

before they crossed the ridge which divides that valley from the glen of the Antermoja See. Following that glen to its head, the party reached the base of the actual peak in 3 hrs. from Campidello. By a steep but short rock-climb a ledge was gained extending diagonally across the face of the peak from right to left. The inclination of this ledge was steep; and the snow lying but thinly over the rocks, caution was necessary throughout. The upper part of the peak once attained, the rest of the ascent presented no difficulty, and the top was reached in about 5 hrs. walking from Campidello. The party descended to Mazin, in the Fassa Thal, by the fine glen of Vajol, and returned to Campidello shortly after 3 o'clock. Owing to bad weather no view was gained from the top, and no opinion could therefore be formed whether this peak, or the Federer Kogel, farther to the S., is the highest of the Rosengarten summits. Young Bernard proved himself a fair cragsman, but was obviously nervous on ice and snow. The inn of Al Mulino, at Campidello, is now both comfortable and reasonable, and offers the best head-quarters for the district of the Seisser Alp and the Rosengarten.

CIMA DI VEZZANA AND PASSO DI TRAVIGNOLO, *Sept. 5.*—Messrs. D. W. Freshfield and C. C. Tucker left Paneveggio at 5 A.M. for the ascent of the Cima di Vezzana, the second in height of the Primiero dolomites. An hour's walk sufficed to reach the fine cirque at the head of Val Travignolo. A small but steep glacier descending from the deep gap between the cliffs of the Cimon della Pala and those of the Vezzana offered the most obvious line for the attack of the latter peak. On reaching the glacier the guides engaged at Paneveggio declined to go farther, and Messrs. Freshfield and Tucker were compelled to continue the ascent alone. Having crossed a considerable bergschrund without serious difficulty, they attacked the steep and hard slope leading to the gap or col above-mentioned. Much step-cutting was necessary, and it took 2 hrs. of hard work to reach the col. Above easy rocks and snow-slopes led up to the highest point, which was attained at 11 o'clock. The peak seemed to be but little inferior in height to the Cimon della Pala, and commands a superb view. Among the nearer objects visible the town of Primiero and the Lake of Alleghe were well seen. Returning to the col, the party descended by easy snow slopes to the head of the ravine leading from the Primiero plateau to Gares, and crossed the Passo delle Cornelle. By a tedious traverse the high road was gained at a point considerably above San Martino di Castrozza, and by it Paneveggio was reached at 6.30 P.M.

ALPINE NOTES.

FATAL ACCIDENT ON THE JUNGFRAU.—On July 24 Herr Merz, school-master of Moos-Affoltern, in company with Von Allmen, of Trachsell-auenen, and the guide Johann Bischoff, left Trachsellauenen at 1.0 A.M. for an excursion to the Roth-thal, intending, if so disposed, to cross the Roththal-sattel to the Eggischhorn. Nothing was heard of the party

until the 28th, when Merz was found at the Stufenstein Alp much injured, and half dead with exhaustion. He gave the following account of what had occurred :—‘ Our journey to the Roth-thal was prosperous ; arrived there, we were so fresh, and the weather was so enticing, that we resolved to cross the Roththal-sattel. We had already a considerable distance below us, and were in the couloir, which has been described as so difficult by Professors Obi and *Æbi*, who made the passage in 1871, when suddenly an avalanche from above fell straight upon us. When I returned to consciousness, I found myself on a rock whither I had been hurled by the avalanche, the mass of which had carried away my companions. The rope by which we were fastened must have been rent asunder, otherwise I should have been hurried to sudden destruction as well as the others. A loud cry from all of us—then silence ; and of my unfortunate companions I saw and heard no more. A second avalanche passed by me without injury ; I remained safe on my rock, where also I passed the night horror-struck. Next day I succeeded in descending to the “ Clubhütte ” in the Roth-thal, where I remained the night with my feet frozen. A little chocolate, some hard cheese-rind, and cold water, were my only nourishment during these days. On Friday, painfully and with bare feet, for they could no longer endure the pressure of shoes, I crawled a little way further to the Roth-thal glacier. On Saturday I managed to leave the Roth-thal, and to-day I came with unspeakable toil to the Stufenstein Alp.’ On news of the disaster reaching Lauterbrunnen, a band of guides set off, and eventually recovered the bodies of Von Allmen and Bischoff. Both of the unfortunate men left large families almost entirely unprovided for.

