

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'

states in mild terms that, in his own opinion, Dr. Güssfeldt is in error in thinking that Messrs. Moore and Walker did not complete the ascent. Considering, however, the wide circulation of the 'Jahrbuch,' and its more or less official character as the organ of the Swiss Club, we cannot help expressing regret and surprise that the editorial opinion did not lead to an alteration of the text; or, if this was difficult, to a more forcibly worded and conspicuous protest against a personal imputation of so offensive a character.

AN EARLY ATTEMPT TO ASCEND THE JUNGFRAU FROM THE ROTH-THAL.—Mr. F. Brown sends us the following very interesting account, found among his father's papers, of an attempt to ascend the Jungfrau, which, considering its date, must be reckoned as one of the most daring feats of early mountaineering:—

'On the afternoon of Wednesday, August 20, 1828, Mr. Yeats Brown and Mr. Frederick Slade left Lauterbrunnen for the purpose of attempting the ascent of the Jungfrau from the side of the Rothenthal. They had previously sent on guides (nine in number) to a chalet on the mountain, distant about four hours' march from Lauterbrunnen, where they met their guides and passed the night.

'The next morning, at three o'clock, they began the ascent, using a lantern for the first hour and a half, and at five o'clock reached the great glacier of the Rothenthal, which they passed with tolerable facility. Then by means of steps cut in the snow they began to climb the almost perpendicular ascent of the barrier of rock and ice which forms the eastern boundary of the Rothenthal. This they proceeded in for four hours, and till within one-third of the summit of the barrier, when one of the guides had an epileptic fit, and shortly afterwards two others refused to proceed.

'The climb, however, was continued with the remainder until within musket-shot of the top, when the weight of the ladders, hatchets, provisions, &c., combined with the necessity of two at least remaining unburdened for the purpose of cutting the way, occasioned a general remonstrance from the remaining guides, and unavoidably caused the abandonment of the project.

'It is but fair to state that Peter Bishoff, the brothers Hans and Christoffe Lowener, and the younger Gertz, behaved throughout with the greatest zeal and intrepidity, and are well deserving of strong recommendation.

'This attempt, though unsuccessful, has confirmed the previously conceived opinion that the ascent of the Jungfrau by the way of the Rothenthal, though very difficult, is feasible.'

THE ITALIAN ALPINE CLUB.—The accomplishment of the national union has naturally widened the field of the labours of the Italian Alpine Club. Last year the summer meeting was held at Agordo, in the Venetian Tyrol; and it has been suggested that the next should take place among the Neapolitan Apennines.

Naples itself is perhaps the last spot to which we should have looked for a display of mountaineering enthusiasm. Yet we learn that nume-

rous papers have been read before the Neapolitan section of the Club, and travellers are promised that before long the Gran Sasso d'Italia and the more remote mountains of Calabria shall be thoroughly explored, and that endeavours shall be made to improve the accommodation and render the country more accessible. An account of an ascent of the Gran Sasso, illustrated with views and a panorama by Count Paul de St. Robert, has lately been published by Vincenzo Bona, of Turin, at the price of four francs.

MODEL OF A PORTION OF THE GRAIAN ALPS.—We extract from the 'Feuille d'Aoste' the following particulars: 'After more than three years' labour, Mons. L'Abbé Vescoz has completed his model in relief of the Valley of the Cogne, and of the neighbouring mountains. The work includes all the ranges between the torrent of Val Savaranche and that of Fenis. The young vicar of Cogne has spared no pains to render his work perfect, and has for this purpose himself ascended many of the highest summits. The model introduces many important corrections on the Italian Government map. The author has, moreover, inserted more than 120 heights, the greater number of which were ascertained by Mons. le Recteur J. Carrel, director of the meteorological observatory at Aosta.'

THE KING OF ITALY AND MR. WHYMPER.—The King of Italy has, through Mons. Sella, the Finance Minister of Italy, and the President of the Italian Alpine Club, conferred on Mr. Edward Whymper, in recognition of the value of his recently published work, the order of SS. Maurice and Lazarus. Mr. Whymper is the fourth member of our Club who has received this mark of distinction; and we believe that English mountaineers will agree that these honours have been in every case most judiciously bestowed.

LAST WINTER IN THE ALPS.—'The Alpenpost,' a valuable weekly journal published at Glarus, under the editorship of Herr Senn, furnishes us with many of the following details:—The early winter of '71-'72 seems to have been remarkable throughout the Alps for bright but intensely cold weather. At Chamouni the sky was cloudless, and the frost severe throughout December. On the 28th the Halwyler See was completely frozen over for the first time since 1828; steamers could no longer run on the Zurich See for the ice; and the Lake of Constance sank thirty-three centimetres beneath the lowest recorded level since 1837.

On January 8th the weather broke. A furious 'föhn' burst upon the mountains and swept down into the valleys, stripping roofs in Glarus, and tumbling over like a card house a large solidly-built manufactory in Appenzell.

As in England, the temperature during the first months of the new year was unusually high, so that before the end of January the sunward-sloping meadows round Glarus were already carpeted with flowers, the birds had begun their songs, and the sun shone with a brilliancy more suited to May than midwinter.

