ALPINE NOTES.

THE MOUNTAIN HUTS IN THE BERNESE OBERLAND.—There are now six sleeping places, more or less furnished, in the Oberland, besides one or two convenient spots for night quarters, where nature owes little or nothing to art. Having slept at three of these towards the end of the past summer, and having made careful enquiries about the others, I believe that a few words about their condition and extent of accommodation may be useful.

1. *The Aar Pavilion.*—The original building is now a ruin, having been much damaged by fire; but there is still room for a small party in the wooden hut erected some ten or twelve years ago. The representatives of M. Dollfuss desired to make it over to the S. A. C., but the Commune of Hasli had a claim derived from the circumstances of its first erection, and nothing had been settled as to the future ownership when I left Switzerland.

2. *The Faulberg Hut* is, I believe, in tolerable condition as regards cleanliness and furniture, but somewhat in need of repair. It is also much too small for the demands which are made upon it during the height of the climbing season. This hut, having been built partially at least with English money, is more especially under the guardianship of the Alpine Club. It might be worth while to consider the question of contributing towards the erection of a new hut, for which probably a more desirable site might be found higher up the Aletsch Glacier.

3. *The Bergli Hut*, about 1,000 ft. below the Mönch Joch on the Grindelwald side, is so conveniently placed that it is a pity it should not be well cared for. It is naturally used very often, and the guides seem to take very little pains to keep it clean, or to avoid leaving scraps, &c. about, so that it is rather ill-smelling. This is a S. A. C. hut, and it is to be hoped that their influence may prevail with the guides, and lead them to see that their duty and interest coincide.

4. *The Gleckstein.*—The same remarks apply to the hut, very injudiciously called the Weisshorn hut, which has superseded the old Gleckstein cave, except that it is not the property of the S. A. C., but built by the Grindelwald men with the assistance of our own Club. It will hold eight or nine, is tolerably furnished, has an abundant supply of water at hand, but is abominably stuffy, partly because no thorough ventilation is possible, the minute window being close to the door; partly because—but let no traveller look under the bed-place.

5. *The Kastenstein* is only a cave walled in, and the cooking has to be done in the open air, there being no means of lighting a fire inside the cave. But for four or five people it is thoroughly comfortable, there being an ample supply of hay, and sufficient cooking utensils, though it is of course colder than most of the other sleeping-places. The chief credit of converting a mere hole under a rock into a tolerable cabane is due to Christian Almer, who also bore a large part of the expense.

6. *The Mönch Hut.*—This was erected in the spring of this year by the Oberland section of the S. A. C., near the foot of the northern face of the Mönch, just where the route to the Jungfrau Joch enters on the

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Guggi Glacier. Being so near to the Wengern Alp, it is probably less useful than any of the others; but being new, it is quite clean, and it is also very well furnished. A charge of one franc a head is made at the Wengern Alp inn to parties going there to sleep, which does not seem unreasonable, seeing that the Oberland Section is very recently formed, and necessarily poorer than most others.—H. B. GEORGE.

THE INN AT OBERGESTELEN.—The 'Cheval Blanc,' which Mr. Ball (Ed. 1873) describes as 'good and reasonable,' does not exist—nor since the fire of 1868, when the whole village was destroyed, has there been any such house. There is now only a 'Pinte,' where our guides, whom we sent in to take a schoppen and reconnoitre, told us we should not like to sleep. But at Ulrichen, only a mile and a half lower, and still better placed for the Gries Pass and the Fall of the Tosa, there is a model country inn, called 'Zum Gries Gletscher'—large airy rooms, fair cooking, most pleasant people, and moderate charges.—THOMAS BROOKSBANK.

THE RIEMENSTALDEN THAL AND KULM PASS.—Being for a few days at the quiet and comfortable inn at the Tells Platte, and wanting a little training before the more serious work, my friend Mr. J. T. Beard and I, with Ambrose Z'graggen as porter rather than as guide, for no guide is required, passed by this route from the Vierwaldstätter See to Unter Schächen. Mr. Ball, in his latest as in his earliest edition, has called for information as to the valley, and neither his nor any other guide-book mentions the pass—sufficient determining causes for our choice of route.