The guide Bischoff, who was known to several English mountaineers, was well acquainted with the formidable pass on which he perished, having crossed it with Mr. Stephen’s party in 1864, and with Messrs. Moore and Tucker in 1870. There must always be on it a certain amount of danger from avalanches, as the ascent is made for some hours by a couloir the head of which is filled by a very steep hanging glacier, descending from the Roththal-sattel itself. In 1870 the final tongue of ice was found to be almost entirely dissociated from the parent glacier, so that it was a mere question of time when it might break loose altogether. Whether such a thing occurred upon this occasion, or whether the avalanche was composed of the superficial snow from the glacier, is doubtful. The latter supposition is, however, probable enough, as the week in which the accident happened was in Switzerland, as in England, signalled by intense heat, not only during the day, but also at night ; and the enormous masses of snow which still encumbered the higher slopes of the Bernese Alps melted, during its course, with astonishing rapidity.

With regard to this pass, which will henceforth have such a melancholy interest, there is a mistake in the lately published ‘ *Jahrbuch* ’ of the Swiss Alpine Club, which it appears desirable to correct. As a prelude to an account of the passage effected on August 22, 1871, by Professor *Æbi* and others, it is stated that the only previous passage since that by Messrs. Grove, Macdonald, and Stephen in 1864, had

been one by the German Professors Voigt and Liebeskind on August 21, 1871. This is certainly not the case, as the pass was crossed on July 12, 1869, by Messrs. G. E. Foster and H. Walker, from the Stufenstein Alp to the Faulberg; and on July 6, 1870, by Messrs. Moore and Tucker, from the Stufenstein Alp to the Eggischhorn. On each occasion the peak of the Jungfrau was ascended from the col.

THE ETYMOLOGY OF 'AVALANCHE.'—We have received the following note from Mr. R. C. Nichols:—"I offer the following remarks as a supplement to the interesting observations on the word *Lavine*, &c., by Mr. Tuckett in the May number of the 'Journal.'

'Ebel, in his "Manuel des Voyageurs en Suisse" (1818), heads his article on this subject thus: "LAVANGES (ou *Avalanches*; en allemand, *Lauinen* ou *Lauwen*)." Note.—"En Tyrol *Schneelähnen*; dans la Rhétie *Lavine*; dans le patois de la Suisse Romande *Lévantré* ou *Valantre*; dans les Pyrénées *Congères*, ou *Lydt de terre* et *Lydt de vent*."

'It seems evident that *Lawine*, *Lauine*, *Labine*, *Lavine*, *Lavage*, *Avalanche*, and probably also *Lévantré*, *Valantre* (according to Scheuchzer, *Levanze*, *Vallantze*) are only different forms of one and the same word. *Lavage* scarcely differs from *Lavine*, and *Lavage*, *Avalanche*, bear the same relation to each other as *Lévantré*, *Valantre*. The only question is whence the whole class of name is derived.

'The conjecture of Berlepsch, which would derive it from *Lau* (warm), will hardly be regarded as satisfactory. The idea is too far-fetched and only a shade less improbable, if at all so, than the suggestion that the mythical *Löwinn* has stood godmother to the group.

'Two other distinct etymologies alone present themselves, *advallare* and *labi*. That the Romansch form is *Labine* renders it extremely probable that the word (under either supposition of Latin origin) has come from the Latin through this channel, and from *labi*, to slip, not from *advallare*, to descend.

'This is further confirmed by finding that the German *Schneeschlupfen* is synonymous with *Schneelauinen*; the one being a translation, the other an adoption of the Romansch word *Labine*.

'Nevertheless one cannot feel certain that we have not here an instance of those double derivations which are so puzzling to etymologists. The word *Lavage* may have been assisted in its transformation to *Avalanche* by the suggestion of *avalier*; or the word *Avalanche* independently derived from *avalier*, *advallare*, may have the more readily been converted to *Lavage* on account of the similarity of the latter to *Lavine*.'

