

ALPINE NOTES.

WINTER MEETING AND DINNER.—The Winter Meeting of the Alpine Club will be held in the Club Rooms, on the evening of Tuesday, December 13. The Picture Exhibition and Winter Dinner will take place in Willis's Rooms, on the afternoon and evening of Wednesday, December 14. Loans of pictures, photographs, &c., for the Picture Exhibition will be gladly welcomed, and it is specially requested that all communications relating to such loans may be sent *as early as possible* to the Honorary Secretary of the Club, W. F. Donkin, Esq. (142 Sinclair Road, Hammersmith, W.)

TETNULD AND GESTOLA.—Questions of mountain nomenclature, in a region still but little known, can have but the faintest interest to the vast majority of readers of the 'Alpine Journal.' We need only, therefore, with reference to Mr. Freshfield's 'Skeleton Diary' (p. 364 of the present number) and a foot-note on p. 232 of the current volume of the Journal, state briefly the following three conclusions:—(1) That the peak ascended by Mr. Freshfield should be known as Tetnuld. (2) That the peak we ascended last year should be known as Gestola. (3) That the name 'Totonal,' by which Mr. Freshfield's peak is marked in our map (facing p. 258, *supra*) should be dropped altogether.

CLINTON DENT,
W. F. DONKIN.

ASCENT OF KILIMA-NJARO.—This great volcano, the highest mountain in Africa, has been ascended for the first time by Dr. Hans Meyer, of Leipzig. It was obvious from the beautiful drawings brought home by Mr. Johnston, that the upper part of the mountain presented no serious mountaineering difficulties, and that the failure of the English artist to reach a higher point was due entirely to his want of mountaineering ambition or experience.*

The ascent took Dr. Meyer six days. On the first he reached the upper level of the forest, on the second Johnston's camp, on the third the snow level where Dr. Meyer's native companions turned back. On the fourth day the traveller—it is not stated if he had European companions—traversed broken lava-fields to the foot of the mountain; on the fifth day the crater was climbed; the sixth was spent in photography and collecting. It is to be hoped that this very meagre account of a most interesting expedition will soon be supplemented by fuller details.

Dr. Meyer estimates the height of Kilima-njaro at 6,000 mètres, or 19,686 feet. There appears to be a glacier in the crater of the mountain.

ON THE ITALIAN SIDE OF THE MATTERHORN.—On July 9, 1887, J. B. Aymonod, J. B. Perruquet, and J. B. Maquignaz discovered a new way up the last precipice on the Italian side of the Matterhorn, and on July 31 ropes were placed on this new passage. With Emile Rey and Aymonod I descended that way on September 14,

* *Proceedings of the Royal Geographical Society*, March 1885, pp. 137–160.

having come up from Zermatt. We started not far from the Swiss summit. The ropes do not go straight down, but are fastened in a diagonal direction. It takes from forty to fifty minutes to go down carefully, and the old route is rejoined in half an hour more by a nearly horizontal traverse along the rocks to the right.

PAUL GÜSSFELDT.

THE NEW INN AT LA BÉRARDE.—This little inn, which has been some years in building, definitely opened its doors on July 1 last, and on July 3 Mr. Gardiner and I had the honour of being the first travellers received under its hospitable roof. We were weatherbound there till July 6, and were far more comfortable than in the old auberge chez Rodier, though of course things were still in a state of confusion, and huge packages were continually arriving with various luxurious additions to the simple furniture. In order to see what it was like when everything was organised and ship-shape, I went there again on September 7, and was again, oddly enough, weatherbound till September 9. Matters had greatly improved since my former visit, and the inn can now take rank with the smaller Swiss inns in remote valleys, such as Ried, or Gruben, or Zinal in the old days. The beds are good, the rooms scrupulously clean (all former visitors to Dauphiné will appreciate the full meaning of this), the food excellent and well cooked, and the prices moderate. The manager, young M. Auguste Tairraz, of the Montenvers Hôtel, has had exceptional difficulties to cope with in addition to the usual troubles of a first season; but he has achieved wonders in a marvellously short space of time, and only needs a little more encouragement in the shape of more visitors to carry out still more extensive plans. La Bélarde has never seen a larger number of strangers than this summer, and I hope that now a really comfortable inn exists there, more members of the Club will find their way thither, for I have no hesitation in saying that, so far as my experience goes, there is no finer mountaineering centre in the whole of the Alps. The facts that two English ladies were able to stay at La Bélarde, the one for three and the other for four weeks, while no less than eight ascents of the Meije were made, show the vast change for the better which the opening of the inn has brought about. All honour is due to the indefatigable Société des Touristes du Dauphiné, who have built the inn, and to M. Tairraz, the enterprising and most courteous manager.

