

that, with virgin peaks each year getting scarcer, a mountain considerably more than 12,000 ft. high close in view of the Col de Balme should have been left untouched. The ascent is not so difficult as that of the Aiguille Verte, and, I should think, is free from any danger from falling stones.

THE SWISS 'ALPENCLUB.'

THE valuable annual publications of the various foreign Alpine Clubs being—partly perhaps from the language in which they are written—less known in this country than they deserve, we propose in the following pages to lay before our readers a *résumé* of a portion of the contents of the last (4th) 'Jahrbuch des Schweizer Alpenclubs,' for 1867-8, which appeared during the spring of this year.

The proceedings of the Club since 1866 are first described in a paper by Dr. F. von Tschudi, from which we learn that the summer of 1866 proved very unfavourable to the designs of the members, and that but little was, in consequence, accomplished towards the exploration of the district ('Exkursions-Gebiet'), specially chosen at the general meeting at Chur, as the object of detailed investigation, viz., that section of the Central Alps comprised between the passes of the Great St. Bernard and St. Théodule. The area originally set apart had been subsequently restricted to the Mont Blanc de Cheillon group, between the Col de Fenêtre de Chermontane, and the Col de Colon, its west portion having been already more or less thoroughly explored, whilst the east division, extending from the Col de Colon to the St. Théodule, was left for another year. The Vice-President—the well-known Herr Weilenmann of St. Gallen—undertook in the autumn of 1865 a preliminary reconnaissance of the 'Exkursions-Gebiet,' whilst the preparation of a special 'excursion-map' on a scale of $\frac{1}{80000}$ based upon the original Federal survey, with contour lines at intervals of 100 ft., was entrusted to the firm of Wurster & Co. of Winterthur—already so famous for their cartographical publications. Considerable attention was also devoted by the Committee to the establishment and organisation of guide corps and the arrangement of tariffs, especially in the sections Rhätia, Tödi, and Monte Rosa. Investigations into the nomenclature of remoter valleys, especially near the points of contact of different languages, were set on foot, and lastly, in order to stimulate the zeal and economise the efforts of the members, a pamphlet was issued, containing suggestions for observers on a variety of

subjects, such as the geological and mineralogical character of mountain tops, the movement of glaciers, the height of the snow line, the limits of vegetation, the superior limits of the growth of trees, rural economy, quarrying stone, topography, folk-lore, physical phenomena, &c. By this means, it was hoped, a rich store of materials might in time be accumulated for a future volume on Swiss mountain craft.

Whilst the Central Committee was thus engaged, the eleven sections into which the Club is divided pursued their own peculiar objects, with more or less activity. In the Section Geneva (President Professor A. Favre; eighty-six members), numerous topographical and scientific papers were read, corrections and additions were noted for future insertion in the Federal map, the extension and distribution of erratic blocks was made a subject of particular study, a special organ—'L'Écho des Alpes'—was set on foot, and arrangements were made, in concert with the Sections Monte Rosa and Diablerets, for a French translation of the annual volumes of the Club.

The Section Diablerets (President M. Auguste Bernus; twenty-nine members) was prevented by the unfavourable weather from completing the erection of a refuge on the Diablerets or carefully exploring the neighbouring excursion ground, though early in July, Herr Isler accomplished ascents of the Barne Blanche, La Salle, Mont Pleureur, Pigne d'Arrolla, and Pointe d'Otemma. In other parts of the country various independent expeditions were made by members of this section, but it may suffice to mention here an ascent of the Tödi by Dr. J. Piccard, from which he returned direct, viâ the Klein Tödi and Sand Alp—a route which, it is believed, had not been tried since Hegetschweiler's abortive attempts.

The Section Monte Rosa (President Herr A. v. Torrenté; twenty-four members), established in October 1865, had been principally engaged in getting itself into working order, arranging a collection of books and maps, and drawing up guide rules and tariffs for the different valleys. Unfavourable weather put an end to all their projected tours in the official district, and an ascent of the Ofenhorn in the Binnen Thal—described as one of the finest points of view in the Valais—is the only 'free expedition' alluded to.

