

tion, contributed not a little to the effect of the whole, bringing now a building, now a group of trees, into startling vividness of outline. In every direction on the distant hills fires blazed, while, as if to show how easily Nature could surpass art, blue summer lightning flashed up every few minutes from behind the hills on the eastern shore of the lake, paling the ineffectual fires of the illumination. Whether it was the interest of this additional spectacle, attracting attention in opposite directions alternately, or through some mismanagement, the tiny steamer presently began to roll in a most threatening manner, as the spectators on board shifted ever so little from one side to the other. It had not developed any such crankiness in the afternoon, when the crowd of passengers was far greater; and the ladies were not ill-pleased when the cruise was over, and with it the day's entertainment.

If the members of the Alpine Club desire to know what took place at the meeting which occupied the whole morning of August 14, they may find a full report in the interesting narrative of M. Descostes, Secretary of the Chambéry section of the French Alpine Club. To explain why no account can be given here at first hand would be to unfold a melancholy tale of misconduct on the part of the representatives of the Club, of amiable weakness in the one officially bound to work through the programme, of insidious temptation on the part of his unofficial colleague. The heat, moreover, was enough to roast all sense of moral obligation out of us; to stroll at a mile an hour through the quaint shady streets was labour severe enough to demand repeated iced drinks; what would it have been to sit in a crowded meeting, with ice everywhere (in the papers read), and not a drop to drink in beer or lemonade!

The Prefect cut the morning's work a little short by inviting some dozen of the leading men in the French Alpine Club and the foreign representatives to a most sumptuous *déjeuner*; his welcome was as warm as the weather, and his champagne as cool as we could have wished to be. How the energetic gentlemen fared who left his hospitable table to 'personally conduct' the parties which started immediately afterwards for three or four different mountain excursions, we are again unable to record, for the entire English contingent started that afternoon for Chamonix. But if one may judge by the fury and duration of the storm which burst upon us before we reached St. Martin, there must have been a good many wet jackets among the *ascensionnistes* that evening. But the sky was clear again before morning, and the sunrise views from the Parmelan and Tournette must have been grand indeed if they surpassed the view of Mont Blanc which was before our eyes as we ate our early breakfast in the balcony of the little inn at St. Martin.

H. B. G.

ALPINE NOTES.

DENTS DES BOUQUETINS.—Dear Sir,—I have pleasure in making a correction of some remarks in my last article relating to the first ascent of the Dents des Bouquetins. The remarks referred to were founded

on the repeated assurances of my guide, M. Anzevui (the Judge), who seems to have taken advantage of a very small basis of fact to throw doubt on an ascent which, after the details given by Mr. Hamilton, everyone will admit was practically complete. My experience is another proof that before accepting a guide's version, however circumstantial, of an earlier ascent, it is always desirable to consult those he has accompanied. I need not say that I much regret not to have had an opportunity of talking the matter over with Mr. Hamilton before the article appeared.

Yours, &c.,
A. Cusr.

Mr. Hamilton's note is subjoined.

DEAR SIR,—In your interesting account of your ascent of the Dent des Bouquetins, published in the last 'Journal,' you say, on the authority of the Judge, 'The gentleman who made the first and only previous ascent was contented to remain at this point'—that is a point some distance below the summit. And again, 'The Judge on that occasion unroped himself and went on alone to the top.' You must have been misinformed, as these statements are inaccurate.

I made the first ascent with Anzevui and Vuignier (the tailor), and we hit the last ridge almost exactly at the gap you mention ('A. J.' p. 140), probably a little lower than you did. We all three went on to the summit, there being no reason why we should not do so. When on the top Anzevui unroped himself and built a stone man on the literally highest point. My card passed from my hands into his when he was actually alongside the cairn. This shows that the point where I stood was, to all intents and purposes, the summit. Considering it so, I did not think it necessary to take my stand beside Anzevui. He invited me to do so, but I declined, with a remark to the effect that it would be mere bravado, and that there was not room for me to remain there while he was building the cairn.

In the case of a second-class peak the question of priority is of no great importance. Yet, as an account of my ascent has already appeared in the 'Journal' (vol. vi. p. 28), I ought not, I think, to allow a doubt to be thrown on it, without explaining the facts, and I therefore, with your consent, propose to forward a copy of this letter to the editor for insertion among 'Alpine Notes.'

Yours truly,

A. B. HAMILTON.

THE GRANDE CASSE.—Dear Sir,—Your correspondent, M. Henri Cordier, in a note in the 'Alpine Journal,' No. 54, on an ascent of the Grande Casse, describes a point some distance from the summit as 'no doubt the spot where Mr. Mathews stopped.' M. Cordier is mistaken.