STRANGE DISCOVERY ON THE VERRA GLACIER.—On the morning of July 16, Messrs. G. G. C. and T. Middlemore and F. Gardiner left Ayas to make the ascent of Pollux and cross the Zwillinge Joch to the Riff. At about 8.15 A.M. the large plateau of snow immediately above the seracs of the Verra Glacier was reached, when the notice of Johann Jaun, the leading guide, was attracted by what he at first thought was either a dead chamois or a large stone. He mentioned it to the other guides, one of whom (Peter Knubel) detached himself

from the rope and descended to the object, when, to the surprise of everyone, he called out 'It is a dead man!' The whole party then at once went down and found the dead body of a young man of about eighteen or twenty years of age, lying on his back, with his arms stretched out at each side and head thrown back; he wore a large red woollen cap, a blue coat and waistcoat with white metal buttons, trousers of a large check pattern, no stockings, and leather shoes. In his right hand he held a blue bag containing a quantity of clothing, a large key, a prayer-book, and a religious paper, signed by the curé of Chatillon, and with the name of Gorret Marie Ursule, which was presumed to be his name; also the portrait of a soldier. The key, prayer-book, paper, and portrait were taken to help identification, and placed in the hands of Monsieur Alex Seiler, of Zermatt. There was neither money nor food found about his person, and he had no stick. The position in which he was found was quite that of repose, and it may be presumed, that being tired, and probably hungry, he lay down to rest, fell asleep, and was frozen to death. Judging from his dress and the papers found in his bag, he must have been in the Italian army. It is impossible to conjecture what he was doing in such a place without either food, a stick, or any of the necessities for such an expedition.

THE MARJÉLEN SEE.—The following letter, signed 'J. T.' appeared in the 'Times,' and gives an account of a subsidence of the Marjélen See, a phenomenon of not unfrequent occurrence, but which is not known to have been before described by an eye-witness:—

'On August 2, a party of three of us descended to the glacier and walked downwards along the ice to the savagely-picturesque gorge in which the Aletsch glacier ends. Our way at one place lay along the hollow, between the glacier and the mountain, which hollow three hours later was to be filled by a furious torrent. We crossed a wooden bridge which spans the Massa, and ascended thence, mainly along the moraine of an extinct glacier to the Bel Alp. It was half-past 4 p.m. when we arrived. The domestics drew our attention to a sound like the roar of a cataract, which seemed to descend the Aletsch. For a time the sound was sub-glacial, but a yellow torrent at length appeared at the opposite side of the glacier, smoking and roaring as it tumbled down the declivities of ice. The front of the torrent soon appeared opposite to the Bel Alp, carrying every movable thing along with it. The ice-barrier which had dammed the Marjélen See had manifestly given way, and this was the result. Wishing to get near the torrent, I descended rapidly to the glacier, crossed it and succeeded in getting quite close to the rushing water. Everywhere impetuous, it was divided into spaces of tolerably uniform slope, separated from each other by steep and broken declivities, down which the water plunged with tremendous fury. At the base of one of these falls it was met by a kind of reflecting surface, by which the rhythmic character of its motion was finely revealed. The water here was tossed upwards in a series of vast parallel fans, carrying with them ice-blocks and stones, and breaking above into a spray as fine as smoke. A bend of the glacier came in for the lateral portion of this spray, and over it the

rounded blocks of ice and the stones were showered like projectiles. The sound of the torrent had not abated at bedtime, but this morning all is quiet, and no water is to be seen in the temporary channel. The Rhone at Brieg rose, I am told, considerably, but no loss of life has been reported.'

MONT ISERAN.—In the 'Times' of September 24 appeared a letter under this heading, signed 'H. L. R.,' purporting to give an account of the first ascent of this mythical peak, which was demolished years ago by Mr. W. Mathews and the late Mr. Cowell. The details given of the ascent were of the most thrilling and exciting character, but could leave, it might have been supposed, no doubt on the mind of any one at all acquainted with the subject that the whole story was a hoax. Not only, however, did the leading journal, ordinarily wide-awake, and the confiding public, accept the tale as genuine, but a few old-stagers, who ought to have known better, were taken in, and wrote seriously either to the 'Times' or the Secretary of the Club, controverting the ingenious 'Mr. Ryder's' statements; one sympathising correspondent going so far as to condole with him on having been deceived by his guides, and probably heavily charged for a new ascent. Further comment appears unnecessary; but it is to be regretted that such a considerable amount of literary talent and liveliness of imagination should have been expended (evidently by a mountaineer—possibly by a member of the Club) in a narrative of a fictitious ascent of a non-existent peak.

