a perfect consciousness that there would not be the smallest danger. I was carried over the mountain in a small chair by four men, who relieved each other during about five leagues. The uphill work was very hard, but upon the plain and downhill they went a kind of trot, which I can only compare to our double time. I am sure you will not blame me for having added a Guinea to the half-crown at which the King has taxed this hard day's work.'

These chair-men are the *marrons* of older writers, and are mentioned on the Great St. Bernard as well as the Mont Cenis. The origin of the word has been much disputed, and some wild conjectures hazarded, by myself among others.\* It seems to me now most probable that the word was used for what was distinctively wild, as distinguished from cultivated or civilised, for the fruit as well as the men of the mountains, as opposed to the produce of orchards and towns. Such a primitive sense may explain the relation of the 'marrons glacés' of our dessert table to the 'marrons' who helped half-frozen pilgrims over the Alps.

D. W. F.

MONT BLANC AND THE RARITY OF THE AIR.—The following is a cutting from a newspaper of 1825:—

THE LAST ASCENT OF MONT BLANC.—(FROM the 'Mirror'). 'Berne en Suisse, September 4, 1825. Among other eccentricities of my life I have just completed the difficult and dangerous task of reaching the summit of Mont Blanc. A few hasty particulars may amuse you. Dr. Edmund Clarke, myself, and twelve guides started from Chamouni on Thursday, August 25. We reached the summit on Friday, the 26th, and arrived back at Chamouni on Saturday,

\* See Coolidge's *Swiss Travel*, &c., p. 157.

the 27th. The two nights we were absent we slept, of course, on the eternal snows, in an atmosphere of 12 degrees below freezing. The dangers and difficulties of passing the Glaciers des Bossons and that of Tacconai, and subsequently traversing the immense plains of snow to arrive at the top, will all be more fully detailed in a pamphlet which is to be published at Geneva in the course of ten days, as soon as our narrative is ready. The barometer was ten inches lower with us than in the Valley de Chamouni, where we had a man stationed to observe the mercury. The thermometer at 12 o'clock in the sun was 2-12 (*sic*) below freezing only; our pulses varied from 100 to 150. The rarity of the atmosphere had very serious effects on us all. One or two of the guides bled profusely at the nose; one spit blood during a whole day. I vomited during 18 hours with little intermission. Sleep overcame us at every moment; but my principal guide, Coutet, son of him who went with Monsieur de Saussure in 1787, would not let me sleep on the snows a long time, fearing the frost, &c. One of the most remarkable things is the most perfect silence which reigns on the top of Mont Blanc. You do not hear one thing. The sky is dark, quite indigo. The full moon in such a black ground was the finest thing imaginable; one star was visible only; our faces almost all peeled, and our eyes were very much swollen. It was a hazardous thing.'

The writer was Captain Markham Sherwill, who climbed Mont Blanc on August 26 of that year. In the lengthy account of his ascent furnished to a contemporary magazine (bound up in a volume entitled 'Ascent of Mont Blanc' in the Club library) Captain Sherwill considerably modifies this statement. In the fuller account we are told that 'one of the guides bled at the nose from an accidental blow,' and that he (the Captain himself) felt 'a slight tendency to nausea,' with 'an overwhelming headache,' 'pain in the breast,' and a 'strong tendency to faint.' It would seem, therefore, that the art of framing sensational paragraphs had been learnt by some mountain-climbers at a very early date, and that the descriptions they gave of their sensations and sufferings from the 'rarity of the air' may fairly be subjected to a considerable discount.

THE HISTORY OF THE CLUB ROOMS.—The following passage, extracted from 'Round about Piccadilly and Pall Mall,' p. 80, by H. B. Wheatley, gives some interesting details as to the historical past of the premises in which the Club has lately made its home:—  
 'Savile Row, named after Lord Burlington's wife, Lady Dorothy Savile, was built about the year 1733. . . . At the end of Savile Row, with its front looking up the street, is an old-fashioned brick house with a centre and wings built by Lord Burlington. Though the exterior is not very pleasing to the eye, the interior is handsomely decorated in the same style as Burlington House; the egg border that is so prominent in the large house is here found surrounding the doors and fireplaces. Lord Burlington built this as a garden or tea-house at the end of his garden, which formerly extended as far as here. The house afterwards came into the possession of Messrs. Squib, the auctioneers, who built out a large auction room, which was used at one time as a private theatre. Horace Walpole, writing on July 23, 1790, says: "I went to carry my niece Sophia Walpole home last night from her mother's, and I found Little Burlington Street blocked up by coaches. Lord

Barrymore, his sister Lady Caroline, and Mrs. Goodall, the actress, were performing the 'Beaux's Stratagem' in Squib's auction room, which his Lordship has converted into a theatre." The court by the side of the house, leading through into Mill Street and Conduit Street, belongs to the house, and is called Savile Place. It was originally a pathway to St. George's Church.'

