

as the Zanzibaris cannot be depended on above the forest zone, and only reliable men could be trusted to follow a leader through these.

As far as time goes, an expedition to Kenya might be managed from London in six months, giving one month on the mountain. The cost would be somewhat heavy, as it would be unsafe to go with less than forty armed men, and the local authorities would advise a much stronger force. The number quoted to me as the minimum was 100, while 150 were recommended; but having got through safely with forty, that is, at least, a possible number, though it leaves no room for accidents.

The honour of reaching the highest summit of German East Africa has been gained by Germans, and two climbers from that ubiquitous nation are now on their way to Kenya; they, however, have plenty of other work on their hands, as they are going to solve the social problem and accomplish a few other trifles on their way. If this paper should stimulate any members of the father of Alpine Clubs to scale the crags of the highest peak in our African dominions, my paper will have been amply repaid.

THE FIRST ASCENT OF THE MITTELHORN.

[By the courtesy of Mr. H. Cockburn we are enabled to reprint in these pages the following very interesting and important account of the first ascent of the Mittelhorn (the loftiest of the Wetterhörner), the existence of which Mr. Cockburn made known to students of Alpine history by his note in 'Alpine Journal,' xvi. p. 402. It appeared on pp. 1055-6 of the 'Athenæum,' No. 940, the number for November 1, 1845, and is due to the pen of Mr. Speer, the hero of the climb. From the article itself we learn that some allusion to this ascent had been already made in the 'Athenæum.' Mr. Cockburn informs us that a summary of the article given below is to be found in 'Chambers' Journal,' January 24, 1846. It may be added that a paraphrase of Mr. Speer's narrative is given on pp. 163-186 of a small compilation, entitled 'Alpine Adventure' (from 1881 onwards, 'Alpine Climbing'), and published by T. Nelson & Sons in various editions, dated 1878, 1881, and 1882. The ascent is mentioned by Herr G. Studer in his 'Panorama von Bern' (1850), p. 233; by the 4th edition (1851; *not* by the 3rd, 1846) of Murray's 'Handbook for Switzerland,' p. 78; by Mr. Wills, 'Wanderings among the High Alps,' 1st edition (1856), p. 271; and in 'Alpine Journal,' vol. viii., Appendix, p. 78. Some elucidations have been inserted (within square brackets) in the text by Mr. Coolidge, who has added at the end of the reprint a note on the various interesting questions of Alpine history raised by Mr. Speer's description of his adventures.]

Ascent of the Wetterhorn, or Peak of Tempests, in the Valley of Grindelwald, Canton of Berne.

(The Berne and Zürich journals lately announced, as we mentioned at the time, that the central peak of the Wetterhorn, one of the highest of the Oberland Alps, had been ascended by a young Englishman, the son of Dr. Speer, a feat heretofore unaccomplished, and not unattended with difficulties and danger. We have now the pleasure to publish an interesting personal narrative of that bold and hazardous adventure.)

The valley of Grindelwald, situated in the heart of the Bernese Oberland, may justly be considered the formidable rival to that celebrated spot, above which tower the mighty masses of the monarch of all European mountains. It is true the valley of Grindelwald cannot boast the presence of a Mont Blanc; it is, nevertheless, the chosen spot around which the giants of the Swiss Alps have, as if by one consent, grouped themselves. This valley is bounded, on its southern aspect, by three mountains, the loftiest (if we except the Finsteraarhorn) of the whole range; to the right, the *Klein Eiger*, or Great Giant, in the centre the *Mettenberg*, surmounted by the *Shreckhorn* (Peak of Terror), and on the left the three summits of the *Wetterhorn* (Peak of Tempests); the first of these (the *Eiger*) attains the height of 12,000 [13,022] ft.; the second, 13,291 [13,250] ft.; the last, 12,194 [12,166] ft. above the sea level. Seen from the village of Grindelwald, they present the appearance of stupendous walls of rock, rising almost vertically for thousands of feet: these vast black masses are surmounted by fields of snow and ice; which, in their turn, are crowned by the peaks themselves: whilst in the wide intervals which exist between the three mountains, the two seas of ice, known as the superior and inferior glacier of Grindelwald, stream downwards into the valley to the very verge of the pastures. Until of late years, the prevailing opinion existing in the vicinity was, that these summits were inaccessible; experience had however (in the case of one of them) proved the contrary; the *Shreckhorn*, or Peak of Terror, having been surmounted by three Swiss naturalists, with their guides,* after imminent danger and difficulty, leaving on the summit an undeniable

* [This is the ascent of the *Lauteraarhorn*, August 8, 1842, by MM. Desor, Girard, and Escher von der Linth, with Leuthold, Bannholzer, Madutz, and two other guides. See Desor's *Excursions*, vol. i. pp. 532-558.]

proof of their achievement in the shape of a flag-staff,* which I afterwards discovered through a telescope: nevertheless, by the guides and chamois hunters of Grindelwald, the exploit is not yet credited.