Section Bern is the most numerous of all, numbering 118 members, who are worthily presided over by that veteran mountaineer Herr G. Studer, 'the Nestor of the Alps.' The meetings were frequent, numerous attended, and well provided with papers on a variety of subjects. The library had received large accessions, whilst the construction of a hut in the

Trift district, as well as the repair of that on the Mönch Joch, was discussed.

The Section Pilatus (President Herr Rector Zähringer; forty-five members) accomplished a sectional excursion to the Hochstollen viâ the Milchsee Alp, whilst ascents of the Surenen-eck, Grosses Spannort, &c., were effected by individual members, and arrangements were made, especially in Uri and Unterwalden, for the organisation of guides, &c.

The Section Aargau (President Herr A. Neuberger; ten members) seems to have had to content itself with a policy of masterly inactivity, thanks to the persistency of the bad weather.

The Section Basle (President Professor Rütimeyer; seventy-three members), always active, seems in 1866 to have borne away the palm from all the rest. A convenient club-room, a library of 650 volumes, a rich collection of maps and panoramas, as well as of specimens illustrating the geological structure of the Alps, &c., afford every facility for information, and that these advantages are made good use of is shown by the fact that, throughout the year, meetings were held every fortnight and attended by twenty to forty members, whilst papers, either single or in a connected series, were freely contributed. Amongst the excursions accomplished by various members it may suffice here to mention the Kleine and Grosse Windgelle and Grosses Scheerhorn, by Herr F. Hofmann; the Claridenhorn, Kehlengletscher, &c., by Herr E. Burkhardt; the Hüfistock, Oberalpstock, and Grosses Scheerhorn, by Herr v. Haller; the Sustenhorn and Tschingel Glacier, by Herr Lüscher-Stapfer, &c. In the Valaisan official excursion district, the Mont Fort, Mont Pleureur, Mont Gelé, and Serpentine, were climbed by Herr E. Hoffmann; La Salle by Herr F. Hofmann-Merian; the Col de Cheillon, Durand Glacier, &c., by HH. Finniger, Hoffmann-Burkhardt, and Raillard; the Col du Crêt, Glacier des Eculaies, and Col de Riedmatten, &c., by Herr C. Osir-Paravicini.

The Section Uto (Zurich) (President Herr Siber-Gysi, successor to Professor Ulrich who had been elected Central President; eighty members), held monthly sittings during the winter, at which papers on mountain expeditions, the Alpine commissariat, hypsometry, &c., were read. In actual expeditions little was accomplished by the Section during the year.

The Section Tödi (President Herr Landrath Hauser) reported various successful sectional excursions, such as the ascent of the Ortstock from Schönenbühl, the exploration of the little-known group of mountains between the Hausstock

and the Kisten Pass, the ascent of the Ruchi returning along the ridge of the Hausstock and Mättlistock, and so descending into the Durnachthal. Besides these, the indefatigable Herr Hauser effected the ascent of Piz Urlaun, both summits of Piz Cristallina, the Düssistock, and the Scheerhorn.

The Section Rhätia (President Herr J. Coaz; 100 members), appears often to have combined its sittings with those of the Grisons Naturalist's Society, but finally resolved to hold special meetings of its own. Amongst private expeditions we may mention the first ascent of the Tinzenhorn by Herr E. Hauser, in which our own countryman Mr. D. W. Freshfield took part, that of the Verstanklahorn by Herren F. Brosi, and Jacob; together with the Sruors near Pontresina, and the highest peak of the Disgrazia by the guides A. Flury and P. Jenni. These last are described as being 'both *really* first ascents'—a mistake, as regards the second expedition, which probably rests upon Herr Siber-Gysi's erroneous inferences in his paper on the Disgrazia (*Jahrbuch*, vol. iii.), already disposed of by the writer of the present notice in the May number of this Journal, page 49.

