

We spent 55 min. most enjoyably on the narrow rock-crest which forms the summit, put the first English names into the bottle which we found in the cairn, and left it with regret at 7.30.

Near the bottom of the couloir an absurd incident happened. I had in my boots a number of new four-spiked Mummery screws. The sun had softened the snow-crust to snowball consistency. Without any warning both my boots balled and I shot off at a speed almost as great as that described by Carr on another occasion as 'stealthy haste.' In my case I hardly know where the stealth would come in. I pulled myself up when abreast of Walker, who was in the middle, and though at the time I felt rather like a naughty boy who had been caught stealing an apple, and who expects a whipping, I thoroughly enjoyed seeing Walker turn round, drive his axe-head into the snow, and draw the rope in taut, all in a second of time. It was delightful. Carr would have done just the same, but he was in front, and it all happened so quickly that he missed it entirely. He was almost if not quite on the flat snow-field, so that we could not possibly have come to any harm.

We arrived at the hut at 9.10, and sauntered gently down to Vorauen, where we received the congratulations of our friends, and left with much regret this lovely little alpine resort in the evening for Stachelberg. We then had an ambitious programme, which began with the Tödi and Maderanerthal, but which, alas! was ultimately changed to the Schweitzer Hof at Lucerne, Meiringen, and the Grimsel. As it turned out, we climbed the Glärnisch on the one fine day during our stay in Glarus; none other would have done so well, and we considered ourselves to have been most fortunate in thus scoring a success at the outset of our campaign.

THE ASCENT OF ACONCAGUA.

THE following telegram from a member of Mr. FitzGerald's party appeared in the 'Daily Chronicle' of January 18, and is printed here with the permission of the Editor:—

'Mendoza: January 16, 7.35 P.M.

'Mr. FitzGerald and Zurbriggen, with four Swiss porters and ten mules, left Inca for Horcone's Valley on December 23, and bivouacked 12 miles up the valley.

'December 24.—Proceeded 8 miles round the N. of Aconcagua, expecting to reach the summit on the 27th. Bivouacked at an altitude of 14,000 ft. All well.

'December 25.—Bivouacked 19,000 ft. on the "col" (neck of the mountain). All are suffering from sickness. The cold is intense. Two aneroids ran to 27,000 and broke. The weather is very bad; snow and gale.

'December 26.—The Russian furnace refused to act and exploded. Sent down two porters who were ill, and did the cooking myself. The tins were bad, and we had no spirits.

'Zurbriggen while prospecting found Gussfeldt's card in a tin box, dated March 1883. The height was 21,000 ft.

'December 27.—As we had no hot food we were forced to descend. We rested three days in the valley, and were obliged to send wood and water to the col.

'December 30.—We made a second attempt. Boiling thermometers useless. They were not rated high enough. During three days the lowest temperature was 5° F., and the highest in the sun 26·46°.

'December 31.—We started for the summit. Zurbriggen suffered from frozen feet, and was carried up the mountain with great difficulty. We bivouacked for 2 hrs., and, after constant rubbing, the feet were restored.

'January 2.—We had ascended over 22,500 ft., and were not near the summit. We all returned to Inca to recoup.

'Crossing the river a mule fell and got wedged between rocks. Zurbriggen being underneath was nearly drowned. He received some injury to his shoulder.

'The weather was still bad.

'January 9.—We made a third attempt to get to the top of Aconcagua. The cold was more intense.

'January 13.—We bivouacked at a height of over 20,000 ft.

'January 14.—We reached the arête between the peaks at a height of 23,000 ft. Mr. FitzGerald turned back ill.

'Zurbriggen reached the summit at 5 P.M.

'Mr. FitzGerald hopes to reach the summit next week.

'The mountain is over 24,000 ft. high.'

As regards the greatest heights previously attained, the matter will be found fully discussed by Mr. D. Freshfield in vol. xii. of the 'Alpine Journal,' pp. 52-60, 99-108. The height assigned to Aconcagua by Dr. Güssfeldt after careful trigonometrical measurement was 22,869 ft. It will be interesting to learn the nature of the observations on which a so much loftier elevation is now attributed to the mountain.