Our Hall is Squib's Auction Room, which has served many purposes before attaining its present dignity. The mantelpiece in it, however, is not part of the old building, but was presented with its adjuncts and the clock to the Club by our late President. The curious may observe that it has a singular appropriateness, as the design in the centre represents a female figure with an alpenstock standing before a Temple of Fame and dissuading an invisible youth—probably in some such words as Plato's *της ἄρω ἰδοῦ ἀεὶ ἐξόμεθα*—from following a second lady who offers flowers.

GIFTS TO THE ALPINE CLUB.—During the past year several gifts have been made to the Club. Mr. Heelis gave a very beautiful set of photographic coloured transparencies by Signor Sella. These were chiefly views of Caucasian scenery. This method of transparent reproduction brings out very successfully the depth and atmosphere of the scenery. Mr. A. MacCallum has presented six silver points depicting various climbing episodes which occurred during his ascent of Monte Rosa. Silver point lends itself admirably to these subjects, which will remind those members who are familiar with his work of the humour of the late Mr. Adams Reilly. Mr. D. W. Freshfield has presented a small photograph of the late Mr. Mummery, and also a portrait of the guide Michel Auguste Croz, by Mr. Whymper. These gifts will help to adorn the walls of the new rooms; and we may hope that they will be the forerunners of similar presents from other members.

ALPINE ACCIDENTS IN 1896.—(1) *Accident on Monte Ghiridone*.—On September 24, 1896, Dr. F. de Filippi, with two friends, brothers of the name of Zoja, started at midnight from the Baths of Craveggia, to ascend Monte Ghiridone (7,041 ft.), the summit S. of Locarno on the W. shore of Lago Maggiore. They did not reach the final ridge of the mountain until noon. They intended to traverse it and descend on the further side into the Val Cannobbina. The weather turned bad after midday, and there was fresh snow on the mountain, which in ordinary conditions offers no real difficulty. The brothers Zoja here fell into a state of collapse, and, after hours spent in vain attempts either to traverse the ridge or to descend, the party found a sheltered shelf to spend the night on. The elder brother, however, grew worse and died at 2 A.M. The survivors continued the descent next morning, but the younger brother died of exhaustion at 11 A.M. before the valley could be reached. No adequate explanation is offered of this lamentable catastrophe except the physical and moral effects produced by exposure to a mountain storm on persons without previous experience of the High Alps.

(2) *The Accident on the Predigtstuhl*.—We have to thank Mr.

E. T. Compton for calling our attention to an error in our account of this accident. It occurred not on the easy Predigtstuhl, in the Niedere Tauern, but on a very difficult rock tower of the same name in the Wilder Kaiser group. This tower has lately come into fashion with the ultra-gymnast school of climbers, though it does not seem to be mentioned in Hess and Purtscheller's very full book on the 'Eastern Alps' (1894). It can only be approached by a very difficult chimney variously estimated at 100 to 150 m. in height and by an excessively bad traverse on which the slip took place.

(8) *The Meije Accident.*—Mr. Stutfield desires to disclaim any responsibility for any part of the account of the Meije accident published in November, except the quotations in inverted commas. Mr. Coolidge wishes to correct an error on p. 264 of the November number, wherein he stated that Madame Thorant was the first lady who ever ascended the Meije. In reality she was (in 1890) the first *French* lady to make the ascent, having been anticipated in 1888 by Miss Katherine Richardson, as was pointed out by Mr. Coolidge at the time.\*

MR. D. FRESHFIELD'S CAUCASIAN MAP AND APPENDIX.—Members of the Club who desire to have separate copies of the map or topographical appendix to Mr. Douglas Freshfield's 'Exploration of the Caucasus' can obtain them from the Assistant Secretary of the Club, who will forward a copy of either post-free on receipt of 10s. for the map and 3s. for the appendix.

#### PROCEEDINGS OF THE ALPINE CLUB.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING was held in the Hall of the Club on Monday evening, December 14, Mr. Charles Pilkington, *President*, in the chair.

The following candidates were balloted for and elected members of the Club: Messrs. A. D. T. Carey, F. Y. Edgeworth, F. Fletcher, H. C. Foster, J. M. Gordon, F. Harrison, H. L. Joseland, J. Maclay, E. A. Martel, A. B. Thorold.

On the motion of Mr. F. O. Schuster, seconded by Mr. Mortimer, the President, Mr. Charles Pilkington, was unanimously re-elected.

On the motion of Mr. Willink, seconded by Mr. Curtis-Leman, the Vice-Presidents, Dr. G. H. Savage and Mr. Frederick Gardiner, and the other members of the Committee who were eligible, viz. Messrs. H. Cockburn, G. P. Baker, J. Heelis, Ellis Carr, J. Norman Collie, and T. L. Kesteven, were all unanimously re-elected.

On the motion of Mr. A. J. Butler, seconded by Mr. Eccles, Dr. Claude Wilson and Mr. G. A. Solly were both unanimously elected new members of the Committee in place of Dr. W. A. Wills and Mr. H. Woolley, who retired by rotation.

On the motion of Mr. G. E. Foster, seconded by Mr. Clinton

\* *Alpine Journal*, vol. xiv. p. 163.