ALPINE NOTES.

'THE ALPINE GUIDE.'—Copies of Vol. I. of the new edition of this work, price 12*s.* net, and of 'Hints and Notes, Practical and Scientific, for Travellers in the Alps' (being a new edition of the General Introduction), price 8*s.*, can be obtained from all booksellers, or from Messrs. Stanford, Charing Cross.

THE LIBRARY CATALOGUE is now printed, and may be obtained, bound in cloth, on application to the Assistant Secretary, 23 Savile Row. Price 8*s.*; postage 4*d.*

THE ALPINE CLUB OBITUARY IN 1905.—H. C. Foster (1896), G. W. Stevens (1872), H. E. Buxton (1864), E. F. Stapleton (1892), W. Fowler (1864), C. J. Joly (1895), Dr. Martino Baretti, Honorary Member.

MEMORIAL TO FRANÇOIS DÉVOUASSOUD.—We have received the following note from Mr. Douglas Freshfield: 'I had not intended to ask for any help towards the erection of a suitable and lasting memorial over F. Dévouassoud's grave; but several of his old friends have expressed their wish to take part in whatever is done, and their belief that others may have the same feeling. It seems to me difficult and undesirable to settle on the form of the memorial until we know the exact position of the grave with relation to others and to the neighbouring ground. My prolonged absence from Europe has prevented me from getting this information hitherto, but I hope to obtain it before long. Meantime François's family are content to wait, and I hope contributors may be. I will receive and acknowledge (at 1 Airlie Gardens, W.) any contributions sent, and will arrange that a photograph of whatever memorial may be erected shall be forwarded to each contributor.'

TORLOSA.—This fine peak, near Aconcagua, has been ascended by Mr. A. F. Wedgwood.

THE CAUCASUS.—The first two volumes of M. de Déchy's sumptuous work on the Caucasus (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer) have already appeared. We hope to say more of them in our next number.

REVIEWS AND NOTICES.

The Central Tian-shan Mountains, 1902–1903. By Dr. Gottfried Merzbacher. Published under the authority of the Royal Geographical Society. (London: John Murray. 1905.) 8vo. Pp. ix and 285; with Illustrations and a Map.

THIS very interesting and well written volume is a record of scientific exploration rather than of mountain-climbing. Dr. Merzbacher, however, by no means neglected the latter, and took with him first one, then a second Alpine guide; but his primary aim was to make their craft subservient to securing a thorough knowledge of this grand mountain region rather than to win

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distinction by ascending a few of its culminating summits. Nevertheless he was much in the snow world, traversing glaciers and passes, and not seldom attaining heights varying from 14,000 ft. to 16,000 ft. In this remote mountain chain, far from civilisation, the climber has to encounter more than the usual difficulties, among the chief of which, as might be expected, are supplies and transport. For expeditions above the snow line porters can hardly be obtained, and Dr. Merzbacher, himself a good judge of mountain work, remarks that the ascent of the highest peak in the Tian-shan—Khan-tengri, about 24,000 ft.—would have to be organised by the Russian Geographical Society and backed up by the Government to have a reasonable chance of success. The peak itself, he thinks, after examining it from both sides, cannot be easy. A pyramid of marble, rising some 6,000 ft. above the last snow saddle, which can be readily reached, it is formed of beds disposed one above the other like the tiles of a roof. Chimneys are wanting; ledges and terraces, so far as can be judged from below, are hardly discoverable, except a little beneath the summit; and the arête leading thither promises to afford not a few obstacles. Yet this is the least unpromising line of attack.