Leaving the Tells Platte at 11.40 on August 12, we reached Sisikon in 25 min., and entered the valley by the side of the Uri Rothstock Pension in that village. In 25 min. more we crossed the stream at a spot where there was no bridge, and from that time to the end of the ascent kept always on its right bank. The ascent is varied in scenery, through beautiful meadows and wood, but almost always steep, and we reached the church and chief group of houses at 1.45 P.M. Here the priest has a charmingly-placed house, with a large and clean double-bedded room, where he is glad to receive visitors, and we found his bread, cheese, butter, and red 'Italiener' excellent. After passing the church the ascent is over gentler grass slopes, and we reached the watershed in 1 hr. 50 min., though we lost time by keeping much higher above the stream than was necessary. The first half of the descent is gentle, and we kept the eastward-flowing stream on our right till we reached a small group of buildings, where we crossed it; and soon after, the depths of the Muotta Thal being then in sight, we quitted such path as there was, and ran straight down the meadows, arriving at Muotta in about 1 hr. 40 min. from the top. On August 13, having slept at that primitive little public the 'Hirsch,' still kept by the brace of toothless old landladies—cousins, who were toothless some fifteen years ago—we started at 6.10 for the Kulm Pass. The path soon leaves that leading to the Pragel, and is carried up the whole length of the Bisi Thal, and never far from the stream, till, having gained the Ruos Alp, it bends to the left to cross the ridge between the Schächen Windgelle, W. of the spurs of the grand mass of rock

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which Z'graggen called the Zingelspitz E. Though the ascent to the Alpe is for the most part gentle, there are steep bits from one ledge to another of the valley, and an uphill walk of 5,000 feet, occupying nearly six hours, is trying to London legs and lungs. As far as the Ruos Alp the valley is very beautiful. There is no chance of missing the way except at a bridge near to a fall of the Muotta Bach, which, although the Federal map carries the track still on the left bank, it is desirable, if not necessary, to cross. The fall itself is an exceedingly grand one, but the terrible rains of the preceding fortnight must of course not be forgotten in estimating it. In 40 min. from the bridge we reached the Alp, some 4 hrs. from Muotta; thence to the col was nearly 2 hr. more, dull but for a fine view of the Glärnisch and its long and graceful glacier. From the col the view is very fine—factitiously so to us perhaps as the first snow-view of the year. From the Clariden stock on the left the whole of the Maderaner Windgelle range stretched before us—nothing hidden but the Kleine Windgelle, bullied out of sight by her bigger sister—the deep trench of the Schächenthal at our feet, with the pretty Aeschi Fall conspicuous, and across the Reuss the Krönlet, Spannörter, the Erstfeld Glacier, and the Schlossberg; and soon after we quitted the col we added to these, on the right, the Gütsch and the Uri Rothstock, and on the left the Gemsfayr stock, with a long line of glacier beyond it glittering against the farthest sky.

The descent is very pleasant, and need not be very steep if the paths be kept. Immediately below the col is a small tarn, beneath which we passed, and soon found an almost level path nearly two miles long, which brought us to the Hauptmanns Alp, and apparently continued beyond it; but here we left it to its own devices, gave up paths altogether, and went at a swinging trot down deliciously steep meadows. Unter Schächen and its shining inn, 'Zum Klausen,' which we found excellent and cheap, was always in sight, and we reached it at 4.30. We had been out nearly 10½ hrs., of which the descent was 1¾ hr., and our halts were nearly 3 hrs. There can be no doubt that this is a far more beautiful pass than the Kinzig Kulm.

I should add that on both days our upward going was slow, but the downward of, at least, average speed.—THOMAS BROOKSBANK.

TYROL OR TIROL.—The following note is sent by a contributor whose opinion has the weight of German and local knowledge. 'Miss Busk's recent volume on "The Valleys of Tirol" has suggested the question whether *Tyrol* or *Tirol* is correct. Miss Busk, as well as her reviewer in the "Saturday Review," seem to write on insufficient knowledge. In all the old histories of the country that I have examined, some of them dating back as far as A.D. 1500, the spelling *Tyrol* is found, and this form is at the present day frequently used both in the province itself and throughout Austria. It will be found, for example, throughout Von Sonklar's work on the Tauern. Had Miss Busk troubled herself to look into the question a little deeper she might have hesitated before giving her verdict in so positive a manner. With regard to the use of the definite article before the name of the province, Miss Busk is probably right.'

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BOTANICAL NOTES FROM THE DOLOMITES.—In climbing the last rocks of the Marmolata before the final snow arête which leads to the summit, at a height of about 3,200 mètres, I hastily gathered the last flowering plant which I noticed. In descending, I again gathered the first evidence I met of vegetation. On examining these two specimens at leisure when I got home, each proved to be a small crucifer, *Draba frigida* (*Sauteri*), a variety of the *Draba tomentosa*, and the same species which I had gathered four years before at 3,163 mètres on the summit of the Pelmo.

On the summit of the Marmolata, but a few mètres below the highest point, there is a considerable space of 'geröll' free from snow; but on this I looked in vain for the smallest trace of vegetation: I could not find even a lichen. The north face of the Marmolata is barren in plants, as the lower portion that is bared of snow is constantly swept by *débris* from the glacier; but on the moraine at the top of the Fedaya, by the side of the small lake, there are some good things, and an abundant stock of a rarity, *Cochlearia brevicaulis*.

