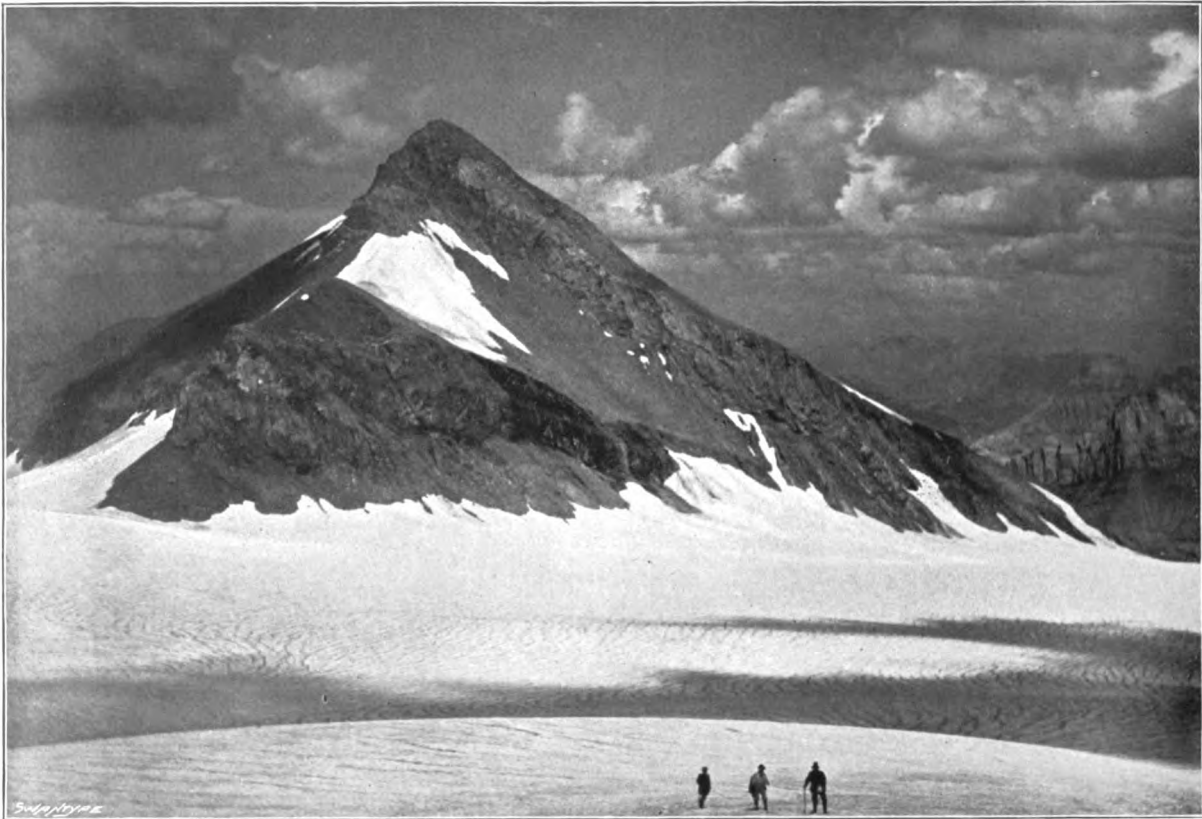


A DAY ON THE OLDENHORN.

By GODFREY A. SOLLY.

CLIMBERS who were in the Alps in the early part of the summer of 1908 will long remember the showery weather and the peak-concealing clouds that were so prevalent. About the middle of July I went with a party to the Hôtel des Diablerets in the Vallée des Ormonts. None of the party had been there before, and for the first few days no mountains were visible, though we knew from the picture postcards and a study of the Siegfried map that at least two mountains—the Diablerets and the Oldenhorn—were close to us. At last, on the evening of Wednesday, July 22, the weather was more promising, and Messrs. James Maclay, J. Arthur Hargreaves, and I proposed to start for the Diablerets. At dinner we heard that another party from the hotel, with guides, was going out, so we asked what peak they were going to. They told us the Diablerets, so we decided to go for the Oldenhorn. There is no climbers' guide to the district, and there are very few allusions to the mountain in any English alpine literature since the date of the charming papers by Mr. Hinchliff in 'Peaks, Passes, and Glaciers,' and by the Bishop of Bristol in 'Off the Mill.' All we knew was that if you got to the Zanfeuron Glacier there was an easy way up. We left the hotel at 8 a.m., and, instead of having to stumble along a narrow path by lantern-light, had the luxury of an hour's walk on the splendid carriage-road to the Col de Pillon. Just before reaching the col we turned due S., and, after crossing some very wet ground, began the ascent of the slopes towards the Sex Rouge Glacier. These slopes are steep and tiring. Sometimes we followed the ill-defined path, but until dawn came we frequently lost it. Near the glacier we made our way along a number of terraces, which in places gave us a little scrambling, though apparently there is a simpler way known to guides. We reached the snow before 8 o'clock, and there saw in front of us a large white hare—the first I have ever seen in the Alps—but after turning round twice to look at the intruders it disappeared. We then walked up the glacier to a point where we got a good view of the S.W. ridge of the mountain. There seemed to be no particular reason for not trying it, so we turned sharply to our left, up by the snow and a rather difficult chimney in the rock wall shown on the extreme left of the illustration. Above this we had to mount by the screes, then covered with snow, to the actual