W. A. B. COOLIDGE.

ALPINE ACCIDENTS.—The following circular has been sent to the various Alpine Societies in Austria. It is dated August 10, 1887, and proceeds from the Police Department of the Ministry of the Interior:—
'In consequence of the repeated fatal accidents to tourists making high ascents, the Minister of the Interior has found himself obliged to consider the question whether any administrative measures can be taken with the object of prohibiting inexperienced tourists from undertaking dangerous ascents where there is no good footpath, unless they are accompanied by tried and licensed guides. It might also hereafter become necessary to revise the regulations as to mountain guides in such a manner as to ensure the security of travellers on the higher mountains. In order to clear up these questions it seems desirable

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that the views of the Alpine Societies interested in promoting the welfare of tourists and strangers should be laid before the Ministry of the Interior. I therefore, by order of the Statthalter of Lower Austria, beg to inquire of you what regulations should, in the opinion of your Society, be issued to prevent the recurrence of fatal accidents in the Alps, and request an answer at your earliest convenience.'

To consider this circular a meeting was held of the committees of the Austrian Alpine Club and of the Austrian Tourist Club (the 'Section Austria' of the German and Austrian Alpine Club being unable to take part in the proceedings). A long memorandum was drawn up and sent, explaining the great difficulties of making such regulations, and the manner in which, even if they attained their object—which is very doubtful—they would put a stop to the increasing number of visitors to the Austrian Alps. The committees expressed themselves willing to discuss the question further with the Ministry.

On these proceedings (which we summarise from the account given in No. 226 of the 'Oesterreichische Alpen-Zeitung') we have only one remark to make. Prohibition, absolute or partial, of making high ascents would only increase the evil which it is desired to remedy. Public attention would be more than ever drawn to the subject, and all adventurous young fellows would feel strongly tempted to break such regulations for the pleasure of breaking them. The only real and effectual remedy is that the Alpine Clubs should do all they can to impress people with the fact that climbing is a skilled occupation, and that, as in all similar occupations, want of skill, due to ignorance or carelessness, must have fatal results.

Herr C. W. Pfeiffer has published in the 'Mittheilungen des D. und Ö. Alpenvereins' (October 1, 1887) a set of statistics as to fatal Alpine accidents which seems very valuable. Based on the table given by M. Guisan* many additions have been made (up to the end of August 1887), and several cases have been struck out where the persons killed were not *bonâ fide* travellers, or guides, or porters; or where death ensued from illness, not from anything directly connected with mountaineering. It usefully completes Mr. C. E. Mathews' well-known 'Alpine Obituary.'†

The results are that from 1856 (1859 is a misprint) to 1887 (inclusive) 50 guides (or porters) and 121 travellers, or in all 171 persons, lost their lives while making 116 expeditions in the Alps. According to date the deaths may be thus classified:—1856–1869, 30 (19 travellers and 11 guides); 1870–1879, 52 (32 and 20 respectively); 1880–1887, 89 (70 and 19): the curious fact being that while the number of travellers killed has rapidly increased, that of the guides killed is slightly falling. Adopting Herr E. Zsigmondy's division of dangers into objective (where the traveller's will has no influence—*e.g.* stones, avalanches, cold, bad weather) and subjective (slipping, falling through corniches, or into crevasses), the numbers are 43 and 128; of these 171 deaths, 2 and 11 respectively, occurred where there were no guides in the party, and the ascent was a difficult one.