The untrodden summit of the central or great peak of the Wetterhorn had therefore been to me an object of ambition for months; it was not, however, until my arrival at Interlaken that I proceeded to obtain information as to the feasibility of my project. Among the resident guides there were but two really good mountaineers; by one of these I was informed that all attempts to scale the Wetterhorn from Grindelwald had proved fruitless, and that the only plan was to proceed to the Grimsel (situated at a height of 6,570 [6,149] ft.), on the southern slope of the great chain, and that there we should meet the most intrepid and adventurous mountaineers of the Bernese Oberland—the men by whom the invincible Jungfrau had been successfully conquered some years previous. Acting, therefore, on the advice of this guide, whom I immediately engaged, we started from Interlaken on Thursday, July 4, at six o'clock in the evening, arriving at Grindelwald at 10 P.M. I now had full opportunity of satisfying myself as regards the previous statement of the guide, which I found to be perfectly correct. We therefore left Grindelwald the following morning [July 5], proceeding across the Great Shiedeck, passing at the foot of the glaciers of Schwartzwald and Rosenlauri, &c., and arriving at Meyringen at eight in the evening. We again left at an early hour [July 6], continuing our course up the valley of the Aar, passing the villages of Im Grand [*i.e.* Im Grund, or Im Hof] and Guttanen, and the celebrated fall of the Aar at Handeck. Since our departure from Meyringen the ascent had been continual, as was now testified by the frequent occurrence of large patches of snow, and by the presence of a few immense avalanches, which impeded our course in no trifling degree. Vegetation was visibly decreasing as we approached the Grimsel, the Alpine rose alone flourishing in these wild regions, whilst the fallen masses of rock, a few blasted pines, and the roaring of innumerable torrents, bore melancholy testimony to the unbridled fury of the wintry elements—the whirlwind, the snow-storm, and the falling avalanche. On our arrival at the Grimsel, a consultation was held between the host [Zybach] (a hardy old mountaineer), myself, and three of

[* Desor, vol. i. p. 551.]

the guides, as to the proceedings to be adopted, and also as regards the probable result of the undertaking. This terminated satisfactorily; two of the boldest, J. Jaun and Caspar Alphanalp [Abplanalp], volunteered to accompany me, and, as both one and the other had trodden the summit of the Jungfrau,* I instantly placed all confidence in them; and leaving them in company with my former guide to prepare for our expedition, I retired early, knowing that the ensuing night would be spent necessarily on the glacier of the Aar—a locality not very favourable to repose. The morning [July 7] broke without a cloud, and I found the three mountaineers fully equipped with hatchets, ropes, crampons, long poles shod with iron, blue veils, &c., not forgetting provisions for two days, and the flag, which we fondly hoped should bear testimony of the forthcoming exploit. On leaving the Grimsel, our course lay among fallen rocks, up a desolate valley, bounded on the left by the Leidelhorn [Sidelhorn], and on the right by the Juchliberg [Juchlistock] and the Broniberg [Brunberg]. This valley (situated about 7,000 [6,135] ft. above the Mediterranean) appeared gradually to enlarge, and we perceived its further extremity to be closed from side to side by a wall of dingy-looking ice, rising vertically between 200 and 300 ft. in height; this was the termination of the glacier of the Aar. Having attained the summit of this wall, by scaling the rocks on its border, we perceived the vast glacier of the Aar itself spread out before us for many miles, and surrounded by the gigantic peaks of the Finsteraarhorn, Shreckhorn, Oberaarhorn, Vischerhorner, and Lauteraarhorn, the former rising to the height of 14,000 [14,026] ft., the remainder ranging between 11,000 and 13,000 ft. above the sea level. Following the course of the terminal moraine, we reached the pure unsullied surface of the glacier itself, which we now found thickly spread with crevasses, all running parallel with each other; the majority of these being filled with snow, considerable caution was necessary in sounding them with the poles, previous to trusting the body to so frail and deceptive a support. Proceeding thus along the centre of the glacier for 3 hrs., we arrived opposite the little hut, constructed for M. Agassiz,† in

* [The former made the ascent in 1841 with M. Desor's party (Desor, vol. i. pp. 359, 394); the latter in 1842, with Herr Gottlieb Studer (see his *Topogr. Mittheilungen*, p. 102).]

† See *Athenæum*, No. 717 [*i.e.* the Pavillon Dollfus].

order to enable him to carry out more fully his experiments on the increase and advance of the glaciers. Situated fully 300 ft. above the level of the ice, it is in a great measure sheltered from the fall of avalanches and from the effect of those hurricanes and snow-storms to which these elevated regions are so liable. The sun was now gradually declining, the innumerable ice-bound peaks and glaciers being lit up by its last rays, until the whole chain presented the appearance of burnished gold. This magnificent spectacle suddenly ceased, and every object resumed its ghastly bluish tinge, as the shades of night shut them out from our view, merely leaving the white outline of the nearer peaks discernible. We now attempted to obtain a few hours' sleep, after taking every precaution to guard against the severe cold; in this latter we partially succeeded. Sleep, however, was tardy in its approaches, the novelty of the situation being too exciting. Towards midnight, several vast avalanches fell, with the roar of the loudest thunder, on the opposite side of the glacier. This was quite sufficient to banish all drowsy sensations; we were soon, therefore, on foot, preparing in earnest for the anticipated 17 hrs. of successive climbing over snow and glacier [July 8]. The first point to be accomplished was, the descent to the surface of the glacier, into the recesses of which (owing to its disrupted condition) we found it necessary to penetrate, finding ourselves at the bottom of a well, round three sides of which walls of ice rose up almost vertically. Up these walls it was necessary to ascend, in order to effect our exit from our cold dismal prison. Jaun, our *guide chef*, commenced cutting out steps in the ice, and in a short time we all emerged from our retreat, and stood safely on the glacier of the Lauteraar, at its junction with that of the Finsteraar. The former descends from the Shreckhorn and Col de Lauteraar; the latter from the Finsteraarhorn and its attendant peaks. Our course was now directed across the glacier towards the Abschwung, along the base of which we cautiously proceeded, the ice at this early period being dangerously slippery. The doubtful crevasses were sounded, and the yawning ones avoided as far as possible; these at length (on our attaining an elevation of 9,000 ft.) ceased in a great degree, and the surface of the glacier appeared covered for miles in extent with a thick coat of unsullied and unbroken snow, whilst in front of us, and fully 3 hrs.' march distant, rose the Col de Lauteraar, 10,000 [10,355] ft. in height, hitherto con-