Dr. Merzbacher's party—for he was accompanied by Herr Hans Pfann, of Munich, and Herr Hans Keidel, of Freiburg in Baden, a young but experienced geologist—received much friendly assistance from the Russian authorities, and notwithstanding the natural difficulties of the country have made important additions to the work accomplished in the Tian-shan by their predecessors, Sven Hedin, Von Kaulbars, Ignatieff, Krassnoff, and Semenoff, with other Russian travellers. The present volume does not claim to be more than a general account of the expedition; the measurements and observations, the geological and other collections, have yet to be worked out. They first undertook, in 1902, a series of expeditions on the northern side of the central *massif*—that crowned by Khan-Tengri—to explore its valleys and glaciers. As the autumn drew on they crossed the watershed by the well known Musart Pass, the height of which they place at about 11,500 ft. Its summit is an almost level plateau, but the descent on the southern side, down an icefall of the Jiparlik Glacier, is really difficult. Dr. Lansdell gave a vivid description of it in 'Chinese Central Asia,' and Dr. Merzbacher, speaking as an experienced climber, says this could not be surmounted by caravans without the aid of the guards posted below, who 'excavate regular staircases in the icy pinnacles,' and even thus 'the skeletons of pack animals, strewn about in large numbers, show how great are the perils of the passage despite all aid.'

Then they studied the geology of the hill region between the central chain and the Tarim river before going into winter quarters at Kashgar, where earthquakes were frequent, and next year, as soon as the season permitted, they crossed into the Kok-ahni valley (running parallel with the watershed), and returned to the northern face of the Tian-shan by the Bedel pass (about 13,000 ft.), higher but less difficult than the Musart. Thence they made their

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way to Lake Issik-kul and devoted the rest of their time to exploring the valleys and plains radiating westward and northward from the central massif, and revisiting some places already examined in order to replace a set of photographs unfortunately lost.

The most important geographical result of Dr. Merzbacher's work is to demonstrate that Khan-Tengri is not situated on the *main* watershed of the Tian-shan, but rises from a spur which projects from it far to the S.W. Thus the true nucleus of the central chain is not Khan-Tengri, but a grand lofty mountain range, to which the explorers, when first they came upon it from the N., gave the name of the Marble Wall. The geological results are also important. The rocks constituting the chain exhibit almost everywhere contortions and dislocations not less important than those of the Alps. These rocks, as in the latter mountains, are of various ages from Archæan crystallines to post-Tertiary gravels, which were deposited by the rivers still cutting down into the massif, but among those of intermediate date strata of carboniferous age are very frequent. Besides these intrusive deep-seated rocks, such as granites, occur in great force and have often greatly metamorphosed the neighbouring sedimentaries. The glaciers are large, the largest exceeding forty miles in length, but they were once much more extensive. The Tian-shan mountains afford almost everywhere, no less distinctly than the Alps, indisputable evidence of a past age of ice. Numerous photographs enable us to judge of their grand scenery. The descriptions are terse and interesting, and the book is a valuable addition to our knowledge of this grand and comparatively inaccessible chain.

Josias Simler et les Origines de l'Alpinisme jusqu'en 1600. Avec Illustrations et Cartes. Par W. A. B. Coolidge, &c. &c. (Grenoble: Allier Frères. 1904; and to be had of Mr. Quaritch, 15 Piccadilly, London. Price, 20*s.*)

'Prodigious!' is the adjective which will best express the feelings of the man of average strength and prehensile grasp who is fortunate enough to receive the *édition de luxe* of this portly and strangely proportioned volume. Most possessors even of the ordinary edition will, we fancy, after gazing for a few days at Mr. Coolidge's monumental work, follow the present writer's example and send it off to their binder to be bisected, an operation which the arrangement of the text happily renders not impossible. In all other respects—save perhaps a somewhat intricate system of pagination, and consequently of indexing—the volume does credit to its producers. The printing in particular is of singular excellence.

The first point that must strike even an 'indolent reviewer' who does not penetrate beyond prefaces and tables of contents will be how great a tree has grown from a small kernel. It is amusing to put the first or second 'Simler' (A.D. 1574 and 1633) beside the last. The title tells its own tale, even were it not confirmed by the preface. An annotated edition of 'De Alpibus' was planned; what has emerged from the printing press is a treatise and collection of documents relating to the 'Origins of Alpinism' up to the year

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1600. Mr. Coolidge's antiquarian knowledge and enthusiasm have led him to surround Simler's text with a broad and sedulously laboured frame of Alpine lore, historical, topographical, biographical, and mountaineering, such as probably he alone could have constructed. His book reminds us, in some respects, of the late Sir Henry Yule's delightful 'Marco Polo.' Here too the results of a lifetime of research among out of the way authorities and unpublished manuscripts are poured out in profusion in voluminous notes. We take what we are given with gratitude. Yet it is difficult not to wish that Mr. Coolidge would digest his vast store of knowledge into some independent form that would be likely to attract a greater number of intelligent readers. As it is he has furnished a banquet of information which will doubtless be eagerly resorted to by mountaineers and also by the tribe of bookmakers who live and flourish on the labours of others.

