

suddenly confronted to the S.E. by a near and striking view of Hungabee's rival, Deltaform, whose summit overtopped us by several hundred feet and whose steep sides, built up of tier above tier of rugged precipices alternating with horizontal snow-covered ledges, held out little hope to the climber of an easy victory on this side. Neptuak, in spite of its unpromising appearance from below, had given us for our last expedition a most delightful climb, and had rewarded us with one of the most interesting views we had yet enjoyed.

We remained two days longer at the Desolation Valley camp, still hoping to be able to attack Hungabee; but the weather became so bad that climbing was out of the question, and as our time had nearly run out we returned to Banff on September 5.

During our last week the weather had not been favourable, but with this exception we had little cause for complaint. The enjoyment of the expedition had been increased by the unusual coolness of the summer, which kept down the mosquitoes and made travelling more agreeable; the rarity of forest fires had favoured us with a clear atmosphere and good distant views, and we brought away with us pleasant reminiscences of a delightful journey through a highly interesting and picturesque region which, as Mr. Stutfield prophesied four years ago, is destined to become one of the most favourite mountain resorts of the American Continent.

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#### AN ECCENTRIC HOLIDAY.

By T. G. LONGSTAFF.

'Afoot and light-hearted I take the open road.'

WE were only two: but we each had an alarm watch, a pair of crampons, and a silk rope, so that we had nothing to fear except the rucksacks, and these improved on acquaintance as if they had been mortals. A silk rope is useful in many ways to the guideless climber. For instance, it will obtain civility from haughty hotel-servants, and even guides themselves may be beguiled into conversation by its means; if they will ask its price the owner's respectability is at once established, and he is put down as a mad, and not as a merely mean, person.

The question of an early start on the first morning was warmly debated, for Rolleston had come straight from the luxuries of town and I from those of the Maritimes. We

both hold rather advanced, not to say revolutionary, views as to the exact meaning of the term 'early,' and hence it was not until 8 o'clock on July 26, 1902, that we started from Pralognan up the path which leads to the Col de la Vanoise through such fine rock scenery. Here the hardened one, hoping for a cheap victory over the effete town-dweller, threw out artless hints as to the view which might be expected from the Pointe de la Réchasse at the northern extremity of the great ice-fields of the Vanoise. The bait was swallowed, and, tramping up convenient but unseasonable snow-beds to a level glacier, and along an almost horizontal rock ridge, we reached the comfortably large summit (10,575 ft.) at 2 P.M.

Then only did we fully realise the blessed state of the guideless climber. Had we not started at a late hour after a real breakfast for a peak which we had been assured by a local celebrity required a night in a hut? Had we not crawled the whole way, and were we not fully six hours too late on the mountain? Would we not undoubtedly remain where we were for two hours more, with no one to threaten mysterious dangers, after the manner of the orthodox guide, because we did not at once descend?

The view was even finer than we expected. To the north were the cliffs of the Vallonet and Glière, the glaciers of the Grande Casse, and the snowy dome of the Motte, the two latter connected by the long serrated ridge traversed last year by Mr. Bartleet's party; to the east, the desolate ranges of the central Tarentaise, dark and inhospitable even in the sunlight; southward, the ice-fields of the Vanoise, stretching from our feet in one continuous sweep to the Dent Parrachée, nearly eight miles distant; and further off, across the gulf of the Maurienne, the peaks of Dauphiné.

We each made out a perfect route up the Grande Casse opposite, and discussed their rival merits with some heat until overcome by the charms of sleep and tobacco. At 4 o'clock we started to descend the northern buttress, which, though steep at first, soon led to slopes of loose stones and ice, coated with sloppy snow. Leaving it for hard snow-slopes on the left we glissaded quickly down on to the Vanoise track and reached Pralognan half an hour too late for the crowded *table d'hôte*, so that the first *pourboire* of the season could be absorbed in the comparative seclusion of the restaurant. Our peak was but a small one, and we found out later that we had drawn upon the tariff itself; still, we made a trifle, and a good start is everything.

On the following day we despatched our sacks to the little inn

built by the C.A.F. on the Col de la Vanoise, and we ourselves strolled up in the cool of the afternoon. That evening we were treated to a magnificent hailstorm, which broke the windows through the punched out fleur-de-lys in the iron shutters. Getting away soon after 3 next morning (July 28), we coasted round the eastern end of the Lac Long, still covered with ice, and in less than half an hour reached the glaciers on the S.W. face of the Grande Casse. Putting on our crampons we walked up the middle plateau.\* As usual, it had frozen hard after the hailstorm, so the crampons bit well, and we had made such good progress that we expected to be on the top in a couple of hours more.