KRUKELI PASS.—Mr. Selater sends us the following note with reference to this pass, which is a very pleasant one, and deserves to be more frequented. We have a promise from Mr. Sowerby of a paper on this and the numerous other interesting expeditions which can be made from the Maderaner Thal, with which he is probably better acquainted than any other English mountaineer:—The pass leading from the Upper Maderaner Thal to Unterschachen, in the Schachenthal, deserves to be better known, now that the Swiss Alpine Club Hotel, in the former valley, is so much resorted to. In Ball's Guide it is merely alluded to as a hunter's pass called '*Krukeli*.' I believe, however, its correct name is *Ruchen-kali*—i.e. 'Shales of the Ruchen'—the pass lying close under the mountain known as the Greater and Lesser Ruchen, and the descent into the Unterschachen-thal being effected by the shales descending from the former. The whole pass, from the Alpine Club Hotel to Unterschachen, may be easily accomplished in about eight hours. There is no difficulty for the practised mountaineer, though the slopes high above the right bank of the Hüfi Glacier, by which the ascent from the hotel is made, are rather precipitous, and require a steady head. There is a good hotel at Unterschachen (Hôtel et Pension Clausen).

THE PEAK OF NAIGUATÁ, VENEZUELA.—We have been favoured by Mr. James M. Spence of Manchester with the following particulars of the first ascent of this mountain, which was briefly alluded to in our last number:—

'The range of mountains which strikes off at right angles from the Andes, near Barquisimeto, is about 180 miles long, and presents two peaks near Caracas, the capital of Venezuela. They are seven miles apart, and lie to the north of the Valley of Caracas, near the sea. The Silla of Caracas was first climbed by Humboldt, who gives an account of it, though he does not even mention the higher one—viz., the Peak of Niaguatá—which I was fortunate enough to ascend. On April 6, 7, and 8, I climbed the Silla; and as the rise and track are well known in Venezuela, I need not describe them, but merely state that I found its summit was 8,833 ft. above the sea. It was during this ascent that I resolved to essay the Peak of Niaguatá, the view from the Silla being intercepted by it. I had done many a day's stiff climbing in California, Arizona, and Norway, and here at last was a feat which promised to be worth the trouble. Humboldt had ignored its very existence; and well might the walled flanks of its ridges make it seem to him more like a Titan fortress than a mountain. When I told my determination in Caracas I was laughed at, and the most experienced mountaineers said I might as well plan an expedition to the moon. But I had carefully scanned it with my glass; and had conjectured, from the form of its longest ridge, which was a high, jagged precipice, slightly inclining towards the foot of the Peak, that by traversing this we could get farther up than by any other route, and could determine our course as we found it practicable. Gradually I succeeded in inspiring a number of my friends with a desire to attempt this ascent. The fact of the summit never having before been trod by human foot gave a zest to our plans, and we decided to leave Caracas on April 27. My party consisted of General Terrero, M. Bolet, M. Goëring, M. Hübel, Señor Lisboa, Dr. Vaamonde, and our attendants. We reached Dr. Vaamonde's house, 3,000 ft. above the sea, the first evening, and started at four o'clock the next morning. Striking N. across the valley on our mules, and up a bridle-path on a shoulder of the mountain, we arrived at the estate of Tócome, 3,325 ft. above the sea. Temperature, 69°. By 6 a.m. we got another rise, and were 4,255 ft. Temperature lowered to 62. We had frequently to descend to lead our mules (which soon had to be abandoned) over the dangerous gullies, and passed a precipice where a man had been killed a fortnight before in his attempt to cross it. Ascending we caught a glimpse of the sharp peak of the Silla, to the left, all roseate with rays from the rising sun, while we were still in the last shades of the expiring night. At eight o'clock we arrived at Cerro Duarte, a precipice which separates Naiguatá from the Silla, and here we had made 5,375 ft. The sun was now getting up in strength, for the thermometer marked 75° when we were 6,550 ft. At ten o'clock we lost all track, and came upon a spring which proved to be our last chance of obtaining water. Three flasks were filled, which, alas! was too scanty a supply for such need as we experienced. Now began our real hardships. We had to cut and break down branches to get through an almost impassable wood, and the ascent all the time was steep and trying. When we got out to the open the heat was intense, the thermometer indicating 78°. At length we came upon the place where the great fire of 1868 had devas-