The 'bill of fare' put before us is indeed varied. To begin with, we have a reprint and translation of Conrad Gesner's delightful letter on 'The Admiration of Mountains.' This is followed by an interesting sketch of Alpinism up to 1600, including lists of peaks and passes climbed or crossed before that date, with comments on the implements employed by the early mountaineers and on their way of looking at mountains. It is curious to find our King Henry VI. complaining that his subjects suffer on the Great St. Bernard from 'floods, avalanches, and swamps.' The Great St. Bernard seems to have been the English Pilgrim's Pass. Our readers will remember the reference in an Anglo-Saxon charter to the 'bitter blasts of its glaciers' ('glacierum'). The translation seems allowable, as the Grindelwald glaciers are called Glacies Superior and Inferior in A.D. 1246. We now approach Simler himself. We have chapters on his life, on the sources of his treatise, and its bibliography. These lead the way to the text, which is printed in the original Latin, with a French translation on the opposite pages. It is followed by 130 pages of notes. The final 260 pages are devoted to eighteen 'Pièces Annexes' with the 'notes' on them of the indefatigable editor. These are, with one exception, reprints, or first prints, of documents relating to mountain ascents prior to A.D. 1600. Moses is left out, but we range from an ascent of Hæmus, B.C. 181, by Philip of Macedon to an ascent of the Rochemelon in 1588 by the Seigneur de Villamont. The novelties are an account of the Bernese Oberland, by T. Schöpf, written in 1577, and a very minute description of the Passes of the Val d'Aosta, put together in 1691–4 by Philibert-Amédée Arnod, a judge at Aosta, which contains an account of the first attempt to reopen the traditional Col du Géant. The original text of the account of the ascent of the Wonder of Dauphiné, the Mont Aiguille, is for the first time printed from the MSS. preserved in the Archives du Département de l'Isère at Grenoble: the originals have been reproduced by photography; one is given with the ordinary edition and several with the *édition de luxe*. With regard to the early *ascents* of Pilatus (A.D. 1515, 1555, 1717) it

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is to be noted that they were not ascents of any point on the highest ridge. The Pilatus of the fathers of mountaineering was the Gnepstein (6,300 ft.), a grassy hill on the west of the site of the once famous lake. We find also the familiar ascent of Mont Ventoux by Petrarch in 1336, the ascents of the Stockhorn and Niesen by B. Marti in 1557, an ascent of the Stockhorn, made in 1536 and told in mock heroic verse by a Swiss scholar who called himself Rhellicanus, and several scraps from the classics.

It is difficult to pick and choose where there is so much room for choice, and we must leave Mr. Coolidge's readers to do so, each for himself according to his particular taste or interest. The mountaineer will probably turn first to Mr. Coolidge's own sketch of early Alpine travel above the snow line, and particularly to the minute details as to the Pennine Passes. But Simler's text is very good reading, and there is hardly a page in the book in which some curious information does not lurk.

