The Zillerthaler Ferner.—1. The Thurnerkamp. By R. Pendlebury.*

I FEAR it is now a little dangerous to call any portion of the Alps unknown. The Dolomite region, once a true *terra incognita*, is fast becoming quite a fashionable resort. Dauphiné, the Graians, all other once secluded districts are every year more and more visited. Yet so far, the solitude of the Zillerthal has remained comparatively unbroken, at least by Englishmen. Its recesses have occasionally been explored by members of the German Alpine Club (especially by Herr von Sonklar, whose admirable map and accurate description of the group, the results of a long series of personal observations, have lately been published in an extra number of Petermann's 'Mittheilungen,' Ergängzungsheft, No. 32), but I never heard of any English mountaineers turning their attention to the district before our own expedition, except, of course, the ubiquitous Tuckett and his party. Considering the position of the valley, lying as it does between the frequented Brenner road to the west, and the well known Gross Glockner to the east, this has always seemed to me not a little wonderful, unless on the supposition that the tourist, after devouring everything else, proposes to keep this as a *bonne bouche* to the last.

The exact configuration of the range can be better understood from a good map than from any verbal description. Roughly speaking, it may be described as a long chain extending without any deep depression from the town of Sterzing to the Tauern pass, falling abruptly on the south side to the Ahren Thal, and on the north sending out long subsidiary ranges somewhat in the shape of a fan. The valleys are, consequently, on the south side short and steep, while on the north five or six troughs start from the main range and converge together, the last great affluent joining the main stream at the village of Zell, from which place a broad open valley runs northwards a few miles to its junction with the Innthal nearly opposite Jenbach, a village about half way between Innsbruck and Kufstein. Between the most westerly of these valleys and the Brenner road lies a detached group, to which the name Tuxer Gebirge has been given: this, though separated from the main Zillerthal Alps by the Pfitscher Joch, is small in extent, and is best considered as forming a part of the larger neighbouring group. Though the absolute height of

* An account of the first ascent of the Möselenock, with Herr von Sonklar's map of the group, will be contained in the next number.

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the mountains is not great in comparison with that of the giants of Switzerland, yet the formidable steepness of the offshoots, and the perfect form of the summit of the main chain render the group, to my mind, one of the most picturesque in the Alps.

Our party in 1872, so far as the Zillerthal was concerned, consisted of the Rev. C. Taylor, Mr. W. H. H. Hudson and myself, accompanied as usual by the ever faithful Gaber. Our place of rendezvous was Jenbach, from which place we set out, on a charming evening in June, on our explorations. The drive from Jenbach to Zell is by a good road, passing through the open lower valley, and scarcely rising at all. At Zell there are several inns where good accommodation is to be had (as also at Mayrhofen, a short distance higher up), though unfortunately the place is too far from the glacier to be of much use to the mountaineer. Besides being the chief town of the district, Zell may also be considered its art-capital, and here we had our first experience of the musical abilities which have made the Zillerthal people so famous, not in Tyrol only, but throughout Europe. After we had had our supper, the waitress, who was dressed in the pretty national costume, and who felt it her duty to be communicative, after a variety of small talk, volunteered a song. She took a guitar down from the wall, and playing her own accompaniment, sang several of the peculiar songs of the country with a really fine voice of great compass. One or two of her songs were most striking, and had all the true national characteristics, though I was sorry to find at least one proof of bad taste in a wretched vocal walse, which civilization had brought even here. The walse brought up the subject of dancing, and we learned that the next day, Sunday, there was to be one of the popular balls of the district, the prospect of which was so enticing to one member of the party, that I will not say how much force we had to use next morning to compel him to quit such a paradise. The tyrannical majority were deaf to his appeals to their artistic perception, declared mountain tops much the best place to dance on, and in short carried him off. Many, however, and sad, were the complaints when on the road to Mayrhofen. We met group after group of gaily dressed country folk, all going down to the dance, and found Mayrhofen itself apparently deserted by all but the bedridden.

Near this last village is the point of concourse of the largest valleys of the district, the Zillergrund, the Stillupgrund, the Zemmthal and the valley which forms the northern boundary of the Tuxer Gebirge, viz. the Tuxer or Duxerthal. Our plans

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led us up the Zemmthal, which, between Mayrhofen and Ginzling, is contracted into a narrow defile of the most picturesque character. The stream runs through a very deep cleft, and the path rises to a considerable height above it, winding about in the most charming manner amongst trees and great boulders, and giving frequent glimpses into the valley beneath. No high mountains, of course, are visible, and as far as I know there is no place in the main valley where a view of the peaks can be got. At Ginzling, where the valley widens considerably, is a little inn, which was made our head-quarters for a time. The house was not very inviting outside, but inside we found a fairly good *stube*, perfectly clean beds, provisions which, if sometimes tainted with garlic, were always eatable, and last, but not least, abundance of beer.

