CORRESPONDENCE.

S. A. C. HUTS.

To the Editor of the ALPINE JOURNAL.

Neuchâtel: 18 juillet 1896.

TRÈS HONORÉ MONSIEUR,—Le Comité Central du Club Alpin Suisse a pris connaissance de la lettre de M. W. C. Compton, dans le numéro de Mai de votre estimable revue. Il a immédiatement pris des mesures pour remédier, dans la mesure du possible, aux inconvénients signalés par votre honorable correspondant, et fera tous ses efforts pour que les abords des cabanes du Club Alpin Suisse soient à l'avenir d'une parfaite propreté.

Recevez, très honoré monsieur, l'assurance de notre haute considération.

Au nom du Comité Central.
LE SECRÉTAIRE,
DR. MECKENSTOCK.

THE GERMAN-AUSTRIAN ALPINE CLUB AND THE USE OF THE ROPE.

To the Editor of the ALPINE JOURNAL.

SIR,—There is an obvious slip in your correspondent's letter with regard to Tyrolese guides. The accident referred to, which happened more than twenty years ago, was not on the Königspitze but on Monte Cevedale. It could not have happened had the rope been properly used. I once walked up the slope on which the fall occurred, and it is nowhere steep. Indeed, on the spot the catastrophe seems hardly credible.

The issue by the D. und Oe. Alpenverein of any Circular or Rules such as your correspondent suggests is improbable; but there is no doubt that their instructions have not been universally understood by guides or tourists, that the pernicious habit of going two on a rope is of old standing in Tyrol, has been constantly practised on the Gross Glockner,* and, though condemned by some of the best German and Austrian mountaineers, has not been effectively put down in the Eastern Alps. I suspect that the origin of the story told by your correspondent's guides was a misunderstanding on their part of the instructions given at one of the *Führerkurs* which are often held in the Eastern Alps. Three years ago a Trentino guide transmitted to Mr. Clinton Dent and myself some very curious instructions as to mountaineering precautions, which he professed to have derived from a lecture at a *Kurs* at Botzen. It was only on our offering to sign our names as past and present Presidents of the Alpine Club that he became reconciled to crossing a small snowless glacier without rope or crampons.

I am, yours obediently,
DOUGLAS W. FRESHFIELD.

* See Mr. Comyns Tucker's note, *Alpine Journal*, vol. vi. p. 151.

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[We are sorry that, owing to a misapprehension, arising in the transfer of the Editorship, our editorial note on Mrs. Dickinson Berry's letter was not otherwise worded. Besides Mr. Freshfield's letter, printed above, we have received communications from several of our own members. It appears that we have involuntarily done an injustice to our Austrian colleagues. We therefore take the earliest opportunity of expressing to them our regret. *Editor* A. J.]

THE ALPS OF NEW ZEALAND.

To the Editor of the ALPINE JOURNAL.

College House, Christchurch, New Zealand :
April 20, 1896.

SIR,—Mr. FitzGerald must not think that I wish in any way to *underrate* his work out here, for, honestly, such is not the case ; my point is that I fear he is *overrating* the value of his expedition, from a *geographical and topographical* point of view. By so doing he causes the hard work of years by many men here to be underrated, and in justice to your members in this remote corner and to the New Zealand Alpine Club I must ask you to permit me to reply on this subject.

I wrote before in the full expectation that when Mr. FitzGerald saw the facts he would correct, or at least modify, his claims. Instead, however, of doing so he tried to substantiate them and made rather an unnecessary attack on my good faith, which I shall deal with later.

With regard to his claim to be the first man to find and cross a pass over the Southern Alps, I pointed out that numbers of passes had been found during the last thirty-five years, and he meets this by saying, ' Only one (pass) refers to the Southern Alps of New Zealand, the rest all being on other ranges,' and again, ' The coach road which joins Christchurch to the Western Coast does not in any sense cross the Southern Alps.'

