ACCIDENTS IN 1892.

THE accidents of the past year, above the snow-line, were not many in number, as compared with those of some recent years; but a remarkable feature of them is the high proportion of cases in which the whole party perished, making it impossible for the exact cause and place of the disaster to be ascertained. That only one Englishman lost his life this year in the Alps is a subject for congratulation among ourselves—*pace* the French writer (if we mistake not), who called the expression of a similar sentiment a year or two ago 'un peu trop John Bull,' or words to that effect. Surely, the country in which a man has most friends is that in which he is likely to be most regretted; and, if so, the fewer we lose of our friends the more cause we have for congratulation. So many, and so full, accounts of Mr. Nettleship's death have appeared, that it is only necessary here to record the fact that it took place, on August 25, between the Aiguille and the Dome du Goûter, as the result of exposure during many hours to a storm; and to repeat, with emphasis, the remark made by Mr. C. E. Mathews, in a letter to the *Times*, that it was the extreme of imprudence for the guides to have left the hut on the Aiguille in the face of the impending storm. If they could not tell that a storm was impending, it speaks ill for their qualification to be guides at all.

On some day between July 25—when the party left Fend—and August 1, when the bodies were found, Father Eugen Zelniček, a Cistercian monk, and his guide Rochus Raffeiner, of Karthaus, lost their lives on the Spiegelkogel, it would seem by the breaking of a cornice. Raffeiner was a local guide of considerable experience; but it seems as if nothing would impress the danger of cornices on the mind of the average Tyrolese. The accident on the Similaun in June, 1890,* was of just the same kind. In the present instance the bodies were only found owing to the accident of a tourist catching sight of them through a telescope from the neighbouring Ramolkogel.

On August 14 three tourists from Saxony started for the Alpeiner Ferner, in the Stubai Thal, without a guide, probably intending to cross the Schwarzenberg Joch. At some point, spoken of merely as the 'Oberer Berg,' they fell from rocks, with the result that one was killed and the other two severely injured. As there is no spot on the Schwarzenberg Joch where any catastrophe of the kind would be at all likely, they would seem to have lost their way.

On August 18, Herr Brock, of Berlin, started from Degioz for the Grivola, with the guides François Bich and Adrien Proment. Another party, who made the ascent on the following day, found traces of them on the summit. Descending on the E. side, they saw nothing to suggest that an accident had taken place; and as no one at Cogne had any reason to expect the arrival of Herr Brock's party, no surprise was excited by its non-arrival. The first alarm seems to have been given by Mme. Brock, who received no news of her husband,

* Vol. xv. p. 273.

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and Proment's father, who was anxious about his son. Finally, the elder Proment, accompanied by the clergyman of Cogne and several guides, went on the 29th in search of the missing men, and finally discovered their bodies buried under a mass of snow and rocks—actually, it would appear, in a snow-bridge over the bergschrund, at the foot of the great couloir, on the eastern face of the final peak. It is thought that, being belated, they may have been hurrying down this way with insufficient caution, and so have started an avalanche, or, possibly, a spontaneous fall of stones brought about the disaster.

The Fünffingerspitze, in the Langkofel group, the ascent of which (described in another part of this number) has become fashionable in the last two years, has already claimed its victims. On September 6 Herr Egon Stücklen, of Stuttgart, with Josef Innerkofler (a kinsman of Michel Innerkofler, who lost his life in 1888 on the Cristallo) started from St. Ulrich to make the climb. As they had not returned by nightfall, a search was instituted, with the result that on the following morning the bodies of traveller and guide were found at no great distance from the col between the Fünffingerspitze and the Grohmannspitze. We understand that a good deal of new snow was lying about at the time, and it would seem that Innerkofler, who was a bold and successful climber, cannot be acquitted of rashness in taking a tourist up the Fünffingerspitze in the existing state of the rocks.

An accident, of which we have seen no details, is alleged to have occurred on the Grand Casse early in July. Two officers of the Alpine *Chasseurs*, with an *adjudant* and a private soldier, appear to have been struck by a mass of ice on that mountain. One of the officers, Lieut. Porcher, and the *adjudant*, Rosier, were killed.

These appear to have been all the specifically Alpine accidents during the past summer; but there has been the usual series of disasters in the lower regions, from 'picking edelweiss' and the like, for which we must refer readers to the columns of the 'Rivista,' the 'Oesterreichische Alpen-,' and 'Touristen-Zeitungen,' and other periodicals.

On the subject of Alpine accidents, we would call attention to an article by Herr L. Friedmann, in No. 358 of the 'Oesterreichische Alpen-Zeitung,' dealing primarily with the accident on the Fünffingerspitze, but containing many remarks of general application, and well deserving to be considered.

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