On Monday, as the weather had not appeared very promising in the early morning, we walked up the hill opposite the village, on the left or western bank of the stream. It is an outlier of the Tuxer Gebirge, and our object in climbing it was to get as much of a general view of the hills as we conveniently could. There was nothing remarkable in the ascent, except that by judicious mismanagement we contrived to get on some formidably steep grass-slopes and nearly came to grief in consequence, but our expectations of a view were disappointed, partly by the clouds and partly because much of the great group was shut out by the peaks at the head of the Gunkel-kaar, a small lateral valley, the torrent of which falls into the main Zemmthal, about half an hour above Ginzling, in a fine waterfall. Among these peaks, however, we noticed one which from its position seemed perfectly suited for a point of observation, and from its shape promised a pleasant scramble. This was the Rother-kopf. It lies between the Zemmgrund and the head of the Gunkel-kaar, and was one of Von Sonklar's points of observation. The next morning, therefore, we set off to conquer it, taking our way through the before-mentioned Gunkel-kaar. After climbing into the valley by a path on the right bank of the waterfall, we found no difficulty in getting on to the secondary glacier at its head, and leaving our peak to the right reached the foot of the very steep wall which forms the side of the eastern ridge. The ascent of this wall cost us some trouble, as the snow was very steep and not equally good, and the ridge itself, along which we turned towards the summit, proved more troublesome than we could have expected; still a way was found till we reached a point about 150 ft. below the summit. Finding, then, that the snow on the final rocks was tumbling down everywhere in

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small cascades, we gave up the summit and contented ourselves with the view we already had. To obtain this would have been well worth any amount of trouble. At our feet was the head of the Zemmgrund, with its three great primary glaciers, and on the other side of the valley we had a view of as lovely a group of mountains as can be found in the Alps. Queen of all was the Thurnerkamp, the Jungfrau of the Zillerthal (as it is called by the natives), and separated from her only by the insignificant Ross-ruck Spitz the more massive Mösele serves to set off its neighbour's more delicate pyramid. To the left the ridge passes through the Horn Spitzen and the Schwarzenstein at the head of the glacier of the same name. The Löffel Spitz is hidden for the most part by the offshoot which culminates in the green slated Mörchen Spitz. It was long before we left our halting-place and descended to the nether world, taking this time the southern side, the opposite to that by which we had ascended. The descent was easy but for the bad state of the snow, in consequence of which a somewhat rash attempt at a glissade gave us the satisfaction of finding how it feels to fall with an avalanche. The avalanche luckily was not a very big one, and we managed to stop in time, though, I am ashamed to say, minus all our axes and hats. The errant property was, however, safely recovered, and using a little more caution we reached the valley in safety not far from the Waxegg châlets, and after a charming walk, *viâ* Breitlahner, passing at least three waterfalls worthy of special attention, returned to Ginzling in good time for a dinner of pork and garlic.*

Beautiful as our view had been, we had had little or no view of the Löffel Spitz, one of the principal summits of the district. This peak stands at the head of the Floiten Grund, a large side valley that enters the Zemmthal close by the village of Ginzling. Our next plan was, therefore, to explore the Floiten Grund, ascend the Löffel, and if possible to descend on the other side into the Ahren Thal, though on the latter point Ball gave us little encouragement. After Tuesday's walk, Wednesday only took us as far as a gamekeeper's hut, about an hour and a half above Ginzling, in which we passed a most pleasant evening. The hut is perched on a platform a little distance up the hill side and commands a fine view of the Floiten glacier. The night was beautifully clear, and the moon hung just over where at the head of the valley there appeared a col so inviting-looking and easy as to give us good

* The summit of the Rother-kopf can be reached without difficulty from Breitlahner.

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hopes of success in the morning. Our host proved to be an accomplished musician, and before we went to bed played to us several national airs on his zither, and played them well, though he began by apologising for want of practice and general stiffness of hands. Next morning he accompanied us on our journey. After reaching the glacier we kept along its right moraine, circumvented a portion by climbing some steep grass slopes, which were tenanted by the usual troublesome sheep, and crossed the upper plateau to the foot of our peak with no difficulty beyond that of trudging through very deep snow. The Jäger here wore a pair of snow shoes like those described by Mr. Moore in the account of his winter excursion in Dauphiné. They were formed by a hoop of cane, with cross attachments to hold the foot. Thus equipped he scarcely sank at all into the snow, and could move rapidly and easily along. The plateau crossed, we climbed steeper slopes towards the depression in the western ridge of the Löffel which is nearest the summit, but turning to the left below the arête, reached the top over some very steep slopes of snow, almost approaching to ice in hardness. Unluckily, clouds had gathered, and the only thing we could notice was that there was a great precipice to the south, and that a direct descent in that direction seemed impossible.

