yonder, across the semi-tropical vegetation of the valley of Anahuac, that glittering ice-peak of Iztaccihuatl is nearly 1,000 ft. lower than the Swiss giant whose hoary head looks down on many dreary months of hard winter, and a few weeks of oft-interrupted summer.

'From the tropical city of Vera Cruz, situated but nineteen degrees north of the equator, and sweltering the year round, with the thermometer in the nineties, we look up at the eternal snows of Orizaba, the summit of which, the Professor tells us, is not 15,000 ft. above us.

'That Orizaba, and not Popocatepetl, is the highest of the Mexican giants, I have always been inclined to believe. Seen from the summit of the latter, at a distance of at least 80 to 100 miles, it still appears the higher, and I was struck by the same evident fact when I made the ascent of Iztaccihuatl on November 9 last.'

REMSEN WHITEHOUSE.

In April 1888 Herren J. Felix and H. Lenk, who were driven back by a storm when about 500 ft. below the peak, had measured it trigonometrically at 4,800 m. = 15,754 ft.* It is to be hoped that the White Lady is not going to share the fate which has been predicted for another North American mountain—viz., become a mere depression in the ground.

ACCIDENTS IN 1890.

THE past season has been more fertile of accidents than any since the fatal year 1882. Happily we have to deplore the loss of only one member of our Club—indeed, of only one Englishman. But the brotherhood of the mountains is not limited by speech and language; nor will the members of foreign clubs doubt that we sympathise with the sorrow which the loss of valued colleagues must have caused to them. The special point, however, which will strike everyone who reads the accounts of the recent disasters will be the almost unprecedented number of guides who have perished. Between June 24 and September 12 no less than nine guides, some of them among the very first in their profession, and at least two porters, have lost their lives—eight while actually employed, one while on his return after completing the tour for which he was engaged. Another, though with a party, was at the moment separated from them; and both these were undoubtedly due to want of precaution on the part of the unfortunate men. But the remaining seven, and the two porters, seem to have died literally in harness, with the rope round them and their sacks on their shoulders. Except in 1870, when three travellers and eight guides perished in one storm on Mont Blanc, there has never been in one year such a tale of slaughter among those who earn their bread by helping men from the lowlands to climb mountains. At the same time, we have no right to be greatly surprised. Practised mountaineers have long foreseen something of the kind—if mountain-climbing

* *Oest. Alpen-Zeitung*, No. 300, p. 166.

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was to continue 'in fashion.' One does not wish to speak too severely of errors which have been so heavily atoned for; but it may safely be said that if three at least of the tourists who have, as the German euphemism has it, been 'unlucky' this year, had paid attention to the maxims which Mr. Stephen and others have inculcated, four worthy peasants would still be alive to support the families who depended on them.

The following accidents occurred above the snow-line, or in situations which place them distinctly within the category of 'Alpine' accidents:—

June 24.—Herr R. Poppe, from Saxony, ascended the Similaun (11,830 feet) in the Oetzthal, with Peter Paul Gstrein. The mountain is perfectly easy, and, as a rule, free from danger. This year, however, a cornice had formed over the N. face, which falls precipitously for some 1,500 feet to the Marzoll Ferner. It is believed that they reached the top, and that on the descent the tourist, walking too near the edge, broke through, and dragged the guide, who probably was in front, down with him. P. P. Gstrein was one of the oldest guides at Fend. His name appears in several accounts of first ascents made in the Oetzthal before and after 1870. Though never a 'brilliant' man, he was a steady guide, and knew his own district well.

July 31.—Dr. Edward Mayer, a well-known Vienna barrister, ascended the Kitzsteinhorn (10,515 feet), in the Kapruner Thal, with J. Schernthaler, of Kaprun. He was accompanied by his son, a lad of sixteen. They were not heard of for some days. A search-party was organised, and all three were found lying dead on the Grubalm- or Schmiedinger-Kees. They appeared to have begun the descent by the eastern ridge, a route which is said to present some difficulties. Here Dr. Mayer, who was an elderly man and very short-sighted, would seem to have slipped, or his son, who was quite unpractised, may have slipped. The condition of the guide's hands bore witness to the efforts that he had made in vain to save the party under his care.

On the same day Andreas Untersteiner, of Windisch-Matrei, after taking a tourist across the Venediger from the Defregger (or, according to another account, the Prager) to the Kürsinger Hütte, started at noon from the latter spot to return by the Obersulzbachthörl and Dörferkees to his own valley. As he had not appeared by the next day but one, a party of four guides went to look for him. They traced him on to the Dörferkees, after which the tracks were lost in new snow. His body was not found, but there can be little doubt that a crevasse of the Dörferkees holds it.

August 12.—The guide Gratien Brunod, of Pré St.-Didier, accompanying SS. Carones and Rochetti, of the C. A. I., across the Col du Géant, slipped while filling a bottle with water in a couloir not far from the hut, and fell a distance of 1,000 feet on to the Glacier de Toule. Another guide who was with him caught at him as he fell, but unluckily succeeded only in holding his watch-chain. When the rest of the party reached him he was quite dead.