But above us the slopes rose more steeply, and even with the 'artificial aid' of crampons we had to cut steps in the mixture of snow and hail solidly frozen on to the ice. Turning a succession of schrunds on the western side, we struck straight up towards the summit. This would seem to be the proper route. But alas! 'we are none of us infallible, not even the youngest,' and some one suggested that the slopes under the depression between the two peaks were gentler, and could be reached without prolonged step-cutting. So we traversed horizontally to the right (S.E.). However, the slopes did not get any easier, the snow turned to ice, and the leader was changed at shorter and shorter intervals; also the wind began to harry us. To our shame be it said, we spent more than five hours on the Grande Pente, as it is called, between the middle and upper plateaux—the time Ball gives for the whole ascent—and we should not have succeeded at all without the moral and material support of our crampons, which enabled us to dispense with the large steps which would otherwise have been necessary.

The wind was much too cold for a halt when at last the depression between the two peaks was gained, so we pushed on at once for the northern summit. Soon we found ourselves on a snow ridge, very narrow, but without a cornice, and in such good condition owing to the cold that in places one could work along it astride. The top (12,668 ft.) was reached before noon, but we were rewarded by no view, and as this summit is remarkably unsuitable for those higher flights of fancy to which all true believers are so liable, we left it at once and came down again to the upper plateau—and lunch. It was impossible to get any shelter from the bitter

\* See Mr. Withers's photograph facing p. 160 of the present volume.

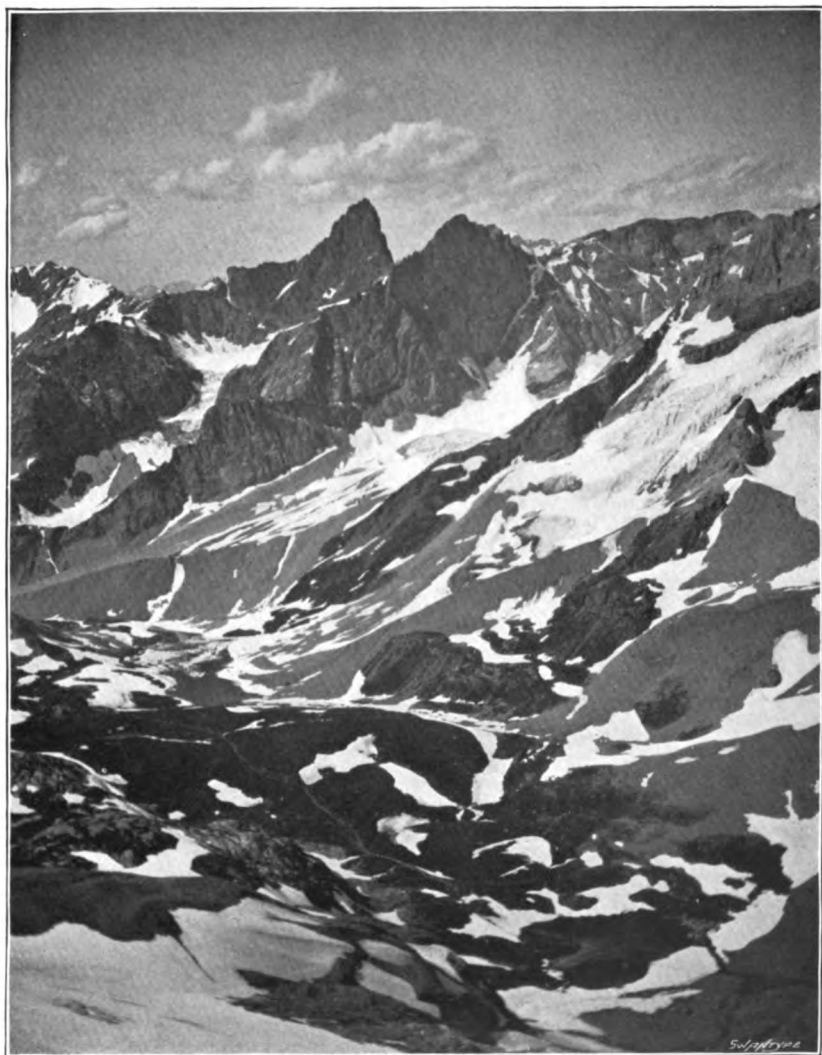
wind which was blowing fine particles of icy snow through every chink in our clothes, but we felt that a meal was necessary before descending, and we knew that on such a cold day the slopes below would remain safe for many hours. As it turned out, it would have been better to descend at once, for, though moving only one at a time over the steeper parts, we got down from the summit to the moraine in  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hr.—the ascent having cost us  $7\frac{1}{2}$  hrs.' hard labour. It appears, therefore, either that we were very bad step-cutters, or that the steps were extremely well made. Otherwise one is forced to admit that crampons may be useful: which is absurd.

