side by side in splendid cascades. Below the lake the glen falls with extraordinary rapidity, and a very stony path, mainly on the left bank, leads down past a succession of waterfalls, any one of which might be famous in a less favoured region.

The lower level of the valley is devastated by the torrent. Travellers ascending Val Camonica to Ponte di Legno, the nearest sleeping-quarters, will cross the stony bed and follow a cart-track joining the Tonale road a little below Pontagna, and about 2½ miles from Ponte di Legno, where the inn is much improved.

This route across the snowy table-lands of the Adamello may be shortened by from 3 to 4 hrs. by omitting the ascent of the Carè Alto. It would then cease to be a day of unusual length, and there is probably no place in the Alps where five watersheds of equal elevation can be crossed with so little fatigue. The views of the surrounding ranges, especially of the whole chain of the Brenta Alta, are most splendid, and mountaineers already acquainted with Val di Genova can scarcely do better than follow the track here pointed out. The passes traversed are believed to have been all accomplished by Lieut. Payer, or other foreign mountaineers, but their combination is certainly new. The relative heights assigned to the Passo di Cavento and Fum Pass (9,400 and 9,800 Austrian feet) by Payer require revision, the former being decidedly the higher of the two.

Bonifazio Nicolosi of Molveno can be recommended as a splendid rock-climber and as one of the most cheerful and ready companions and sturdy weight-carriers to be found in the Alps. He seems also perfectly capable to take the lead on ice. It is a pity that his duties as a forester prevent his accepting any long engagement.

Times—Borzago to shepherd's hut, 4½ hrs.; ascent of Carè Alto, 4 hrs.; to Passo di Cavento, 2½ hrs.; to Passo della Lobbia alta, 1 hr.; to Passo del Mandron, 1½ hr.; descent to Alp near Lago di Avio, 1½ hr.; to Ponte di Legno, 2½ hrs. (fast); total (second day) 13 hrs.

ALPINE NOTES.

CHAMONIX * GUIDES AND THE DEATH ON THE MER DE GLÂCE.

A letter from the Editor of the 'Alpine Journal' appeared in the 'Times' of October 7, giving some of the leading facts connected with the recent death of Professor Fedchenko, a Russian *savant*, already distinguished for his researches amongst the mountains of Central Asia. A report spread at Chamonix that the immediate cause of the catastrophe

* The 'Times' reviser, following the ordinary custom of English printers, twice substituted 'Chamounix' for 'Chamonix.' Good literary authority can be found for both 'Chamounix' and 'Chamouni.' But 'Chamonix' is the spelling of the people of the valley, and of the French Ordnance Survey and Post-office, and there seems no reason why it should not in England, as in accurate Germany, be universally accepted.

had been the traveller's refusal to take the necessary provisions was contradicted, and the conduct of the guide and porter, two brothers, named Joseph and Prosper Payot, in leaving Professor Fedchenko while still alive, was severely commented on. The letter concluded as follows:—

'Every effort has been made at Chamonix to hush up the matter; the one brother remains on the roll of guides, and no punishment or even public censure has fallen on either.

'For the present, therefore, the whole body of guides must be regarded as discredited and disgraced. There is only one course by which they can partially retrieve their credit.

'They must at once remove from their ranks the member who has so grossly violated his trust, and they must further press for such punishment on his conduct as French law can inflict. But if they wish to regain their former reputation much larger measures are necessary. Mountaineers have for some time known that many of those on the Chamonix roll were unfit for their work. The men who can take the lead on a glacier and the men who are only capable of following a mule must be placed on separate lists in such a way that strangers may run no risk of mistake. Until this has been done travellers should accustom themselves to look on the title of "Guide de Chamonix" rather as a snare than a safeguard, unless it is prefaced by one of the well-known names distinguished in the "Alpine Guide" of Mr. Ball.'

Three days afterwards, Mr. Warren Pugh supplied the following information as to the antecedents of the guide employed by M. Fedchenko:—

In the autumn of last year Mr. Pugh ascended Mont Blanc with Joseph Payot as his guide, and his brother Prosper and a Champéry man as porters. The guide showed himself so little acquainted with ice-work, and was so often at a loss in finding his way among the crevasses, that had it not been for his brother, the porter, and the Champéry man, to both of whom he was constantly appealing, the party would scarcely have reached the summit in time to descend by daylight. Mr. Pugh called at the office of the "chef guide," and stated his experience of J. Payot, but was informed that the man having passed all the requisite examinations must continue to rank as a duly qualified guide.

