

two first points I need hardly enlarge after what I have already said. Of the extent of their demands I will give one instance. I said above that the rope we had on when we fell over the ice-cliff on the Pers Glacier was broken to pieces. So damaged was it, and so rotten, that we threw it away on the Isle Pers as of no further use. Jenni said it had been given to him by Mr. Kennedy, and therefore it must have been in his possession at least two years. It was about 50 feet long, had probably cost five shillings when new, and might then have been a good rope. But it was now quite thin and frayed and rotten with age and use. For this rope they insisted on having 15 francs. That they wished to preserve a rope at all which had broken under the trial is a significant fact. I should also say that the demands made on us were not instigated by Colani, as has been supposed. Our payments to Jenni were principally made at the Boval gîte, where we finally parted with him, far away from all ulterior influences, and were nearly all for expeditions not mentioned in the tariff. From the letters inserted in the Journal by Mr. Tuckett and Mr. Winkworth, some may have inferred that our complaints were harsh, but I trust from the facts I have here narrated it will not be thought that they were uncalled for.

P.S. I think it right to add that I have given Jenni a further trial this year, and was delighted to find a great change in his behaviour. He made himself very pleasant, and showed a spirit of enterprise and a willingness to work very different from what I saw last year. This of course does not lessen his fault on that occasion, but it leads me to hope that it was exceptional.

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THE BIETSCHHORN AND BLÜMLIS ALP. By the Rev.  
LESLIE STEPHEN, M.A.

THE two mountains of which I propose to give some account in this paper are amongst the most beautiful of the lower summits. Though close neighbours, the contrast between them is striking. The Bietschhorn is a pyramidal mass, conspicuous all down the valleys of Saas and Zermatt. Its sharp needle-shaped summit is so remarkable that Mr. Ruskin picks it out as one of the (I think) five really pyramidal mountain-tops of the Alps, a statement of very questionable accuracy. The Blümlis Alp, on the other hand, seen from the Lake of Thun or the terrace at Berne, displays a noble curtain of glacier, pouring down from three summits of nearly equal height. These

mountains, which look at each other across the low flat ridge of the Petersgrat, had one point of resemblance in the summer of 1859, viz. that no one had yet ascended either of them.

It was with a special view to the Blümlis Alp that I had crossed the Lötsch Sattel to Kippel, in the beginning of August, 1859, in company with Messrs. W. and G. Mathews. After whittling at certain dried bits of stick, which are the prevailing substitutes for meat in those parts, accompanied by loaves whose consistency suggested that a Kippel father of a family would be doing a really humane action in giving his children stones for bread, we washed down our meal with draughts of vinegar, and went to call upon the priest, one Lener. The priest was, he told us, a friend, and in some degree an imitator of Imseng of Saas. He showed us a collection of sturdy alpenstocks and a rifle, an ancient and portentous weapon, which he had formerly used against chamois. Proceeding to talk of the wonders of his village, he told us that he had attempted the ascent of the Bietschhorn the year before, and had been driven back within a few feet of the summit. The voracious Peter Bohren had since informed him that there was in England a society called the Alpen Club, and that its president had announced that the Bietschhorn must, could, and should be ascended, and had even sworn a solemn oath that, if not ascended within the current year, he would come and do it himself. I confirmed the general accuracy of this report, and added that the secretary of the club was already at Kandersteg, and would return with me in a few days to inspect the mountain. Next morning we crossed by the Petersgrat to Kandersteg, and (after resolving to postpone for the present our attack on the Blümlis Alp, which a hot summer had transformed into a mere pillar of ice) I returned to Kippel. Various circumstances prevented Hinchliff, whom I had gone to meet at Kandersteg, or any other friends, from joining me; as, however, I had expected to have a larger party, I had rather weakly consented to Lener's eager request to be allowed to engage two guides and two porters. He seemed to be somewhat perplexed to find so large a number of natives endowed with what he called *courage*. Some of the best mountaineers had lately disappeared. One had been ordained priest, another had been married, and though a married man might do for a porter, he was not, in Lener's opinion, to be relied upon as guide. At last one Johann Zügler was sent for to act as guide, with a married brother to serve as porter. An old fellow, named Joseph Appener, was added, on the ground that his name was in 'The Book;' the book being, of course, Murray. A youth, who seemed to be the priest's footman, curate, and slavey in general,

