NEW EXPEDITIONS IN 1874—*continued.*

WESTERN ALPS.

DAUPHINÉ DISTRICT — MONT POURRI (3807 mètres = 12,491 ft., Mathews; 3,788 mètres = 12,428 ft., French map), *July* 2, 1874.—Miss Brevoort and Mr. Coolidge, with Christian Almer and two Grindelwald porters, ascended the Mont Pourri by a new route. Starting from the highest châlets above Villaroger, locally known as de la Thuria, or de l'Arc (commanding an exquisite view of Monte Blanc), they mounted to the rocky arête which forms the E. boundary of the great glacier (de la Thuria?). Following this more or less, they gained a ridge which overlooks the Glacier de la Gurre, running down to the NE. from the highest ridge of the Pourri. Climbing along this with some difficulty, the party gained the point marked 3,615 mètres on the French map. This is the NW. extremity of the highest ridge of the Pourri, which runs NW. and SE. A very sharp and splintered crest of rocks, succeeded by a long snow crest, led finally to the highest peak, which was thus reached from the NW. instead of the SW., the usual route. The view of the Tarentaise, Graian, Pennine, and Dauphiné Alps was simply marvellous. The descent was effected by the same route, save that from the ridge overlooking the Glacier de la Gurre, the party descended directly to the great glacier, and followed it to its extremity above the châlets.

COL DU PECLET, AND COL DE LA MONTÉE DU FOND, *July* 5.—The same party traversed these little-known cols from Moutiers Tarentaise to St. Michel en Arc. After sleeping at the châlets of Motaret la Cave at the head of the W. fork of the Combe des Allues, they reached the Col du Peclet by an easy climb over grass and stones, whence a fine view of the Aiguilles d'Arve, Mont Blanc, Aig. de la Sassière, and Grandes Rousses, was gained. Bearing to the left over easy rocks, the party descended to a vast hollow at the head of the Vallon de Belleville, surrounded by the Montagne du Borgne, the Château Bourreau, and the Roche des Encombres. Traversing a stream, they then aimed at an opening between two blunt shaley peaks, and keeping to the left ascended over snow to the Col de la Montée du Fond, where a stone man was built to guide future travellers. An unexpectedly fine view of all the Dauphiné peaks was obtained. Descending over easy rocks, the party gained a small level glacier; following this they soon got into grass. Hence the way lay by the châlets on the Montagne du Bouvillard, left an oratory on a knoll to the right, crossed a stream to its left bank, passed through a small forest, and finally led the party to the village of Bouvillard. A steep and stony path took them down to Franceau or Franco, on the Cenis road, half an hour's drive from S. Michel. Time, actual walking, 11⅓ hrs.

AIGUILLE D'ARVE (CENTRAL PEAK). FIRST ASCENT BY TRAVELLERS, *July* 10.—Mr. Coolidge, with Almer and Michel, ascended the central Aiguille d'Arve. Starting from a bivouac at the head of the Vallon des Aiguilles d'Arve, they climbed up to the snow plateau which

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comes down from the Col des Aiguilles d'Arve. They ascended steep rocks and then a narrow snow couloir for some little way and bore to the right across the face, just beneath a conspicuous yellowish rock. After a somewhat difficult passage over some smooth and slippery rocks, they climbed up to the main arête, following which more or less, they reached the base of the final peak. This appeared very formidable, but was in reality quite easy. A cairn was found on the summit, erected in all probability by Savon, a chamois-hunter, of Valloires, who had been boasting of having reached the top. Traces of chamois were found quite close to the highest point. The view was, unfortunately, very cloudy. The line of descent was the same, save that below the yellow rock the party bore rather more to the left, and descended to the plateau by a broad snow couloir, a route which is recommended to future travellers. They reached S. Jean d'Arve that evening by the Col des Aiguilles d'Arve, the châlets of Rienblanc and Entraigues. Times: actual walking, from the base to the summit 1¾ hrs.; descent, 1 hr. 50 min. A good walker could thus easily combine the ascent of the Aiguille with the passage of the Col.