sidered impracticable. Its brilliant white crest being cut out in the strongest relief against the deep blue sky tempted us into the belief that it was close at hand ; we soon, however, became aware of our inability to calculate distances in regions where the vast size of the surrounding objects, combined with the peculiar light reflected from the snow and glaciers, baffle such attempt. For hours we continued surmounting long slopes of snow, sinking at every step half way to the knee, and as yet no visible decrease of distance appeared. At length we reached the first range of those great crevasses usually found at the foot of the steepest ascents : among these it was necessary to proceed with the utmost caution ; the whole party were lashed together, and we threaded our way through this labyrinth of blue and ghastly abysses to the very foot of the redoubted Col de Lauteraar, which now rose quasi-perpendicularly far above our heads for many hundreds of feet, whilst on its ridge we perceived a mass of overhanging snow, which from its threatening aspect caused us great uneasiness ; in fact, a more formidable or apparently inaccessible barrier could scarcely be witnessed : it was, nevertheless, necessary to surmount it, and the question now was, How is it to be done ? At our feet lay a large crevasse, on the opposite side of which the wall of snow rose immediately, not leaving the smallest space on which to place the foot. Our head guide, however, nothing daunted, by means of his long alpenstock, succeeded in excavating a hole in the snow, into which we might jump without much danger of falling into the yawning gulf below ; he first crossed, and extending his baton to assist the next comer, I seized the friendly aid and jumped ; the snow, however, gave way, and I remained suspended over the abyss, grasping with all my strength the extended pole ; from this perilous position I was instantly rescued, and the rest of the guides having crossed in safety, we found ourselves clinging to the wall of snow which constitutes the south aspect of the Col. The ascent now commenced in earnest, the first guide having been relieved by the second in command, who (hatchet in hand) assiduously dashed holes in the snow in which to place the hands and feet ; the steepness of the Col being such that the necessary inclination of the body forwards, which all ascents require, brought the chest and face in close contact with the snow, the excessive brilliancy of which, notwithstanding our blue glasses and veils, proved singularly annoying. In this critical position our progress upwards was of necessity very slow, the advance

of the foot from one step to the succeeding one being a matter of careful consideration, as a slip, the least inclination backwards, or even giddiness, must have inevitably proved fatal to one or other of the party. Thanks, however, to the efforts of the hardy mountaineers, the summit of the Col was at length attained, 5 hrs. after our departure from the night encampment. For some time previous our sphere of vision had necessarily been limited by the interposition of the Col de Lauteraar; its crest, however, being attained, we beheld a great portion of Switzerland stretched out like a map far below, whilst on either side rose the summits of those gigantic barriers which bound the Valley of Grindelwald. On the left, the great and little Shreckhorn and the Mettenberg, and on the right the object of our ambition, the three peaks of the Wetterhorner, the Wetterhorn, the Mittalhorn, and Rosenhorn: below us lay the fields of snow which descend from these summits and crown the superior glacier of Grindelwald.

It was now deemed necessary to descend a portion of the opposite side of the Col we had just surmounted, previous to arriving at the foot of the great peak, which appeared to rise in close proximity to the height of 2,150 [1,811] ft. above the plateau of snow on which we stood, and which in itself attained an elevation of 10,000 [10,355] ft. We now began our descent, which, although not so steep as our previous ascent, was perhaps more nervous; the precipices of ice and snow, together with the wide crevasses thickly spread at their feet, being constantly before the eyes. Great stress being laid on the ropes and hatchets, this descent was in turn safely accomplished, and we again began to ascend slope after slope of snow (at times threading our way with much difficulty among the gaping crevasses, all of which presented the appearance of the deepest azure), our course being directed towards the base of the superb central peak, known as the Mittalhorn [Mittelhorn], which now towered over our heads; apparently a huge pyramid of the purest ice and snow. To me it appeared so impossible to scale it, that I ventured to inquire of the guides whether they expected to attain the summit; to this they replied, that they assuredly did so. I, therefore, held my peace, thinking myself in right good company, and the south-western aspect of the Peak being deemed, to all appearance, the most practicable, we began the arduous task of scaling this virgin mountain. The ascent in itself strongly resembled that of the Col de Lauteraar described above; its dura-

tion, however, being longer, and the coating of ice and snow being likewise more dense, the steps hewn out with the hatchet required to be enlarged with the feet preparatory to changing our position. In this singular manner we slowly ascended, digging the left hand into the hole above our heads, left by the hatchet of the advancing guide, and gradually drawing up the foot into the next aperture; the body reclining full length on the snow between each succeeding step; in this truly delectable situation, our eyes were, every moment, greeted with the view of the vast precipices of ice stretching above and below; impressing constantly on our mind the idea that one false step might seal the fate of the whole party: connected as we were one to the other, such, in fact, might easily have been the case. We had now been three hours on the peak itself, and the guides confidently affirmed that in another hour (if no accident occurred) we should attain the summit; the banner was accordingly prepared, and after a few minutes' repose, taken by cautiously turning round and placing our backs against the snow, we stretched upwards once more, the guides singing national songs, and the utmost gaiety pervading the whole party at the prospect of so successful a result. The brilliant white summit of the peak appeared just above us, and when within 30 or 40 ft. of its apex, the *guide chef*, considerably thinking that his employer would naturally wish to be the first to tread this unconquered summit, reversed the ropes, and placing me first in the line, directed me to take the hatchet and cautiously cut the few remaining steps necessary. These injunctions I obeyed to the best of my abilities, and at 1 o'clock precisely the red banner fluttered on the summit of the central peak of the Wetterhorn.