Mr. F. T. Pratt-Barlow also wrote to the 'Times' condemning strongly the rules of the Chamonix bureau, and giving his experience of *a* Joseph Payot who walked with him over the Tête Noire. Mr. Barlow described him as a young man looking not more than 20, very inexperienced, but with a genuine enthusiasm for the mountains. It does not seem certain that Mr. Barlow's companion was the same Joseph Payot employed by Mr. Pugh and Mons. Fedchenko.

On the 17th ult. a most interesting letter from Mr. Alfred Wills furnished for the first time full details of the sad catastrophe. We cannot do better than reprint Mr. Wills's account, founded on first-rate authority, and on a personal examination of one of the men concerned:

'M. Fedchenko was recommended to visit the Col du Géant by a near relative of the guide and porter he afterwards engaged, who keeps

one of the shops for the sale of crystals and the like, of which there are so many at Chamonix—a person who has the reputation of some geological and botanical knowledge, and to whom on that account M. Fedchenko had addressed himself. The same person naturally recommended the guide and porter in question. I do not blame him for this, and I think he was justified by their character in so doing. The guide—Joseph Payot—was a young man between 23 and 24 years of age; the porter, his brother Prosper, between 22 and 23. M. Fedchenko started from Chamonix at 5 A.M., intending to visit the col and and return the same evening. He breakfasted at the Montanvert, whence he set forth at 8 A.M. He there procured his provisions, for which, with his breakfast, he paid 26f. The party took the ordinary route, and reached the snow slopes about the séracs without any unusual incident. The passage of the séracs always involves a good deal of close attention to details, and it was only on reaching the névé above that they noticed that the day, which, when they started from the Montanvert, was exceptionally fine, was clouding over. They did not, however, anticipate any very severe weather, and pursued their way; but when they had nearly reached the rocks known by the name of "La Vierge," from which it would have taken them, under ordinary circumstances, about an hour to reach the col, a storm of wind, rain, sleet, and snow burst upon them with extreme suddenness and violence. Their first idea was to push on, cross the col, and reach Mount Fréty on the southern side; but a very few minutes sufficed to show them that it was hopeless to attempt in such weather to toil up the heavy snow slopes which lead to the col, added to which the storm prevented them from telling in what direction they were going, and the chances were greatly against their hitting the place of passage even if they could breast the ascent. They turned, a little after 2 P.M., to retrace their steps. The tracks they had made in the snow were already obliterated, and were never found again, except here and there in the middle of the descent of the séracs. They were soon wet to the skin and half frozen by the cold wind. M. Fedchenko was already tired, and the cold and wet told heavily upon him. Partly in consequence of his exhausted state, partly in consequence of the mist and drift in which they were enveloped, and which prevented them from seeing any distant object by which to direct themselves, they were a long time in reaching and again in descending the séracs; and it was necessary to give an increasing amount of help to the traveller, who was not a light man. By the time they arrived at the foot of the séracs it was nightfall—the day was the 14th of September—and by this time M. Fedchenko was so exhausted that the two Payots had to carry him on their backs, turn and turn about. The storm still continued, and they descended in this fashion over a stretch of ice very far from being as difficult as the séracs, but still laborious and embarrassing in the last degree to men so encumbered. About 9 P.M. they reached the few scattered rocks which compose the moraine known as La Noire—a moraine totally insufficient in size to afford any protection against the weather, but which still gave them rock instead of ice to rest upon. By this time Joseph Payot, who is the less strong of the two brothers, was almost as exhausted as M. Fedchenko,

