

to above have not allowed me to do justice to a description of the interesting district dealt with in the earlier part of this Paper? But I hope what I have written may be of some slight service to some of our members when they are paying their first visit to the Turtmann Valley.

THE NORTH FACE OF THE GRAND COMBIN.

Referring to the route described in 'A.J.' xix. p. 247-8, Mr. Lipscomb has now obtained from his guides, the late Jean Maitre and Pierre Maurys, further particulars of the exact line followed. The climb was undertaken in poor weather culminating in a snow-storm, which overtook the party below the summit and caused them to lose their way on the descent, forcing them to return to the same route followed on the ascent. In these circumstances accurate observations were difficult. It is shown in the illustration, and descends directly from the upper plateau to the corridor route. Pierre Maurys writes to Mr. Lipscomb as follows:—

Translation.—' We are a little late in replying to your letter, which recalls to our minds friendly memories. My uncle Jean [Maitre] was up at our mayens, 1500-2000 m. altitude, looking after the cattle. The winter has been rigorous and cold. After discussing the matter we send you back the photograph with a mark to indicate the route which we took for our descent—your recollection is exact. It is down steep slopes of snow and ice which [lead] to the bifurcation of the routes coming from the Panossière hut and from the Col des Maisons Blanches in taking the ordinary Corridor route. This route is still accessible at this moment, or rather if the season permitted. During the first days of mobilisation I tried the Combin, but was beaten by the weather, but I examined our route and saw that it is still possible.—Evolène, March 25, 1915.'

This line was again taken by M. Émile Fontaine¹ with the guide E. Masson and the porter E. Michellod on July 29, 1907.—'Écho des Alpes,' 1909, p. 89; 'Rivista,' 1911, p. 149.

On July 26, 1913, Mr. V. A. Fynn and I, with Omer Balleys¹ of

¹ He and his brother Jules, also a botanist, are good guides and very agreeable companions. They know their neighbourhood very thoroughly, and have also travelled a bit. They are both to be recommended. The other brother, Auguste, likewise a very good man, died some years ago. They are the sons of Daniel Balleys of the P.P.G.

Bourg St. Pierre, reached the summit of the Combin de Valsorey from the Valsorey hut by the Maisons Blanches arête. We went along to the Graffeneire and then returned to the col between the two. Balleys suggested looking for a direct passage down the ice-cliff to the Corridor route, which, he said, he had heard had been once done by M. Fontaine with Val de Bagnes guides. Accordingly we struck down the easy slopes of the upper plateau to the top of the ice-cliffs, almost in a straight line for the Combin de Corbassière. We cannot have taken above ten minutes to reach the top of the cliff, and, peering over, saw below us what looked like good and not



very steep snow-slopes. We were able to get down without difficulty on a projecting block of ice, and, turning parallel to the ice-cliff, wedged ourselves down between the block and the cliff and so reached the slopes below—the height was not over 30 feet—to find them, much to our disgust, *hard ice* covered with a very thin layer of snow. It cost us little short of two hours' step-cutting in ice before, bearing a little to the left, we were able to get on to snow. The position of the party on the slope under the square-cut ice-cliffs was not a comfortable one, and the enterprising Fynn suggested trying a glissade, as, not very far down, the slope eased off and was evidently snow. I preferred the ills we knew of, and declined. Moreover, clouds kept obscuring the sun, so that the chances of anything falling were reduced.

We were all the time in a straight line for the Combin de Corbassière

and were well seen from the Panossière hut, so we learned on arrival, where our long delay on the ice-slope was not envied. The glacier below was deep with snow, and notwithstanding our having out 120 feet of rope and the most stringent attention being paid, Omer Balleys, who, as the lightest, was leading, went through into a longitudinal crevasse, *i.e.* *along* the line of march, so that the rope cut through the roof almost to my feet before the slight jerk came on me who had instantly squatted in the deep snow. It took us twenty minutes before he emerged, very cold but perfectly unabashed, hauled at the finish, sheer, by the mighty arms of Fynn. Our descent through the ice-cliffs is slightly different from that marked, as we got on to the ice-block shown and came down on its right-hand side (descending). The route is all right for an ascent, preferably with crampons, but might not be very safe later on a hot day.

J. P. FARRAR.

BEDDGELERT IN SEPTEMBER.—II.

By THE EDITOR.

It will be remembered that to the poet Wordsworth

‘Twas pastime to be bound
Within the sonnet’s scanty patch of ground.’

Our pastime is now to be bound within the narrow limits of Snowdonia. It is sometimes objected to members of our Club that they think little of their home hills, but there never was a greater calumny. None of us is blind to their attractions and beauties, and when we cannot visit the Alps ‘how salutary, how very salutary,’ it is to visit North Wales!

On September 6, 1915, I revisited Beddgelert. All then promised well—for not only was Moel Hebog’s head clear of clouds, but the local augurs used smooth words of the weather. As I strolled about in the evening the familiar trees and streams and mountains gripped my imagination as strongly as ever. I had meant to spend the next day in comparative idleness, but when I found a charming lady lamenting that to-morrow was her last day amongst the hills, that she had waited for a week in vain to ascend Snowdon, what could I do but offer to act as guide? She was quite inexperienced, but another young lady who joined her was a very good walker and climber. So the next morning, September 7, Mr. Pullan drove us in the hotel motor to Rhyd-ddu, and we started from Snowdon station accompanied by the hotel dog, an eager climber and, contrary to the most of dogs, a persistent centrist as far as the path was concerned.