After a sufficient amount of freezing we descended in the direction of our ascent, and by keeping higher up and to the left struck the ridge at the depression mentioned above. After a while the mist lifted sufficiently to show us a formidably steep snowslope running down to the small glacier at the head of the Trippachthal. A descent was, however, clearly practicable, and after waiting to see our musical friend (who, being of the matrimonial persuasion, declined to come further with us) safe over some large crevasses on his way home, we descended the couloir for some distance in ladder-fashion. The slope proved nothing like so long as the mist had made it appear to be from above, and after a time we turned round, circumvented a chasm, and, racing over the glacier and down its moraine, reached a shepherd's hut on the right bank of the valley just too late to escape a drenching from a heavy shower. On our way down it seemed to us that we had found the only place where the ridge could well be crossed; the col, which from the Floitengrund looked so promising, is held up on the south by a great wall of rock, which seemed far from practicable. There may, of course, be some way, I can only say that we did not see it.

Our descent had been rapid, for it was only one o'clock when

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we reached the hut. After drying ourselves at an improvised fire, we strolled quietly down to the Ahren Thal, and leaning to the left, soon reached the excellent little inn at Steinhaus. The too seductive character of this *gasthaus* must, I fear, be our only excuse for idling away the whole of the next day, though the weather was fine. In truth there are less comfortable places where I have been glad to spend not one day but several. The scenery, if not striking, is very pleasant, and the natives, in their way, most hospitable. We made the acquaintance here of an Austrian gentleman who had something to do with the mines a little higher up the valley, and who proved a most agreeable companion. After vainly trying to teach us the pronunciation of the Sclavonic krn and vrh (that he was good enough to pronounce these awful sounds himself must prove his great good nature and self-sacrificing disposition) he challenged us to a pistol-match in his garden; though as one of us belonged to the Church Militant, and used other weapons, and another had no more acquaintance with firearms than a knowledge of the mathematical theory of projectiles, there was only one (fortunately a volunteer) who could accept the challenge. The non-combatants, however, turned out to act as chorus in the performances, the result being the Graf first, the Englishman a bad second, and two natives who had joined in absolutely nowhere.

Like most other things, this pleasant Friday came to an end, and Saturday morning saw us again in the paths of virtue, making our way back to the northern side of the range by way of the Keilbach Joch. The road begins to ascend immediately behind the inn, and crossing the chain to the east of the Löffel, descends through the Stillupgrund to Mayrhofen. Only four hours were needed to reach the summit, where we had a charming view of the Löffel close at hand, and of some high peaks to the east in the distance, though want of local knowledge prevented us from identifying them. There was no difficulty in the ascent, nor, spite of the warnings of the Steinhaus people, who sternly refused to believe in the possibility of our getting across without a local guide, would there have been in the descent had we kept to the right when near the end of the glacier instead of turning straight down. As it was we found the glacier suddenly come to an end at the top of a mass of cliffs, down which we had some difficulty in finding a way. The walk down the Stillupgrund was magnificent. Over and over again we stopped to admire the beautiful picture formed by the mountains at the head of the glacier, framed in by the steep rocky sides of the valley, down which

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poured numberless waterfalls, with a foreground of beautifully green meadows, châlets, and groups of cattle. At its mouth the valley contracts to a defile, and the path being thereby constrained to mount considerably drew from Gaber his first English joke, though I cannot determine whether a premeditated or an accidental one. Toiling up hill when the path professes to go down is a process our friend particularly detests, especially in hot weather, and so when he exclaimed in an injured tone, 'Ja dass ist Still-up! Still-up!' he certainly looked as if he meant it.

On Saturday we returned to Ginzling by the road already mentioned. From the Rother-kopf we had looked with envy and admiration on the Thurnerkamp, and determined not to leave so lovely a peak unclimbed if we could possibly help it. As, however, it seemed anything but easy, we made enquiries for a second man in the person of a local celebrity named Georg Samer (or Josele), who seemed to be the only native at all competent to act as guide. He was unfortunately busy on Monday, so that our attack was put off till Tuesday, and we filled up the time with various wanderings as our several inclinations directed. On Monday evening all were assembled at the Waxegg chalets in the Zemmgrund, and though I run the risk of seeming to scatter too profuse praise, I cannot but express my admiration of the situation of the huts. Three large glaciers (Schwarzenstein, Horn, and Waxegg) enter the valley close at hand, and the summits of the Mösele * and (I think) of the Thurnerkamp are both visible, the former from base to summit. Our sleep in the hay-shed was untroubled by any daring intruders, and at 4.0 A.M. on Tuesday we started. Rounding the spur which runs northward from the Rossruck Spitz, and passing some garnet mills, we ascended along the side of the spur, having the Horn glacier on our left, till, without any difficulty, we reach a kind of plateau directly beneath the lowest point of the ridge connecting the Thurnerkamp and the Rossruck Spitz. To reach this saddle we had a steep snow wall to surmount, bounded at the bottom by the usual bergschrund, which, at the time of our visit, was almost choked with snow. The snow had not yet been affected by the sun, so that except at the top we had no trouble. At the saddle, however, matters changed. Josele, who had led hitherto, first tried to make his way along the ridge which leads directly to the top. This was jagged and narrow, and steep enough to be difficult at any time. At this

* It seems quite practicable to climb the Mösele from this point.