and was himself unable to proceed further. They remained in this dreadful position, exposed, without any shelter, to wind, rain, and snow from 9 P.M. to 2 A.M. There was no moon, and the night was dark, with clouds and bad weather. Prosper Payot, who was the strongest of the party, remained upon his feet all the time, moving about, and, as long as he could, he kept his brother and the traveller upon their feet; but at length exhaustion became supreme. The traveller sank upon the rock, and despite every effort Prosper could make, fell into that fatal sleep of frozen exhaustion from which there is no awaking. He had been long in this condition, though still breathing, and Prosper had already had to strike, kick, and shake his brother to prevent him also from falling asleep, when the younger brother came to the conclusion that the only chance of saving any life besides his own—perhaps his own also—was to attempt to walk on. He got his brother into motion with infinite difficulty, and with great difficulty kept him from falling, till, little by little, circulation and warmth to some degree revived, and between 4 and 5 A.M. on the 15th they both reached the Montanvert in a very exhausted and pitiable condition, especially Joseph. What time the traveller died cannot be known, but if the information given to me be correct, he was dead to all intents and purposes long before the Payots left him.*

'If this narrative be substantially true, it is difficult to see what more the two men could have done after they once became involved in the difficulty, or of what avail it would have been to stay longer on the glacier than they did. It is true that the narrative comes from the men themselves; but I see no reason to doubt it. The story was told me by Prosper Payot simply, quietly, and modestly; and there are many circumstances to bear it out. In the first place, it is undoubted that the men did not reach the Montanvert till between 4 and 5 on the Monday morning. In the second place, it is to the last degree improbable that they should have been able to descend the séracs in the night. They therefore must have stayed several hours by the traveller, and I cannot conceive for what purpose except to do the best they could for him. Their own chance of escape would have been infinitely greater had they left him earlier, and there is no room to doubt that one of them had a very narrow escape with his own life, which, indeed, he owed entirely to his brother. Their retreat would have been much easier at 9 or 10 P.M. than at 2 A.M, because the strain of several hours passed under such circumstances of weather, temperature, and associations was a very fearful one even for a very strong man On the other hand, when it had once become impossible to rouse the traveller from the fatal lethargy which creeps over men so situated, no power on earth could save him, and I cannot see any sufficient reason to doubt that they did stay by him as long as there was any chance of saving him,

* Joseph Payot, immediately on his return to Chamonix, stated distinctly that he had left M. Fedchenko alive. The Commissary of Police, however, informed Madame Fedchenko that her husband died while the guides were with him. It may be hoped he made this statement from a kindly motive; but the same excuse cannot be made for the rest of Chamonix, which did its best to circulate the untruth.

and, indeed, till the life of one of themselves hung by a thread. I have only to add upon this part of the case that my friend and I both entered upon the investigation with a strong feeling against the Payots. That my friend's views were changed by examination and reflection is best proved by the fact that a week ago he selected the same Prosper Payot to accompany us on an expedition of very considerable length, rendered serious by the fact that we were both taking with us some of those nearest and dearest to us, and upon which we were both, therefore, unusually anxious to be sure of our men. I do not see any reason, further, to doubt Prosper Payot's statement that, had he started off alone to the Montanvert to get assistance, in the four or five hours which must have elapsed before he could return his brother and the traveller would have infallibly both perished. As it was, he long prevented the traveller from falling into his fatal sleep, and just succeeded in preventing his brother from following in the same course.

'The mistake they made, so far as I can judge, was in going so far before turning back. It is quite possible that in this respect they were wrong. The Chamonix tariff offers to guides and porters enormous temptations to press on in spite of warning. Had these men reached the summit of the col, the guide would have been entitled to 40f. or 50f.—I forget which—and the porter to 20f. or 25f. Had they turned back where they were when the first symptom of bad weather attracted their attention, the guide would have been entitled to 10f. and the porter to 6f. A similar provision in the exaggerated tariff for the ascent of Mont Blanc was the undoubted cause of the death of 11 persons in the terrible accident of 1870; and it would take a higher nature than that of probably 335 out of the 340 guides of Chamonix to resist such a temptation, when they did not foresee that their own lives would be at stake.' *

For this mistake, if it was one, Mr. Wills proceeds at some length to excuse the Payots, on the ground of the sudden and unlooked-for character of the storm. It did not burst, however, on the Mer de Glâce wholly without warning. Another traveller, with an Oberland guide, was on the glacier that day. He breakfasted at the Montanvert with M. Fedchenko, and only parted with the Russian and his guides at the junction of the glaciers, where the Jardin route turns off to the left. About midday the Oberlander called attention to ominous signs in the sky, and insisted on the return being hurried. We mention this circumstance as a contribution to the accurate understanding of the events of the day.