Our sleeping quarters were only twenty minutes from the moraine, but the afternoon visitors had not yet departed, and why should we descend to their level? Warm rocks and good water are better than the dust of mules and turf sodden with melting snow. So we made sacrifice and burnt offerings to our mountain. It had rattled us, but we had 'had a rattlin' day.'

Next morning we started soon after four for the Pointe de la Glière. Most peaks which have only one route up them are interesting, and this proved to be no exception. The little glacier lying in a shelf under the S. face of the peak has first to be reached. The usual route lies up the abominable-looking cliffs, said to be easy, which rise from the Glacier de la Grande Casse, but we preferred to try conclusions with the terminal icefall, which may be seen in the photograph opposite.

Skirting round the lower end of the great moraines below the Lac Long, we climbed up into a little grassy window, on the other side of which the map shows a small lake. Instead we saw a snow-filled hollow. Even in the Maritimes the high tarns were still frozen in July, so doubtless there really is a small lake hereabouts. A ptarmigan whose newly-hatched brood we had disturbed came threateningly towards us, and then turned, and, feigning a broken wing, ran over the snow for some distance ahead.

The lower icefall does not deserve its bad reputation. It can be taken best on its true right side, though stones may fall here occasionally. We found it very steep, but quite short, and did not miss the crampons, which had been left behind that day. Once the upper level of the glacier is gained it is an easy walk to the snow col—as yet uncrossed—between the Pointe and Aiguille de la Glière. This was reached in  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hrs. from the Refuge, so the cliffs can have little advantage over our route.



*Photo by T. G. Longstaff.*

*[Swan Electric Engraving Co.]*

**THE POINTE DE LA GLIÈRE FROM THE POINTE DE LA RECHASSE.**

The climb thence up the S.E. ridge was perfectly delightful. The rocks were warm and quite free from snow. They are very steep and very good. The hands are never idle, and the ice-axe bumps merrily at the wrist all the way. The leader went absurdly fast, and as there were only two on the rope the summit (11,109) was reached in 50 mins. A properly constituted party, without a silk rope, would of course take much longer.

From no other point is the Grande Casse seen to such advantage; at one glance this culminating peak of the Tarentaise is visible from base to summit. Its steep icy face is almost in profile and nothing is foreshortened. How I regretted the camera left behind that morning! The Lepéna also is very well seen, and its forbidding appearance confirmed our belief that it was quite beyond our powers.

We watched an Alsatian friend descending by the route we ought to have followed on the previous day, and steep enough it looked. He nearly halved our time on the ascent, partly owing to softer snow, but lost much time on the descent owing to the same cause: we had had a hard frozen staircase to walk down—and crampons. After an hour's rest a descent was made to the col and the sacks, the weakling resolutely refusing to climb the lower, but reputedly more difficult, Aiguille de la Glière. He said that he saw ice in its northward facing gullies, and the fiction was generously accepted.

We went quickly down the glacier, and got off the ice half an hour after leaving the col, thus having little cause to regret our choice of route. Altogether it was one of the most delightful climbs we had during the season; only the most jaded of 'book-makers' could have failed to appreciate it. We picked up our traps at the Refuge, and went down to Pralognan the same afternoon, accompanied for a part of the way by a pair of eagles: possibly they expected a conflict between us and the Alpine troops we found in possession of the village. Unfortunately for the eagles, we found the invaders friendliness personified.

Next day was spent in packing and forwarding our baggage to Val d'Isère. We had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Horace Walker, who was covering the same ground as ourselves, and to whom we are indebted for much useful information as to routes.