completed the party. Next morning I started, in company with the priest, two of my very queer-looking guides, and a cat, which volunteered at the last moment to follow us. The cat, however, was puzzled by a glacier stream, which we crossed in the dark by tumbling in on one side and out on the other, and ignominiously retreated with pitiful mews. Leaving Kippel at 4 A.M. we took to the southern side of the valley, and gradually ascended by the forests towards the foot of the Nest glacier. [See the Federal map, in which the mountain is very clearly laid down.] The day was just dawning as we left the forests and entered the clearing through which the stream flows from the Nest glacier. The Bietschhorn may be compared in shape to one of those four-sided steeples which terminate, not in a point, but in a short horizontal ridge, and which are in fact an exaggerated roof. The ridges marking the angles between the different sides of the spire correspond to the three or four great spurs which radiate from the summit of the Bietschhorn. We were about to attempt the ascent by following the spur which runs due north from the summit to form the eastern boundary of the Nest glacier. A conspicuous mass of red rocks marks the point where this spur sinks into the broader buttress along which our ascent began, and the principal difficulty seemed to be the necessity of circumventing a great rocky tooth which, at this point, interrupted the continuity of the arête.

As we crossed the stream below the glacier a wild shout announced the approach of our remaining guides, and a queer lot they certainly were. They all appeared in full dress—dress coats and ‘chimney-pot’ hats, or such imitations of those civilised articles of torture as pass current in the Lötschenthal. A certain air of shabby respectability was thus communicated to the party, in singular contrast to the wild scenery around; and with our clerical guide, in shorts and a shovel hat, we had the appearance of being on our way to some outlandish Young Men’s Christian Association, rather than the ascent of a new mountain. The most singular characteristic of my guides was, perhaps, their conversational power. During the ten or twelve hours we passed together, they seemed to be conversing at the top of their voices in the unknown tongues, a few words of German dropping out at intervals with a discordant twang. I may as well say at once that I found one of them, Johann Zügler, to be a good mountaineer. Of the others, the less said the better.

We ascended over grass slopes, changing gradually to rocks and long patches of snow. They were tolerably easy to climb, but seemed to punish the poor old priest and his henchman severely. My guides had an eccentric trick of getting so exceedingly

animated in their conversation as to be obliged to sit down to have it out better. During these halts, certain small barrels of wine circulated rapidly, whose contents were only attainable through the bunghole. A glass had been carefully provided for the 'Herr,' the convenience of which was no doubt counterbalanced in their view by its transparency. The halts allowed the priest and his follower to catch us up occasionally, on which occasions the poor old gentleman began to complain of cramps in his legs, and to give other unmistakeable symptoms of distress. I was obliged, however, to cut the halts as short as possible, as time was evidently of importance, and we pressed on without adventure till at 10 A.M. we reached a little snow col, just below the rocky tooth I have already mentioned; once round this tooth I had little doubt of ultimate success, and I had been for some time impatient to reach it. My guides, however, to my no small irritation, considered this to be a favourable opportunity for a fuller explanation of their views to each other than any in which they had yet been able to indulge, and sat resolutely down with apparently the full intention of enjoying a comfortable chat. My impatience was increased by the fact that the weather was growing rapidly worse; masses of cloud were rolling up and concealing from us even the Aletschhorn glaciers which had till then been visible. Examining the rocks above us, I thought that they looked tolerably practicable, and began scrambling up by myself. The first step or two was difficult, but I had hoisted myself over one or two obstacles when, looking round, I saw that the priest had come up, and that my guides were preparing to start. Just at that moment my hand was on a large flat piece of rock, wedged in like a volume on a book-shelf between two others; I trusted my weight confidently to it, when, with a bound like a wild cat, it made a spring of some thirty feet through the air and caught poor Johann Zügler fairly on the side; a second bound took it right down the eastern cliffs, whilst Johann staggered over and subsided; fortunately for him a knapsack which he wore had guarded the blow, and received all the injury actually inflicted. It rather frightened us, however, and seemed to act strongly on the poor old priest's imagination. When you are following a man who is detaching loose stones there are obviously only two courses open. Either stick close to him, that the stones may not have accumulated much momentum, or keep as far off as possible. The priest unhesitatingly chose the latter alternative with regard to me; and I think that this was the last we saw of him and his follower. Meanwhile I was joined by the remainder of the