The concluding paragraph of M. Wills' letter is now quoted:—

'I quite agree with the Editor of the "Alpine Journal" that it would

* Mr. Wills has here hit on the motive actually avowed by J. Payot as having induced him to disregard the first signs of storm. The following fact has lately come to our knowledge:—On the night of M. Fedchenko's funeral the Payots were at the village *café*. Joseph was asked by a bystander, 'Did you notice signs of bad weather?' 'Oh, yes,' was the reply. 'Then why did you go on?' The exactness of the answer is vouched for:—'On "grandes courses" one takes the chance. One goes on because one gains much. Generally all goes right; and if not, well—"tant pire."'

be well if the guides could be divided into two classes, one comprehending the men competent to carry ladies' shawls to the Montanvert and to help nervous tourists over the Mauvais Pas or up to the Planpraz or the Flégère, or even to conduct a mule to Contamines or Martigny; the other, those fit to take the lead on a great glacier expedition, and to whom a life may be safely trusted in a moment of real difficulty or danger. But how many would be properly placed in the second category? I solemnly believe not half a dozen in all. And who is to classify them? If it were possible to give an idea of the illusory character of the securities provided by the existing laws regulating admission into the corporation of guides, or the depth of incompetence, sordidness, and prejudice which now prevails among that once honourable body, those to whom the traditions of Mont Blanc and the associations of Chamonix are dear would fairly stand aghast. The Chamonix regulations are a system of the rankest Communism, framed for the purpose of destroying all wholesome and honourable rivalry. The enormous influx of visitors has had its usual demoralising effect. The annexation of Savoy to France has told wofully upon the character of a people just learning to be independent. I have been a resident in Savoy during a part of every year since the annexation, as well as having known it very well before, and I have seen with pain and sorrow the rapid deterioration brought about by a system so fearfully and wonderfully perfect in all the arts and means by which public spirit, independence, and self-respect can be crushed out of the national life. At Chamonix every one of these causes is at work in the fullest vigour, and it is only surprising that any manliness is left in the place. There is not much of it. I have been a sorrowful witness during the last week to a picture of cowardice, imbecility, and incompetency on the part of guides, in whom I had been accustomed to believe, such as would have been incredible if I had not seen it and suffered by it. The glaciers of Mont Blanc are fast melting away, but the courage and virtue of the once hardy population of Chamonix are melting faster still, and already what is to my mind incomparably the most attractive district of the Alps has become scarcely a fit place for any mountaineer who is not prepared to do guide's and porter's work as well as his own, and to rely upon himself alone in any situation of difficulty or danger.'

The distressing story is now before us, told in such full detail and on such good authority that, although it is possible the chef-guide may be able and disposed to throw light on one or two points still more or less obscure, it is not premature to express at once our comments on the catastrophe, and to point out where we should wish to modify the conclusions drawn from it by Mr. Wills.

On the ground principally that the Payots remained by the traveller for five hours, and did not leave him until their own lives were in danger and his was, as they considered, past hope, Mr. Wills inclines to a more lenient judgment of the guides than that we felt at first bound to express. It must be borne in mind throughout, although not pressed unfairly, that our only evidence comes from the Payots themselves. Nor can we forget what Mr. Pugh has told us, that last year Joseph Payot proved himself on Mont Blanc a worthless guide. But it

need hardly be said we have no wish to judge the men harshly, and are heartily glad to find that, after Mr. Wills' explanation, their conduct appears less selfish and cowardly than at first sight. Mr. Wills has, we think, successfully cleared the Payots from the charge of manslaughter which, when the story first reached England, they seemed to labour under. But if we admit they did all they could, it must be with the reservation—being the men they were. Joseph Payot remains in our eyes a poor creature, unworthy both physically and morally to retain the name and position of guide. Prosper is very young, and was engaged only as a porter. He may be a good porter, and it is possible he may some day develope into a good guide. But in the accounts of the fatal expedition we find no sign that he rose above the duties of a porter, or at any moment by an act of judgment or decision proved himself capable of the post in which his brother was found wanting.

