

local guides, the route we used being so much easier. There were no difficulties whatever on the French side. We arrived at Bonneval at 5.50 P.M. On August 12 we left Bonneval at 4.10 A.M. for the Pointe d'Audagne and the Pointe du Grand Fond (11,228 ft.) for photographic purposes, reaching the latter peak at 10.45 A.M. (halts 95 min.). The view was magnificent, a very prominent object being the Albaron. After a stay of 2 hrs. we had to make a long descent and re-ascent to the Col du Collierin, arriving at Balme at 6.50. The hotel was full, so we had to be content with a room outside. Next day, August 13, we walked up to the Rifugio Gastaldi in just under 3 hrs., *en route* for the Bessanese. During the evening sixteen other people came up, all bound for the Ciamarella. Next morning, in consequence of so many breakfasts having to be prepared, we did not get away until 5.5; crossed the Col d'Arnas at 6.25. Two hundred yards below the col, on the French side, we left the Arnas Glacier, walked up some rock steps, and traversed along stone slopes in the direction of the couloir, coming down from the S. ridge, halting 25 min. at its foot. We now took to the rocks of the left bank of this couloir, and arrived on the first summit at 9.30. Now that the rocks were clear of snow, the ascent to the highest point was easy, and only occupied 11 min. and the descent 7 min. The view was the finest I saw in the Graians. We left the summit at 11.50, arrived at the Col d'Arnas at 1.50 P.M., having halted 24 min. on the way; Gastaldi hut, 2.25, where we stayed 10 min.; Balme, 4.20 P.M.

On map VI., the Graian Alps, in Ball's 'Guide,' the Levanna Club hut is marked on the French side of the chain. It should be on the Italian side, near the foot of the Col Perduto.

THE DREIECKJOCH.

BY THE EDITOR.

A T much-frequented Alpine centres the guests apparently argue that, as others abide their question, therefore you, lover of the mountains and anxious if possible to stand on some summit, however humble, or cross some pass, however insignificant—

Where no man comes
Or hath come since the making of the world—

you, I say, may be interrogated in the same style as the pseudo-orophilist. Whether the tone be wheedling, 'Where

are you going?' or insinuating, 'How long shall you be away?' or archly suggestive of peril and glory, 'Will it be a very difficult excursion?' you will be expected to answer with readiness, if not with effusion. Should you reply, 'I will tell you when I come back,' aspersions on your courtesy are pretty sure to follow. Not that lasting malice inspires them. No! For on your return you must answer further interrogatories, unless you can by topographical cunning escape to your room by the back-stairs. Should you unguardedly make any admissions as to what you have done, you may expect a charming lady, who is dying to hear of your exploits (exploits, indeed!) to ask you, with the most obvious good faith, 'Were you let down 150 ft. by the rope on a face of blue ice?' But, after all, you do but pay in this way for the creature comforts which you enjoy. You may take your choice between luxury and cross-examination or peace and peasants' fare.

On August 18, 1899, I was awakened at about 2.30 A.M. by the porter at the *Hôtel Jungfrau*, on the *Eggischhorn*. A colloquy ensued something to this effect:—'Is the weather good?' 'No, sir.' 'Is it bad?' 'No, sir; not altogether.' 'What do you think?' A shrug of the shoulders was the only answer. Then, as a sudden thought struck him, 'Come, and I will show you the morning from another side.' So, Balaamwise, in the priest-like garb of night, I followed him. But if he thought that I should curse the weather he was wrong. I did not like it, for the fog was thick; but no malison escaped my lips. We returned to my room. A happy thought struck me: 'Have you looked at the weather-glass?' 'No, sir; but I will do so.' While the porter was away I reflected. Did not the mountain poet write—

Not seldom clad in saffron vest,
Deceitfully goes forth the morn?

Might not success be locked in the leaden mist, as it was in the leaden casket which Bassanio chose? Wherefore I followed Bassanio, and, as it turned out, with equal good luck. When the porter reappeared he said: 'It is going up a little.' 'Very good, I will start!'

