

Zermatt, and more particularly to the Riffel Hotel. Unless innkeepers are speedily awoke to a higher sense of their responsibility in this matter, we shall have some day to tell an Alpine story in which the porter will play a tragic instead of a comic part.

ALPINE ACCIDENTS IN 1871.

ALTHOUGH three fatal accidents took place last year in the Alps, two of them occurred far from the peaks and glaciers of the central chain, and were due to botanical rather than to mountaineering zeal. Of one of these, by which we have to deplore the loss of a valuable member of our Club, the following letter from Mr. Moggridge, a member of the Italian Alpine Club, gives exact particulars:—

'The Rev. Robert Crosse, accompanied by a friend, Mr. Collingsplat, left Mentone on December 4, for the gorge of Pont St. Louis, about two miles distant from his hotel. His object was to get the rare fern *Asplenium petrarchæ*. They passed up the eastern side, over a small aqueduct that spans the bottom of the gorge, and ascended the broken rocky ground on the western slope, which presents no difficulties to an ordinary climber—certainly none to my poor friend, who was especially good upon the rocks. Searching about for the plant, his progress was slower than that of his companion who, when about halfway up the slope, sat down to wait. Some twelve feet below Mr. Collingsplat was a rock—probably heretofore arrested on its descending course. Below this Crosse passed, stopped, and commenced hammering—we suppose to get out the fern which grew there. In doing so, it would appear that he removed the stones which supported the rock; a fearful crash was heard; the huge mass rolled over him and bounded down to the bottom of the gorge. Death, or at any rate the loss of all sensation, must have been instantaneous. Hoping against hope, Mr. Collingsplat sought medical assistance, and then came to me. Taking ropes to let down the body, I was soon upon the spot, and found my poor friend literally crushed. I need not now go at any length into further details; how the body was taken by the Italian authorities, left for more than a day exposed by the roadside; how I offered to pay any sum they might demand—to buy the body at their own price. No! "formalities must be gone through," partly at Ventimiglia, partly at St. Remo, partly at Rome—all of course implying money. We to-day laid him in his last resting-place, in the same grave which some years back received his daughter.'

The second of the accidents above referred to happened on the Stockhorn, near Thun. Two young Swiss set out with a guide to ascend the mountain. They strayed from the path in search of rare flowers. In grasping at a plant growing on a grassy shelf, one of them slipped, and in falling caught hold of his companion's leg. The two youths rolled downwards together, and soon fell over a cliff, at the bottom of which they were found lifeless.

The only fatal mishap in the High Alps was the death of a German

student in descending, from Piz Tschierva, one of the summits of the Bernina group. The unfortunate young man set out alone for the expedition, which is one of no difficulty, but requires all the ordinary precautions. He never returned. Of course, as soon as possible a thorough search was instituted, and it was ascertained that he must have fallen into a crevasse on the glacier while on his way down. This sad event should serve as a warning to tyros, who, finding that ordinary glacier expeditions offer no difficulties to men of active habits, are apt to fancy that the dangers of mountaineering are for the most part imaginary, and its recognised precautions traditional and lightly to be dispensed with.

ALPINE NOTES.

DR. GÜSSFELDT AND THE FIRST ASCENT OF PIZ ROSEG.—We beg once for all to assure foreign readers of the 'Alpine Journal' that, whatever may be the practice of individuals in other countries, English mountaineers are not in the habit of climbing peaks by proxy, and crediting themselves with the ascents, or of putting in print, with great precision of detail, statements which are deliberately untrue.

Such a warning is not so unnecessary as it may at first sight seem. Dr. Paul Güssfeldt, a member of the Bernese Section of the Swiss Alpine Club, has, in the 'Jahrbuch' of that Society for 1870, published an account of an ascent of Piz Roseg, made by him in 1869, in which he mentions that one of his objects in undertaking the expedition was to ascertain whether 'die von Berner Führer, Jakob Anderegg, aufgestellte Behauptung, dass er—*freilich ohne seine Herren* (es waren deren zwei)—die höchste Spitze 1865 wirklich erklommen habe, mit Recht oder Unrecht von den Pontresiner Führern angezweifelt wurde.' In the face of Mr. Walker's account of the ascent, published in 1867—of the statement by Herr Weilenmann (himself most anxious to have made the first ascent, and certainly with no bias in favour of English mountaineers), in the 'Jahrbuch' of 1869, that there could be no doubt on the subject—and of the fact that he himself found on the highest peak the card of Messrs. Moore and Walker—Dr. Güssfeldt, with incomparable coolness, assumes throughout his paper that our countrymen halted on the 'Schneekuppe,' or northern peak, and sent on Jakob alone to complete the ascent of the 'Allerhöchste Spitze,' which they afterwards claimed to have made themselves.

That the Pontresina guides may have doubted, or pretended to doubt, whether the ascent was effected at all, is likely enough. The assumption that, if effected, it was by Jakob alone, '*freilich* (of course) *ohne seine Herren*,' appears, however, to be Dr. Güssfeldt's own, and, unsupported as it is by a tittle of proof, and directly opposed to strong circumstantial evidence, can only be attributed to his desire to set up a claim to have been the first amateur climber to stand on the actual top of Piz Roseg.

In the small type of a foot-note the editor of the 'Jahrbuch