

village of Les Brevières, in the homely inn of which we spent the night.

This expedition can be thoroughly recommended, for though in good weather there are no special technical difficulties, the climbing throughout is interesting and full of variety, and the scenery, both near and far, cannot be adequately expressed in words.

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### THE GLETSCHERHORN.

By H. C. BOWEN.

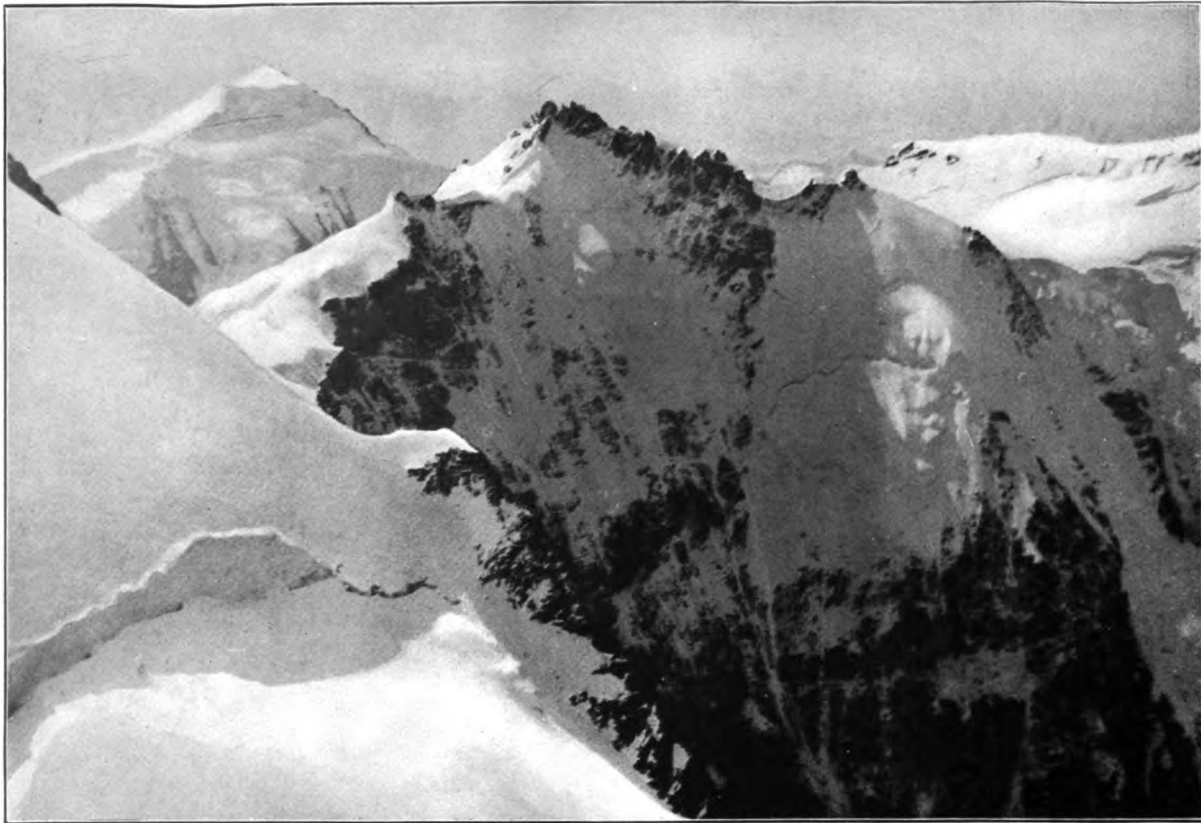
THE Gletscherhorn, lying due S. of the Jungfrau, between the Kranzberg and the Ebnefluh, has never been a popular mountain, though it is hard to say why. From its summit, the Jungfrau presents a majestic appearance, but it certainly does completely shut out that magic view over northern Switzerland which the more fashionable Oberland peaks possess, and the outlook is almost equally confined in other directions. But after all we do not climb a great mountain merely to get a good view, and the Gletscherhorn is a mountain of sufficiently imposing height, being only a few mètres short of the mystic *viertausend*, it is within easy reach of the Concordia Inn, and it affords at any rate three lines of ascent which are all interesting, and give varied climbing. The summit consists of two peaks, the E. and W. summits, of almost equal height. There is no indication that the mountain has ever been traversed until last summer, and moreover volume i. of the Oberland section of the 'Climbers' Guides' (1902) speaks of the 'deep and hitherto untraversed gap' between the two summits. Of the three routes by which hitherto the mountain has been climbed, one is the ascent of the W. summit by its W. or rather N.W. arête, leading up from the Gletscherjoch, the depression between it and the Ebnefluh; the other two are climbs of the E. summit, the first by the S.E. arête made by Mr. C. E. Freeman and myself in 1898, the second by M. and Mme. J. Gallet in 1897 by the N. arête from the Lauithor, between the peak and the Roththalhorn.