party, and the serious part of the climb began. It appeared to be impossible to keep along the ridge much farther, and we accordingly left it and proceeded horizontally along the face of the cliffs, above the upper plateau of the Nest glacier. Having turned the difficulty, we again struck directly upwards. The rocks we were now climbing sloped steeply above us, sometimes in sharp rib-like ridges, sometimes in broad faces of rock intermixed with patches of snow. Loose crumbling stone, which gave way at every step we took, covered the whole mountain-side. Zügler was getting warmed to his work, and we raced each other up the rocks as hard as he, or at least as I, could go; he kept me at my full stretch, sometimes walking upright over an easy bit—sometimes using our hands, knees, and eyelids. The other two followed us in a state of profuse perspiration, and with their flow of talk perceptibly checked for the time. Behind us the stones went skipping and rattling down the rocks, starting heavy cannonades of avalanches, or starting off by themselves and going off with irregular rocket-like bounds over the ice and snow. 'Isn't the Herr Pfarrer somewhere down there?' I asked. They thought he probably was, but that he most likely would get out of the way. They took occasion to add significantly that the Herr Pfarrer's infirmities had been the cause of their want of success in the previous year, and that the Herr Pfarrer's servant was a very bad man in difficult places. Meanwhile, we progressed steadily, and at 11.15 A.M. reached once more the crest of the ridge. A long snow arête, like that of the Weissthor, rose gradually from our standing place to the top of the mountain. The long snow-slopes sank down on the east into the rolling mists below us, and on the west to the upper névé of the Nest glacier. A few yards below us on the western side ran a rocky ledge, broken by occasional couloirs of ice. The snow on the ridge was pretty firm, and Zügler led us with much courage and judgment, becoming, as I was glad to see, more cheerful the further we went, and the wilder grew the cliffs amongst which we were wandering. Once or twice we left the actual ridge and slid down to the rocky ledge below us, rather a nervous feat, as there was nothing but bare ice under a thin covering of snow, and if once shot over the ledge we should have had a fair chance of being ground to powder. We followed the ridge without serious difficulty, till a couple of steps, cut across the last couloir with an axe, enabled me to grasp one of the huge broken rocks of the summit, and land myself upon it at 12.30. I have been on wild enough mountain-tops before and since, but I doubt whether I ever saw one so savage in

appearance as that of the Bietschhorn. It consists of a ridge some hundred yards or so in length, with three great knobs, one at each end, and one at the middle—the articulations from which the great ribs of the mountain radiate. It was hard to say which of the three knobs was highest, and at first sight it also seemed hard to pass from one to the other. The sharp-backed rocky ridge was splintered and torn into the wildest confusion. It looked like the mockery of a parapet, in which the disfigured ruins of grotesque images were represented by the distorted pinnacles and needles of rock. The cliffs on each side sank steeply down into the broken masses of cloud which concealed from us all distant views; and the distant views from the Bietschhorn must, as Mr. Ball remarks in his 'Alpine Guide,' be some of the most beautiful in the Alps. Some compensation for the loss might be derived, as is often the case, from the extreme wildness of the immediate prospect of jagged black cliffs emerging in every variety of grim distortion from the heavy masses of cloud. We waited more than an hour in hopes of obtaining a fairer view, and employed the time in erecting three cairns on the three rival summits. Not a glimpse of the distance was vouchsafed to us, and at last we turned reluctantly to retreat, with a vow on my part to return some day for better luck. I was rather out of training, and was conscious of a strong disposition in my legs to adopt independent lines of action, which could not be too severely reprehended. I felt rather nervous on commencing the snow arête, and made a stumble nearly at the first step. Old Appener, emitting a fiendish chuckle, instantly gripped my coat-tails—with the benevolent intention, as I am willing to believe, of helping me, and not of steadying himself. If so, his design was better than his execution. He did not progress very rapidly, and whenever I made a longer step than usual, the effect of his manoeuvre was to jerk me suddenly into a sitting position on the ice. I denounced the absurdity of his actions, both in German and dumbshow, but, as I only elicited more chuckles and a firmer grip of my coat-tails, I finally abandoned myself to my fate, and was truly thankful when, at the end of the arête, my equilibrium ceased to be affected by the chances of tumbling down a precipice on either side, or being lugged over backwards by a superannuated and inarticulate native. The descent was only varied by one incident. My legs having developed more decidedly erratic propensities ended by deserting their proper sphere of duty altogether, during a race down the rocks. I consequently found myself sliding at railway pace, on my back, over a mixture of ice and rough stones, and was much

gratified on being stopped by an unusually long and pointed rock, which ran through my trousers into my thigh, and brought me up with a jerk. My pace was rather slackened by this incident, and we finally reached Kippel at 7.30, where old Lener, on the ground that it was a fast day, provided me with a dinner consisting entirely of soup and cabbage stalks. The latter, with the benevolent wish not to hurt his feelings, I was compelled to bestow surreptitiously on the cat. Poor old Lener is now, I believe, dead. I hope that some enterprising innkeeper may, before long, offer better hospitality to those who visit the Lötschenthal.