* *Echo des Alpes*, 1885, p. 240.

† *Alpine Journal*, vol. xi. p. 86.

Herr Pfeiffer's further investigations lead him to the conclusion that of the 128 deaths due to 'subjective' dangers the majority (92) are due to slips (of which 44 in relatively safe places), and that ten lives only have been lost in consequence of not being roped, or being badly roped. He draws attention to the extraordinary inexperience and carelessness of many who nowadays make high ascents which formerly were only attempted by tried men and with every precaution. He adds a few very severe remarks on climbing without guides, which in many recent cases have been simply foolhardy. The editor appends some excellent comments on the folly of the mania for solving what are now called 'Alpine problems,' that is ascents of peaks by every side and ridge, however dangerous and steep; and recommends all meditating such 'extravagant' expeditions to go alone and without guides. It is also pointed out that the mere fact of being a peasant or a hunter does not constitute a man a good guide, and that gentlemen possess many of the qualities required for being a good guide. A rather alarming suggestion is thrown out as to the possible effect of a gentleman applying for and obtaining a licence as a guide! The whole article is well worth reading.

THE SWISS 'JAHRBUCH' ON THE BORCKHARDT ACCIDENT.—It will be remembered that early in the present year Herr Wolf published a pamphlet on the circumstances attending the death of Mr. Borckhardt on the Matterhorn in July 1886. We gave a summary and short criticism of it at the time, and now the new volume of the Swiss 'Jahrbuch' has a long, interesting, and instructive editorial notice of the same pamphlet. The writer looks at the matter from a point of view midway between the excessive praise bestowed on the guides by Herr Wolf and the severe blame attributed to them by Herr Lorria. He is of opinion that Herr Wolf's statement, that the conduct of Aufdenblatten and Kronig was above all praise, is far too sweeping, and is not justified by facts. He sums up the question in the following words of very great importance, as coming from the editors of the official publication of the S. A. C.: 'The guides, as appears from Mr. Davies' testimony, fulfilled their duty admirably so far as they recognised it; but being relatively young and inexperienced they did not recognise what their first and chiefest duty was. They did not deliberately neglect or violate their duty, but they did not fully take in the extent of their duty.' ('Es liegt also in keiner Weise eine bewusste Pflichtverletzung vor, sondern eine mangelhafte Pflichtenkenntniss.') 'They began the descent too late to bring help to Mr. Borckhardt, and yet too soon for them to close the eyes of the dying man.' Herr von Falkner's conduct is also blamed. It is pointed out that his belief that Mr. Borckhardt's two guides called out for two more men and blankets, while they maintain that they frequently shouted out for aid, may perhaps be excused because of his possible ignorance of the language in which they spoke, though he must have known that it is the custom in Zermatt to send up a rescue party on the second day, and therefore ought to have sent one of his men not down to Zermatt, but up to the party in distress.

We understand that, notwithstanding Herr Wolf's indiscriminate

praise, both Aufdenblatten and Kronig have voluntarily given up their position as guides. It is doubtless in consequence of the accident of 1886 that the Valais government have published a remarkable new code of regulations for guides, according to which each traveller must, in the case of any of the great ascents, take two guides (not a guide and a porter), two travellers three guides, and so on; while considerable hindrances are thrown in the way of non-Valais guides exercising their profession in that canton. These and other points in the code are doubtless well meant, and may secure tourists from bodily harm; but to climbers of any experience they will prove very burdensome, and are certain to appear very ridiculous. As heavy money penalties are to be inflicted in case these regulations are violated, it is certain that either the average Valais guides will soon find themselves in the same position as regards employment and reputation as the average Chamonix guides, or that these rules and penalties will become a dead letter. It is stated that the latter alternative has been adopted by several men last summer, and we are not surprised to hear it. These regulations are imitated from those in force at Chamonix, which have produced unexpected and evil results. The Chamonix rules have often been mentioned unfavourably in these pages, and are once more severely criticised (in consequence of his own experiences) by Mons. J. Vallot in the current 'Annuaire du Club Alpin Français,' pp. 81-85. In the 'Echo des Alpes' (1887, No. 3, pp. 240-7) the new Valais rules are ridiculed and a strong protest recorded against their remaining in force.