We had thus, after three days' continual ascent from the level of the plain, attained a height of 12,154 [12,166] ft. Up to this period, our attention had been too much occupied in surmounting the opposing obstacles which lay in our route, to allow us to contemplate, with attention, the astonishing panorama, which gradually unfolded itself. The summit being under our feet, we had ample leisure to examine the relative position of the surrounding peaks, the greater portion of which appeared to lie far beneath us. To the N. we perceived the Faulhorn and the range of mountains skirting the Lake of Brienz; behind these the passage of the Brunig, together with the lakes of Lungerne and Lucerne, on the banks of which rise the pyramids of the

Righi and the Mont Pilate, the summits of which (the boast of so many tourists) appeared as mole-hills. Towards the E., the eye wanders over an interminable extent of snow-clad summits, extending to the utmost verge of the horizon, a perfect ocean of mountains. Turning to the S., however, we there perceive the monarchs of these Bernese Alps rising side by side, the Rosenhorn and the Berglistock raise their snow-clad crests in close proximity; separated from them by the Col de Lauteraar, we perceived the rugged Shreckhorn, aptly denominated the Peak of Terror, whilst the loftiest of the group, the Finsteraarhorn, appears peering among his companions. To the right of these two peaks the brilliant Vischerhoerner next came into view, beyond which we discover the three celebrated sister summits of the Eiger, the Mounch, and the Jungfrau; the whole group exceeding the height of 12,000 ft. At the base of these gigantic masses lies the Wengern Alp, apparently a mere undulation; whilst far below the outline of the village of Grindelwald may be faintly discerned, the river Lutchinen winding, like a silver thread, through the valley. On all sides of the peak on which we now stood (on the summit of which a dozen persons could scarcely assemble) we beheld vast glittering precipices; at the foot of these lie the plains of snow which contribute to the increase of the numerous glaciers, situated still lower, viz. to the left the superior glacier of Grindelwald and that of Lauteraar, to the right the glaciers of Gauli, of Reufen [Renfen], and of Rosenlauri, out of which rose the peaks of the Wellhorn, the Losenhorn [Dossenhorn], and Engelhorner.

Many anxious looks were now cast in this direction; the guides having determined to reach Rosenlauri through this unexplored region. We had remained above twenty minutes on the summit, exposed to a violent wind and intense cold, although in the plain, on that day, the thermometer of Fahrenheit stood at 93° in the shade. The sudden appearance of a few fleecy clouds far below caused us some misgivings, we therefore (after firmly securing the flag-staff) commenced our descent on the opposite side of the peak to that by which we had ascended, in order to reach the plains of snow surmounting the great glacier of Rosenlauri. From the excessive steepness of this slope, and the absence of crevasses, it was deemed advisable to sit and slide down the snow, guiding our course with the poles. In this manner we descended with the greatest rapidity to the plateau. Here again great caution was required, many of the crevasses

being covered with a slight coating of fresh snow, incapable of sustaining the weight of the human body. After crossing this plateau we arrived at the foot of the Tosenhorn [Dossenhorn]. This is a lofty peak, situated at the junction of the glaciers of Rosenlauri and Reufen, which at this point become identified with the great slope of snow descending from the Wetterhorner. This region being a *terra incognita* like the preceding, our advance was slow and wavering; and on the descent of the Tosenhorn the difficulties appeared rather to increase than diminish: the loose rocks and stones covering the southern aspect of the peak, receding continually from under the feet, and falling in showers over the precipice; below which, at a fearful depth, we could discern the deep blue crevasses and bristling minarets of the glacier of Rosenlauri. Quitting the rocks, we again found ourselves on slopes of snow so vertical that for a long period of time it was necessary to descend backwards as if on a ladder—the hatchet being in full play. At the foot of one of these slopes, the snow broke suddenly away, leaving a crevasse, apparently about four yards in width, the opposite border of which was fully 20 ft. lower than that on which we stood; this at first sight seemed insurmountable, the guides themselves being bewildered, and all giving advice in one breath; we were at this time clinging to the slope of snow over the very verge of the blue gulph below. Jaun at length volunteered the hazardous experiment of clearing it at a bound—this he accordingly did, arriving safely on the inferior border. The ropes being detached, the remainder of the party mustered resolution, and desperation giving fresh courage, we all in turn came flying across the crevasse upon the smooth snow below. Our successful triumph over this alarming obstacle having greatly inspirited us, we prepared to cross a narrow slope of ice, on which our leader was diligently hacking a few steps; a sudden rumbling sound, however, arrested our attention—the rear guides drew the rest back with the ropes with violence, and the next moment an avalanche thundered down over the slope we had been preparing to cross, leaving the whole party petrified with horror at the narrowness of their escape. The clouds of fine snow in which we had been enveloped having subsided, we again descended, during 3 hrs., a succession of steep walls of ice and snow; reaching the glacier of Rosenlauri at 5 P.M. The passage of this glacier resembles in every respect that of the far-famed glacier de Bossons on the Mont Blanc, the crevasses being so numerous as to leave

mere ridges of ice interposed between them; and these ridges being the only means of progress, the eye was constantly exposed to the view of the surrounding gulphs of ice which at every step, appear ready to swallow up the unfortunate individual whose presence of mind should fail; whilst the pinnacles of ice rising over head, often totter upon their unsteady foundations. In our present fatigued condition, the passage of the glacier was indeed highly perilous; the extreme caution and courage of the guides, fortunately prevented the occurrence of any serious accident, and at 8 P.M. we bade a final adieu to those fields of snow and ice-bound peaks over which our course had been directed for 17 consecutive hours. All danger was now past, and the excitement having ceased, the tedious descent over rocks and fallen pines became insufferably fatiguing. The baths of Rosenlauri were still far below at our feet; whilst the sombre hue of the pine forests, stretching down into the valley, formed a striking contrast to the uninterrupted glare of so many previous hours. Night was now gradually throwing its veil over the surrounding objects; the glimmering of lights soon became visible, and at 9 P.M. we all arrived safely at the baths of Rosenlauri, where, for several hours, considerable excitement had prevailed—the flag fluttering on the summit of the peak having been discovered, by means of a powerful telescope. Four small black dots had likewise been noticed at an immense height on the otherwise unsullied snow, which dots having been likewise seen to change their position, the inhabitants of the valleys wisely concluded that another of their stupendous mountains was in a fair way of losing its former prestige of invincibility.