From the summit it was impossible to say whether the central or S. Aiguille was the highest. The people of Valloires and S. Jean d'Arve, all viewers from other peaks, Herr Studer and Mr. Whymper, give the preference to the central one. Mr. Moore is doubtful. Mr. Ball attributes 16 feet more to the S. one.

Grandes Rousses (11,395 ft.), *July* 12.—The same party, with Kaufmann instead of Michel, starting from the châlets of Aigires Rousses, above S. Jean d'Arve, ascended the N. or highest point of the Grandes Rousses (locally known as the Pic de l'Etendard), without difficulty in 3 hrs. 25 min. Clouds entirely concealed the view. They reached Bourg d'Oisans in about 7 hrs., after a very fatiguing descent, by the Lac Blanc and the Granges de Hulz.

The same party made the following new expeditions in Dauphiné, which are described at length in the present number.

Pic de la Grave (12,051 ft. E.M.F.) and Brèche de S. Christophe, *July* 14.—Starting from châlets above Freney, they reached the Col de la Lanze, climbed the Pic de la Grave, and descended to S. Christophe by the Brèche of the same name.

Brèche du Râteau and Tête du Replat (11,260 ft. E.M.F.), *July* 16.—This is a new pass from the Glacier de la Selle to the Vallon des Étançons, over the lowest point of the ridge between the Râteau and the Replat. The latter, a summit at the head of the Glacier de la Selle, was climbed en route.

Col de la Grande Ruine, *July* 17.—This is a new pass from the Vallon des Étançons to the Glacier des Cavales, just north of the Grande Ruine.

Col de la Muzelle, *July* 27.—Mr. Oakley Maund started with Jean Martin from the châlets de la Muzelle, 3 hrs. above Vénosc, at 4 A.M., took the rocks to the left of the Lac de la Muzelle, which they followed due south for 2 hrs.; they then took to the ice, and arrived at the summit of the col at 8.50. The last 400 feet was a steep ice-wall. The col lies to the east of the Muzelle, and by a steepish

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descent brings you to Valsenestre. They attempted the Pic de la Muzelle from the summit of the col, but the rocks are very difficult, and after 4 hrs. they were obliged to return. The mountain is probably practicable from the west. The map here is very inaccurate.

MONTE ROSA DISTRICT.—ARBEN JOCH.—Mr. E. Whymper left Zermatt at 4.15 A.M. on August 24, with Jean Antoine Carrel and Louis Carrel as guides. 'We went up the path on the left bank of the Zermatt valley, and then, for a little distance, up the moraine on the left bank of the Zermatt glacier. When just above the waterfall which is made by the stream that flows along this moraine, we turned sharply to the right, and made towards the Gabelhorn, which was then due north of us. Our course was up the valley which is now closed, and which at one time was filled, by the Arbengletscher. In a short time the great moraine on the E. of the Arbengletscher offered the easiest path, and we followed it until we took to the glacier itself. This moraine is one of the largest, if not the largest, of all the moraines in the Zermatt district, and shows how very largely the glacier has shrunk in modern times. In some places the crest of the moraine is several hundred feet higher than the present surface of the glacier. Unlike most moraines, this one afforded excellent walking, as the *débris* had well settled down and become consolidated. At 8 A.M., just before taking to the Arbengletscher, we halted. The view of the Matterhorn from this spot was inconceivably grand and entirely novel. Our position was just on a level with Kennedy's cairn on the Hörnli ridge, or 10,800 feet above the level of the sea. We saw the summit of the Théodule *over* Kennedy's cairn, and this fixed our altitude very exactly. The southern cliffs of the Ober Gabelhorn also looked exceedingly grand from our halting-place, and we made towards them over a gently undulating glacier (instead of proceeding directly towards our col, which was well away to the left) in order to circumvent some large crevasses. Whilst so occupied, distant cries engaged our attention; but we could not tell whence they proceeded until we had quitted the glacier and taken to the rocky ridge which is its northern boundary, and then we discovered a party of five making an ascent of the Gabelhorn from the Zinal side. The wall that we had to climb before arriving at the summit of our col resembled that on the Zinal side of the Col du Grand Cornier, and though very steep, offered no great difficulty. We arrived on the summit at 11 A.M., excluding halts in 6 hrs. time from Zermatt. The col was 100 feet or so higher than the lowest depression between the Gabelhorn and the point which is marked on the Carte Dufour 3,744 mètres, and this point was perhaps 250 or 300 feet higher than our col. Our altitude was therefore about 12,000 feet. I have never before got to so great a height with so little trouble. The view on the southern side comprised everything from the Cima di Jazzi to part of the Dent d'Erin. On the other side the view was less extensive, though we saw the Grand Cornier and the snowy range to its N. to advantage; and the mountains on the northern side of the valley of the Rhone.

