

of the most beautiful fjords in Norway, the Hjörund and Sökkely, and where the natives, who are descended from the Scotchmen who repeopled this region, which, with the exception of one woman who survived, was completely depopulated by the 'black death' in the fourteenth century, are still, I am glad to say, delightfully superstitious, and are thoroughly acquainted with the romance and legendary lore which abounds in Söndmøre.

This new edition is undoubtedly excellent, and the enterprising editor, Herr Randers, deserves much success, as a more painstaking and faithful representation in guide-book form of the country which he loves so well could not easily be imagined.

It is copiously illustrated with most artistic pictures, though it is perhaps a pity that the view of Kjölaastind, or Gluggentind, is not taken from some point nearer Standal, where the 'glugge,' or hole through the southern arête of the mountain which was pierced by an arrow shot by St. Olaf when out 'troll'-hunting, could be clearly represented.

The name 'Kölaastind' is, we are glad to say, the only instance we have seen where the old form of spelling has been changed to the slipshod, or perhaps pedantic, form adopted nowadays by the modern University student, and we heartily congratulate Herr Randers on the vigorous conservatism which he has shown in retaining the ancient mode of writing in the words Hjörund, Slogen, Kviteggen, Sökkelven, and many others.

Some of the excellent diagrammatic mountain sketches of the late Herr E. Mohn are appended, and we regret that others which appeared in the edition of 1890 are now omitted. The large map at the end is very good except in one respect, viz. it does not define the glaciers sufficiently well. For that matter, however, the 'Amts karter' are no better.

Finally, the book will be found to be a mine of wealth to all who wish to become intimately acquainted with one of the most fascinating districts in Northern Europe.

WM. CECIL SLINGSBY.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE ROPING OF MOUNTAINS.

To the Editor of the ALPINE JOURNAL.

SIR,—I doubt if most members of the Club are aware of the principles on which the mountains in some parts of the Austrian Tyrol are roped, or if the 'D.Ö.A.V.' itself appreciates the result of the latitude allowed to some of its sections. Everyone is, I suppose, agreed that on certain mountains (*e.g.*, the Aiguille du Géant) roping is an absolute necessity, and on others it may be desirable, whilst on yet other mountains it is both undesirable and unnecessary. In any and every case, however, it is suggested that some really competent and official body ought to decide the

question, and that the matter should not be left entirely to the discretion of guides, however experienced, and hotel keepers.

Cortina, one of the charming spots as yet unspoilt by the railway, boasts of a section all to itself of the 'D.Ö.A.V.' That section (called the 'Ampezzo' section) has about fifty-six members; but many of these members reside at a distance from Cortina; so that, in practice, the decision on all Alpine matters rests with the resident members, who are, as I understand, composed very largely, if not almost entirely, of guides and hotel keepers. I also understand that the 'Ampezzo' section of the 'D.Ö.A.V.' acts on its own resolutions, at any rate as to roping mountains, without let or hindrance from headquarters.

The guides and the hotel keepers at Cortina are as worthy representatives of their classes as could anywhere be found, and wicked indeed would be the climber who invoked aught but blessings on their heads. If, however, guides and hotel keepers are considered in the abstract, it seems clear that their aims and desires must be to make the mountains possible for the greatest number, and to convert a good climb into a walk up hill, so that the village may be filled with every class of person from the invalid to the athlete.

I fear that unless something is done it may become the practice of the 'Ampezzo' section of the 'D.Ö.A.V.' to collect subscriptions at the end of the season (in October) to enable ropes to be put up on one or other of the adjoining mountains. The climb on the Pfalzgauhütte side of Sorapiss has been spoilt by being roped; the Via Inglese on the Tofana* has been similarly spoilt, and last October one of the guides told me that the 'Ampezzo' section were thinking of getting up another subscription to do some more roping elsewhere. The *locus in quo* was not then definitely chosen, but it was felt that the intended performance (if carried out) must be in every way meritorious!

Is it not time that some steps were taken to prevent any roping being done without the consent of some superior authority, and is it not desirable that some drag should be put on before the Kleine Zinne and the Croda da Lago have respectively been converted into bath-chair parades?

Yours truly,
N. ARTHUR HEYWOOD.

ALPINE ACCIDENTS.

To the Editor of the ALPINE JOURNAL.

SIR,—In the article on the above subject which appeared in the November number of the 'Journal' (p. 264), the remark is made that 'sign-posts and marked rocks may be snares, not safeguards, to the unwary and inexperienced.'