Below the Fedaya, as you descend towards Caprile, the pastures are very rich in plants, and were a favourite resort of the late Dr. Facchini, the Italian botanist; but I would especially direct the attention of any traveller to the Forcella di Padon, 2,379 mètres, dividing them from the valley of Livinallongo. From no point is the Marmolata seen to such advantage; and though a mere grassy col, entirely destitute of ice, or even snow, it is a perfect garden of high-growing Alpine plants. I gathered three species especially, which are almost always found in close proximity to glaciers; namely, *Eritrichium nanum*, *Androsace glacialis*, and *Ranunculus glacialis*, the last especially fine, both with white and red flowers. Besides these there were a host of others, *Artemisia lanata*, *Arenaria recurva*, *Saxifraga sedoides*, &c. Altogether it is a most delightful spot for loitering out a summer's day, with just enough turf to repose upon, and enough rock to give the excitement of a scramble. It is scarce 50 minutes from the Fedaya to the summit of the col, but it may be also reached by the north side, from the village of Andraz; from which, however, it is rather a heavy pull of two good hours up the steep grass slopes. Any one staying at Caprile for a few days cannot do better than make this excursion; and I believe a horse could be got over. It is too long for a single day of pleasure, so that it would be best to sleep at either Andraz or Buchenstein, returning by the Fedaya and the gorge of Sottoguda. The botanical traveller will not fail to notice the *Saxifraga crustata*, which grows on the rocks on either side of the gorge in great profusion.

Before I close this note, which I am afraid is already too botanical for some of the readers of the 'Alpine Journal,' may I be allowed to state, that, a week later, on July 23, I visited from Heiligenblut the stony slope beyond the Johannishutte, known as the Gamsgrube, and there gathered five fine specimens of *Braya Alpina*, which was mentioned two years ago in the Austrian Botanical Journal as having been extirpated from that locality.—CHARLES PACKE.

MISCELLANEA.—The Italian Alpine Club is now publishing a monthly journal under the title of 'L'Alpinista.' The annual sub-

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scription for England is 5 frs. 50 c., and orders should be sent to G. Candeletti, 3 Via Rossini, Turin. The German Alpine Club will commence this year publishing a journal appearing six times a year. The subscription (not including postage) will be 5 frs. yearly. Orders will be received at Zimmer's Library, Frankfort-on-the-Main.

Mr. Budden sends the following notes:—

The guides of Courmayeur are about to erect two huts, one on the Col du Géant, the other for the ascent of Mont Blanc, near l'Aiguille Grise. They are to be solidly constructed, about 13 ft. long and 6 ft. wide. Henry Seraphin, one of the Courmayeur guides, has considerable experience beyond his native valley, and is strongly recommended. The Minister of Agriculture has lately presented 1,000 frs. to the Italian Alpine Club for the encouragement of the replanting with trees of the mountain districts. Prince Humbert has lately joined as a life member the same Club.

The principal 'winter expedition' to be recorded this year is an ascent of the Gross Glockner made in the first week of January by Mr. W. Baillie Grohman, an account of which will appear in our next number.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE ALPINE CLUB.

December 18.—*The Annual General Meeting was held, the Rev.* T. G. Bonney, *Vice-President, in the Chair.*

Messrs. Porges, H. Stirling, M. Déchy, E. Arnold, A. C. Vesey, W. J. Nixon, A. H. Cawood, E. Dent, W. L. Watts, and A. H. Burton, were balloted for and elected members of the Club.

The following were elected officers for the ensuing year, viz.:—

President, Mr. T. W. Hinchliff; *Vice-Presidents*, Messrs. C. E. Mathews and R. C. Nichols; *New Members of Committee*, Messrs. L. Stephen, W. Trotter, C. Tucker, and H. Walker; *Honorary Secretary*, Mr. F. A. Wallroth.

Mr. F. Gardiner read a paper on an 'Ascent of Mount Elbruz, in the Caucasus.'

Mr. A. W. Moore agreed with Mr. Gardiner that Elbruz had two peaks; their relative heights he considered uncertain (see p. 121).

Mr. D. Freshfield congratulated Mr. Gardiner and his companions on their successful ascent, which had secured for the Club both the summits of Elbruz.

Mr. Gardiner mentioned that they were unable when on the western peak to distinguish any appreciable difference of height, either way, between that and the eastern.

The Annual Winter Dinner took place on the same day at Willis's Rooms, when 135 members and guests were present; the Rev. T. G. Bonney in the chair.

A large number of Alpine pictures and drawings were exhibited. Amongst the contributors of their own works were Sir Robert Collier, Mr. G. Barnard, Mr. Croft, and Mr. Smith. Mr. Blackstone also sent numerous drawings.

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