The men, having knowingly run into difficulty with a mercenary motive, lost their heads the moment they found themselves in what, no doubt, they did not foresee—real danger. Pluck and spirit were wanting in the decisive moments of the day, and when at last the moraine was reached Joseph Payot who, five hours afterwards, could walk down to the Montanvert, lost the last chance by being too weak or too timid to go on at once by himself and seek assistance. Had he done so, help would have been brought before the hour at which M. Fedchenko was left to die.

If the Payots showed little head they showed less heart. Though able to walk down to Chamonix, they neither of them thought to return with the men who went in search of their employer. And yet they did not scruple to ask and receive payment from his widow—payment for the services which were of such little avail.

We cannot finally leave this side of the subject without protesting most earnestly against the suggestion—not made by Mr. Wills, but which might be drawn from his letter—that it is allowable for a guide to attempt to judge whether his employer is or is not 'to all intents and purposes dead,' and, if he takes the former view, to leave him. Mutual confidence between the members of an Alpine expedition is founded on the knowledge that all will act on the principle that 'while there is life there is hope.' If the extremity of a companion's state is to be allowed as the reason for his abandonment, we must give up all our former ideas of honour, duty and devotion as between guides and travellers.

The skill or conduct of the two Payots is, however, despite the tragic interest for the moment thrown over it, a question of comparatively minor importance. Is it true, as Mr. Wills tells us, that the whole valley of Chamonix is a dark gulf of 'incompetence, sordidness, and prejudice,' and that a notice ought to be placed round the glaciers, 'Closed for want of guides'?

We feel that in the face of the evidence it must appear presumptuous to uphold any other view. When Chamonix has been tried and found wanting by Mr. L. Stephen, Mr. Wills, and Mr. Reilly, what can remain to be said for it? Yet we must be loyal to old friends. The

two or three men of the village we have ourselves had to do with have been good guides and honourable companions. In their families we have found independence joined to a delicacy of feeling rare anywhere. It is hard to us to believe that we have fallen upon the solitary specimens of virtue in a large population. No doubt the wretched rules of the 'bureau' have been successful to an extraordinary degree in discouraging and checking the progress of the young men who might, under other circumstances, have by this time taken an honourable position as the successors of the old Balmats and Couttets. But until we have yet further proof to the contrary we would fain hope that there is still good raw material in Chamonix, and that, despite the miserably low tone of morality prevalent, reformers may count on the presence and support of a perhaps small but influential class in the place itself. The select list we propose to form would not embrace many names, but in how many villages in Switzerland are there more than from a dozen to twenty first-rate guides?

But, however few the good men left in the valley, it will be admitted that the present inefficiency of Chamonix guides, as a body, has been the product of a bad system, rather than the result of any natural unfitness or viciousness in the men themselves. It follows that if we wish to enable Chamonix to regain its old reputation this system must first be destroyed. It is, we think, the duty of the Alpine Club to take the means at hand to effect this object, and in the first place to represent in the most forcible way to the guides themselves, through their official chief, the evils caused by the levelling nature of their present rules, the laxity of their discipline, and the disloyalty often shown towards travellers. If the 'bureau' refuses to listen to our advice we shall then be justified in taking the strongest measures to save travellers from the trap prepared for them, and in devising some means by which what good men there are in the valley may be effectually severed and distinguished from their unworthy brethren. The 'Corporation of Guides' has to choose between submitting itself to a severe but wholesome reform, or remaining as it is, and being denounced to the world as an association of muledrivers, bent on obtaining money under the false pretence of glacier guides.

It only remains for us to add, that the first step in the course here sketched out has already been taken, as will be seen from the following letter extracted from the 'Times' of October 21:—

'Sir,—I send you herewith a copy of a letter I have sent to the Guide Chef at Chamonix, relative to the death of M. Fedchenko, and the organisation of guides at Chamonix. I trust you will publish it in your columns, as it will, I hope, give your readers an assurance that serious accidents on the Alps cannot take place without an effort being made by our Club to investigate their causes and to prevent their recurrence.