'There was a strong wind blowing from the N., and it was more comfortable to nestle on the southern side of the ridge, and to watch the party ascending the Gabelhorn, than to expose ourselves to its chilling

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blasts. We were no great distance off, and could follow almost every step of their route. They seemed to us to be extremely well led, but we had no idea who was there. The party arrived on the summit at 11.20 A.M., stayed there half an hour, and then descended by the ordinary route to Zermatt, and became lost to our sight. Shortly after they left, I despatched the Carrels to connect our route with theirs; for this was all that it was necessary to do to prove that there was a practicable way to Zinal. The guides were absent 1 hr., and when they returned we built a great cairn to mark the summit of our pass. At 1.15 P.M. we returned in our track to Zermatt, and arrived there at 6 P.M., having halted a half hour on the way. The Gabelhorn party came in 2 or 3 hrs. afterwards, and as I left Zermatt on the homeward journey early next morning, I had not the opportunity to enquire anything about their expedition.

'Our excursion (combined with that of the others) thus established two things—that there is a pass from Zermatt to Zinal by the route we followed, and that the Gabelhorn can be ascended from Zermatt by the route which we took. Indeed, I believe that its ascent will be more easily accomplished by following our route as far as the col, and thence by ascending the ridge leading towards the E., than by any other way, and that the faster men in the Club could start from Zermatt and return to Zermatt, under favourable circumstances, in 12 or 13 hrs.'

THE GABELHORN FROM ZINAL.—The Gabelhorn was first ascended from this side by the late Lord Douglas (see Alpine Journal, vol. ii. p. 222). It seems uncertain whether the route here described is the same as that taken by Lord Douglas's party, and the following account is therefore inserted:—

'On August 23, Mr. H. Seymour Hoare and E. Hulton, with Johann von Bergen, Peter Rubi, and J. Moser, left the hut at Le Mountet at 4.30 A.M., and, gaining the glacier, we made straigh tacross it in the direction of that branch that lies at the foot of the rocks of the north-western face of the Gabelhorn. For a considerable distance we ascended by the slopes of this arm of the Durand Glacier until an ice-fall compelled us to take to the rocks on our left, and a short steep climb up them enabled us to gain the upper part of the glacier. While on the rocks an avalanche fell a short distance ahead of us, sweeping right across our route. We continued the ascent up the glacier until we had passed the highest bergschrund, which is not very far below the level of, though at some distance from, the col between the Gabelhorn and a point marked 3,744 on the Federal map, and which I believe is known as the Pic de Zinal. After crossing the bergschrund without difficulty we turned to our left and proceeded to cut our way up a steep ice-slope thinly covered with snow. The higher we got the more difficult became the work, until at last coming upon a quantity of ice-covered rock we were obliged to bear away to our right almost horizontally along the face of the mountain, and gain the crest of the western arête at a point about a third of the height between the col above mentioned and the summit. The rest of the ascent was made by the arête when practicable; but we were frequently forced to leave it and take to the rocks on our left, in order to turn some tower of

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rock that was impossible to cross. The rocks on our right fell sheer for a considerable distance on to the Arbengletscher, where for some time we saw Mr. Whymper. At a short distance below the final peak we had to work across the face of the mountain and gain the northern arête, by which we completed the ascent, arriving at the top at 12.5. The descent was made by the usual way of the north-eastern arête. We encountered much difficulty on the Gabelhorn Glacier in consequence of the numerous and broad crevasses that have opened this year. We did not arrive at Zermatt till 7.10 P.M.'