If the practice were strictly confined to passes and uncertain

* *Alpine Journal*, vol. xviii. p. 534.

mountain paths, certain compensatory benefits to the less experienced might be recognised in the resulting freedom from the cost, and presence, of a guide necessary only to indicate the route. But I think that few will be prepared to justify the latest development of the system, wherein we find, as I am assured is the fact, that the S.W. route up the Kleine Zinne has now been 'red-marked' from base to summit.

So far this mountain has secured an immunity from fatal accidents, but it is impossible now to believe that this can long remain the case. It is inevitable that the invitation thus held out to attempt the climb without the aid of guides will be ere long accepted by the adventurous, but inexperienced, aspirant for fame, of which membership in an Alpine club which requires no climbing qualification tends to create too large a number.

The result, sooner or later, cannot remain in doubt. The climb of the Kleine Zinne is certainly to be classed as difficult, and there are places where, to all but the true expert, guideless climbing would be the height of un wisdom. No one need fall from the 'traverse' if he possess what is called a 'steady head,' but the lower portion of the Zsigmondy Kamin and the section just above the traverse, especially in descending, afford potentialities for a slip which in these places might mean absolute disaster.

The object in view in thus red-marking the route was, doubtless, not to encourage guideless climbing, but to render it safer for the single guide to navigate his Herr in the descent, for there are possibilities of variation from the accustomed route, especially just before reaching the traverse, which permit the Herr to lead both himself and guide into a very awkward situation. And it pays the guide to climb alone with the Herr, for the fee of the second guide is, by custom, lower than that of the leading guide, and the practice is to lump the sums together and divide equally between the two. But, whatever the object of the marking, its existence must inevitably tend to encourage attempts by guideless climbers of less, as well as more, experience. And what has been done on the Kleine Zinne may be done next season on other peaks of equal difficulty and potential danger. And so accidents are manufactured.

It is probable that the responsible authorities of the D.Ö.A.V. are in absolute ignorance of the circumstance referred to. In fact, too much seems to be left to the discretion, and action, of the local sections of the Verein, which appear to have it in their power, not only to red-mark, but to chain and rope, the mountains at their sole discretion. Already some of the finest climbs have been spoiled in this way, and there are indications that the work of destruction will go on.

The English Alpine Club cannot, of course, directly interfere in any effective fashion, but, surely, it should not be impossible to approach the authorities of the D.Ö.A.V. with the suggestion that, if these things are to be done, they shall at least not be left to

irresponsible local sections, but shall be placed under the direction and control of central expert authority.

Should an accident occur a very serious question of responsibility must of necessity arise.

Yours truly,

CHARLES E. SHEA.

January, 1899.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE ALPINE CLUB.

THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Club was held in the Hall on Monday evening, December 12, 1898, Mr. Charles Pilkington, *President*, in the chair.

The following candidates were balloted for and elected members of the Club:—Messrs. C. E. Ashford, F. N. Ellis, E. B. Harris, W. T. Kirkpatrick, F. G. Leatham, G. Lipscomb, E. B. Moser, L. W. Rolleston, J. P. Somers.

The *PRESIDENT*, in proposing the Right Honourable James Bryce, M.P., as President for the ensuing year, said, 'We know Mr. Bryce as a mountaineering explorer, while the world knows him as a politician, traveller, and literary man. I have great pleasure in proposing that he be our President.'

Mr. LESLIE STEPHEN in seconding this proposal said, 'One does not often get much pleasure from reading a circular, but I seldom have received a livelier pleasure by such means than when I read the circular which announced that Mr. Bryce had been nominated for our new President. I begged permission to come to-night that I might take some part in his election, as I am unfortunately unable to attend in order to greet him at to-morrow's dinner. I have a claim which, I think, can hardly be disputed. I am probably the oldest friend of Mr. Bryce in this room. My friendship began at a period when a great many members of the Club, for very sufficient reasons, had no friends at all; and, what is more, I consider that I am, in a certain sense, the creator of Mr. Bryce as a mountaineer. When I first had the honour of knowing him he had achieved the very remarkable feat—I think it was an almost unique feat—of writing a prize essay which, instead of haunting its parent like a disgraceful progeny in later years, became at once a permanent part of English historical literature. This brought him the warm approval of Professor Freeman. I remember Mr. Bryce telling me that Freeman warned him against me as a seducer of youth. I did my best to seduce Mr. Bryce. Freeman thought it quite right to travel in Switzerland, in order to investigate the history of federal institutions, but necessary to forget that there were such things in Switzerland as mountains. I used to forget that there was anything else. It was my habit to surrender my mind to what the poet by a happy periphrasis calls a "wise passiveness"—that is, I forgot that I had any mind at all, and used my brain as a mere organ for correlating the action of my legs. I tried to initiate Mr. Bryce into