refreshers, is adopted. Let him by all means test his treatment, and that on no *corpore vili*, but, if not too late, on Sir Martin Conway himself on the Bolivian Andes.

I have written in the desire to further, as far as lies in my power, a full, exact, and fruitful discussion of the whole question. To my own opinion, however, I attach no great importance. As I have often said before in these pages, the researches involved call for physiological experts, who, unlike Dr. Hepburn, are 'concerned particularly' in the matter to be investigated. But they must also be practical mountaineers and patient readers of mountaineering records, as well as of the researches of foreign observers, otherwise their dicta can be of very little scientific value. When the results of Mr. Dent's stay at the Cabane Vallot are given to the world we shall possibly know more than we do at present, and may even be provided with a scientific and final substitute for 'rarity of the air,' which I shall be the first to accept. For I cannot believe that Dr. Hepburn's theory that the human frame is not frequently affected by the condition or composition of the atmosphere at heights under 17,000 ft. will meet with any acceptance among mountaineers or physiologists. I am, Sir, yours obediently,

DOUGLAS W. FRESHFIELD.

Appin, Argyllshire: July 25, 1898.

ALPINE NOTES.

MOUNTAINEERING IN THE ANDES.—We take the following from the 'Daily Chronicle' of July 16:—

'*Mountaineering in the Andes.*—Reuter's Agency is informed that Sir Martin Conway left Southampton by the Royal mail steamer "Don," *en route* for Bolivia, where he intends to explore the high group of the Andes containing the peaks Illimani and Illampu (or Sorate). He is accompanied by the Alpine guides Antoine Maquignaz and Louis Pellissier, who made the first ascent of Mount St. Elias, in Alaska, last year with the Duke of the Abruzzi.'

MONT BLANC BY MONT BLANC DU TACUL AND MONT MAUDIT.—This route is likely to be more often followed in the future, since the Midi hut has been rebuilt and furnished by M. Vallot. And it is obviously the natural route to take from Montenvers. On the first day, instead of the tedious way by the Plan des Aiguilles to the Grands Mulets, you have the séracs of the Géant (always 'interesting' in the ordinary, if not in the special, sense of the word), and then the splendours of the Vallée Blanche, and the wonderful view from the Aiguille du Midi, where you may linger at your pleasure, for the hut can easily be reached in an hour from the summit.

This hut is now in excellent condition, furnished with rugs and every requisite by that benefactor of his kind M. Vallot, so that one only needs to take up food and fire wood. It may be worth while to mention this, for Mr. Whymper's 'Guide to Chamonix' (1896) merely states that 'the cabane is said to be uninhabitable,' and in July last I could get no information as to its condition from

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the Bureau des Guides at Chamonix. The only drawback is that it is floored with ice; and unless a broken hinge has been made good it is to be feared that the winter's snow will find its way in through the doorway. On July 19 we spent a night there in comfort, though a violent storm came on, which drove us down again to Montenvers next morning. The furious gusts, with intervals of breathless calm, and the driving snow, certainly tested the stability of the hut most thoroughly, and proved that it was quite weather-proof, in spite of its exposed position. But in its position lies its great charm, and when we returned there ten days later the weather so favoured us that we spent the day, from 10 A.M. till dusk, basking on the rocks and enjoying the splendid and varied view. The hut, it should be mentioned, stands 1,686 ft. above the Grands Mulets, and commands a wide prospect to the N.W. over the hills of Savoy to the Jura, and to the S.E. over Mont Emilius into Italy, while close at hand are the fine precipices of the Aiguille du Midi, and the 2,000 ft. of snow-slopes that fall steeply from Mont Blanc du Tacul. The magnificent sunset was of the type with which M. Loppé's pictures have made us familiar.