Bidding adieu to our French friends on the following morning (July 31), we hired two cheery porters to carry our sacks over the Col d'Aussois (9,228) to the Fournache chalets—of which they had never even heard—at the foot of the

Dent Parrachée. After about seven hours' walking we found the chalets, but not their inhabitants. Nevertheless we dismissed the porters and possessed ourselves of patience and tobacco. It was a charming spot with a widely extended view across the Valley of the Arc to the low ranges in the direction of the Mont Cenis. Eventually our trust was rewarded by a sedate little maid who came down from the upper pastures and informed us that mama would follow soon. About 5 o'clock the good lady came back with the cows. Yes, we could have a bed. 'Very few strangers came here; of what country were we?' 'Not of the Tarentaise?' 'Ah! Of England!' 'Really!'

The bed in question is a cubical cupboard about 6 ft. each way. It is half filled with chaff and spiky hay. The door is opened. Out of the darkness flaps an astonished fowl. 'Yes certainly, it has a nest.' A foot is cautiously inserted, and descends upon something soft and wriggling. 'Yes, they are kittens.' 'But, madame, this bed is too small for my big friend: if you please we will sleep in the barn.'

The evening passed pleasantly enough. We produced two candles and a tin of apricots, greatly to the little maid's delight, and tasted several varieties of cheese, butter, and sérac without any very alarming results.

The night was stormy when we retired to our barn, and soon hail was drumming on the low roof, and rain dripping steadily on to our one blanket. We were visited by a succession of thunder-storms, and at 4.30 the sleepless one gave up the contest for the blanket, and went to watch the butter-making in the chalet. The weather was still abominable, but at 6 it was so bad that we decided it must get better soon, and packing up our sacks we said good-bye to our friends and set off before 7. We were wrong, however; for gaining the Col de l'Arpont on the S.W. ridge of the Dent Parrachée after a stiff pull of 2½ hours, we were assailed by wind, hail, rain, and snow, while the peak itself was hidden in tormented clouds.

Again discretion had the better of valour, and after futile attempts to take cover we effected a descent on to the broad Parrachée Glacier, so well seen in Mr. Ellis's photograph facing p. 217 of this volume. The crevasses were quite regular, but rather numerous, so we put 50 ft. of rope between us and walked circumspectly, meeting a couple of chamois who were wandering aimlessly about, apparently lost in the storm. Finally, after a long descent in the rain, we reached Thermignon at one o'clock, and with some

difficulty obtained a series of carriages through Lanslebourg and Bessans to within 5 min. of the comfortable inn (C.A.F.) at Bonneval-sur-Arc, where we arrived at six. From the appearance of the inns at Bessans it is probably much pleasanter to take the Ciamarella and the Bessanese from the Italian side!

Next day (August 2) the central peak of the Levanna (11,943) was climbed in 5 hrs. 40 min., by the easy S.W. buttress in Scotch weather. We had hoped to traverse the summit ridge to the lower eastern peak, but a snowstorm fairly drove us off the top as soon as it was gained. We descended quickly and sheltered for 2 hrs. in a friendly cave, just above the source of the Arc and the great smooth rock ribs which look like so many stranded whales.

Sunday found us ready for a lazy day among the groves of chestnut, poplar, and alder which surround the inn. Thrushes and pipits were singing among the wild rose bushes, water-ouzels darted up and down the stream on important business, and a weasel came out from a pile of rocks and danced in the sunshine. By the evening we had quite decided that the off-days are really the most enjoyable.

At dinner we met a genial Frenchman, who informed us that two English climbers had recently traversed the Meije without guides. We were able to recognise them as friends, and rose accordingly in the public estimation. Therefore we decided to leave at once, ere a reaction set in.

At dawn on August 4 we started for the Val d'Isère across the historic Col d'Iseran, traversing on the way the Aiguille Pers (11,328) and Mont Iseran itself, now fallen from its proud pre-eminence to a paltry 10,634 ft. The day was perfect and the views so delightful that they thoroughly consoled us for the absence of any real difficulty in the climbing. We seemed to be in the very centre of those intricate ranges which lie between Mont Blanc and the Viso. From the Aiguille Pers we saw the eastern Val Savaranche ridge in its entirety, while from the Iseran the most striking feature of the view was the mass of the Pourri, which rises in tier upon tier of steep cliffs for 9,000 ft. or 10,000 ft. above the Isère at its base. No wonder the mountain is seldom climbed, so far it seems from every point of approach.