MONTE ROSA, FROM GRESSONEY, *July* 29.—Mr. Déchy, with Christian Michel, of Grindelwald, and Weisshorn Biener, left a very comfortable châlet on the Lavezalp (Val de Gressoney), at 3.30 A.M. They crossed the Lyspass at 8.30 A.M., turned towards the Zumsteinspitze, over the highest névé of the Grenz Glacier, traversed the slopes of the Zumsteinspitze, and reached the foot of the rocky face of Monte Rosa at 10 hrs. 30 m. A.M. Climbing directly upwards, they struck the ridge a little higher than the Sattel. This ascent required 2½ hrs. hard work, lying partly over steep and difficult rocks, in many places covered with ice, and through short snow couloirs. Michel being unwell, had to be left behind at the little arête. Mr. Déchy, with Biener, reached the top, after much step-cutting, at 3.45 P.M., and the Riffel by the ordinary way at 8.40 P.M. This is the first ascent of the Höchste Spitze of Monte Rosa from the W. side; thus achieving the undertaking commenced fifty-two years previous by Vincent, and later by Zumstein and others. This way is much more interesting than the ordinary route going from and returning to the Riffel, and would be perhaps more practicable than the brilliant ascent of Messrs. Pendlebury and Taylor from Macugnaga. The ascent can be made in one day, starting from a very comfortable sleeping-place (at the Lavezalp), in Val Gressoney, and combines one of the finest passes in the Monte Rosa group with the ascent of its highest peak.

[Herr Déchy is in error in thinking that he was the first to reach from the W. side the Sattel of Monte Rosa—that is, the point at which the ridge of the mountain is struck by the ordinary route. This had already been accomplished in 1868 by Messrs. Digby and Heathcote, although the exact course taken by the earlier party was probably somewhat to the left or N. of Herr Déchy's. Herr Déchy, however, rightly claims to have made the first ascent from the Val de Lys. Future climbers, starting from the same point, will probably prefer the shorter route described in the last number, by Mr. E. Hulton, by which the Höchste Spitze is gained by a direct ascent from the Grenz Glacier, and without touching the arête.—ED.]

CENTRAL ALPS.

LOCARNO DISTRICT—THE PASSO DEL BASODANO.—The possibility of reaching the top of the Basodine or Basodano from the Falls of the Tosa was first proved by Mr. William Freshfield in 1865. Swiss

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climbers soon afterwards followed in his footsteps. The fact, however, that the most direct pass for mountaineers from the Falls of the Tosa to Val Bavona, is the gap immediately N. of the Basodine and between that peak and the Kastelhorn, has not been recorded in this Journal, and has escaped the notice of the guide-books.

The pass is reached in from 3 to 3½ hrs. from the comfortable inn at the Tosa Falls, the master of which is an efficient guide. The Gries path is soon left, and a steep track up a face of rocks, the interstices of which are rich in ferns and flowers, leads to the upper Alps. Keeping well to the right, and passing some small tarns, the snow-filled hollow lying under the Basodine comes into sight. Its drainage falls into the Tosa below the falls. A steep but easy climb over glacier and rock leads to the pass. To reach the peak takes half an hour more, the last ten minutes rough scrambling along a granite ridge. The descent lies over an extensive glacier, which is divided in its central portion by impracticable precipices. To reach the Alp Robiei, the course always hitherto taken, it is necessary to bear constantly to the left. In clear weather I should recommend an attempt to descend more directly by the right hand or southern branch of the glacier, and a very steep goat-track which descends into the head of Val Bavona, a little way below the junction of its three torrents This route would lead past a group of séracs, or great snowcastle, the towers and minarets of which appeared from a distance as wonderful as any I have seen in the Alps, except, perhaps, on the Brenva Glacier.

[It is certainly possible to descend from the Basodine on to the small glacier which drains into Val Antabbia, and a shorter route to the peak from San Carlo may be found through this glen.—Ed.]

Adamello District—Monte del Castello, *August* 24.—Messrs. Tucker, Carson, and D. W. Freshfield, with F. Devouassoud, reached this outlier of the Adamello group in 1¼ hr. from the Passo di Monte Campo. A piece of wood showed that it had been visited by shepherds, probably from the Val del Leno, on its southern flank. The ascent from the pass lies along a goat-track under a row of rocky teeth, and then up a steep glacier. The view of Val Daone and the southern glaciers of the Adamello is fine, and the panorama extends from the Primiero peaks to the Schreckhorn and Grand Paradis. The impression formed on other views of the Adamello and Caré Alto, and particularly from the appearance of each of these peaks when seen from its rival, that the difference in their height has been greatly overestimated, was again strengthened by their appearance from this point.