On the following morning [July 9] I took leave of the two intrepid chamois hunters, to whom, on several occasions, during the previous eventful day, I had owed my preservation. I was shortly afterwards informed that these poor fellows (though so hardy) were confined by an illness arising from the severity of their late exploit. For myself, I escaped with the usual consequences of so long an exposure to the snow in these elevated regions, viz. the loss of the skin of the face, together with inflammation of the eyes, and accompanied by my remaining guide, who was likewise in a very doleful condition we recrossed the Great Shiedeck, arriving at Interlacken the 10th of July.

We here learnt, for the first time, that two days previous to our ascent some Swiss gentlemen, indignant at the idea of allowing 'un Anglais' to be the first to scale their

virgin peak, had, in company of three chamois hunters, made another attempt from Grindelwald. To our gratification it proved a failure; the parties, having mistaken their locality, ascended a peak,* the summit of which had been first reached in 1844 by the same men † who had so ably assisted me in the ascent just described.

Paris, August 20th, 1845.

HISTORICAL NOTE.

BY W. A. B. COOLIDGE.

Mr. Speer's most interesting paper possesses great historical value, even though it is not possible to accept all his statements as in accordance with well-ascertained facts.

That his ascent of the Mittelhorn, the highest of the Wetterhörner, was the first, has never, so far as I know, been doubted by anyone, and his full narrative of his climb is therefore an original document of the greatest value to the Alpine historian. ‡

His claims, however, to the *first passage of the Lauteraar Sattel*, and to the *first exploration of the Rosenlauri glacier*, are opposed to well-authenticated historical facts.

Let us take the case of the *Lauteraar Sattel* first.

* [Herren Fankhauser and Roth, both of Bern, with three Grindelwald guides, on July 7, 1845—the day before Mr. Speer's expedition—climbed from the Gleckstein cave to the ridge of the Wetterhorn, probably that between the Hasli Jungfrau and the Mittelhorn, and were then driven back. See G. Studer's *Panorama von Bern*, p. 233, and *Ueber Eis und Schnee*, i. p. 236.]

† [This is a mistake. The Hasli Jungfrau was, indeed, reached in 1844 by Jaun, but his companion was Michael Bannholzer, *not* Abplanalp. See Desor, ii. pp. 153-4.]

‡ I take this opportunity of completing the account of the Mittelhorn by a notice of the Mitteljoch, the pass between that peak and the Rosenhorn. Mr. Ball's *Alpine Guide*, 'Central Alps,' p. 124, is the authority for the statement that this pass was crossed, probably for the first time, by Mr. A. P. Whately in 1857. Mr. Whately has kindly communicated to me the following particulars of his expedition:—The exact date was August 24, 1857, and the guides were Winterberger and Johann Jaun, who were unacquainted with these regions. The party, therefore, took about 16 hrs.' actual walking from Rosenlauri to the Dollfus hut, crossing, most probably, the Lauteraar Sattel to gain the Lauteraar glacier, though possibly they crossed first the Berglijoch or the Rosenegg, and then the Gauli Pass. The former conjecture is the more probable, and in that case Mr. Whately's party was only two days later over the Lauteraar Sattel than Captain J. R. Campbell, Dr. Porges, and Herr Stern, whose traverse (*Alpine Journal*, i. pp. 60-2) is sometimes regarded as the first, though it will be shown presently that that claim is historically untenable.

Herr Gottlieb Studer tells us * that as early as 1831 he and Professor Hugi had the intention of crossing it, but that bad weather made them change their plans. As the broad opening of the pass was plainly seen from Agassiz's hut on the Unteraar glacier (the so-called 'Hôtel des Neuchâtelois') we are not surprised to find a view of it from the hut inserted in the account of the sojourn of 1840 in that rough shelter. † Nor does it astonish us to read that at the end of July or at the beginning of August (the limits are July 23 and August 8), 1842, one of Agassiz's party, M. Girard (who, a few days later, was one of the three travellers who made the first ascent of the Lauteraarhorn), with J. Berger (the chief of the workmen employed in making soundings of the glacier), was stirred up to pay a visit to the pass. This was apparently the first time it had been reached. The two adventurers seem to have found no very great difficulties, save a final ice slope, and only took 4 hrs. from the hut to the pass. They thought that the slopes on the Grindelwald side were rather less steep than those by which they had come up, yet decided that it would be rash to descend on that side. Desor, to whom we owe all these details, ‡ adds, no doubt on the authority of M. Girard, 'Aussi jamais cette descente n'a-t-elle été effectuée.' This visit is important as showing us that Agassiz's party were aware of a possible pass by this ridge. In the second series of Desor's 'Excursions' (published in 1845—the preface is dated May 1) we find the 'Col d. Lauteraar' (*sic*) marked on the map at the commencement of the volume. Later on he narrates how, on his way down from the first ascent of the Rosenhorn (August 28, 1844), two of his guides, Jaun and Bannholzer, offered to plant a flag on the virgin Hasli Jungfrau, and adds, 'Ils devaient en même temps s'assurer si, comme on avait prétendu jusqu'alors, il était réellement impossible d'atteindre le glacier de l'Aar par le Col de Lauteraar.' The two guides were thus sent on a double errand, and carried it out successfully on August 31, 1844, going from Rosenlauri to the col between the Mittelhorn and the Hasli Jungfrau, making the first ascent of the latter peak, and then achieving the first traverse of the Lauteraar Sattel in order to regain the hut on the Unteraar glacier, whence the whole party had started on August 27. They took 12 hrs. from Rosenlauri, and reported that there were no great difficulties, save in rounding the foot of the Berglistock, so that they clearly took the old route over the N.E. bit of the ridge of the col. Desor tells us all this in detail, § and it is worth notice that, in describing the view he had enjoyed from the Rosenhorn on August 28, he makes special mention || of the 'Col du Lauteraar,' which he and his guides had thus clearly examined on its hitherto unknown Grindelwald side. I lay stress on these small points because they go to prove that the passage of the Lauteraar Sattel was one of the climbs planned by the Desor party, and hence the fact that the

* *Berg- und Gletscherfahrten*, ii. p. 62.