'I am, sir, faithfully yours,
'WILLIAM LONGMAN, President of the Alpine Club.

'Alpine Club, St. Martin's Place, W., Oct. 20.

"Alpine Club, St. Martin's Place, London,
October 20, 1873.

"Sir,—As President of the English Alpine Club, I write to you relative to the death of M. Fedchenko on the Mer de Glâce on September 14, of which two accounts—one by Mr. Douglas Freshfield, the Editor of the 'Alpine Journal,' and the other by Mr. Alfred Wills, formerly President of our Club—have appeared in the 'Times' newspaper. These two accounts of the catastrophe differ considerably. It is therefore important that we should have a report from yourself, who—responsible by virtue of your office—must be able to speak with authority of all the circumstances connected with the expedition.

"Although the unfortunate gentleman was not an Englishman, you will, I am sure, feel that I, as the representative of English mountaineers, and the President of the first-formed Alpine Club, am only performing a duty to the general body of Alpine travellers in now addressing you. It is to the interest of travellers of all nations, and I may add to that of the guides themselves, that the dangers of Alpine travel should be, as far as possible, reduced to a minimum. When, therefore, an accident does occur, its causes must be jealously scrutinised, for the purpose of ascertaining how far the fatal event was inevitable, and how the occurrence of a similar catastrophe may be prevented. I therefore invite you to send me a circumstantial and properly-authenticated account of the whole expedition. Unless this is done the confidence of all travellers in the bureau which guarantees the efficiency of the Chamonix guides will be destroyed, and no small injury be inflicted on Chamonix itself.

"But I have a further object in addressing you, and that is, to induce you to take steps for the improvement of the organisation of the body over which you preside, the necessity for which is insisted on in the two letters to which I have referred, and also in that by Mr. F. P. Barlow, one of the most active members of our Club, in another letter to the Editor of the 'Times.' It is not right, as I am sure you cannot hesitate to admit, that there should be but one list of guides, comprising indiscriminately those qualified for glacier expeditions of the greatest difficulty and for arduous ascents of the highest mountains, and also those competent for merely ordinary passes, and that all travellers, whether genuine mountaineers or ordinary tourists, should be compelled to take them in strict rotation. This practice is as unjust to the guides themselves as it is to those requiring their services. The members of our Club are absolved from this condition, and so should be the general public. I should be stepping out of my proper province were I, at present, to attempt to dictate to you the exact details of arrangements having for their object a more satisfactory organisation of guides; but I may suggest to you that a list of guides should be printed, and presented to all applicants, in which they should be arranged in three classes. The first should contain the names of those qualified for expeditions of real difficulty; the second of those suited to ordinary glacier expeditions; and the third of those capable of only easy work. To the names of the guides in the first two divisions should be appended a list of the expeditions they have made, and

travellers requiring a guide for any purpose should be allowed to select their companions, entirely untrammelled by the principle of rotation; but no guide except those in the first and second divisions should be allowed to conduct any traveller on a glacier.

"I trust you will give this communication—a copy of which I have sent to the 'Times' newspaper—your early and careful consideration, and that you will write to me on the subject with as little delay as is consistent with due deliberation.

"I am, sir, with expressions of the highest esteem and consideration, faithfully yours,

"WILLIAM LONGMAN, President of the Alpine Club.

"I enclose copies of the various communications to the 'Times' to which I have alluded.

"To the Guide Chef, Bureau des Guides, Chamonix."