It would be easy to ascend Monte Castello directly from the Lago d'Arno, and descend into Val del Leno, and this course may be recommended to future mountaineers. Monte Frerone appears to outtop Monte Castello, and to be the highest summit between the Chiese and the lower Val Camonica. Foot travellers ascending from Val Camonica to the Monte Campo Pass should not follow the roundabout track by the village of Val-Saviore, but climb the direct and romantic path which mounts from Isola through the gorge by which the waters of the lake make their escape.

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EASTERN ALPS.

Œtzthal District—The Tiefenbachjoch. From Vent to Mittelberg; en route ascents of the Tiefenbach Kogel and Schwarze Schneide, *July* 23.—Messrs. Dr. Petersen, Dr. Hecht, M. Déchy, with Johann Pinggera, Alois Ennemoser, and Josef Spechtenhauser, starting from Vent at 8 A.M., reached the Tiefenbach Kogel at 1.40 P.M.; the Col at 2.20 P.M. The ridge led them in 25 min. to the top of the Schwarze Schneide, which was first ascended. The party regained the pass at 4.30 P.M., crossed it for the first time, and arrived at Mittelberg in the Pitzthal, at 7.30 P.M.

Wildspitze from the Taschach Glacier, with the first descent to the Kaunserthal, *July* 28.—Messrs. Déchy and Dr. Hecht, with Johann Pinggera and Josef Spechtenhauser, ascended the northern and highest summit of this peak direct from the Taschach glacier, sleeping at the very comfortable Club-hut 'Taschach-hütte,' erected in a splendid position on the lower slopes of the Pitzthaler Urkund, between the ice-streams of the Taschach glacier and Sexegerten glacier, by the Frankfort section of the German and Austrian Alpine Club, and opened only the day before. From the north peak of the Wildspitze they passed along the arête to the southern lower and usually visited peak, and descended to the Taschach glacier. After rounding the Hintere Brochkogl on its north side, they ascended the snow-peak, 3,473 mètres (on the new map, published by the G. and A. Alpine Club), and descended to the upper névé of the Hochvernagt Glacier. After traversing its highest slopes a short ascent led them to the Taschachjoch, and crossing this, they regained the upper fields of névé of the western portion of the Taschach Glacier. Between the Hochvernagtwand and the Pitzthaler Urkund—where they found difficulty from the crevassed state of ice—they descended to the upper part of the Sexegerten Glacier and, *viâ* the Œlgrubenjoch, arrived at the Gepatschütte in the Kaunserthal. This descent—or perhaps more correctly speaking, this passage of a very interesting high-level route—occupied 7 hrs. 12 min.; the halts on the way having aggregated 1 hr.

Stubay Alps. Schwarzwandspitze (3,355 m., 11,007 ft.), *July* 16.—Messrs. Dr. Hecht and Déchy, with Johann Pinggera, left the Upper Aglsalm, in the Ridnaun valley, at 5.15 A.M. Making a great détour to avoid the ice-fall of the Ublthal Glacier, they struck to the ridge of the plateau, 'Hohes Eis,' at 1 P.M. From this ridge Mr. Déchy ascended alone the Sonklarspitze (3,468 m., 11,378 ft.), and joined the others farther down near the Schwarzwandspitze. The summit of the Schwarzwandspitze was gained at 2.12 P.M. After remaining 1 hr. on the top, and building a stone man, they descended over the Schwarze Wande to the Winacher Glacier and the valley of the same name.