At 3.5 Sylvain Pession and I were off; he in front with the lantern, I behind with gloomy doubts as to whether I was a credulous enthusiast or a mere optimistic ass; for the fog was damp, dense, and disheartening. Sylvain, for lack of more solid questions, inquired whether the pace suited. 'Yes,' I answered; after that we plodded on in silence.

By lapse of time we reached the *Märjelen See*. When we

had come to the edge of the Aletsch glacier the light was still dim, so we agreed to wait a little. On the rocks there were one or two logs of wood, brought for fuel for the Concordia Inn. In them I recognised a possible bed, lay down, and went to sleep. The cold was semi-glacial, and I got up nothing loth to quit so unkindly a dormitory. We began to cross the Great Aletsch glacier. When we were about the middle of it a sudden increase in the cold and an occasional gust of eager air made me say to Sylvain, 'There is a north wind getting up.' 'You are right, Monsieur, the north wind will soon be strong.'

By this time there was a distinct tinge of gold on the wild swirl of clouds which shrouded the cliffs of the Olmenhorn. Shadowy arms in loose drapery, despairingly thrown up towards heaven, signified the passionate intercession of the mountain nymphs for fine weather. We supported them with silent orisons. The cold increased. The mists gradually dispersed. We climbed slowly round the cliffs of the Olmenhorn,* and observed with pleasure that the struggle in mid-air was taking a turn in our favour, and that a fine day would probably be assured to us.

After traversing some distance northwards almost at a level, we reached the glacier which fills the great hollow between the Olmenhorn and the second peak of the Dreieckhörner. We now began to go upwards in a north-west direction. After crossing slantwise some slopes where stones evidently fell after sunrise, we reached a safe place. We had once or twice heard solitary stones fall, and, while we indulged in breakfast at this spot, we beheld a great block descend, smite various stones which lay close together, and awaken them to a proper sense of the necessity for warning trespassers off their native cliffs. This heart-scaring demonstration was, however, too late. We were well above the spots where risk must be run, and, after finishing breakfast, went on our way leisurely.

Soon afterwards we saw seven chamois some way above us. The herd was hardly numerous enough to make me fancy I was in the Graians, and besides, in that delightful land we should have found a royal hunting-path to lead us up to where we now were. Still, the beautiful creatures aroused our enthusiasm, and helped one of our party, at any rate, to smother the unworthy suggestions of a too cautious age.

* The edge of the moraine was lettered with flowering plants of *Linaria alpina*.

After pursuing a north-western direction for some time we came to a large crevasse of great loveliness, but it was the loveliness of *la belle dame sans merci*. When this was passed another barred our way, but, as Campion says—

Bold assaults are fit for men
That on strange beauties venture.

We therefore proceeded.

After Sylvain had cut some steps up a little ice slope we gained a ridge* of rocks where progress, if leisurely, was quite easy. So we reached our pass, and then in a few minutes climbed the peak to the north of it by a ridge which sloped like the roof of a house. This little peak afterwards looked very well from the Mittel Aletsch glacier. On Mr. McCormick's illustration from one of Dr. Tempest Anderson's photographs the actual col has a cross above it.

The great feature of the view from the little peak was the Aletschhorn, which rose before us in absolute splendour, as glorious a structure of dark rock, gleaming ice, and dazzling snow as eye could desire. We estimated the height of our pass at 11,000 ft., and our summit was a little higher. We reached it about 11 o'clock, and stayed about 40 min.

Sylvain had doubts about the descent, but I combated them. I had read with much pleasure M. Gallet's account† of his ascent of the second peak of the Dreieckhörner from the Gross Aletsch glacier, and I remembered that his party had gone down to the Mittel Aletsch glacier, and had found the descent much easier than the ascent. But I was wrong in my inference, for M. Gallet's descent was in great part on snow, whereas ours was wholly on rocks. The first part was perfectly easy. I was, according to the most natural arrangement, leader, and had no difficulty in finding a way down the slopes of loose stones immediately below the summit. 'You will go where you please,' said Sylvain; and so I did for perhaps half the distance to the Mittel Aletsch. Then it became less easy to find a way, and Sylvain began to distribute imputations of folly at large. Nor was this astonishing, for it was growing gradually pretty plain that we were not to reach the glacier without a struggle.