I confess that I always differ from our learned colleague with the greatest reluctance. If he will pardon an African comparison, I feel like a poor shot aiming at an elephant with the conviction that his sport is too likely to end in his being trampled under foot. Simler discusses at length 'the Pass of Hannibal.' It is rash, perhaps, to recur to a subject on which feeling runs strangely high among the learned. Yet until some reasonable ground has been shown for disregarding what I consider the obvious and only natural sense of the passage from Varro, accepted in this country by the late Mr. W. T. Arnold and other classical scholars, I shall stick to the second pass from the Sea, the pass over which Napoleon planned 'a Route Impériale from Spain into Italy,' the Col de l'Argentière. Nor does Mr. Coolidge satisfy me that the *Saxum Album*, *Rupes Alba*, and *Scez Blanc* of three documents prior to the middle of the fifteenth century refer to Mont Blanc. In my opinion the scribe of the Act of Donation of A.D. 1091 probably had in his mind not the natural geographical limits of the Vale of Chamonix, such as Mont Blanc and the Aiguilles Rouges, but the boundary marks between the territory of Chamonix and those of neighbouring communities on the principal approaches to it, and the scribes of later documents were content to copy him. I believe the 'Saxum Album' to have been a rock on the *left* bank of the Arve, nearly opposite the Diosaz torrent. There is such a rock (and a Says Nigrum as well) not far from Servoz. I further hold that 'saxum' and 'rupes' and 'scez' are not terms likely to have been applied to a mass of snow and ice. I am in no way shaken in this opinion by the fact that from the days when Strabo described τὰς χιόνας καὶ τοὺς κρυστάλλους of the Caucasus to the present time in the heart of Africa glaciers and crystals have been confounded by men of letters, mediæval scientists, and simple savages. Mr. Coolidge himself tells us that 'up to the commencement of the eighteenth century the great mountain was called "Les Glacières" or "Montagne Maudite."' Where was the name 'Mont Blanc' lurking between 1431 and the commencement

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of the eighteenth century? The map in which Signor Uzielli fancied he had seen 'Roches Blanches' cannot be found, or rather the words cannot be found on it. The temptation to carry back the name to the eleventh century is obvious, but I must decline to yield to it. Mr. Coolidge, I may add, has recently discovered that the 'Mont Blanc' mentioned in Arnod's Report on the Passes of the Val d'Aosta in 1691 refers to two hamlets near Champorcher, and has not, as he here assumes, anything to do with the Monarch of the Alps.*

Next as to Leonardo da Vinci's much discussed Alpine excursion. As long ago as 1892—having ascertained that the expression used by Leonardo 'between Italy and France' might, when he wrote, have included the Valaisan Alps—I abandoned my suggestion of Monte Viso, quoted here. I may point out that on the ridge separating Val Sesia from the Biellese the Italian survey shows not one Monte Bô, but two Monte Bôs and also a Monte Bose. The highest summit is now a 'view point' and provided with a hut, and may possibly have been the Monboso visited by the great artist.

But enough of minute criticism where there is so little to criticise. Taking a broad view of the facts laid before us, we are struck with the extensive use of the byeways of the Alps in early times. The main passes were made by Nature and remained in vogue until our generation learnt to burrow under them.† But long before that date the improvement in communications had gradually concentrated traffic. Carriage roads first drew the countless streams of intercourse into a few channels. The old mule passes were neglected and became hardly known by name beyond their immediate vicinity. Commerce left them. The longer way round was recognised to be the quicker and the safer way there. The 'Commercial Mountaineer,' with his alpenstock and his snow spectacles, so graphically described by Simler, has long been extinct, unless the smugglers sometimes met on a remote glacier may be considered as a surviving species of the genus.

I may take this occasion to point out that quite recently, in the November number of the monthly Journal of the French Alpine Club, the probable source of some at least of Simler's hints to these merchant adventurers above the snow line has been indicated. In 1561, thirteen years before Simler, Grataroli, a physician, born at Bergamo, who practised chiefly at Basle, published a work with the following title: 'De regimine iter agentium, vel equitum, vel peditum, vel navi vel curru vel rhedâ viatoribus et peregrinatoribus quibusque utilissimi libri duo.' The author, among other and more primitive preservatives against snow-blindness, recommends 'glass or crystal spectacles.' With regard to foot gear he writes as follows: 'Si super juga montium ac super glaciem ambulare

* See Mr. Coolidge's notes, *Jahrbuch des Schweizer Alpenclub*, vol. xxxvii. p. 247; and vol. xl. pp. 352-3, for various statements cited above.

† See that excellent and too much forgotten book Brockedon's *Passes of the Alps*, illustrated edition, 1828-9.