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August 18.—Count Umberto di Villanova, with Antonio Castagneri, of Balme, Jean Joseph Maquignaz, of Val Tournanche, and two porters, left the *cantina* of Visaille to ascend Mont Blanc, it is supposed by way of the Chaut des Pesses and Dôme du Goûter. They, too, have not been seen since. A search of the most elaborate kind has been made for them, an account of which may be read in the *Rivista Mensile* of the C. A. I. for August and September; but, in spite of one or two very circumstantial rumours of their discovery, there seems no doubt that not only have their bodies not been found, but that even the spot where they lie cannot be conjectured with any certainty. So far as suppositions go, the most probable seems to be that they were caught on the ridge between the Aiguille de Bionassay and the Dôme by the fearful storm which raged on Mont Blanc during August 18 and 19, and (possibly) hurled by it on to the Glacier de Bionassay.

Of Castagneri Mr. Coolidge has written on another page. Maquignaz, born in the same year as his friend J. A. Carrel, was equally well known, especially in connection with early ascents of the Matterhorn. But there were few regions of the Western Alps which he had not visited, often in company with Castagneri. He was great at winter expeditions, and had ascended at that season Mont Blanc, Monte Rosa, the Lyskamm, the Grand Paradis, and others. He also led the first victorious party to the top of the Dent du Géant, an achievement specially gratifying to the patriotic pride which seems to have been one of his most marked characteristics.

August 25.—Jean Antoine Carrel died of exhaustion after bringing Signor Sinigaglia down in safety from the hut on the Italian side of the Matterhorn through a terrible snowstorm. The story is told in full by Mr. Whymper in another part of this number.

September 13.—Herr Goehrs, a young man from Strasburg, started at 3.30 from the new Matterhorn hut to ascend the peak. His guides were Alois Graven, of Zermatt, and Joseph Brantschen, of St. Niklaus, both young men also. Not far behind them was another party, Herr Dames, of Frankfort, with Fridolin Burgener and Peter Knubel. Towards 9 o'clock Herr Goehrs and his guides had reached the shoulder, and met the full force of a northerly gale which was blowing. Unable to face this, they decided to turn back. The lower party seem to have come to the same decision about the same time, and to have halted or gone slowly to let the others overtake them. A quarter of an hour later, Burgener, who was at a little distance from his companions, heard a clatter, and saw Herr Goehrs and his guides falling through the air within one hundred yards of him. Their bodies were found on the Furggen glacier. The cause of this accident will never be known, but it seems probable that the party were descending too fast for safety, that a slip took place (whether, as has been suggested, owing to the photographic apparatus which the guides carried, or from whatever cause), and that all three lost their hold. Herr Goehrs seems to have been almost entirely devoid of experience in Alpine work; and the guides, though said to be promising young

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men, can hardly have been properly qualified to take a beginner up the Matterhorn.

Of accidents below the snow-line, the most noteworthy to Englishmen will, of course, be that by which Mr. Macnamara so unhappily lost his life. Mr. Cornish has given a full account of it. On June 24 the Abbé Lombard slipped and fell into a torrent-bed on the Croix de Belledonne, near Grenoble, while gathering flowers; and on August 3 Herr Ferber, a post-official of Pontresina, fell over some rocks on Piz Languard while running after his hat, which had blown off. Any of these three accidents might, as has been said, have happened in Wales or the Lake country.

THE ACCIDENT IN THE MADERANER THAL.

I FELT that it would be fit and proper that my version of this accident, whereby the Alpine Club lost a valuable member, and many of us personally a good and loyal friend, should be reserved for the pages of the 'Alpine Journal.' Several inaccurate and misleading accounts and comments have appeared in the papers, but, with the exception of a letter addressed to the 'Times' to correct some glaring misstatements, I have not taken any notice of them. Anyone who has been similarly circumstanced will know how peculiarly painful a discussion in the newspapers is at such a time. I regret, however, that I did not at once correct an unintentional error which occurred in the first announcement. The statement that we were 'running down a grass slope' unfortunately gave rise to the natural impression that the accident was due to carelessness on our part. This was not the case. We were working as carefully at the time of the accident as at any other time during the climb, and I can testify that Macnamara was a very careful climber. I am not writing as an apologist for climbing without guides, but I wish in the first place to distinctly disavow any idea of bravado on the part of my poor friend or myself in going without guides. Our original summer programme, settled long previously, was to attempt the aiguilles near the Montanvers with first-rate guides. The loss of our chief guide's services, when, as it seemed to us, it was too late to secure a good substitute, led us to abandon our more ambitious projects, and to entertain the idea of doing a little guideless climbing among the lesser peaks in the neighbourhood of the Maderaner Thal, which had been recommended to us for that express purpose. In the second place, I do not think that the warnings of the landlord have anything to do with the matter. His warnings, as far as I know, exclusively referred to the mountain proper, and especially the last part of the ascent, which we found particularly easy, and which in the case of experienced mountaineers, as we both were, presented none of the alarming difficulties into which we might be supposed to have wilfully and blindly entered. The accident by which my poor friend lost his life happened well below the snow-line, and was not specially 'Alpine.' From my experience, I should say that the same thing might have easily happened on the hills in Wales or the Lake district. In a

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