MELCHIOR ANDEREGG AS A SCULPTOR.—Very many members of the Alpine Club know Melchior Anderegg, and those who do not know him know of him. He is, I venture to affirm, the first Swiss guide of the day; and he is, furthermore, as good a fellow off the mountains as he is a good guide upon them. In winter, Melchior occupies himself with wood-carving. Hitherto his work, though distinguished by taste and skill, has been conventional and common-place in character; but I have now the pleasure of announcing that he is ripening from a carver into a sculptor. In the year 1872 we were resting for a moment, during the descent of the Wetterhorn, when the question of Melchior's doing some carving for me during the winter first cropped up between us. It was decided that he should do *something* for me, and the only point of apparent difficulty was the selection of the subject. 'Would you like a chamois, Herr?' asked Anderegg, cheerfully. 'No, Melk, I won't have anything to say to a chamois.' 'Perhaps you would prefer a cow?' suggested my guide. 'Well, do you know Melchior, I hate cows—in wood—rather more than I hate chamois in the same material. No cows for me.' Melchior hesitated a moment, and then asked, doubtfully, 'Would you like a châlet, with rocks?' 'No, Melk, I won't have a chamois, a cow, or a châlet; but I will tell you what I will have.' 'What is that, Herr?' 'Why, a portrait of yourself, carved by yourself, in wood; and about—let us say, about two feet high.' Melchior looked dismayed. 'I couldn't do it!' he exclaimed; 'I never carved a figure, and I don't know at all how to set to work. I am afraid that I could not do it.' However, I pointed out that he had nothing to fear; that the work was a commission; that I wanted him to make a trial, and would take the figure whether a failure or a success. At last he undertook, though with some diffidence, to execute my commission, and the result of his labours reached me in the early summer of this year. I was surprised, as well as delighted, with Melchior's production; and members of the Alpine Club can judge for themselves whether my admiration be well founded by inspecting this portrait of Melchior Anderegg, by himself, in the Dudley Gallery, which is now open. There are, of course, defects. Some of the proportions of the figure

are not quite correct—nor was it to be expected that they could be in a first attempt to model a figure; but Melchior is studying diligently, as I know, and will soon succeed in mastering such difficulties. The feeling for texture is quite remarkable; the portrait is fair; the attitude—one which I suggested—is well managed; and the whole work is full of 'go,' truth, and life. I do not, however, now want to criticise beyond calling sufficient attention to its merits to induce men to go and see it. My motive in inducing Melchior to try sculpture (at present only in wood) was this: I thought a day would come—may it be far distant!—when Melchior would have to quit the peaks and to retire to the flat. I thought that it would be pleasant to many of us if our greatest guide turned from guiding into art—a better career than keeping a small hotel, or a horse and chaise. Melchior has, I feel sure, very great natural ability and aptitude; and he is bent on studying hard. Why should he not become—perhaps—a Thorwaldsen of Helvetia? Why should we not respect our old guide in the young artist? If this prospect seems a pleasant one to members of the Alpine Club, I would invite them to inspect the statuette in the Dudley Gallery; and if they like it, and think that it affords a promise of better things, I would suggest that they should encourage the artist-guide by giving him winter commissions for art-work.

H. Schütz Wilson.

Mr. Moore sends us the following note:—

'Jakob Anderegg burnt out.—On August 26 last the house of Jakob Anderegg, the well-known guide, at Unterbach, near Meiringen, was totally destroyed by fire, with all its contents, representing the savings of a lifetime. Nothing was saved, and the property was insured to the amount of only 1,000 fr. After allowing for this insurance, Jakob's actual loss is no less than 6,880 fr. Thanks to the exertions of Messrs. Pratt-Barlow and Grove, and the liberality of sympathising friends, a considerable sum has been raised for the poor man's relief, but the money collected still falls short by about 100*l.* of the amount of his loss. I think it probable that many of our members and others, to whom it has not been possible personally to apply, may be disposed to assist in the good work, when informed of the circumstances in your pages. Any sums which may be sent to me, addressed A. W. Moore, Hon. Sec. A. C., 8 St. Martin's Place, I will thankfully take charge of and acknowledge.

'Amounts received: Sir. C. Mordaunt, 5*l.*; T. Middlemore, 3*l.* 3*s.*; M. W. Whitmore, 1*l.*; F. F. Tuckett, 5*l.*; G. E. Foster, 10*l.*; L. Stephen, 2*l.* 2*s.*; H. P. Thomas, 10*s.*; E. Gonne, 1*l.*; C. J. Thomas, 1*l.*; J. H. Fox, 2*l.* 2 .; Eliot Howard, 3*l.*; S. Howard, 2*l.*; Commander Salmond, R.N., 2*l.* 18*s.*; E. Neel, 10*s.*; E. N. Buxton, 10*l.*; A. W. Moore, 10*l.*; C. G. Heathcote, 5*l.*; W. Trotter, 2*l.*; C. E. Mathews, 2*l.*; G. S. Mathews, 1*l.*; D. W. Freshfield, 1*l.*; Horace Walker, 10*l.*; Mrs. Walker, 2*l.*; Miss Walker, 5*l.*; J. Walker, 1*l.*; W. M. Pendlebury, 10*s.*; F. Gardiner, 3*l.*; Miss Barrett, 1*l.* 10*s.*; J. Camenisch, 1*l.*; Anon, 10*s.*; G. H. Strutt, 1*l.*; W. Peachey, 1*l.*; Miss Butler, 1*l.*; T. Cox, 1*l.*; A. Boyson, 3*l.* 3*s.*; W. Longman, 10*l.*; R. Still,