When I made the ascent in August, 1860, the snow arête extended to, and covered, the highest rocks, and overhung the great mural precipice which descends to the Val Champagny. This was the summit which we reached, and there was no other. But as the weight of our party would have inevitably brought down the cornice, we were compelled to halt when our heads were about five feet below the crest of the arête.

In the autumn of 1860 the snow on the high Alps was exceptionally

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heavy; in any other season, and especially after the lapse of 16 years, the snow arête may have been very different from the form in which I found it.

Yours, &c.,

WM. MATHEWS.

Feb. 9, 1877.

TITIAN AND THE ITALIAN ALPINE CLUB.—The '*Adriatico*,' a Venetian newspaper, gives some details as to the monument to be erected to Titian on the tercentenary of his death at Pieve di Cadore, his native place. It will consist of a statue raised on an ornamental pedestal. The figure, which is spoken of with high praise, has been designed by Signor Antonio dal Zotto, a Venetian sculptor. It is somewhat over life-size. 'The whole effect of the figure is full of life, and expresses at the same time the calm repose of age, the natural vivacity of the artist, and the dignity of genius. It will stand with the face turned towards the cottage in which he first saw the light, and on whose walls—as tradition tells—his youthful hand traced the first lines; the proud and keen pinnacles of the Marmarole which, true artist and true Cadorin, he never forgot, even among the homage of the great, will form a worthy coronet behind his head.'

The pedestal, which will be 12 feet in height and of white marble, is from the designs of Ghedina, the painter of Cortina d'Ampezzo, known to all visitors of the '*Aquila Nera*.' The statue will be cast by the brothers De Poli, of Vittorio.

Titian is sometimes called 'the first painter of mountains.' Anyone who has studied the works of Bellini or Cima da Conegliano at Venice knows this claim to be untenable. But it is true that in the pictures and drawings of the Cadorino, mountain scenery took a new prominence in art. The Italian Alpine Club, by holding their annual meeting this year at Auronzo, in August, so as to allow Members and their guests to take part in the ceremony at the public erection of the monument, intend to pay an appropriate tribute to this side of the great painter's genius.

It may be hoped that the meeting will have the effect of introducing many Italians to a part of Italy to which, as yet, they have not done justice. In England Mr. Ball, Mr. Gilbert, Mr. L. Stephen, the author of '*Zigzagging amongst Dolomites*,' Miss Edwards, and Mr. White have dwelt on the fantastic beauties of the Venetian Alps. In Austria Dr. P. Grohmann and others have climbed and mapped them. We doubt if there is even a guidebook description of them in Italian.

There will also be a meeting of some sections of the Italian Alpine Club at Gressoney on the 2nd of August, at which Members of Foreign Clubs are invited to be present.

THE WEISSMIES FROM SIMPLON TO SAAS.—Mr. and Mrs. E. P. Jackson and Mr. J. H. A. Peebles, with Peter Schlegel, Ulrich Rubi of Grindelwald, and Jean Martin of Vissoire, as guides, passed the night of August 16 in the chalets at the head of Laquin Thal.

On the following morning they crossed the Laquin Glacier above the ice-fall, taking the rocks facing the NE., and on the right of the snow couloir. Three rocks were followed as directly towards S. as possible, occasionally varied by snow slopes (steep and in bad condition, requiring care) until a cornice was reached, which had to be cut through, landing

them on the northern arête, and they then gained the summit by an easy ascent in about 20 m., descending to Saas by the Zwischbergen Pass.

It is advisable to sleep out and start early, as numerous stones and large masses of ice begin falling very soon after sunrise, making dangerous an expedition otherwise extremely enjoyable and not too long.

SCHOBER THÖRL.—Captain Clayton desires to call attention to the eligibility of the Schober Thörl as a route from Kals to Lienz. The way cannot be missed; the scenery at the head of the Debaut Thal is fine, and the walk through the forests in the lower part of the valley very pleasant. Times: From Kals to summit of Pass, 5 hrs.; thence to Lienz, 7 hrs., walking up easily with long halts.

SCHLOSS WEISSENSTEIN.—Dr. Joseph Drexler writes from Vienna to recommend Schloss Weissenstein, a quarter of an hour distant from Windisch-Matrei, at the SW. base of the Glockner group, as a pleasant resting-place. 'The large pile has been recently restored and accommodated for the reception of tourists and families. It is situated on an elevated crag, only accessible from the E. by a char-road, and commands an imposing view of the whole valley and the surrounding mountains. The apartments are comfortably, some of them even elegantly, furnished, the garden laid out with taste, and the woods are quite close to the house. The fare is excellent, and cleanliness and neatness prevail. There are steam, cold, and shower baths, and a mineral spring. "Pension" is two florins, exclusive of rooms and wine. The collection of old weapons may interest an antiquarian, and the mineralogist will be surprised by a sort of iron pyrites of fuscous aspect and brazen fracture; they are said to be found nowhere else.