This portion of the mountain-side was divided into promontories, so to speak. The one on which we were did not,

* On this ridge we found *Ranunculus glacialis* and *Chrysanthemum alpinum*.

† *Jahrbuch S.A.C.*, vol. xxxiii. p. 183 foll.



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so far as I could judge, offer a very feasible descent to the slopes below us. Eventually Sylvain passed in front of me and examined our chances of escape. He found on the right an impossible cliff, on the left a precipice, while in front the way was quite impracticable. There was, therefore, nothing for it but to go back, turn the hollow between it and the next promontory to the south, and attempt a descent by it. Backwards we went with unwilling feet, and with this unpleasant conviction in our minds, that if we failed in our new effort a return to the col would be necessary, to be followed by an ignominious descent towards the Märjelen See. This was no oil and balm. Besides, carnival would doubtless be going on amidst the rocks and stones on that eastern sun-warmed slope, and we desired no assiduous attentions from any creature, but would fain depart unobtrusively.

Yet why should we be despondent? Might we not adapt Cassius's words, and say of our Joch—

Three parts of him
Is ours already; and the pass entire
Upon the next encounter yields him ours.

Well then we climbed slowly upwards. At last we had turned the head of the hollow between us and the desired promontory. Then a traverse became inevitable. Sylvain effected it and called to me to follow, but I regarded the passage doubtfully. For Sylvain was in such a position that if I made a false step I should swing out, and probably by no means benefit my limbs by sharp contact with the rocks. I shouted once and again that I could not do it, but at the same time I found hold for one hand and foot, and by the time that Sylvain's answering shout had died away I was ready to tempt fate. I gave a spring, my right foot reached a lucky projection, and I had rejoined my companion.

Then more contentedly turned we downwards. In a short time we were nearly level with the spot where we had been repulsed. Sylvain came forward to reconnoitre. He essayed the left side of our promontory. 'Well?' 'If nothing better offers——.' He then tried the right side. 'Is it better there?' 'No, not so good.' Then I once more advanced, and was lowered the whole length of our rope of 80 ft. I had generally hold for one foot or one hand, but I do not think I should have liked to face the position without the rope's support. Then I untied myself, Sylvain fixed the rope round an accommodating protuberance on the face of the cliff, and descended the upper half of the face—the difficult part; he then shook the rope loose and rejoined me.

I had previously lost my axe. Another troublesome bit enabled me to recover it. After one or two more unimportant little difficulties we began to think that we had escaped from our troubles. We turned somewhat northwards, and in a few minutes more reached the Mittel Aletsch glacier, having found several small beds of snow, which gave us a little help, as we were able to glissade. Our final escape was by the side of a little brook that fell over the last cliffs. These cliffs, covered with bright green grass, flowers, and stones, were steep enough. The place recalled Scott's lines—

It was a barren scene and wild,
Where naked cliffs were rudely piled ;
But ever and anon between
Lay velvet tufts of loveliest green.

The Mittel Aletsch glacier gained, I sat down on a big stone, with tingling limbs and torn garments, and rejoiced in the thought that we had escaped a return to the col. Who shall assess the satisfaction with which I regarded those grim tiers of steep cliffs rent by deeply-cut gullies? There was no *Forsan et hæc olim* about it. There was present and genuine gratitude for a glorious day.

It may be useful to future climbers to say that when we got to the end of the Mittel Aletsch glacier, instead of crossing the Great Aletsch and then finding a way to the Jungfrau Hotel over the ridge, we followed the true right moraine of the Great Aletsch glacier for some distance, then climbed a steep cliff-face on the Olmenhorn (Sylvain climbed it, the rope and Sylvain's arms ensured my arrival at the top), and then, traversing pretty much at a level, struck the moraine, crossed the Great Aletsch glacier, and regained the Hôtel Jungfrau by the Märjelen See path. When once we reached the path I began to walk again in respectable style—so much so that Sylvain, doubtless recollecting his distribution of rebukes for folly at large, and deeming it judicious to bury fact in saccharine, remarked quite genially: 'I am pleased with you. I have seen that you have good legs.'

My friend Tempest Anderson's congratulations revived me completely, and so I brought a very pleasant day to a very pleasant close by sitting down to that nourishment which is called supper.