

recommend, especially to the younger members of the Club ; but don't do as I did, and attempt it in your first season for seven years, when you are the wrong side of fifty.

The view was magnificent, especially of the stupendous western or Zinal face of the mountain, and of the striking great gendarme on the northern arête.

I should like to remind you that the guide who accompanied me, Alois Pollinger, is a son of the Pollinger who accompanied Messrs. Hartley, Davidson, and Hoare on their famous climb in 1877. Alois was also, as most of you know, Mr. Broome's guide for a number of years, and I am sure I have to thank him for the success of my venture. In fact, it was much more his climb than mine.

Before I close I should like to acknowledge my grateful thanks to Captain Farrar for his very willing and material help in the preparation of this paper. I expect that some of you who know him well will recognise quite a lot of his phraseology ; in fact, it is practically Pollinger's climb and Farrar's paper.

THE BRENVA FACE OF MONT BLANC.

By J. P. FARRAR.

THE 1911-12 Anglo-Saxon onslaught on this face is fresh in our memories.

It produced a literary outburst, viz. :

1. My summary of the known ascents ('A.J.' xxvi. p. 171 *seq.*).
2. Narratives of ascents (*ibid.* p. 203 *seq.*).
3. Dr. Wilson's paper, 'The Col de la Brenva' (*ibid.* p. 264 *seq.*)—a narrative of an expedition in 1904 by Wicks, Bradby, and himself, which, like Mummery, Collie, and Hastings' ascent of 1894, is a glorious page of English mountaineering attainments.
4. A record of Mr. Coolidge's ascent in 1870, with some topographical notes by Dr. Wilson and myself (*ibid.* p. 428 *seq.*).
5. Mr. R. W. Lloyd's paper (*ibid.* p. 431 *seq.*) describing his momentous *descent* of the face.
6. My paper in 'A.J.' xxviii. p. 306 *seq.* on some topographical points.

Until 1919 the face was immune from onslaughts by axe and pen. Early this year M. Claudius Joublot, the able *réducteur en chef* of the *Revue Alpine*, was good enough to send

me the *Revue*, vol. xxiii. No. 4. This revealed a previously unrecorded ascent—the first by a Frenchman, whether monsieur or guide—made by M. J. Manoury on July 19, 1906, nine days after Mr. Ryan's ascent.¹ The guides were Camille Ravel, Jean Amiez, and A. Ravel (porter), all of Chamonix. From the Géant inn the party, hindered by mist, took to the foot of the buttress (3 to 9 on illustration, 'A.J.' xxvi. opposite p. 203²) nearly 6 hours; main arête at c. 4000 m., c. 2½ hours; summit and down to Vallot hut, c. 9 hours.

But the same *Revue* contains an account of an even more interesting expedition made on August 21, 1922, by MM. Tom and Jacques de Lépiney and Dr. A. Migot, without guides, viz. the passage of the Col de la Brenva, the hardest Col and one of the most strenuous expeditions in the whole Alps. The brothers de Lépiney, Dr. Migot, M. Henri Bregeault, M. Lagarde, and M. Savard are among the most active spirits in the Groupe Haute Montagne of the C.A.F.—a group which has done great things towards the splendid, if still limited, revival of enthusiasm and enterprise in French high mountaineering. Nothing is more gratifying to us Englishmen than to read of their exploits, among which is the completion of Mr. Geoffrey Young's attempt on the Col des Nantillons, mentioned elsewhere in this number—a rock climb of the highest class. To no one will we more willingly cede the entry upon a domain like the Brenva, which up to now has been a sort of reserve of ours.

The party left the Géant inn at 0.25 h. and gained the Col at 14 h. The narrative is a most workmanlike production, and enters into the closest technical detail, the following of which is eased by a marked sketch.

Arrived at the point where the Wilson party was cut off by a wall of séracs and forced to make the memorable traverse to the Col, the French climbers found 'l'aspect des lieux a beaucoup changé depuis leur ascension: il n'y a point de glace lisse cette année. A une quarantaine de mètres au-dessous de nous, dans la branche droite du fer à cheval, c'est à dire dans la cascade de glace, existe une sorte de crevasse qui permettra de gravir le versant opposé du couloir et nous fera accéder à une pente formée de glace grumeleuse irrégulière; nous traverserons cette pente pour arriver à un

¹ Accordingly the ascents No. 11 onwards (*A.J.* xxvi. 175) must go down a place.

² See also sketch, *Revue*, p. 159.

second mur de séracs peu élevé (environ 5 m.) dans un angle dièdre où un cône de blocs écroulés monte au niveau de la neige . . . et cette neige, c'est celle des douces pentes aboutissant au Col de la Brenva.'

In the same *Revue* are some 'Notes sur le versant de la Brenva du Mont Blanc' by M. Jacques Lagarde. They deal with the subject in a more complete and much more critical manner than did my summary in 'A.J.' xxvi. 171 *seq.*, and are, in effect, a précis of the narratives of previous ascents.

M. Lagarde distinguishes :

Route I. Moore, 1865.

- Variation (1) Ryan, 1906.
 (2) Güssfeldt, 1892.
 (3) Caesar, 1911.
 (4) Lloyd, 1912.
 (5) Coolidge,³ 1870.

Route II. Gruber, 1881.

Among guides, Adolphe Rey has made two, Emile Rey two, Daniel Maquignaz two ascents, and Joseph Pollinger one ascent and one descent. Mr. Lloyd is the only traveller to have faced the expedition twice. There have now been three guideless expeditions, viz. 1894, 1904, and 1922.

Both papers, admirably documented, are great contributions to one of the most magnificent ice-climbs in the Alps—a great memory to its devotees, a great hope for its suitors.

The G.H.M., newest brotherhood of mountaineers, may rest assured that they will find nowhere keener and more interested admirers of their work or more assiduous readers of their admirable narratives than members of the older Club.

A WINTER ASCENT OF MT. COOK.

MR. R. L. WIGLEY, with the guides Frank Milne and Murrell, left the Hermitage in perfect weather on the morning of Thursday, August 9, and reached the Ball hut at 4.30 A.M., Friday.

³ My expedition in 1893, led by Daniel Maquignaz and Klucker, appears to have followed the line of Mr. Coolidge, led by Almer, which is satisfactory!