It was not till the next year, 1860, that I was able to resume my postponed attack on the Blümlis Alp. Although one of the most agreeable excursions that I ever made, there were not many incidents of the expedition that are worth relating. An admirable account of the first ascent of the Doldenhorn and the middle peak of the Blümlis Alp, with excellent illustrations, has lately been published by M. Abraham Roth, who made the ascent in company with M. E. von Fellenberg. I must refer to it any of my readers who wish to obtain an accurate knowledge of the various peaks and glaciers of this beautiful block of mountains. I will confine myself to a few very short notes of my own adventures. My companions were Dr. Liveing, and a young American gentleman, Mr. J. Kent Stone, of Boston, one of the very best walkers that it was ever my good fortune to meet. Our guides were my old friend, Melchior Anderegg, and a Simond of Chamouni. We slept at the little chalet above the exquisite Oeschinen Lake—a lake, so far as I know, of a beauty quite unrivalled in any of the high alpine districts. Stone and I, who measure a good deal over four yards in the aggregate, were invited to make ourselves comfortable on the bed of the inhabitant, which measured about 4 ft. 6 in. in extreme length, and was closed at each end by a high board. We turned out at 2 A.M., and, preceded by a lantern which performed its usual office of effectually dazzling our eyes, and making the big stones in our path invisible, we climbed the Dundengrat by 4.30 A.M. Here we were treated to one of those sublime sunrises which never reach the eyes of the wretch who sneers at alpine travellers, and crawls contentedly along the valley to enjoy what he calls the beauties of nature. A broad band of orange light ran round the distant horizon, dividing night from day. The great plain of Switzerland lay half seen below us, still wrapt in mists and darkness. Above us the Oberland giants stood out white and clearly defined in the early dawn. We watched the rosy alpine glow as it touched peak after peak, with more than usual

interest. We did not yet know for certain which of the three peaks of the Blümlis Alp was the highest. Suddenly the western peak caught the flush of the sunrise. The middle summit did not hang out an answering signal till after a perceptible interval. 'There's no doubt about it now, Melchior,' I said, and accordingly we steered for the western summit, that which is visible from Kandersteg. The Federal map, I may observe, also assigns the greatest height to this point. Our path lay round the head of the glacier plateau, which lies at the foot of the great backbone ridge of the Blümlis Alp, and up to the notch between the mountain marked as Rothhorn on the Federal map and the highest summit. An arête (visible from Kandersteg) leads from this notch to the top of the mountain. It presents no unusual difficulties, but it might call for a good deal of step-cutting if the snow was not in good order. As it was, we mounted with the loss of only one of the party. This was a thermometer which a benevolent but weak disposition had induced me to carry with me 'for scientific purposes.' To my inexpressible delight, it escaped from my hands, which were rather numbed with the cold, just as I took it out at the summit, and, rattling merrily down the glacier slopes, disappeared from our sight. It may probably be found by any scientific gentleman who will drag the Eschinen See, immediately under the waterfalls in the south-eastern corner, and I will make him a present of it for his trouble. We reached the top at 8 A.M., and enjoyed a view much like that from the Altels, which, however, is somewhat higher. The great charm of these views is that, standing as they do on the northern edge of the high mountain district, there is a beautiful contrast between the comparative plain involved in the northern semicircular sweep of the horizon and the wild confusion of peaks to the southward. A detailed description would be simply a catalogue which can be easily supplied from a map. We descended at our ease, and after an interview with a herd of chamois, returned comfortably to Kandersteg by 2 o'clock P.M.

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ASCENT OF BAULA, in Iceland.—By T. W. EVANS, M.P.  
F.R.G.S.

THE following account is translated and slightly abridged from the work of Preyer and Zirkel, 'Reise nach Island im Sommer 1860, Leipzig 1862,' p. 116. The ascent was made from the farm of Dalsmynni, situated at the base of the mountain on the SW.