3*l.* 3*s.*; S. F. Still, 6*l.*; F. Pratt-Barlow, 3*l.* 3*s.*; F. Pratt-Barlow, jun., 10*l.*; F. C. Grove, 5*l.* 5*s.*; Mrs Grove, 1*l.* 1*s.*; H. Malan, 2*l.*; J. H. Pratt, 2*l.*; J. O. Maund, 4*l.*; J. H. Peebles, 4*l.*; E. Whymper, 2*l.*; F. Morshead, 2*l.*; Rev. J. Bramston, 10*s.*; Rev. C. Hawkins, 10*s.*; T. Kensington, 10*s.*; F. W. J. Vecqueray, 25*fr.*; Mrs. Vecqueray, 25*fr.*; T. Brooksbank, 20*fr.*; R. N. Hayward, 10*fr.*; Mrs. Jackson, 25*fr.*; H S. Hoare, 25*fr.*; Mrs. Hoare, 20*fr.*; Hamilton Hoare, 25*fr.*; the Misses Pigeon, 60*fr.*; J. L. Johnson, 10*fr.*; Mr. Ramadge, 20*fr.*; G. W. Prothero, 10*fr.*; Mr. Brackenbury, 10*fr.*; Mons. A. Seiler, 10*fr.*; Mr. Leaf, 50*fr.*; Mrs Leaf, 20*fr.*; H. Marindin, 20*fr.*; Mons. E. Selignan, 20*fr.*: E. Hulton, 25*fr.*; G. G., 10*fr.*; W. P. W., 10*fr.*; Anon, 10*fr.*; small sums under 10*fr.*—21*fr.*'

Balloons for Mountaineers.—The following letter has been received:—

'Sir,—Will not some enterprising member of the Alpine Club test a plan of mine for climbing mountains which I elaborated some years ago, but have had no leisure or opportunity to put in practice? It is in brief as follows: When about to climb a mountain, having selected a still day, with what wind there is (if any) blowing at your back, attach to a strong leathern girdle, by a hook or other means, a small balloon, capable of supporting from 50 to 100 lbs., and thus reduce your weight by the same amount. The ease with which a man would make even a very steep ascent, when his weight is diminished by 80 or 90 lbs., and his muscular power unimpaired, needs no comment; and the risk of a false step in descending would be reduced to little or nothing. Moreover, if a party so provided got fairly fixed, by unhooking a balloon and applying two to each individual they might mount even perpendicular rocks, regulating the ascent by ropes in the hands of those below. Of course as the atmosphere became more rarefied the ascending power would diminish, but not to any great degree. It seems to me that a party of three or four, so equipped, might venture with impunity on the most dangerous ground; and by uniting their balloons, when necessary, even a precipice would not stop them.

'I remain, Sir, yours faithfully,

'C. W. Goodhart, M.A.'

The advantages here offered rather concern the general public than the Alpine Club, to whom 'nothing is impossible,' and who can have no wish to see 'climbing made easy.'

REVIEWS.

UNTRODDEN PEAKS AND UNFREQUENTED VALLEYS.*

Alpine writers—except, of course, those who reserve their confidences for the select readers of this journal—are either the most hypocritical or the most illogical of the human race. They utter perpetual professions of their delight in the existence of regions where every beautiful

* *Untrodden Peaks and Unfrequented Valleys: A Midsummer Ramble in the Dolomites.* By Amelia B. Edwards. London, Longmans & Co., 1873.