† Desor's *Excursions*, i. p. 156, which was published in 1844, so that the drawing is, at any rate, earlier than that date.

‡ Vol. i. pp. 491, 531-2.

§ Vol. ii. pp. 146, 153-5.

|| P. 141.

guides made it alone does not detract from their credibility. It was the solution of a problem which had been carefully studied by Desor and his friends. For all these reasons it appears to me that the evidence in favour of the two guides is overwhelming, quite apart from their credibility, to be discussed later on. Barely a year after this expedition, Mr. Speer made his, in the course of which he undoubtedly accomplished the first traveller's passage of the Lauteraar Sattel. He says it was 'hitherto considered impracticable,' but we must bear in mind that his head guide was the very Jaun who had been over it a year before, and had been one of those who had studied it previously on both sides. We shall see later on what was the probable reason of his astonishing statement. On the occasion of the first traveller's ascent of the Haali Jungfrau on July 31, 1845, by MM. Agassiz, Vogt, and Bovet, with Jaun, Bannholzer, and two other guides who do not concern us for our present purpose, the party, making a late start from the Dollfus hut owing to doubtful weather, bivouacked the first night on the Lauteraar Sattel, achieved their ascent next day, and that evening came back over the same pass to the Unteraar glacier.* In other words, scarcely three weeks after Mr. Speer's passage, the pass was so well known that it was used as a bivouac, and recrossed in the afternoon. The 1845 party thus improved on their predecessors. Jaun was on all three expeditions, and I think all this makes it more and more certain that his passage on August 31, 1844, really took place. I, at any rate, am, personally, entirely convinced of this.

Thus, while Mr. Speer can claim only the first traveller's passage of the Lauteraar Sattel, Captain Campbell's party † are only entitled to the credit, such as it is, of having made the first recorded passage of the pass in its entire length, from Grindelwald to the Grimsel.

The discussion of Mr. Speer's ungrounded claim to this pass has taken me longer than will that of the even more ungrounded claim that on July 8, 1845, the *Rosenlauri glacier* was an 'unexplored region,' and 'a *terra incognita*.' It is sufficient to enumerate the recorded visits to all parts of this glacier before Speer ever went down it. In 1843, Desor, with a friend, M. Brunner, and his faithful guide Währen (who had just succeeded the lamented Leuthold as Desor's head guide), went from Rosenlauri to the Weit Sattel (the Urbach Sattel of the Siegfried map). It is expressly stated that the ascent was made by the glacier, and implied that natives had already reached this pass.‡ On August 28, 1844, the Rosenhorn party (including Jaun) descended from the S.E. foot of that peak to the base of the Dossenhorn and to the Weit Sattel, which was crossed to the Urbach valley.§ Desor says expressly ||: 'Tout l'espace entre les Wetterhörner et le pied du Tossenhorn était une *terra incognita*,' and this statement was then strictly accurate, though it was not when Mr. Speer came by, nearly a

* Studer, iv. p. 68, and Vogt's account in *S.A.C. Jahrbuch* xxvii. pp. 388-94.

† See the footnote on the Mitteljoch at the beginning of this 'Historical Note.'

‡ Desor, i. pp. 604-5.

§ *Ibid.* ii. pp. 148-51.

|| P. 149.

year later. Finally, Jaun and Bannholzer, on their ascent of the Haali Jungfrau, August 31, 1844, are distinctly stated by Desor* to have gone up the entire Rosenlaur glacier, from Rosenlaur to the opening between the desired peak and the Mittelhorn. Jaun, at least, had thus been certainly twice on the upper Rosenlaur glacier before he guided Mr. Speer down it on July 8, 1845, by the very route, doubtless, that he had taken on August 31, 1844. Thus, once more, I think, Mr. Speer's narrative has been proved to be contradicted by well-ascertained facts.

Let us, in conclusion, examine the qualifications of Mr. Speer as compared with those of his two guides.

Mr. Speer seems from his paper to have been an energetic young fellow, who, on hearing that there was an inaccessible peak somewhere about, at once started for it. Apart from his imperfect knowledge of German, as shown by his spelling of proper names (part of the blame may very likely belong to his printers), we find that he displays no acquaintance with Desor's books, one of which, at least, was published before his expedition. He had apparently no special topographical knowledge of the regions which he was visiting for the first time, though he seems to imply that he had done some climbing previously. It is odd that he never mentions the name of the Interlaken or Grindelwald guide, who accompanied him from Interlaken throughout his journey and back. Further, it seems to me that there are many little signs in his narrative which point to his having simply handed himself over to Jaun and Abplanalp, on their engaging to take him to the top of the peak he wished to conquer—*e.g.*, the name of Mittelhorn, given in 1843 by Desor,† which at that time could only have been got either from the guides or Desor's works. The latter is improbable, as he never mentions the name of Desor, whose monograph on the Wetterhorn group was then quite unique, and as Mr. Speer misspells the name Mittelhorn, it looks as if he had heard it from the guides. Again, notice what he says about his question to the guides as to whether they expected to reach the summit, seen by Mr. Speer for the first time, and startling him not a little; and remark how, on their assurance that they certainly expected to reach the summit, he allows that 'he held his peace, thinking himself in right good company.' All this makes me think that Mr. Speer was what would now be called a 'gymnast' or 'a peak hunter,' caring for naught else than to conquer his peak—a most laudable frame of mind, indeed, but one which scarcely entitles him to be treated as an authority of any great weight, save as to the actual details of his climb. It is really amusing to see how, as I have pointed out in my notes, he makes a mistake almost every time he condescends to speak of any of his predecessors or rivals. I do not, of course, blame Mr. Speer for not carefully getting up his subject, but I do think that his statements avail little against the wide experience of his two chief guides (we know nothing of the third who came with Mr. Speer from Interlaken).

