The General Introduction to Mr. Ball's 'Alpine Guide.'

By W. A. B. COOLIDGE.

SEVERAL of the reviewers of vol. i. of the new edition of the 'Alpine Guide' have pointed out (in some cases with expressions of regret) that the 'Introduction' has been omitted, and replaced by various lists, &c. It is therefore worth while to show precisely what the state of the case really is.

In the first edition (1863) of the 'Western Alps' the 'Introduction' fills over a hundred pages, and is followed (on p. cxxxvii) by 'Supplementary Notes,' which deal specially with the Western Alps. But if we look at the first editions of the 'Central Alps' (1864), and the 'Eastern Alps' (1868) we find that the long 'Introduction' is not prefixed to these volumes, which have only 'Preliminary Notes' relating to the special part of the Alps therein treated. Probably this was found to be the most convenient plan; at any rate, in the second edition (1866) of the 'Western Alps' the 'Supplementary Notes' of the first edition have become 'Preliminary Notes to the Western Alps,' a slip inserted stating that the 'Introduction' was issued separately.

Thus the 'General Introduction' to the 'Guide' and the 'Preliminary Notes' to each of the three volumes which compose it, though originally closely connected, soon became quite separate and distinct. The 'Introduction' was issued apart as a pamphlet (which could also be had bound up with any of the three volumes), while each volume had its own special 'Preliminary Notes.' This plan seemed to have its advantages, and hence the 1898 edition of the 'Western Alps' is preceded by a new edition of the 'Preliminary Notes to the Western Alps' *only*. But the 'General Introduction' has been by no means thrown aside. On the contrary, a thoroughly revised new edition has long been in preparation, and will be issued in time for the season of 1899. It will contain *new* articles relating to Alpine botany and Alpine photography, as well as perhaps a glossary of Alpine terms, while the older articles have been carefully revised, that concerning Alpine geology having been practically rewritten by Professor Bonney.

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