In reply to these two statements I can only say that never have I heard such an astonishing idea put forward. If Mr. FitzGerald really believes what he says he is labouring under a grave mistake, which goes to the whole root of the controversy. The Southern Alps of New Zealand have always been considered to extend from Harper's Pass, at the head of the Hurunui River, down to Haast's Pass, in the far south. Mr. Green understood this.*

The Southern Alps include at least eight distinct districts, and of these Mr. FitzGerald was working in the best known. Concerning the others far less is recorded than in the Tasman district. Should it be allowed that a man may reduce the limits of a recognised chain of mountains, every one could so define those limits as to exclude all previous passes and raise a *new* pass to the rank of a *first* pass.

* See *The High Alps of New Zealand*, p. 69.

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Now, sir, I wish to distinctly state that I, in common with others, have a great admiration for the ascents made here by Mr. Fitz-Gerald and his guide, for they did in one season the same number of good peaks as we have done in four or five seasons without guides. And the New Zealand Alpine Club was the first to acknowledge the good record, and have, I trust, learnt valuable lessons in *peak-climbing* from Zurbriggen's mode of work. So do not let any one suppose that I wish to underrate Mr. FitzGerald's work.

When I say that he overrates the value of his results I mean that he claims (unintentionally, I believe) exploration and discovery in a district already explored; and I must protest against his work being admitted as *exploration.*

The Tasman, Mueller, and Hooker Glaciers have been so overrun by visitors that he cannot possibly claim any topographical discovery concerning which we are ignorant, or which one of us has not already recorded or discovered before he came out. This, therefore, reduces his claims of exploration and discovery to the route *via* FitzGerald's Pass or the return journey *via* the Fox Glacier.

With reference to the first, when I stated that he had not referred to those who had explored the district before his arrival I was not aware that he had been shown by, and discussed with a member of the Club (*a*) Brodrick's map of the Hooker valley, (*b*) Fyfe's photograph from the Footstool, taken in January 1894 (just above the pass), showing the Douglas and Copland valleys. These two facts, combined with the fact that *he took with him over the pass a map made by Douglas of the whole Copland and Douglas valleys*, which he handed to me afterwards, in my opinion do away with any claim of exploration or discovery. I grant every credit of having *first crossed* the pass, but that is only valuable as an Alpine record, but from a topographical standpoint the passage was valueless, for anyone seeing these two maps * and Fyfe's photograph could see the *details* of the whole route at a glance.

As to his having found 'for the colonists the easy and direct pass they have so much wanted' (to quote the President, p. 9), I submit he has not done so.

That the range had perpetual snow on the eastern side we knew for years, and is shown in photographs from the Ball Pass, and that condemns it as not meeting the Government requirements.

Douglas in his report,† after returning from the Douglas valley—for he *did* go some way up it—mentions this pass as being 'free of snow when I saw it first; but in ordinary seasons the usual winter fall might not melt, and this pass may be considered to be covered with perpetual snow.' But it made no difference what the western side was if the *eastern* side failed in its conditions, and those who had worked on the Canterbury side had stated for years that it failed to do so. Douglas's exploration was under the Westland Survey Department, and was really unnecessary so far as the

* See *New Zealand Survey Reports*, 1889-90 and 1892-3.

† *New Zealand Survey Report*, 1892-3, p. 45.

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col was concerned. The fact is that no such pass as they require exists, and we have proved it by our work, so the Government must make the best of this pass. Had they known that no other was available this would have had to be adopted in 1892. Surely when the route has been *explored on both sides* by independent parties it is rather hard that because a third person, using their maps, *crosses* he may take the credit of exploration and discovery. He would hold an Alpine record, but no more.

As far as the return journey is concerned I submit no capital can be made out of it for exploration or discovery, though by this route there was a little more ground actually untrodden; and though Mr. FitzGerald and I were the first to cross the range by this route both sides of the pass had been previously explored. I had during the year 1894 explored the Fox and Victoria Glaciers.* I had reached and explored the head of the Francis Joseph,† and Fyfe and Graham had ascended the col from the Tasman,‡ while I also had been within 30 minutes of it on that side in 1890. It was my duty and interest, when with Mr. FitzGerald, to note new topographical discoveries, but I do not hesitate to say, as a practical explorer, that this pass added nothing to our former knowledge. This, again, is only valuable as an Alpine record.