FINSTERAARHORN BY THE S. ARÊTE FROM THE CONCORDIA HUT.—Ulrich Almer, his brother Hans, and I starting from the Concordia hut on August 4 this year, followed the ordinary route to the Finsteraarhorn as far as a point (about 1 hr. above the Viescher Glacier) where it is usual to cross some rocks on the left to the snow-field beyond. Here we bore to the right and, skirting the foot of the great S.W. buttress, kept nearly due east, and arrived at the bergschrund underneath two snow couloirs, which are very noticeable from the Grünhorn Lücke. Mounting by the red-coloured rocks between them, we reached the S. arête in 1 hr. from the schrund. Thence to the summit was a grand climb of 2 hrs., the last narrow couloir up the actual peak (which, by-the-bye, is only a few yards to the W. of the arête) taking about twenty minutes. It is, of course, essential that the weather should be fine and the rocks free from snow and ice, but it is indeed a grand excursion, and enables one to traverse both arêtes with an excellent and much-frequented hut as a base. Our time from the Concordia hut to the top was $6\frac{1}{2}$ hrs., including halts, but we started early with a brilliant full moon and frosty air, as we were *en route* to Grindelwald by the Agassiz Joch.

GEORGE H. MORSE.

[Messrs. Farrar and Blezinger in 1883* and Herr Bodenehr in 1884† started from the Oberaarjoch hut and (like the 1812 party)

* *Alpine Journal*, vol. xi. p. 368; *Zeitschrift des D. u. Ö. Alpenvereins*, 1883, p. 503.

† *S. A. C. Jahrbuch*, vol. xx. p. 459.

reached the S. arête of the peak from the E. side. Mr. Seymour Hoare in 1877* started from the Rothloch and probably also reached the S. arête from the E. Mons. H. Cordier in 1876† started from the Rothloch and reached the S. arête by the W. side to the S. of the point marked 3,237. Mr. Morse's route seems to have been practically the same as Mons. Cordier's, but is likely to become popular as the distance from the Concordia hut to the S. arête is much less than that from the Oberaarjoch hut. A start from the Concordia hut shortens the 'traverse' of the Finsteraarhorn in point of time, and makes it possible to double the pleasure without making a great *détour*.]