'The neighbourhood is rich in Alpine allurements. I would only mention the Kalser Thörl and the Tauern Thörl; the path to the former has been improved, and made practicable for horses. It offers to the east views of the Gross Glockner and Schober Gruppe, to the west of the Venediger, and a whole series of other highly respectable acclivities. From the Pragerleiter, in the Tauernthal, the Gross Venediger can be easily ascended.

'Strangers are warned not to be deceived by the jealousy of the new establishment which prevails among the neighbouring innkeepers and their servants.'

ERRATA.—Mr. Coolidge sends the following list of corrections in his recent paper, based on the lately published French map:—

- P. 58, line 26, for '2,898' read '2,893.'
 " " 27, after '2,887 mètres' insert 'Puy Gri (2,960 mètres).'
 " " 28, for '2,827 mètres' read '2,709 mètres.'
 P. 59, " 17, add: 'The new "Carte des Frontières françaises," just published, gives an admirable and accurate survey of the ground included in this paper. Vide ten sheets named "Allervard," "S. Jean de Mau-rienne," and "Bourg d'Oisans."'
 " " 28, for '2,550' read '2,558.'
 " " 29, " '2,902' " '2,802.'
 " " 30, " '2,930' " '2,936.'
 " " 30-1, for 'Roche du Bond Basse (2,996 mètres)' (this last name is very indistinct in the copy of the map) read 'Roche du Bon-homme (2,908 and 2,896 mètres).'

- P. 59, line 32, for 'sinks suddenly' read 'runs on.'
 " " 32 and 38, for 'Crenier' " 'Grenier.'
 " " 32, for '2,390 mètres' read '2,890 mètres.'
 " " 33, *dele* 'again.'
 " " " for 'Lellard' read 'Pellard.'
 " " 34, " '2,836 mètres' read '2,886 mètres.'
 " " " '3,030' " '3,035' "
 P. 60, " 1, " '2,833' " '2,633' "
 " " 21, " 'Buille' read 'Buffle.'
 " 64, " 5, " 'Laus' " 'Lauze.'
 " 97, " 4 in 'New Expeditions,' for 'June 24' read 'June 23.'
 " 98, " 13, for 'Combe de Val Froide' read 'Combe Froide.'
 " 99, " 25, " '15' read '5.'
 " 100, " 22, 24, for 'Alvan' read 'Alvan.'
 " 101, " 8 from bottom, for 'Lepénu' read 'Lépéna.'
 " 106, " 19, 21 from bottom, for 'La Tour Noire' read 'Le Tour Noir.'
 " 115, " 4, for 'August 17' read 'August 7.'

REVIEW.

LES FASTES DU MONT BLANC.*

WE find in this volume two inconsistent statements of its design. By the title and the preface, written in this case by the publisher, we are led to expect a monograph of Mont Blanc. On the other hand, the author, in his epilogue, says very honestly that he makes no pretension to have written a history of the mountain, and that his aim has been simply to seek out and string together the most interesting records of French ascents. It is in keeping with this that the existence of any route to the top except by the Grand Mulets is only shown by a single remark on one of the last pages. A book thus limited may possibly be accepted at Chamonix as a history of Mont Blanc; but it is astonishing that anyone living at Geneva should put it forward in such a light.

The opening chapters throw a welcome gleam on the early annals of Chamonix before its so-called discovery in 1743. We hear of proofs of Roman presence in milestones, in remains of an aqueduct (?) found in cutting the new road from Sallanches, and in an inscription discovered near Passy, recording the passage of a Proprætor. In 1091 A.D. Aymon, Count of Geneva, gave to the Abbey of St. Michael de la Clusaz, 'omnem campum munitum, cum appendiciis suis, ex aqua quæ vocatur Desa et rupe quæ vocatur alba usque ad Balmas'—all the fortified plain, with its appurtenances, from the torrent called the Desa (Diosaz), and the rock called the 'White Rock,' as far as Les Balmes (Col de Balme). M. d'Arve translates 'le champ fortifié par la nature,' and 'Mont Blanc;' and it is tempting to follow him. But we confess to doubts whether 'munitum' was likely to be used in that age in the sense he gives it, and may not rather refer to some arti-

* *Les Fastes du Mont Blanc: Ascensions célèbres et Catastrophes depuis M. de Saussure jusqu'à nos jours.* Genève: Librairie A. Vérosoff. 1876.