

## VARIOUS EXPEDITIONS IN 1920.

*Pennines.*

BREITHORN (4171 m. = 13,685 ft.), BY N. FACE AND E. ARÊTE. Mr. E. G. Oliver, with Adolf and Alfred Aufdenblatten, August 9, 1920. Left Gandegg hut at 2.15, arrived on the Triftje arête at 4.05 after passing some of the largest crevasses I have ever seen (included a halt of half an hour).—We followed the arête, first rocks and then ice, much step-cutting; and passing a bergschrund reached the small Triftje plateau below the final peak (6.20). Left 6.50, crossed bergschrund (difficult), and fortunately finding a way through the séracs climbed straight up snow-slopes to summit ridge, struck slightly to left (E.) of summit (8.50).

Leaving at 9.00 passed three or four snow-peaks—good snow. Heavy cornices on Zermatt side. Cut steps in ice round S. side of large snow gendarme carrying heavy cornice on Zermatt side. Thence up rocks and snow to P. 4148 (10.30), whence over fairly difficult rocks, with several gendarmes, to deepest gap between the two central peaks (11.50). Left at 12.10, cut steps in ice up to and over the E. central peak (no height marked on Swiss map), descended to Col below P. 4089 (13.20), which was climbed without difficulty over a large gendarme (13.45).

As the Schwärze Glacier looked crevassed and it was getting late, we returned to the Col (13.55), instead of descending to Schwarztor, descended to the glacier, crossed the Col de Breithorn and reached Gandegg at 16.30.

The arête is an interesting expedition and offers plenty of variety. It is not very difficult, but requires care in places. Our conditions were probably favourable.

The N. face is a beautiful climb, with splendid ice scenery. It is not dangerous if taken in the early morning.

*Mont Blanc Range.*

MONT BLANC (4810 m. = 15,782 ft.), BY THE GLACIER DU MONT BLANC and the TRAVERSE OF THE AIGUILLE DE BIONNASSAY (4066 m. = 13,341 ft.). Mr. E. G. Oliver, with Adolf and Alfred Aufdenblatten, August 30, 1920.—We spent the previous night in the Quintino Sella hut, magnificently situated above the Glacier du Mont Blanc. Only one other party was inscribed since 1913, and the blankets were wet through.

We had intended to start at 2.30, but a strong wind was blowing and doubtful weather delayed us until 5 A.M. The way leads at first up the glacier—much step-cutting in spite of crampons. Reached the snow-saddle to the E. of P. 3873 of the Rocher du

Mont Blanc, whence we descended into the snowy basin forming the upper plateau of the Glacier du Mont Blanc (7.15).

After several unsuccessful attempts we eventually crossed the bergschrund a good deal to the left of the ordinary route, whence we traversed back over snow-slopes to reach the well-marked arête of rocks and snow which descends from La Tournette (P. 4671), near the summit of Mont Blanc (8.45). We followed, more or less, this arête to the summit ridge at La Tournette (12.20) and the top of Mont Blanc (12.45).

Time from hut, 7 hours 45 minutes, including about 1-hour halts. We lost about an hour over the bergschrund.

This route is easy but rather tiring. The scenery is very fine.

As it was very cold we left immediately, reached the Vallot hut at 13.20 and the Col de Bionnassay at 14.45, a halt of half an hour *en route*.

The narrow E. arête of the Aiguille de Bionnassay carried some large cornices overhanging the N. side. Steps in ice had to be cut practically all the way to the top. The strong N. wind compelled us to proceed *d cheval* for a considerable distance. Top, 17.15.

After a short halt we descended the S. arête, composed at first of ice and then rocks, and going hard reached the Col de Miage at 20.00.

We were fortunate in having a full moon, but even so it was difficult to find the way through the séracs above the level part of the Glacier de Miage, and this part of the climb was about the most difficult of the day. We unroped at 22.30, and reached Courmayeur at 2 A.M. Time, 21 hours, including halts (not more than 2 hours).

The expedition is arduous, and the conditions were against us. The day was too cold for Mont Blanc. The E. arête of the Aiguille de Bionnassay was all ice and really difficult, and while Adolf is the fastest step-cutter I have ever seen, it took 2½ hours' hard work. We all had good crampons.

## ALPINE NOTES.

'BALL'S ALPINE GUIDE.' THE WESTERN ALPS.—Copies of the new edition (1898) of this work can be obtained from all booksellers, or from Edward Stanford, Limited, 12 Long Acre, W.C. 2. Price 13s. net, post free 13s. 4d. net.

'BALL'S ALPINE GUIDE,' THE CENTRAL ALPS. PART I.—A new edition (1907) of this portion of 'The Alpine Guide,' by the late John Ball, F.R.S., President of the Alpine Club, reconstructed and revised on behalf of the Alpine Club under the general editorship of A. V. Valentine-Richards, Fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge, can be