Schrankogel (3,498 m., 11,476 ft., the highest point of the Alpeiner group in the Stubay Alps), *July* 19.—The same party made the third ascent (first ascent by Herr Specht, and second, 1866, by Mr. Tuckett and his companions), the first starting from the Sulzthal, and by the western arête, without difficulty, though it was considered im-

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practicable in the Sulzthal. They descended to the Schwarzenberg Glacier (from there up to the Höllthalscharte with the addition of the hunter from Gries), crossed the Schwarzenbergjoch to the highest névé of the Alpeiner Glacier, and ascended over moderate slopes to the Hollthalscharte. A very difficult descent through a rocky chimney, landed them on the Hallthal Glacier, whence they got down into the Stubay valley to Mutterberg and the Graba Alp. The ascent of the Schrankogel occupied 4 hrs. 55 min., including 50 min. halts; the descent to Graba, 8 hrs. 30 min., the halts having aggregated 1 hr.

Zuckerhütl (3,509 m., 11,512 ft., the culminating point of the Stubay group), *July* 20.—The same party, with the addition of young Pfurthfneller, of Ranalt, as porter, left the Graba Alp at 3.30 A.M., gained the depression in the ridge between the Oestlicher Pfaff and Zuckerhütl, and ascended the latter by its eastern arête, arriving on the top at 11 A.M. The course over the Sulzenauferner was not the same as Mr. Tuckett's on his ascent of the Wilder Pfaff. Following the eastern stream of the Sulzenan Glacier, the party ascended the ridge coming down from the Oestlicher Pfaff and dividing the Sulzenan Glacier from its eastern branch, with difficulty, having to cut a way through an overhanging cornice of snow. From this ridge, they gained the highest field of névé over the second icefall of the Sulzenan Glacier. In descending the party followed the route of Mr. Hinde, spoken of in Ball's 'Alpine Guide' as very difficult.

Zillerthal District—Hochfeiler (culminating point of the Zillerthal Alps, 3,516 m., 11,535 ft.) from the Mühlwalder Thal near Taufers. *July* 12.—Mr. M. Déchy, with Johann Pinggera, of Sulden, left the Nevesalp at 4 A.M., reached the top *viâ* the Eisbruckersattel and Weiszinthscharte (here our porter turned back) at 10 A.M., and descended the ordinary way by the Gliederthal to St. Jacob in Pfitsch.

Schrammacherspitze (3,388 m., 11,115 ft.). Mr. Déchy, with Pinggera, started at 3.30 A.M. from the Rothmoosalp to make the first ascent of this peak, the nearest in height to the Thurnerkamp, and in shape the most graceful summit in the Zillerthal Alps (see Sonklar, Die Zillerthalalpen). Following the Stampflferner, they reached at 6.20 A.M. a gap in the ridge between the Stampfl glacier and Oberschramma glacier. From there they climbed up the rocky arête and gained the summit at 7.45 A.M. In the finest weather they remained on the top till 10.15, and erected a stone man. The view was very fine, both for the west and east portion; the Dolomites were very near, and fully seen. The descent from the Stampfl Glacier was made straight down to the Pfitscherjoch; and Sterzing, on the Brenner railway, was gained the same evening.

Dolomites. Monte Durano, *July* 21.—Capt. Utterson Kelso, with Santo Siorpaes, left Perarollo about 8 A.M. for the 'malga' on the Bosco Nero Alp, which is seen from the road to Longarone. 'We reached this solitary châlet lying at the foot of the peak of Monte Durano about 1 P.M., after a very hot walk of nearly 5 hrs We left it early the following morning and climbed straight up the 'croda' of the peak, passing one or two very steep patches of snow. Finding the higher cliffs directly above us quite impracticable, we had to turn them by passing along

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a ledge to the southern side of the mountain, whence we found access to the summit through a deep cleft in the rocks, choked with steep snow; we experienced a little trouble at one spot in this couloir, where the snow was wedged in against the side of the rock. Having surmounted this obstacle, a short steep climb brought us to the top of a ridge, whence, after descending somewhat, we passed on to a higher one, the real summit of the mountain. Upon it we were unable to discover either cairn or any other trace whatever of a previous ascent, nor did any other way to the top appear practicable than the one we had followed. The view was of very great extent and interest for that of a mountain under 9,000 ft. It afforded more than a glimpse of beautifully calm sea, somewhere to the S. of Sacile, and a long stretch of ranges of mountains nearest to the shores of the Adriatic; on the same side, the eye plunges right down on to the little plain of Cimolaïs, surrounded by mountain tops, and the town of Belluno was clearly visible at no great distance. Turning round, we had most of the Dolomite giants before us, with the Oetzthal and Zillerthal ranges in the distant background. There is a pass already made over the southern or south-western shoulder of Monte Durano, to Cimolais; but the ridge on the northern or north-eastern side appeared quite impassable; beyond this ridge on the N. rose a rather higher mountain, evidently accessible from Cimolais; this peak, we were informed by the men, bore the local name of "Bosco Nero." These châlet men had never heard of our mountain having been previously ascended. We employed about 3½ hrs. to get to the top from the châlet, owing to the uncertainty about the route, and the time required in cutting through the snow which then filled the cleft.