Although no members of the Club profited last Christmas by Mr. Moore's example and precepts, they have perhaps not been altogether thrown away. The Rev. J. H. Echoridge (?), with Peter Bohren, crossed on the first days of the new year the Great Scheideck and the Wengern Alp; and we hear of a party of Cambridge men spending their Christmas in skating on the Silser See in the Upper Engadine.

Davos seems to have become a recognised winter health-resort. One hundred and thirty guests, mostly German, were quartered there, when, on January 21, a terrible misfortune took place. The great Kurhaus was discovered to be on fire. Despite all efforts, it was slowly burnt to the ground. 'It was indeed,' says an eye-witness, 'a miserable sight to see the sick patients, leaning one upon another, issue sadly forth to seek some other shelter.'

CAUCASIAN EXPLORATION.—Mons. E. Favre, a son of the author of '*Recherches géologiques*,' spent the greater portion of last summer in exploring the upper valleys of the Central Caucasus. He writes: 'On the south side of the chain I visited the valleys of the Ksan, the Quirila, the Rion, and the Zênes-Squali. I passed a fortnight in Suanetia, where I had splendid weather. On the north I visited the valleys of the Uruch (Digor), the Tcherek (Balkar), the Tchegeg, and the Baksan. My expedition came to an end at Kislovodsk, where I was laid up with a severe attack of fever, which left me too weak to mount again on horseback. I consequently returned to Tiflis, where I completely recovered, and was able afterwards to pass some time in the Suram mountains and the district of Satskiri.' Mons. E. Favre adds the welcome announcement that he hopes soon to publish a work of some length on the geology and glaciers of the Caucasus.

We are glad to take this opportunity to mention that Herr Radde's work, '*Die Drei Langenhochthalern Imeritien's*,' originally printed in the government offices at Tiflis, can now be purchased of Williams and Norgate. The book, which is full of ethnological and botanical, besides much general information, is intended to be the first of a series of volumes illustrating the whole region of the Caucasus. Herr Radde has lately been engaged, in pursuance of this object, in examining the botany of Armenia, and more especially of the slopes of Ararat.

THE RIFFELHORN FROM THE GORNER GLACIER.—On August 5th J. H. Kitson, with Christian and Ulrich Almer, left Zermatt for a training walk through the ice-fall of the Gorner Glacier. 'Having conquered its difficulties, we thought it would be well to go to the Riffel for lunch, and the direct way lay over the Riffelhorn. Close inspection led to the discovery of a route that would be practical if two points could be passed; and we determined to make the attempt. Our way led up an exceedingly steep gully for some distance, until this ended in a smooth face of rock, inclined at a very high angle, and with no good standing-place below. However, we managed to push Christian up over this with our axes, and he pulled us up after him. The way was then easier, until about fifty feet from the top, where a rock projected with a smooth face at one side and overhanging on the other. Christian, by the most wonderful piece of climbing I ever saw, managed to worm himself over

the smooth face, and began to pull me up; but a straight pull only brought my head under the projection, and the rope pulled me off any hold there was on the smooth face; so we were obliged to climb sideways, supported almost entirely by the rope, until a straight pull up was possible, after which we easily reached the top. I can confidently recommend the excursion to anyone with a liking for difficult rocks, as they are all very sound.'

THE JUNGFRAU.—When the upper part of the Jungfrau consists of hard ice, as is frequently the case, the step-cutting which is so tedious on it may be avoided by taking to the rocks on the Roththal side, which are easy. The snow was in such good condition in August this year that the ascent was made from the Faulberg and back in seven hours and a half.—J. H. KITSON.

MONT BLANC BY BALLOON.—Some time since an account of a projected railway to the summit of Mont Blanc appeared in this journal. We have now to bring before our readers a scarcely less daring project, by which it is proposed to set aside the difficulties which at present hinder so many tourists from ascending the monarch of the Alps.

A young native of Sallenches, a nephew of the mayor of that place, had the misfortune to be shut up in Paris during the Prussian siege. There he distinguished himself as a clever and successful aeronaut. On his return home his thoughts turned to the possibility of applying the skill which he had acquired to some practical and profitable purpose. He surveyed Mont Blanc with care, and arrived ultimately at the conclusion that nothing was easier than to arrange for its ascent by balloon. The details of his plan have naturally not been made public; but it is understood, says our informant, that a number of captive balloons will be attached to rocky eminences on the upper portion of the mountain. The inconveniences attendant on a change of carriages, or to speak more correctly cars, at so high an elevation have, it seems, therefore yet to be overcome. But whatever may be the details of the plan, it was in the course of last spring submitted to the Council of the Commune of Chamouni, and received their formal sanction.

We are sorry to learn that want of funds, and the opposition of some of the inventor's relations, have as yet prevented any steps being taken for the realisation of this daring project. We trust that a scheme so eminently fitted to increase the enjoyment of those of our fellow-countrymen who like to travel in gangs, may not be nipped in the bud by the proverbial distrust of a genius amongst his own people. There occurs to our mind, however, one serious danger, against which sufficient precautions will no doubt be taken. What if some ill-advised guide, urged by the peril of his craft, should cut the connecting rope of the balloon, and dismiss its hapless crew on a 'circular' voyage to heaven's gate, or some other region where return tickets are unknown, and accommodation coupons not as yet recognised.