The mountain was first ascended as early as 1867 by Mr. Hornby with Christian Lauener. They slept at the Faulberg hut, some little distance below the present Concordia Inn, walked up nearly to the Gletscherjoch, and then turned right-handed towards the N.W. arête, cutting up 'a very steep

snow slope to the crest, which was gained about 250 ft. below the last rocks.' From the account it is obvious that the party reached only the W. summit. In 1892 Mr. C. E. Freeman and myself, with Heinrich and Simon Zurflüh of Meiringen, spent a night in the Concordia hut with Mr. (now Sir Felix) Schuster, and on the following day attempted with indifferent success to follow this route. The 'steep snow slope' was ice, and every step took time to cut. We were not a particularly slow party, and we started in fairly good time—3 A.M. to be exact—but it was nearly 11 before we reached the arête, two hours of which were spent in step-cutting. Climbers' guide-books have been useful helps to most of us, but they occasionally make mistakes. Had we gone straight to the Gletscherjoch, the bridging of the gap between the E. and W. summits might well have been accomplished then, instead of waiting sixteen years more. When we at last reached the arête, Heinrich Zurflüh informed us that there was a bad cornice which would have to be thrashed out, that it would take a long time, but that he would go on if we liked. Time was also going on, the weather looked doubtful, and we decided to turn back. From my subsequent knowledge, I am inclined to think the man was tired and that the terrors of the cornice existed chiefly in his own imagination.

Next year we resolved to try again, and this time succeeded in reaching the E. summit, gaining a gap in the S.E. arête by a broad snow couloir from the W. side, and following the arête up. (No notice of this apparently new route was given in the 'Alpine Journal'.) On the summit we gazed across at the W. peak, and unanimously agreed that we were on the higher—probably because the gap between them looked most uninviting. At any rate on that occasion we never made an attempt to reach the other peak, and came down again by the same S.E. arête, turning left at the gap where we had got on to it, and descending to the Kranzberg Firn. In this way the broad Jungfrau track was easily attained and followed for the rest of the way to the Concordia, which we reached shortly after 1 P.M. We found the arête a pretty little climb, resembling in many ways the ordinary S.E. arête of the Schreckhorn; there is the same clean firm rock, but on the Gletscherhorn it is not pitched at quite so steep an angle. They both take about the same time.

This last summer I resolved to find out whether the gap between the two peaks was so impossible after all. It seemed that the climb had not been done, as M. and Mme. J. Gallet, who made a new route up the mountain in 1897, had ascended



*S. P. Staffurth. Photo.*

*Siemens Electric Engineering Co., Ltd.*

THE GLETSCHERHORN FROM THE JUNGFRAU.

apparently only the E. peak from the Lauithor. At any rate their card which we found on that summit makes no mention of a traverse. Melchior Kohler of Meiringen, with his nephew Hans Winterberger, met me at the Eggishorn, and in due course we started from the little Concordia Inn on August 3 at the conventional hour of 2. Our object was to climb the W. peak first, and, if possible, to cross the gap to the E. Melchior showed wisdom in his choice of route. Instead of following the direction of the first party and cutting up on to the arête, he went straight to the Gletscherjoch. It was quite easy going; the Firn did not seem nearly so broken up as in 1893, though this can probably be accounted for by the fact that we kept well away to the left, and avoided many of the schrunds which had troubled us before. Once on the Gletscherjoch, it was a simple matter to follow the easy snow arête with a few rocks at the end, without cutting, as far as I remember, a single step in ice. We were on the summit of the W. peak by 7.40, and a glance across the gap to the twin summit facing us inspired no alarm. The difficulties which one thought one remembered seemed to have disappeared; the distance across was only a short one, and though the rocks were thickly plastered with snow, it looked simple enough. After sitting down for ten minutes, we started on the climb. A short descent brought us to a kind of rock bridge in the middle, and then another short ascent and we were on the E. peak. The rocks gave plenty of hold and the passage took us only half an hour. Imagination occasionally plays strange tricks, but I would scarcely believe that it was the same place which had looked so awe-inspiring fifteen years before. We decided on coming down by the S.E. arête, and followed more or less the route of our descent in 1893. Snow resting on steep ice and made rotten by a blazing sun gave us a little trouble on leaving the rocks, but it was soon over, and we worked across to the Jungfrau track and were back at the Concordia by 2. Melchior Kohler led excellently throughout the day. We examined the N. arête both from the summit and from lower down on the E. face; it looked rather difficult and not particularly interesting. A snow arête from the Lauithor leads up to the final rocks which are steep and rotten, and had a good deal of ice on them last August.

The photograph, for which I am indebted to the kindness of Mr. S. F. Staffurth, is taken from the Jungfrau, and shows the upper part of all the three routes.