'I may mention that a very good inn has been opened this summer at S. Vito ("Hôtel Antelao," I think is the name); it stands a few paces off the road running through the village. The proprietor is working to improve the ground around it, and to make it comfortable and attractive for next season; his charges I found more moderate than at any other inn of the same pretensions in the Pieve or Cadore districts.

'This is probably the best starting-point for at least three great mountains of the district, viz., the Antelao, Sorapis, and Pelmo—not to speak of the pass of the "Forcella Grande," leading to the valley of Auronzo.'

[Now that the peaks and passes tempting to ambitious climbers can be counted on the fingers, it is natural that every foot of ground over 10,000 feet should be examined with interest, and every possible passage attempted. But there is some reason to fear that, in the present disposition to try everything, one of the most essential rules of mountaineering may be disregarded.

In former days, a good guide could scarcely be induced to undertake an expedition which involved venturing for any length of time upon ground habitually swept by avalanches or stonefalls. The instinct which led him to recognise and avoid such places was valued as an important part of his professional skill. Should climbing enthusiasm ever overcome this instinct, and lead guides and their companions

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frequently to expose themselves to the danger of being swept away, we must be prepared for a succession of terrible accidents. Mountaineering—properly pursued—is, for the most part, a game of skill, and it ought not to be turned into mere gambling with fate. The Alpine Club, by encouraging 'new expeditions,' incurs some responsibility; and this seems the proper place to suggest a caution, the need of which is strongly felt by many of its members. It is better to offer a warning in season than to draw a moral from an irretrievable disaster.—ED.]

THE SION FESTIVAL OF THE SWISS ALPINE CLUB.

THE Alpine Club is perhaps a little oblivious of its duties towards the various societies which owe their existence to it. The foreign clubs have all been developed in a somewhat different form, and most of them on a larger scale; but there is a fundamental unity underlying all differences, and the very divergence from the original pattern makes the festivals of the Swiss Club more interesting than if they were mere reproductions of our monthly meetings and annual dinners, with the proceedings in another language. Our members have taken but little part in the Swiss meetings, possibly from not knowing that they will be made heartily welcome; and I venture to think that this is a misfortune. We not unnaturally tend, while in Switzerland, towards the society of one another. Old friends are pleasanter than strangers, our own language readier to our tongues than German or French. But the result is that we stand apart from the entire fraternity of mountaineers, much as England stands apart from the Continent; and the policy of non-intervention produces its usual results. Englishmen bent on pleasure possess too little of the spirit of subordination to make possible an English parallel to the Swiss fête, but there is something novel in finding oneself part of an organised crowd for forty-eight hours, and much that is profitable in even this brief experience of a society so unlike our own. And the friendliness with which the leaders of the Swiss Club greet a foreigner, renders it certain that even a solitary Englishman attending one of these fêtes will not find himself alone in a crowd, but will carry away the memory of many pleasant, if short-lived, acquaintances.

I confess that, arriving alone at Sion on Aug. 22, and going up alone in the evening to the 'réunion familière sur le Prélet à Valère,' with which the festival commenced, I was a little afraid that it might turn out a failure, so far as I personally was concerned. The whole population of Sion had gathered by the time it was dark on the grassy space lying east of the castle, which was faintly lighted up with coloured lamps, just enough to define the space. The crowd was obviously enjoying itself, listening to a most energetic band, partaking of the harmless refections which are always popular on such occasions, and doing a good deal of comfortable flirtation. But I looked in vain for a face that I knew, and wondered how my insular bashfulness would break the ice; consoling myself, however, with the thought that it was

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