THE KILCHFLUH PASS, OR SAUSGRAT.—A pass in the Bernese Oberland, as to which Mr. Ball‡ asks for further information—and Tschudi§ is very vague—may, even though it be not a snow pass, deserve a few lines in these pages, especially as it affords a variation on the well-known tracks from Lauterbrunnen to the Gemmi district. This is the Kilchfluh pass, or Sausgrat, which I crossed on June 13 of the present year, accompanied by young Christian Almer, who knew as little about it as I did, so that the map was our chief guide. Starting from the little inn at Isenfluh (1 hr. above Zweilütschinen), we followed the cattle track to the S.W. (part of the time in the splendid forest), which brought us at length to the left bank of the roaring Sausbach, just at the entry of the glen of the same name (1.5). Crossing the stream, steep zigzags led up to the upper valley at the Flöschwaldweid (20 mins.). This is for a time nearly level, the Sausmatten huts being a little way on. Instead of taking the path to the Ober Saus Alp indicated on the map (for it apparently led up and over very precipitous rocks), we kept to the well marked stony path on the left bank, by which (having passed a very fine waterfall) we gained the glen to the N. and W. of the Mettlenberg ridge (1.35). Being rather uncertain as to our position, we clambered up to the latter grassy ridge, passed round a hillock crowned by a cairn (no trace of the Ober Saus Alp ever being seen), and followed the ridge to the end of the valley as far as a very conspicuous isolated boulder ($\frac{3}{4}$ hr.). A faint and steep track to the right led us to an upper stony plateau ($\frac{1}{4}$ hr.), whence rocks and many snow-fields (probably non-existent later in the season) brought us ($\frac{3}{4}$ hr.) to the pass immediately to the N. of the Kilchfluh peak (2,834 mètres). The most remarkable features in the view were the Schwarzhorn (near Grindelwald), the Schilthorn (close at hand, quite like a big peak), and the green trench of the Kienthal. Slopes of soft snow, followed by a rock precipice, led down in fifty-five minutes to a big, new, wooden hut (Hohkien), seen from afar. It was then found necessary to bear far away to the left (S.), when a very winding and very stony path led down the really remarkable precipices which wall in the upper end of the Spiggengrund, the level valley being reached in 1.5 from Hohkien. The walk now became more agreeable, as the Spiggengrund is grassy and the parts well wooded. One of two bridges must be crossed to gain the

* *The Pioneers of the Alps*, p. 96. † *Alpine Journal*, vol. viii. p. 264.

‡ *Bernese Alps*, pp. 95, 96 of the 1875 edition.

§ P. 90 of the 1887 edition.

right bank of the stream, for the path bears away to the right high above it, in order, after passing through some very fine rock scenery, to descend into the Kienthal, the village of that name being gained in 1.50 from the further end of the Spiggengrund. After the village the char road ascends, though one is descending the valley, and leads to Reichenbach; but, as our destination was Frutigen, we took (55 mins.) a side path on the left to the hamlet of Kien (15 mins.), whence a dreary tramp, generally slightly uphill, brought us to our night quarters, at the Adler in Frutigen (1.25). Our times were thus: 4½ hrs. up, 6.25 down. But they are slow, as it was our first long walk of the season. I cannot say that the pass is very interesting, though there are many fine precipices and waterfalls on the way; but it is very lonely and unfrequented, so that though close to the Schilt-horn one might imagine oneself to be in some very remote district of the Alps, and not between two of the beaten Swiss tracks. The height of the pass is not very much less than that of the Kilchfluh pass.

W. A. B. COOLIDGE.

NEW GOVERNMENT SURVEY OF TYROL.—Our readers may remember that for the last twelve years, ever since its first publication, complaints have been constantly made in these pages by Mr. D. Freshfield, Mr. Holzman, and other travellers of the unsatisfactory character of the last survey of the Tyrol. These soon found an echo in Austria from the numerous tourists who now frequent the Eastern Alps.

But it is not often in our British experience that Government officers lend a ready ear to external criticism. We are glad, therefore, to find in the *Oesterreichische Alpenzeitung* the following announcement; and we cordially unite with Herr Meurer in his thanks to the directors of the survey for their resolve, and his hope for its speedy execution:—

‘In order to bring the maps of Tyrol into complete correspondence with those of the rest of the Monarchy, and to eliminate the errors of the first edition, the Directors of the Military Geographical Institute have determined to instruct their officers to make an entirely new survey of the Tyrol, and to construct on the basis of this survey new maps on the scale of 1:75,000. The survey will be completed in 1888, and the new maps given to the public at the earliest possible moment.’

REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

The Pioneers of the Alps. By C. D. Cunningham and Captain W. de W. Abney, R.E., F.R.S. (London: Sampson Low. 4to. Nearly 50 illustrations in permanent photo-engraving. 2l. 2s.)

It will probably be admitted that mountaineers, in describing their expeditions, have been by no means niggardly in their praises of the guides who have accompanied them, and have so largely contributed to their pleasure, safety, and success. Yet it was well that a special and permanent record of *la vieille garde* of the army of Alpine conquest