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cogimur, ubi non de casu solum, sed de præcipitio agitur, levis res, cum industriâ, nos tutos reddet; calceis enim subligantur chalybeæ cuspides ferreis laminis junctæ ac continuæ, quæ quadrilaterem formam referunt, ut ubique jam ferè venales extant.' 'If we are forced to traverse mountain ridges and ice, where it is a matter not only of a tumble but of a fall, there is an easy means, with care, of ensuring safety. This is to fasten under the boots iron plates, with steel spikes, made of one piece, covering all the sole, and square in form, such as can now be bought almost everywhere.'

This practical advice of the first writer on mountain equipment still holds good. To the natives of the Himalaya now, as to those of the Alps in the sixteenth century, the hobnailed boot is unknown. An explorer will do well to consider and act on Dr. Grataroli's advice before taking his coolies on to treacherous slopes. He will probably save their lives and possibly his own, and he will double his chance of success in any high ascent he may be eager to attempt.

The volume is illustrated by facsimiles of the engraved portraits of several of the authors annotated, and has also plates representing the triptych deposited by Rotario d' Asti on the Rochemelon in A.D. 1858, and the Roman arch at Susa. D. W. F.

I Rifugi del Club Alpino Italiano. Storia e descrizione illustrata con elenco dei Rifugi construiti in Italia da altre Società Alpine. Con 114 vedute e 30 disegni di piante, ecc. Da Dr. Agostino Ferrari. Torino: Club Alpino Italiano. (Sede Centrale.) 1905.

This valuable and interesting volume of nearly 300 pages (extracted from the 'Bollettino' of the C.A.I. for 1904–1905, vol. xxxvii. n. 70) is the work of Dr. Agostino Ferrari, of Turin, assisted by Drs. A. Bossi, of Milan, G. Chiggiato, of Venice, and E. Abbate, of Rome. We commend it heartily to all who purpose climbing amongst Italian Alps, especially to those who climb without guides. A study of its pages will be found a valuable help both in the planning of a tour and in the search for the desired refuge at the end of a long day's work. The volume, as stated above, is freely supplied with illustrations, most of them being of excellent quality, while to judge of the help they provide to the traveller we have only to turn to p. 117, 'Monte Rosa from Tagliaferro,' where the route to the Capanna Valsesia is indicated, or p. 191, 'The Ortler Group, from Monte Confinale,' which indicates the way to the Capanna Milano.

It should be stated that the information given is not confined to the Alps. The Apennines are represented by more than a dozen refuges, of which the most interesting is that on p. 254, the 'Rifugio al Gran Sasso d' Italia.' The Corno Grande in the background seems to beckon mountain-lovers to ascend it. Etna has two refuges, the 'Cantoniera Alpina Meteorologica,' at 1,880 mètres—4 hrs. from Nicolosi—and the 'Casa Etnea' (consisting in part of the old 'Casa degli Inglesi'), at about 2,942 mètres, about $7\frac{1}{2}$ hrs. from Nicolosi and $1\frac{1}{2}$ hr. below the summit of the great volcano. It

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will thus be seen that this volume is of much interest and likely to be a great help to all who purpose climbing in Italy, whether in the Alps or Apennines. We offer our hearty congratulations to Dr. Ferrari and his helpers on the successful completion of their task.

As showing the growth of the C.A.I. it may be of interest to state (we quote from the introduction) that in the 'Bollettino' of 1882 the Club contained 3,600 members and possessed 30 refuges, while at present it has more than 5,500 members and 100 refuges.

La Chaîne du Mont-Blanc. Carte au $\frac{1}{50000}$ème dressée sur l'ordre d'Albert Barbey par X. Imfeld, Ingénieur, d'après les relevés, les mensurations et la nomenclature de Louis Kurz et d'après les documents existants. Kummerly Frères: Berne. 1896. Edition de 1905.

This excellent map was very favourably noticed in this 'Journal' on its appearance in 1896.* Contour lines have now been added, as have the names of a considerable number of peaks—*e.g.* the Aiguille Mummery, between Les Courtes and the A. de Triolet; the A. de l'Amône, one of the points of the Aiguilles Rouges de Dolent; the Pointe de Pré de Bar, and the Pointe de Domino, both between the Mont Dolent and the A. de Triolet; the Pointe des Papillons, between the A. de Triolet and the A. de Talèfre; the A. de Tronchey, the Pointe Luigi Amadeo, the A. Joseph Croux, and the Col Emile Rey.

