

AN interesting cave has recently been discovered in the Bela Lime Alps, which form the north-eastern part of the Tatra Mountains. From the Kotlin valley the cave can be reached in about an hour. During August and September last the inhabitants of Bela thoroughly investigated the cave. The entrance is formed by a shaft about fifteen metres long and only one metre wide. After having passed this torches must be lighted. The cave contains fine white stalactites and stalagmites, large subterranean lakes and ponds, which obtained for it the name of "Seehöhle" (lake cave). A number of bones of prehistoric animals were found. It appears however that the cave was known to the neighbouring inhabitants about the years 1713 and 1731, and was then forgotten. German names with these figures underneath were in one part found scratched upon the rock.

ON September 1 an Aeronautical Society was founded at Berlin under the presidency of Dr. Wilhelm Angerstein. The new Society grows rapidly, and it is the intention of the Committee to hold an aeronautical exhibition next year.

THE additions to the Zoological Society's Gardens during the past week include a Moustache Monkey (*Cercopithecus cephus* ♂) from West Africa, presented by Mr. Frank G. S. Laye; a Bonnet Monkey (*Macacus radiatus* ♀) from India, presented by the Rev. R. H. Manley; two Herring Gulls (*Larus argentatus*), European, presented by Mrs. Greaves; two Chilian Sea Eagles (*Geranoetus melanoleucus*) from South America, a Red-breasted Merganser (*Mergus serrator*), a Guillemot (*Uria troile*), a Bar-tailed Godwit (*Limosa lapponica*), British, purchased.

GEOGRAPHICAL NOTES

ON Monday week Lord Aberdare opened the fifty-second session of the Geographical Society with a brief address, in which he dealt first with the expedition of Dr. Matteucci and Lieut. Massari across Africa. He next referred to the geographical papers read at the York meeting of the British Association, and afterwards dwelt at some length on the International Geographical Congress at Venice. According to Lord Aberdare's view it is a great mistake to mix up exhibitions with these congresses, as, owing to international jealousies, it becomes necessary to withdraw the best men from the sections of the congress to serve on the juries of the exhibition. Lord Aberdare referred particularly to the miserable show made by this country in the Exhibition, which was solely due to the parsimony of the Treasury, who did not even pay the travelling expenses of the British Commissioners, and merely sent 100*l.* to the Vice-Consul at Venice for petty disbursements! The latter part of the address was chiefly devoted to the Arctic expeditions of the *Jeannette* and the *Eira*, and we are glad to notice that so much confidence is felt regarding the safety of Mr. Leigh Smith's party. Mr. F. A. A. Simons afterwards read a paper of considerable geographical interest on the Sierra Nevada de Santa Marta and its watershed, and he certainly has thrown much light on this almost unknown region, *i.e.* in the north-west corner of South America. The water-system, which Mr. Simons was at much pains to explain clearly, consists of the Rio Cesar, with its affluents, the Rio Rancheria and others falling into the Caribbean Sea, and the two large rivers which form the Grand Cierraga. Mr. Simons, who has spent some three and a half years in the country in natural history researches, has already contributed to the Geographical Society's *Proceedings* a paper on the topography of the Sierra Nevada, so that its geography can now be well understood through his labours.

SOME further details of the interesting discoveries made by the search ship *Rodgers* in and about Wrangel Land are given in the *Times*. It appears that the *Rodgers*, after leaving St. Lawrence Bay, passed through Behring Straits, and effected a landing on Herald Island on August 24. Having left records of her visit there, she steamed for Wrangel Land, which she reached on the evening of August 26. Finding a safe harbour, she despatched parties to the eastern and western coasts in search of cairns or traces of the *Jeannette*. Capt. Berry, who commanded the land party, reached a mountain 2500 feet high, from which he saw open water around the island everywhere, except between

the west and south-south-west, where a high mountain seemed to terminate the land. Master H. S. Waring went round the eastern coast and northern side, and being blocked by ice had to return by land to the ship. Ensign Hunt went by the western coast and reached the ice which had blocked Waring, and found it impenetrable. He had passed to the northern side, and could see Waring's position, so that the entire island had thus been skirted. No traces of the *Jeannette* were found. The *New York Herald* correspondent says that he was "surprised to see the ice moving constantly to the westward along the shore, where, according to a natural supposition, the wind would blow it off. Sometimes when he went to bed he would see the pack ice filling the sea as far as the eye could reach, and the next morning when he went on deck he would behold a vast expanse of open water." Wrangel Land is now said to be about sixty miles long, and there is a current at the northern end of it running to the north-west, at the rate of about six knots an hour. At the south-east of the island the ice was observed to be drifting in a northerly direction, at the rate of about two miles a day. From all this it is inferred that the *Jeannette*, which was last seen in September, 1879, steaming towards Wrangel Land, did not reach that island, and that either she was caught in the pack, and is being carried by the current in a northerly direction, at about the 172nd meridian, or that, finding the sea open, as the *Rodgers* did, she has been induced to leave the land, and has taken advantage of open leads through the ice, and has sailed northwards into unknown space. Efforts are still being made to search for her or her crew if they have abandoned their ship. The *Rodgers* will winter at St. Lawrence Bay off Kotzebue Sound, on the Alaska coast, and will in the spring make further search. The American observation party have reached Point Barrow, where they will winter, and where they will have opportunity of searching among the wreckage, which is so often washed on that shore, for any records of the missing ship.

LIEUT. A. HOVGAARD, who was on Prof. Nordenskjöld's staff in the memorable *Vega* expedition, is trying to start an expedition in search of the *Jeannette*. Hovgaard thinks of sailing in the same track which was pursued by the *Vega*, in order to prove that the Kara Sea is perfectly navigable, if the necessary precautions are taken. He intends to winter at Cape Chelyuskin, in order to make scientific and principally meteorological observations. He has already received numerous contributions for this purpose from his Danish compatriots.

COUNT WALDBURG-ZEIL has safely returned from his Arctic expedition, which had for its object the establishment of a regular steamship service between Bremen and Siberia. His ship *Luise* encountered considerable difficulties; nevertheless the Count is of opinion that a regular service will be possible and remunerative. The *Dallmann*, the second ship of the Count's expedition, was left behind at the Yenisei estuary, where it will remain during the winter.

THE German paper *Ausland* publishes a letter from the German traveller Dr. B. Hagen, dated from Tandjong Morawa, to which he had returned from his excursion into the interior of Sumatra. He travelled through the Northern Batta districts, hitherto almost entirely unknown, and then across the plateau of Northern Tobah as far as the great Tobah Lake. The traveller was well received everywhere, and only the eternal wars between the several villages impeded and delayed his progress. His collections of anthropological, ethnographical, zoological, and particularly of botanical specimens are very large. The fauna and flora on the Tobah Plateau, as on all tropical high plateaux (such as Java, and even in Japan), resemble those of Europe.

NEWS from Zanzibar state that the Belgian expedition under Mr. Rogers left for the Congo on October 20 last, 135 natives accompanying it.

UNDER the Chefoo Convention, negotiated by Sir Thomas Wade with the Chinese authorities in 1876, it was agreed that a British officer could reside at Chung-king, in Sze-chuan, on the upper waters of the Yangtze. The gentleman at present stationed there, Mr. E. H. Parker, of H. M.'s Consular Service in China, seems to have made good use of the opportunities thus afforded him of investigating this comparatively little-known district. Under the title of "Short Journeys in Sze-chuan," he has contributed to recent numbers of the *China Review* an account of his travels in the province, together with observations on its trade, customs, geography, &c.