Finally, the Section St. Gallen (Central Section of the year; 105 members), although diligent in holding meetings and reading papers, accomplished little in the way of exploration in its collective capacity. Herr Weilenmann, however, during a visit to the official excursion district (Mont Blanc de Cheillon) in July, crossed the Col de Crête Sèche, and the new glacier pass between the Trouma des Boucs and La Ciardonnay, effected the first ascent of the Bec Épicoun, and finally climbed the Pointe d'Otemma, after which the unfavourable weather put a stop to mountaineering. Dr. Schläpfer, starting from the Vereina Alp, ascended the virgin summit of the Plattenhorn in the Silvretta group.

The extraordinary meeting of delegates, twenty-one in number, for considering the modifications in the rules proposed by the Central Committee prior to their being submitted to the general meeting, took place at St. Gallen. An ordinary meeting of the same representatives followed in which the annual budget was discussed. The receipts for 1866, including the balance brought forward from the previous year, amounted to 7,190 francs, and the payments—inclusive of 919 francs expended for the Excursion map—to 1,938 francs, leaving 5,251 francs in hand, whilst the estimated expenditure for 1867 amounted to 2,049 francs. It was decided not to appoint any fresh excursion district for 1867, but to retain that for 1866 (the Mont Blanc de Cheillon group), in which, owing to the

weather, so little had been accomplished, whilst for 1868 the subdivision from the Col de Colon to the St. Théodule was reserved, thus giving time for the preparation of the necessary maps, itineraries, &c. Lucerne was selected as the place of holding the next general meeting, and it was further resolved to set aside a sum of 1,000 francs per volume as remuneration to the members of the special committee entrusted with the duty of editing the Jahrbuch. At Herr Coaz's suggestion, it was determined to use every means at the disposal of the Club to bring about the publication, on a scale of $\frac{1}{30000}$, of the original Federal topographical survey of Switzerland.

On the following day, the ordinary general meeting of the Club, at which about 105 members were present, took place. Professor M. Ulrich was chosen Central President, various other matters were satisfactorily disposed of, and the proceedings wound up with a banquet, bonfires, an excursion to Weissbad (in Appenzell) and the Wildkirchli, &c., in the most satisfactory and 'lustig' manner.

Next in the order of contents of the new volume of the Jahrbuch follows a report by Professor M. Ulrich of the proceedings of the central committee from November 1866 to July 31, 1867, from which it appears that the former editorial committee of the Jahrbuch had declined to be reappointed, but that an able substitute for a period of three years had been found in the person of Professor Theobald of Chur. The proposition for a French translation of the Jahrbuch proved difficult to carry out, but, after some delay, the necessary arrangements were concluded with Messrs. Schmid (Dalp) of Berne and Georg (Neukirch) of Bâle.

Another important subject of deliberation was the Excursion district and map, with reference to which we extract the following particulars literally:—'The group of mountains between the Grand Combin and Mont Colon, was selected for the year 1866, and an itinerary was compiled by the section St. Gallen. The season was, however, so unfavourable, that, at the annual general meeting held at St. Gallen, it was resolved to retain the same excursion district for 1867. The Excursion map for 1866 consisted of a single sheet, embracing the heads of the valleys of Bagne, Héricence, and Arolla. To the north it had no distinctly defined limit, and the Grand Combin had to be excluded in order to make room for the title. The central committee at Zurich considered it desirable that the Excursion map for 1867 should be enriched by the addition of a northern sheet carrying it up to the Rhone, and that, by the removal of the title to the west side of the upper

sheet, the Grand Combin should also find a place on the map. The whole of the Hérens, Hérémente, and Nendaz valleys, with the upper portion of that of Bagne, are now included in these two sheets, and it only remains to express a hope that expeditions in this highly interesting section of the Pennine Alps may be more favoured by the weather than in 1866. It was further determined at St. Gallen, that in future the excursion district should be selected two years in advance, and that, for the summer of 1868, it should comprise the group of mountains between Mont Colon and the Lyskamm, with the valleys of Einfisch, Turtmann, and St. Nicolas, and that with this object a map should be prepared, consisting of two sheets, to be ready for delivery to members in the spring of 1868. The Rhone will in this case also constitute the north boundary, and their west extension will correspond with the east limit of those of 1867.'

