water, good drainage and a little sunshine, the admirer of Alpine nature will be able to gather together many, though not all, of his favourites round his own door.

To him I need not, I am sure, point out how much more interesting are these children of the snows than the ribbon-streaked rows of half-bred geraniums and calceolarias associated with the system of bedding-out.

A PLEA FOR NORWAY. By Lord Garvagh.

A good deal has been said lately about the exhaustion of the Alps, and it has even been suggested that its work being complete nothing is left for our Alpine Club but to lay itself down quietly and die. In the recent discussion on this subject, a mountain-country almost as near to us as the Alps has been, it seems to me, too little taken into account. To those who have done Switzerland, made all the proper ascents, and tried, perhaps, some of the improper ones, I venture to suggest a new field for their exertions.

It is comparatively but seldom that any article appears relating to the unfrequented ranges of the Norwegian Peninsula, which form as it were the bulwark of Northern Europe against any encroachment on the part of the Atlantic. Yet these mountains are scarcely to be surpassed for wild gleaming beauties and vivid grandeur by any other region of the whole globe. Such, at least, is my experience after living many months among them at different periods. Even after Switzerland, I find that I return to Norway with increased attachment, as to a home and country which though comparatively tame and familiar, never ceases to be fresh and invigorating.

In Switzerland there is a limit to the wild mountain districts one is accustomed to traverse; but in Norway the pleasures of a mountain life are inexhaustible, and the territories that one is at perfect liberty to dwell upon, in hut or tent, are often bounded only by the sea, and present, with their snow and ice-fields, a for ever-changing variety of scenery.

Whether we try the Fille Fjeld, Dovre Fjeld, Sogne Fjeld, or any of the other ranges that compose the backbone of the Scandinavian Peninsula, with Galdhoppigen, Gausta, or Sulitelma, as points visible from far on the horizon, to make for in their several districts; or the different glaciers between Hallingdal and Hardanger, where my observations have been chiefly made—such as Ornsbrœen, Vargebrœen, Hardanger Yokulen, Stor Skavlen, with Vosseskavlen, and Hallingskarven (names more familiar to my ears than Snowdon, Plinlimmon, or any other mountain in England), we find from their summits the same unlimited expanse, infinity of wild grandeur, and apparently everlasting succession of other distant ranges, rising one beyond another, in the cærulean blue of distance, like waves of some gigantic onward-moving sea. Amongst glaciers, I ought to mention that of Justedal upon the Sogni Fjord, perhaps the largest; and that of Folgefond on the Hardanger

Fjord, which seems to alter its appearance every year. But these features, however interesting, do not constitute the irresistible fascination of Norway, or the superiority which I claim for it over the other mountainous countries of Europe, Switzerland not excepted. It is the *air*, a charm peculiar to Norway that no other land can give, and the benefit of which, live roughly as one may upon the mountains, no hardship is able to take away. Upon the Alps, the air in comparison is sharp and biting, without being in reality so fresh; for it has been carried over thickly-populated lands by every wind, whereas the pure influence of the Gulf Stream on Norway fills the atmosphere with wholesome elements which, in all weathers, make that peninsula more healthy than any other part of Europe. So lasting, moreover, is Norwegian air in its effects, that it may fairly be compared to the fabulous 'Elixir of Life' sought after vainly in past ages by the alchemists; but discovered in our own on the mountains, where it can be partaken of without the assistance of any alchemy, breathed pure and simple, and inhaled without fear or scruple.

Norwegian travel has its hardships as well as its pleasures. I have been where the wind gathers up sheets of driving snow from the frozen surface, and lifting, whirls it round and round with dazzling beauty in the sunshine; where, at night, violent gusts drive the frozen particles into one's face with stinging force, covering head and shoulders as with a white garment. I have been where the only dwelling that offered shelter was covered with snow, and appeared with rows of pointed icicles just like an Esquimaux hut, save for the heads and horns of reindeer stuck outside, each with a snowy burden. The return of fine weather will change the whole scene, cause waterfalls to rush down the faces of the cliffs, leaving bridges of solid snow over torrents which have been set free, and lighting up tunnels under huge masses of ice with the loveliest colour of transparent blue, through which the purest of all pure water dashes with sparkling brilliancy, and noisy echo to its constant roar.

As for the people, their life is primitive, their character obliging, honest, extremely hospitable, and sincere. To these qualities the Norwegian adds also a degree of hardihood and endurance, the result of the life which he has led from childhood. Dwelling on the borders of a frozen region, traversing continually its snowy heights, and listening from infancy to the conversation only of deerstalkers and huntsmen, out perhaps for days and nights upon the chase, in keen pursuit of reindeer, he becomes insensible to danger, and capable of ceaseless toil. As guides, I have found Norwegians always to be trusted. They are invariably patient, civil, competent, and well informed as to local topography; and I never knew a single instance of dishonesty or drunkenness. I speak with the experience of four successive seasons, during which no less than twenty-one have been employed either as boatmen, carriers, or guides.

That part of Norway sometimes called Finmark, but commonly known by the name of Lapland, which is remotely situated in the extreme North, is occupied by a race of people whose appearance, language, and mode of life are entirely unlike what we find elsewhere in the Scandinavian Peninsula. In this people some have discovered a

resemblance to the Gypsies; some have even fancied them to be descended from the lost tribes of Israel (!); but there can be no doubt they represent the aboriginal inhabitants of Norway before the Scythians or followers of Odin, whose descendants are the present Scandinavian race, came in and drove them, as the Saxons drove the Celts, into the most remote and inhospitable extremities of their own land. Here, however, the Laplanders seem perfectly contented, declaring themselves happy in possession of, and unwilling to take any exchange for, the enjoyment of their wandering mode of life. With no habitation whatever but his tent, an abode that may be shifted from place to place at will, wherever fancy, caprice, or inclination may tempt him for a while to live, the Laplander has no care in life but for his herd of tame reindeer, which provide him with the means of travelling, with clothing for all seasons, with food and drink at all times of the year, milk daily, venison, and the warmest fur. Of their sinews he will manufacture cord and string; as also from the horns he will make spoons, and so on; each family of Laplanders requiring, therefore, a herd for its support of no less than three hundred reindeer or more, which live only upon the moss that is named after them. This moss is found more abundantly in Sweden than in Norway; but in the former country it is much less used, by reason of the climate, which is far colder in Norway, where the land is higher, healthier, and more adapted to their wants. The Laplander takes particular delight in the society of his own family, to which he is deeply attached and towards which he exhibits, especially if there are young children, the tenderest affection.

Anyone who wishes for such a life as I have described, and is prepared for the light hardships which it involves, ought to be completely independent, and not rely upon the country for night's lodging or supplies, but have his own tent and necessary outfit. In the far North he will be rewarded by the contemplation of some of Nature's most glorious phenomena; by scenes of grandeur pure and holy, enough to make a turning point in one's whole life, an epoch to look back upon. In summer-time he will see the midnight sun; in winter, if able to endure it, the weird magical effect which makes all nature seem to lie spell-bound by some enchantment, when colouring the sky with a million rainbow hues it is seen over vast, endless territories of untrodden snow,—the Aurora Borealis. In no part of the world, I believe, can scenery be witnessed more glorious, ennobling, or sublime; no country of Europe will be found more healthy in its influence, or profitable to wander over, with tent and guides, than Norway.

ALPINE NOTES.

THE CIMA DI JAZZI FROM MACUGNAGA.—The following letter has been received:—

To the Editor of the Alpine Journal.

'DEAR SIR,—I notice in the "Alpine Journal" for November last an account of an ascent of the Cima di Jazzi from Macugnaga, by