These names do not exhaust the list. We feel much gratitude to MM. Barbey, Imfeld, and Kurz, for we have found this map of the greatest help on many occasions. We heartily wish it the continued success which it deserves.

The Yorkshire Ramblers' Club Journal. Volume II. No. 6. (London: T. Fisher Unwin.)

This number maintains the high standard which its editor, Mr. Thomas Gray, has led us to look for. In variety and in quality it is alike interesting. *Place aux dames.* Mrs. E. P. Jackson gives an excellent account of winter mountaineering in 1888 in the Grindelwald district. Mr. W. Anderton Brigg and the Rev. L. S. Calvert carry us with them to the Eastern Alps, the latter to the Kleine Zinne (from Cortina), the former to Pontresina, the Bernina, the Disgrazia, the Ortler, the Adamello, and the Cevedale. Of the last expedition the writer says: 'We proposed to take a guide for the Cevedale, and spoke to one of them, but he said we must have at least four, one for each Herr; such was the rule So of course we did without; nor was there the slightest need for any.' Norway is treated of by Mr. J. A. Green in 'A Holiday among the Horungtinder' and by Mr. Harold Raeburn in 'Slogen: a Day on the Seaward Face.' Sir John N. Barran treats of 'Man-hunting among the Mountains,' and Mr. T. S. Booth supplies a paper on 'Mountaineering Reversed,' to which sport the Yorkshire Ramblers have so devotedly given themselves; he treats of 'Jockey Hole and Rift Pot.' A note

* *Alpine Journal*, vol. xviii. pp. 285–6.

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on the Geological Features of the latter Inferno is furnished by Mr. Harold Brodrick.

There are some excellent illustrations, *e.g.* of the Cevedale and Königspitze, of the Kleine Zinne, of Store Skagastölstind. We are pleased to notice a satisfactory increase in the numbers of the Club.

CORRESPONDENCE.

THE HIGHEST CLIMBS ON RECORD.

To the Editor of the ALPINE JOURNAL.

SIR,—In the November number of the 'Alpine Journal,' on pp. 626–628, Messrs. Collie and Garwood criticise the use of the term 'record' in the title of a paper by myself which appeared in the 'Alpine Journal' of August 1905.

May I be permitted to say I used the term 'record' after mature reflection, having read Mr. Graham's account as well as what Mr. Freshfield and others have written on the subject, and being somewhat conversant with what has been said in different parts of the world concerning Mr. Graham's claim? The foot note on p. 506 states clearly my reason for such use, which does not commit me to any opinion as to whether Mr. Graham did or did not make the ascent claimed.

Further discussion of the possibility, the probability, or the reality of that ascent seems to me to be futile, since under the circumstances and so long after the event no satisfactory conclusion appears likely to be reached, and the question will probably remain a matter of individual judgment. The best way to lay some of the ghosts that have sprung up in connection with it would be for some one to make the ascent of Kabru, in which case certainty would take the place of speculation regarding them.

An important fact, which cannot be ignored, is that Mr. Graham's claim is disputed. It has been disputed from the first, and Mr. Freshfield's elaborate and carefully written arguments have failed to convince mountaineers in general, as well as others, of its credibility. As doubtful and disputed results are not usually placed against acknowledged ones, why should an exception be made to the rule in this case? On this ground I think the word referred to is properly and justifiably used.

The letters of Messrs. Collie and Garwood leave the matter just where it stood before. Nothing is added to what Mr. Freshfield, whom both writers cite as authority, has already said. If Mr. Graham's account appears to them convincing they are perfectly justified in believing it, but their belief does not prove that Mr. Graham climbed Kabru, or that his disputed ascent should stand as a *fait accompli*.

May I call attention to three points in these letters? (1) Professor Collie states that Mr. Graham climbed 20,000 ft. on A 22,

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