'For the accomplishment of the aim of the Club—to give a complete delineation of, and thoroughly to explore, the mountain system of the southern Valais, a further extension of the map to the west and east is, however, still requisite, and with this object the committee propose to themselves a twofold task. First, as respects the west side from the Col de Balme to the Grand Combin, to bring out in the course of 1868 two more sheets, comprising the valleys of Ferrex, Entremont, and Bagne. The expense—about 1,000 francs—is justified by the consideration that for 1867 no *new* map will be necessary, but only an extension of that for 1866. For 1869, the mountain group from the Lyskamm to Monte Leone, including the valley of Saas and pass of the Simplon, will be selected as the official excursion district. Thus, in the course of three (or, including 1866, of four) years, we shall obtain, on a scale of $\frac{1}{100,000}$, a general view of the mighty mountain *massif* of the southern Valais, in eight uniform sheets, comprising 32' of longitude and 47' of latitude (the first sheet extending a few minutes further to the north, on account of the Velan), and executed on the system of contour lines, a work not only appropriate to the objects of an Alpine club, but which may render valuable service in other departments of research, as well as prove honourable to ourselves.'

The report of the committee then goes on to refer to the subject of special subventions, and informs us that, in addition to the original sum of 600 francs granted in 1865 towards the construction of the Silvretta hut, a further contribution of 67½ francs had been voted at the request of the section Rhätia for the purpose of completing some additions and improvements.

The hut had stood the winter very satisfactorily. The section Tödi having, in the year 1863, erected a roomy hut on the Grünhorn on the route followed in ascents of the Tödi, and received from the central fund 946 francs in three instalments, and having now applied for assistance in the construction of a refuge in the Steinhäli at the foot of the Ruchen Glärnisch, at an estimated cost of 400 francs, the committee resolved to grant a subvention of 200 francs. The section Bern desired to erect near the hut in the Trift district—for which 150 francs were contributed by the Club in 1864—a new stone one at an estimated expense of 867 francs, and received from the committee a promise of 500 francs. The old hut, if it withstands the effects of the winter, will probably be devoted in future to the use of guides and as a storehouse. Lastly, the section Pilatus has had a model of that mountain constructed in relief at a cost of about 300 francs, towards which the committee have granted 150, on the understanding that it shall be freely accessible to members of the Club.

To the same category belong two private undertakings of which the committee cordially approve. Herr Statthalter Studer, of Berne, has in hand a list of the first ascents of mountains of 12,000 ft. (Swiss) and upwards in height, and Herr Direktor Szadowsky, of Chur, has been authorised by the central committee to prepare an alphabetical list of Romansch and Ladinisch names of places and mountains, with their signification and correct orthography. Both of these catalogues, according to the dimensions they assume, will appear either independently or as contributions to the Jahrbuch.

With this preliminary general sketch, we propose to close the present notice, but hope in our next number to lay before our readers an analysis of the very interesting series of papers contained in the new volume of the Jahrbuch.

F. F. T.

SUMMARY OF NEW EXPEDITIONS DURING THE SUMMER OF 1868.

Bernese Oberland.

June 17.—Mr. Malkin and Mr. F. Martineau, with Melchior Anderegg, made a new route from Kippel direct to Schwarenbach. ‘We followed the Löttsch-pass (to Kandersteg) for more than two hours, as far as a group of chalets called Kummén. There turned south by compass up a valley, name unknown, divided into three successive basins. There seems to be a small glacier in it, for I am nearly sure we saw ice; but the whole was full of snow, old and new, there having been a