tated this side of the mountain, and the dry grass which covered the almost perpendicular rise made the climbing as difficult and slippery as if on ice. At eleven o'clock my friends had breakfast; I preferred to refresh myself with sleep. Half-an-hour after starting again we arrived at the foot of the first rock, which had to be surmounted with hands and feet, as there were no places where we could even stand, unless we held fast to the rocks. We accomplished this—of course using ropes—in an hour, and then had to descend through a wood, where we found recent traces of tigers. Ascending again, by two o'clock we had gained 8,175 ft., and the temperature was 83°. 340 ft. higher we found the dry bed of a small lake, which in winter would be filled with waters from the Peak, but was now covered with a delicate straw. It was here we decided to encamp for the night, our greatest hardship being the scarcity of water; and as we had no prospect of getting any more till we returned to the well from whence we had last drank, we offered a large sum to three of our attendants to go back to *La Fuente de la Vida* and bring us a supply early in the morning. We gathered sticks for firewood; and then, mounting the highest point near, surveyed the jagged, rocky eminences around, as well as the distant panorama, all of which are indescribable in a short space, but were magnificent in extent and variety. The thermometer had now fallen to 43°, and we suffered greatly from the cold all night. We slept by turns till six in the morning, and soon after the men arrived with water. Leaving them in charge of all blankets, provisions, &c., we did not need, we marched on. Vegetation was now becoming scarce; quartz was very abundant, and here and there in wild confusion lay enormous isolated masses of rock, which gave a most fantastic appearance to the scene. At last we reached an eminence from which we had to descend ere the next peak could be climbed, and on our way had to leap a horrible chasm, over which I had first to go ere I could induce anyone else to venture. At length we came to a steep incline of solid rock which we supposed was the object of our expedition, and the sight of it filled our minds with despair. For a time we could discover no possibility of even scrambling up to the top; but at length descrying a sort of slope, in a crevice of which there was sufficient vegetation to offer resistance to our feet, while with sticks and knives we could make clambering practicable, we decided to attempt it, and succeeded in gaining the summit, when we found that the veritable Peak was far ahead, formed of great columns of rock, and looking at this distance like a gigantic ruined temple. The barometer now marked 9,340 ft., and the thermometer 72°. Fortunately this rock we had surmounted was the abrupt end of a ridge which led to the Peak; but we had to crawl along a kind of gallery, flanked on each side by terrible precipices, and in no part was the ridge wider than 3 ft., and it was with the utmost difficulty we could become accustomed to its dizzy height. After we had crossed it we arrived in a wilderness of rocks, jagged and tortuous in form, bewildering and chaotic in extent; and we found growing in the gulches great masses of a gramineous plant, which, being new to science, has since been named the *Chusquea Spencei*. We climbed

the needle by twelve o'clock, and discovered its height to be 9,439 ft. above the sea, and apparently rising straight out of it, for down in the port of La Guaira we could count the ships! In a limited space it would be impossible to describe the magnificence of the scene. We remained on the Peak but half an hour, for the thermometer was at 82°, and we were suffering intensely from physical as well as mental exhaustion. During the descent I was in agony from thirst. We could not speak, for our tongues and lips were swollen and parched. Suddenly Bolet remembered his painting-flask, and approached me with Samaritan eagerness. I drank, but could not swallow, for the water had mixed with the turpentine with which the thing had been painted a few days before. We pressed on to the encampment, with aching limbs under a burning sky. I reached it but to fall senseless to the ground, though when water was given me I soon recovered. There is much still in my memory to tell of that perilous ascent of the Peak of Naiguatá, which I hope to do in a work I am now writing on Venezuela. It may not, however, be unfit to mention here that the President gave me the only decoration ever awarded by the Republic, in recognition of being the first man who had ventured to the summit of that terribly precipitous mountain.'

THE PIZ MUNTERATSCH OR JULIER.—Baron Albert Rothschild calls attention to the merits, as a point of view, of this peak, which rises above the Julier Pass to a height of 3,380 mètres. He states that it is accessible in five hours from the pass, and has been ascended five or six times, but never by an Englishman, although the panorama is much finer than from the Piz Corvatsch, Piz Languard, and other frequented points in the neighbourhood.