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particular moment it was made doubly difficult by the quantity of snow about; so that after vainly trying to screw himself round an awkward pinnacle, Josele returned, and coolly told us that, as it was clearly impossible to get up, we might as well go back again at once. Gaber had confided to us before starting his ideas on the subject of local guides in general, and of this one in particular. 'He shall take us so far as he can, and then where other folks go not we will go;' with a most sublime stress on the *we*. The time had clearly arrived for him to act up to his bold sayings, and, truth to say, he was ready enough. Under his leadership we descended a little on the south side of the saddle, and, turning to the left, sought a way to the summit by the western face. This showed us a very steep face of mingled snow and rock. Up this we climbed, keeping as much as possible to the snow, our path being on the whole never very far from the western ridge. The climb demanded considerable care, as the face is, I should say, much steeper and far longer than the final Wetterhorn slope, to take a familiar example. Still we mounted rapidly, and struck the southern ridge not far from the summit, where we arrived at nine o'clock, five hours exactly from the Waxegg huts. Later in the year, the snow, in which we made so convenient a staircase, will probably be absent, and how the ascent will then appear I cannot say. I should think, however, that the southern ridge will always offer a practicable route to the top.*

Light mists again spoilt our view, though not completely, as on the Löffel; and the amount of available space at the top was far too small to induce us to prolong our stay there, and we therefore returned to the sattel, accomplishing much of our descent crab fashion. At the sattel we were to separate for a time. Taylor and Hudson returned by the way we had come, whilst I myself was obliged to go as quickly as possible to Botzen. My friends' route did not look particularly inviting, for the sun was doing its work, and avalanches were falling perpetually both from the Rossruck Spitz and the vanquished Thurnerkamp, on to the glaciers they had to traverse. None, however, were of great dimensions, and there seemed to be a road in the middle on which they did not encroach. We watched them down the snow-wall and across the bergschrund,

* The Thurnerkamp has since been climbed by Herren Harpprecht and Seyerlen from the south side. In a note in one of the publications of the German Alpine Club, these gentlemen express their opinion that we had not made the ascent. I can only say that they are mistaken.

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and then, with a shout of farewell, Josele and I turned southward. For some time we had nothing but a trudge knee-deep in snow till we arrived at the point where the southern ridge of the Thurnerkamp sinks to the level of the snow-field we were in. Here Josele preferred to cross the ridge and descend to the next glacier to the east, viz. that at the head of the Weissenbach Thal, and so gain the route of the Trattenbach Sattel, a course to which I had no objection, as I thereby obtained a complete view of both sides of the latter pass. To reach this glacier, however, we had to descend a long snow slope, and thereby had some additional excitement; for the instant Josele set his foot on it, the whole of the surface snow broke away, and thundered down in a tremendous avalanche. This turned to our favour, for the old snow was exposed, and, jumping into the track of the avalanche, we descended swiftly behind it in perfect security to the lower glacier. By keeping too much to the right, under some low cliffs, we ran a little danger of falling stones; but this could have been easily avoided by more care. The end of the glacier was then reached without any difficulty, and we had a long, apparently endless, but very beautiful, descent down the right bank of the valley to the village of Weissenbach. Thence a pleasant walk took us to Taufers, in the Ahren Thal, an entrance to Brunecken, where I parted from Josele. The evening train carried me on to Botzen, in which place, after a day or two of bad weather on the Tuxer Gebirge, Taylor and Hudson rejoined me.

So ended our Zillerthal journey; in which, from first to last, there had been nothing but pleasure. The scenery is often extremely beautiful, and the natives kind; the musician or student of folk-lore can find ample opportunity for investigation and profit; and, last, but not least, except a few members of the German Alpine Club, nobody goes there.

The Ampezzo-Cadore-Auronzo Passes.

By M. Holzmann.

HAVING in a former paper* given an account of the passes in the district N. of the valley of Auronzo, I now propose to describe those on its S. side. The area may be divided into three groups, viz., the Croda Malcora group to the W., the Marmarole group to the E., and the Antelao group to the S. Whilst no doubts can arise regarding the

* See Alpine Journal, vol. vii. p. 9.

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