Next day (July 31), the snow being for the most part in fair condition, we gained the top of Mont Blanc du Tacul in 2 hrs. 10 min., and next the spacious col to the S.W. of it, over those vast, wind-swept downs of snow that are so characteristic of the upper slopes of Mont Blanc. Here the 'Climbers' Guide' is certainly misleading. 'Follow the ridge for some time' (p. 105) I judged could only mean, 'Follow the N.E. arête of Mont Maudit.' This we proceeded to do, though Albert Supersaxo shrugged his shoulders; and this variation from the usual route—which lies away to the right—entailed much labour in step-cutting on him and his brother Benedikt. In fact, the passage of this arête from the col to the summit of Mont Maudit cost us 3 hrs.' work, and I fancy it has not often been followed. Midway rises an intermediate summit, to gain which we had to traverse some formidable slopes, the snow lying loose on ice or on very steep rocks. Beyond it the arête was still more heavily corniced, which compelled us to cut our way across a steep ice-slope in a chilling wind. Our reward was in the wonderful glimpses we got from time to time of the Brenva Glacier, far below, but it was a relief to find that the last slope leading to the sharp rocky summit of Mont Maudit was of good, firm snow. We basked there for an hour in the sunshine, and I fancied all was now plain sailing, but it cost us nearly an hour and a half of step-cutting in hard ice to win the Col de la Brenva. However we found a staircase ready hewn for us up the Mur de la Côte, and gained the summit of Mont Blanc at 1.30. The wind had fallen, and we lingered there till nearly 3, visiting the outcrops of rock of La Tourette and the Courmayeur ridge, and marvelling to see a large crevasse open just below the summit on the N. We came down by the Bosses and Grands Mulets route, reaching the Pierre Pointue in exactly 3 hrs. from the summit, without in any way unduly hurrying ourselves. The actual time spent in going (from the Midi hut to Chamonix)

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was 13 hrs., to which must be added 3½ hrs. for halts on Mont Blanc du Tacul, Mont Maudit, Mont Blanc, and the Pierre Pointue. An expedition of more varied interest it would be difficult to devise. J. S. M.

THE FIRST ASCENT OF JÆKKEVARRE.—Mr. Hermann Woolley writes to us to point out that he did not take part in this climb, though the account in the 'Alpine Journal,' No. 139, p. 65, conveys the impression that he was one of the party.

MR. WHYMPER'S 'GUIDES.'—We are glad to see that the 'Chamonix Guide' has reached a third and the 'Zermatt Guide' a second edition. They seem as far as possible to have been brought up to date—*e.g.* on p. viii of the latter we find a notice that the inauguration of the cabane on the Col de Bertol is fixed for August 6, 7, and 8.

MONTE ROSA.—The Rev. F. T. Wethered writes to us to point out that the statement in 'Alpine Journal,' vol. xix. p. 153, that Mr. E. S. Kennedy ascended Monte Rosa in 1854 is liable to misapprehension, as the point really climbed was the Ost Spitze, the lower pinnacle of the Dufour Spitze.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE ALPINE CLUB.

A GENERAL MEETING of the Club was held in the Hall on Tuesday evening, May 3, at 8.30 P.M., Mr. Charles Pilkington, *President*, in the chair.

Messrs. G. L. Collins and R. F. Norton were balloted for and elected members of the Club.

On the motion of the President, seconded by Mr. Horace Walker, Sir H. Bergne was elected a member of Committee in place of Mr. J. Heelis.

The PRESIDENT said: 'When at our last meeting I spoke of the death of Mr. James Heelis, as creating the first gap in an old circle of Lancashire mountaineers, I little thought that there was even then another name to be added to the list, and that the breach was wider than I thought. Frank Hartley was an active mountaineer and excellent cragsman, whose name was better known some fifteen years ago, when the brothers Hartley were two of our most energetic and successful members. He was one of those happy men who never had an enemy. His cheerful face was the outward sign of a kind and sympathetic heart, and brought forth a responsive smile whenever he came amongst us, and those who knew him well in the days gone by will long regret that that bright and genial nature has passed away.'

The PRESIDENT considered that the Picture Exhibition Sub-Committee was to be congratulated on the excellent show of pictures now hung upon the walls, and he was sure the Club would express very hearty thanks to Mr. MacWhirter and to Mr. Parsons for the interesting sketches they had sent, which showed that for good art it was not necessary to be untrue to nature. He also drew

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