Of these two guides, *Johannes Jaun*, of Meiringen (to be carefully distinguished from another guide, also called Johannes Jaun, of Imgrund

* Vol. ii. p. 154.

† Vol. i. p. 610.

or Imhof *), appears to have been the leader. In 1842 he took M. Desor up the Thierberg (between the Unteraar and the Oberaar glaciers), on which occasion Desor speaks † of him as 'jusqu'à un certain point le rival de Jacob'—i.e. Leuthold, the leading guide of the day. He also went with Desor that year up the Jungfrau (the fourth ascent), ‡ while, assuming the accounts in Desor to be true, Jaun was up the Rosenhorn and Hasli Jungfrau within three days (both first ascents), a capital training for the conquest, in 1845, with Mr. Speer, of the Mittelhorn, which he had thus seen and no doubt studied, guide fashion, from all sides. § *Kaspar Abplanalp* (to be carefully distinguished from his brother, Andreas, ¶ as well as from a Johannes of the same clan ¶¶) has also a good record, for in 1839 he went up to the Strahlegg from the Grimsel (a great feat in those early days), and in 1842 ascended the Jungfrau (fifth ascent), both with Herr Gottlieb Studer, who describes ** him as a hardy and skilful climber, as well as a cautious and reflective man. Jaun's credit, so far as regards the Hasli Jungfrau and Lauteraar Sattel, stands or falls with that of *Melchior Bannholzer*, of whom I must, therefore, say a few words, though he was not one of Mr. Speer's guides in 1845. He was one of the guides on the first ascent of the Lauteraarhorn in 1842, †† while in 1842 he had been the leader on the fifth recorded ascent of the Jungfrau, †‡ having made the fourth ascent in 1841 with M. Desor's party. In 1844 he climbed the Rosenhorn on August 28, came back on the 31st over the Hasli Jungfrau and Lauteraar Sattel, and on September 1 led a party of Americans over the Strahlegg. §§ In 1842 Studer describes him as a most daring and venturesome climber, ||| and narrates how he courageously rescued a cap which had fallen into the great bergschrund, ¶¶¶ while in 1844 Desor tells us *** that Bannholzer was the leader in an adventurous excursion down an ice-hole at night. I had almost forgotten to say that it was Bannholzer who, on the ascent of the Lauteraarhorn, was selected by the leader, Leuthold himself, to force a way over a bad bit on the arête, and who took a most thrilling leap in mid air, to induce the rest of his party to follow him. †††

I have entered into all these minute details about these three guides to prove that their narratives deserve complete credit, and that Mr. Speer's statements in contradiction to them must be attributed to his youth and inexperience. The only plausible argument against the guides is that they did not mention their previous passages of the Lauteraar Sattel and of the Rosenlauri glacier to Mr. Speer, and that

* See Desor, i. p. 359.

† Vol. i. p. 529.

‡ Desor, i. pp. 359, 394.

§ A striking instance of his devoted care to a wearied traveller on the descent from the Hasli Jungfrau, August 31, 1845, is narrated in Vogt's account, reprinted in *S.A.C.J.*, xxvii. p. 393.

¶ Desor, ii. p. 126; Studer, *Topogr. Mitth.* p. 102.

¶¶ Desor, i. pp. 359, 394.

** *Topogr. Mitth.* p. 102.

†† Desor, i. p. 536.

†‡ Studer, *Topogr. Mitth.* pp. 102, 115, 117-8.

§§ Desor, ii. pp. 153-5. ||| P. 102. ¶¶ P. 127.

*** Vol. ii. p. 122.

††† Desor, i. p. 541; Studer, *Topogr. Mitth.* p. 102.

therefore it may be presumed that they did not really accomplish them. Mr. Speer, however, does not say that they did not tell him about their exploits, while he does mention with perfect belief the 1844 ascent of the Hasli Jungfrau by one of his guides, by a very natural mistake giving him as comrade on that expedition his companion of 1845 instead of his real companion, Bannholzer. This admission on Mr. Speer's part goes, I venture to think, a long way towards demolishing the always dangerous argument from silence. Another reason for either their omission to tell Mr. Speer, or for his forgetting what they had told him about the pass and glacier, is that for a long time passes and glaciers (especially the former) were not considered as anything but steps in the attainment of a summit, and so, in the early narratives, they are frequently slurred over in a fashion that seems very curious to us. I need only recall the first passages of the Beichgrat by the Meyer party of 1811, and of the Mönchjoch by Rohrdorf's party in 1828. One has to read each narrative very carefully to make out that the parties crossed a pass at all.

For all these reasons, therefore, I think that we may assert with great confidence that the expedition of the two guides on August 31, 1844, on which the whole matter really turns, is perfectly authentic, and that any expressions of Mr. Speer to the contrary are capable of easy explanation, without supposing that he meant to give the lie to his two guides, of whose general conduct during the Mittelhorn expedition he speaks in very complimentary terms.

Some minor points alone remain to be disposed of.

It is worth remembering that the passage of the Lauteraar Sattel by the two guides in 1844 is recognised as authentic by some important works dealing with Alpine history (in addition to those named in the course of this note)—*e.g.*, Herr Gottlieb Studer in 'Berg- und Gletscherfahrten,' ii. (1863), p. 61, and in his 'Ueber Eis und Schnee,' i. p. 161, and Mr. W. Longman in his 'Modern Mountaineering,' Appendix to vol. viii. of the 'Alpine Journal,' p. 76.

The statement made in 1857 at Grindelwald to Captain Campbell* that the Lauteraar Sattel 'had never been traversed' may be explained either by the jealousy between the Grindelwald men, who had not been on it, and the Meiringen men, who most certainly had been on it several times by the date mentioned, or—this, I fancy, is the 'real explanation—that it had never been traversed throughout from Grindelwald to the Grimsel. This latter contention is apparently quite accurate, but may very likely have been unconsciously given a wider meaning by travellers not well up in Alpine history. This would be not unlike a very common belief even nowadays, that Sir Alfred Wills in 1854 made the absolutely first ascent of the Hasli Jungfrau. Of course it was only the first complete ascent made from Grindelwald as a starting-place; and the hero of that famous climb never claimed any other merit for it or himself. †

* *Alpine Journal*, i. p. 60.