E. Busset, photo.

Swan Electric Engraving Co

THE OLDENHORN FROM THE ZANFLEURON GLACIER.

ridge, which we gained near the top of a conspicuous snowy saddle. At the top of the snow we left one of our sacks, and began the actual ascent of the rocky ridge.

It is nowhere very difficult, but we at once saw that it was not the usual route for tourists. There are three noteworthy places. (1) Near the snow there is a large split in the ridge, but you can get up between the split blocks, getting a footing on the lower rock if desired. (2) Higher up there is a horizontal ridge, about 60 ft. long and very narrow. Coming third, I was hesitating whether to straddle it or not, when I heard a shout from a party on the summit, so for the credit of a guideless party I told the others to hold firm, and walked across. (3) The third place of interest was a curtain of rock with no obvious way round it. However, two loose stones seemed to be coming out of a small fissure in it. Maclay knocked away the top one, and then found that the other was part of the solid rock. It stuck out like a joist from a new building about 8 ins. by 3 and 2 ins. deep. It made a perfect step up the rock, and then we had no further difficulty, and reached the summit at 10 A.M.

The view of the Pennine Range was intensely interesting. Thick clouds were travelling fast from E. to W., and the peaks kept appearing and disappearing as they broke and gathered again. Now the top of the Matterhorn or Weisshorn would be visible, then it would be hidden, and for a moment the Arolla peaks or the Grand Combin would be seen, and a moment later perhaps some of the peaks above Saas. It is difficult in words to describe such views of clouds and peaks, but the memory lasts.

Three ridges meet at the summit. The N. ridge, climbed by Mr. Hinchliff's party, looks broken, but on the S.E. ridge there is a well-defined path in the loose shale. Down this we went till we found a place where we could get off the ridge on to the S.W. face, which we traversed mostly through snow back to the snow saddle where we had left our sack. We then went along the ridge to the point marked Becca d'Audon on the Siegfried, as we wished to descend the great rock wall direct to the glacier below. We went down some distance, but fearing that if it proved impracticable, and we had to ascend again, we should be too late in getting home, we gave it up, and going again to the S. face found a way on to the Zanfleuron Glacier. We knew there was a way down the Prapioz Glacier, so we crossed to that glacier and found a way without much difficulty. After leaving the glacier we got wet through in a thunderstorm, but we had had our climb and

reached the hotel at 4.50 p.m. It was not until a few days later that it dawned on us that we had perhaps made a new climb. Since coming home I have had the great advantage of the help of Mr. Coolidge in ascertaining the history of the climbs on the mountain, and it seems clear that the route is new; and to him also I am indebted for the photograph taken by Professor E. Busset, of Lausanne, who has kindly allowed it to be reproduced. The name *Becca d'Audon*, which on the *Siegfried* appears to refer to the top of the great wall which we began to descend, is misplaced. It is really the name given by the French-speaking Ormonts people to the peak called the Oldenhorn by their German-speaking neighbours of *Gateig*. On the *Dufour* map the name 'Audon' is given as an alternative name to Oldenhorn.

My object in writing this paper has been not so much to describe a very ordinary climb as to illustrate the fact that the Alps can never be played out if properly approached.

A party going without guides to a mountain they have never seen have many of the pleasures of explorers. We had to find a route, using our own judgment. We could vary our route on the descent as we liked, and by doing so we came across several interesting little climbs. Above all, we could take our own time and get the full enjoyment of a long day on the hills.

SOME REMARKS ON THE NOMENCLATURE OF OSSETIA AND ADJACENT COUNTRIES, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO DR. MERZBACHER'S MAP.

By JOHN F. BADDELEY.

KASARA DEFILE.—This name has been applied to the defile cut by the Ardon through the Main Crystalline Range for at least a century and a half, and probably from time immemorial. It is derived from the Georgian 'Kasris' (trough) which appears already at this spot on the map of the Tsarievitch Vakhusht in 1745. Klaproth mentions it in this connection in 1809. Zussermann, to whom the idea of the Mamisson military road is due, names the Ardon defile *Kasara* in his report to Baron Wrewsky in 1856, and at the same time calls the Terek defile *Trusovsky*, and so, with one exception, have all Russian writers since. *Rossikoff*, it is true, speaks of the Terek defile as the *Kasara*, probably because there is a mountain of that name in the vicinity, and Dr. Merzbacher follows him; but there is no sufficient reason for this change of name, and there is certainly none whatever for depriving the Ardon defile of the appel-