I feel sure that had Mr. FitzGerald enquired and read about previous work in and knowledge of this district he would never have made such claims to exploration and discovery as we have seen at the A. C. and R. G. S. His notions concerning the extent of the Southern Alps alone shows great want of enquiry.

He may have found many errors in existing maps, but we also have found these and many others, and have also recorded them. It is only owing to there being no new issue that the maps continue as before. There is an immense amount of information in the Hokitika Survey Office of details large and small, as yet not transferred to the standard map; but it is there, and was recorded before 1895. A few minor details only need correction. So far as I myself am concerned I am sorry that Mr. FitzGerald should suspect my veracity concerning Mr. Brodrick's and others' ideas of a pass *via* the Copland, and I could easily convince him were he here.

As to his charge that I neglected to record certain names, I can only say that the only three names we gave I duly recorded in Hokitika. It is rather far-fetched to talk of 'right and privilege' in this instance, for I had been on the ground the previous season, and named every feature in my opinion worth naming. This route is detailed in my diary on date April 7, 1894.

I do not consider that any attempt at 'splitting straws' or argument will be an answer to these statements. I have made for six or seven years a close study of the work in the Southern Alps, and this district in particular. I know every glacier in this locality intimately, and my facts cannot be disputed. It is not a case for

* *Alpine Journal*, vol. xvii. pp. 326, 327. † *Ibid.* vol. xvii. p. 559.
‡ *Ibid.* vol. xvii. p. 200.

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dispute, because the records will speak for themselves, and I am only stating facts with no object of belittling Mr. FitzGerald's work, but merely to show that we are not so behindhand in our topographical knowledge that he can have made all the discoveries he claims. Had not the President showed in his address how erroneous an impression had been conveyed I should possibly have said no more. And, sir, I think you and Mr. FitzGerald—when he sees these plain facts—will be ready to admit that his grand climbs and first ascents in an already explored district can hardly be admitted on the *broader basis of exploration and discovery*. To send additional proof at this distance is difficult, but I shall be glad to furnish it should it be required.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

ARTHUR P. HARPER.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE ALPINE CLUB.

A GENERAL MEETING of the Club was held in the Hall on Tuesday evening, May 5, at 8.30 P.M., Mr. Charles Pilkington, *President*, in the chair.

Mr. R. J. MORICH was balloted for and elected a member of the Club.

The PRESIDENT regretted to have to announce that a very old member of the Club, Captain Marshall-Hall, had died suddenly on April 14. Up to the last he had taken a very active interest in the objects of the Club, having devoted himself specially to the study of glacier movements. He endeavoured to obtain information on the subject from every quarter of the globe, and a few days before his death was engaged in writing an article for the 'Alpine Journal,' which unfortunately he left unfinished.

Mr. SCHUSTER was sure that, in expressing his regret, he was only echoing the feelings of all members of the Club. Captain Marshall-Hall was one of those who considered that the duty of members was not only to climb, but to collect information as far as possible in all departments of mountain science. His example might well be followed by others, especially the younger members.

Mr. E. A. BROOME read a paper on 'The Weisshorn from the Schallijoch.'

Mr. SCHUSTER thought it was many years since a paper had been read on any of the familiar mountains visible from the Riffel, and this paper had brought back the old spirit of the Club. He considered it very creditable that Mr. Broome had found a new route up an old mountain, and one so full of climbing interest.

The PRESIDENT said that eighteen years ago he had set out for the expedition just described by Mr. Broome; but he had given it up, as his two guides thought it was not possible. He proposed a very hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Broome for his paper, which was cordially given.

The PRESIDENT then drew the attention of members to the new

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