† See *Wanderings*, pp. 271, 302, with which compare Studer's *Ueber Eis und Schnee*, i. p. 237.

Mr. Ball's statements on this subject are unfortunately not as accurate as his statements generally are. He says* that, while the two guides were the first to cross the actual ridge of the pass, yet 'the possibility of reaching the pass from Grindelwald was not established till 1857.' He has clearly forgotten that as early as 1845 a party of travellers came up from Grindelwald to the Gleckstein cave,† and that Mr. Wills and others had done the same before 1857. On the other hand, the two parties of 1844 and 1845 up the Hasli Jungfrau, and possibly others, had passed close to the Gleckstein, on their way up the peak, but did not go down to Grindelwald. Thus it was very clear that the 'possibility of reaching the pass from Grindelwald' was established long before 1857, though no one had actually reached it from Grindelwald until that date. Of course I am only speaking of recorded passages; others may have taken place of which I have no knowledge, though I should be very much obliged to anyone who would communicate to me information regarding any such passages. On p. 120 Mr. Ball, by an unlucky misprint of 1843 for 1845, darkens and confuses matters very much. It is quite certain that Agassiz's ascent of the Hasli Jungfrau took place in 1845, not 1843.‡ In reality the two guides went up in 1844, and took up Agassiz and his friends in 1845. Mr. Ball clearly recognised the ascent by the two guides, though unluckily he postdated it, while antedating Agassiz's. A little below, too, it is of course in flat contradiction to what has just been said in his text to assert that there were doubts as to the accessibility of the Hasli Jungfrau till Sir Alfred Wills' ascent in 1854. Mr. Ball really means (as in the case of the Lauteraar Sattel) that it was the accessibility from Grindelwald that was doubtful, not the accessibility of a peak of which he had just mentioned two ascents. The latter statement would be absurd. After the words 'Wetterhorn proper' we must necessarily insert 'from Grindelwald.' Then the text becomes consistent and much more accurate, though still open to the objection that the Gleckstein had been reached before 1854 from Grindelwald, and also practically by the parties coming from the Lauteraar Sattel on their way up the Hasli Jungfrau. In both cases the question of accessibility has been unfortunately mixed up with the entirely different one—Has the peak or pass in question been actually reached from this or that direction?

It may, perhaps, be of use to some of my readers to point out that Studer's, Desor's, and Vogt's narratives, often referred to in the above lines, may be found collected (with other articles) and reprinted from the original texts, in one volume, which forms vol. iv. (1864) of Dollfus-Ausset's '*Matériaux pour l'Etude des Glaciers*,' and has also a separate title-page, '*Ascensions dans les Hautes Régions des Alpes*.'

This note has become far longer than I expected when I began it,

* *Central Alps*, p. 118.

† See footnote (*) on p. 115 above.

‡ Studer, *Ueber Eis und Schnee*, iv. p. 68; and *S.A.C. Jahrbuch*, xxvii. pp. 388-94.

but I trust my readers will accept it as an earnest endeavour to clear away some deeply rooted but erroneous beliefs that still obscure the history of one of the finest mountain groups in the Bernese Oberland. I hope that a complicated set of events has now been set in its proper light, and that my successors, at least, will thank me for the minuteness with which I have tried to sweep away every cobweb from this dark corner of Alpine history.

NOTES FROM THE ADULA ALPS.

BY W. A. B. COOLIDGE.

THE disastrous fire at Grindelwald (August 18, 1892) had many unexpected consequences, but perhaps none was quite so singular as the following. The news reached us three days late at the distant village of Splügen, and as our leading guide, Christian Almer, jun., lost in the fire his house and all its contents, while I lost half my heavy luggage (left at the 'Bear' after a month spent there in May and June), our party broke up at once. Now we had been engaged for some weeks in the exploration of the Adula Alps for the purpose of a 'Climbers' Guide' for that district, and had pretty well completed our task save as regards the E. bit of that district, precisely that round Splügen. In writing my book in the winter of 1892-3 I felt very keenly the want of notes, based on personal experience, relating to that portion of the range. Hence I resolved to make up for this in the summer of 1893, and the following jottings are meant to help the readers of that work by completing the details there given. These jottings consist mainly of the notes made during a splendid week spent in the Adulas last August, to which I have added corrections of various slips made in the printed text, and some account of certain ascents made by some of my friends in 1893.

Let me first of all put right some minor matters.

A kind reviewer in the 'Rivista Mensile' of the Italian Alpine Club (No. for August, 1893, p. 255) has pointed out that the Cornera Alp (line 7 from the bottom of p. vii. of my 'Guide') is really in Graubünden (not, as stated, in Uri), while he also points out that I have wrongly inserted an accent on the final letter of the name 'Streghe' (p. 147), though in doing this I was but copying the Siegfried map, so that I err in good company. To these mistakes I may add some more which I found out for myself—pp. 137-8, for 'Annarossa' read 'Annarosa'; p. 138, line 8 from the bottom, insert 'S. A. C. J. ix.'; p. 60, line 12, after 'Theobald' insert 'i. p. 80.'; p. 133, line 6, for 'Madens' read 'Modens.' An ascent of the Badus on July 3 showed me that my account of Route 1 (p. 14) was open to improvement. For 'Oberalp road' read 'St. Gotthard road,' and in the next line for 'a small chapel' substitute 'some huts.' It is far better to climb the steep rocky slopes N. of the great gully leading up to the gap between the Badus and Piz Toma than to climb the gully itself, while after gaining the N. ridge of the peak the summit is best reached by