We decided to attack this peak at once, and so at eight o'clock next morning set off for St. Foy in a one-mule affair driven by our host. It had been decided that the Club hut was necessarily the best point from which to attack an un-



known peak. As a matter of fact, the Sevolière Chalets would have been better night quarters for Mr. Coolidge's route, which we had selected, and which lay exactly on the opposite side of the mountain to that from which we were approaching.

Probably the most interesting way of taking the Pourri from Val d'Isère is to sleep at some chalet directly above Tignes, and thence ascend the long southern ridge of the mountain.

We were assured that at St. Foy a porter would be found to carry our provision sack up to the hut on the western slopes of the Col du Pourri. However, on our arrival none were forthcoming, and it did not appear certain that any existed, although one was promised for the next day. We gently but firmly intimated our intention of reaching the hut that night. At last, all attempts to dissuade us from our rash undertaking having failed, an unwilling youth was paraded before us by the village elders.

'What is the tariff?' said the business manager.

'There is no tariff.'

'Do you know the way to the hut?'

'Yes; but I have not been quite up to it.'

'Very well, then; ten francs.'

'And the *pourboire*? How much?'

'We will speak of that later.'

'I will only carry the sack to the last chalets.'

'Then you won't carry it at all.'

Finally, the oldest inhabitant:—

'Indeed, gentlemen, no one ever goes to the hut: gentlemen, *there is no hut.*'

At that we boarded the post-cart, which had stayed to listen to the conversation, and drove on yet a few miles more to Bourg St. Maurice, the capital of these parts. The town was in a great state of excitement, having just been held up by a mad dog, which was eventually slain by a detachment of gendarmes.

An ex-sergeant of Alpine Chasseurs, who was reputed to be a strong goer and to know the hut well, was produced in lieu of a professional porter. We managed to get off at 2 o'clock, intending to walk in the shade through the forest of Malgovert and past the chalet of Arc. However, our sergeant produced short cuts and his absinthe bottle at frequent intervals, finally landing us on the Col des Evettes (about 8,000 ft.) only a short time before sunset. As we plodded down the reverse slope towards the little Merlon lake, our

friend admitted that he had 'deceived himself as to the way.'

'Never mind,' said we, 'in an hour at most we shall reach the hut.'

'But, gentlemen, I have deceived you too: I have never been to the hut; let us go down to the chalets; indeed, *there is no hut.*'

By this time we were beyond any expression of feeling, and more in sorrow than in anger we pointed out the hut among the snow-slopes at the foot of the Col du Pourri. We reached it about 7.30 (French time is an hour behind the sun), only to find that every pot, pan, stick, straw, and blanket had been stolen. The thieves had broken open a window, stripped the hut absolutely bare, and left the door on one hinge. We decided to descend to the chalets of Arc, as we were without any sort of covering and could cook nothing. The Sevolière chalets would have been nearer to our work, but we could not be certain of finding them in the darkness.

So down the steep slopes we scrambled, the sergeant protesting volubly. We were very tired, and even the last marvellous phase of the sunset over against Mont Blanc passed almost unheeded. At last the nightmare came to an end, and at 9 o'clock we were most hospitably received by the *patron* of Arc, whose family did everything possible for our comfort. I observed with pleasure that the porter was quite done up, and ate even less than we could.

Getting off at 4 next morning (August 6), after a good sleep in a real bed, we tramped up the grassy col at the head of the glen, passed to the N. of Les Lanchettes, and skirting round the abrupt spurs of the Aiguille du St. Esprit, reached the moraine of the Roches Glacier. Putting on the rope and crampons at 8, we found a way up the steep and somewhat complicated glacier on to the great S.W. shoulder of the peak, and reached the summit (12,428 ft.) by that icy ridge at 10.45. The weather had been doubtful all day and was now very threatening, so we turned at once, only too glad to have got up at all. Getting down on to the shoulder again and below the clouds we took a short rest, and began to think about the 9,000 ft. we had still to descend before we could get back to Val d'Isère.

We managed to get clear of the glacier in an hour's going from the summit, and then followed a weary trudge up and down hill back to the Arc chalets, where we picked up our heavy luggage and made tender inquiries for the sergeant. Leaving at 3 P.M. we followed a shady path through the

forests above the Isère and, passing through picturesque Villaroger, crossed the river and reached St. Foy before 5 o'clock, looking forward with positive delight to the 13-mile drive up to Val d'Isère. Never was confidence more cruelly betrayed: it was not until 12.30 A.M. (August 7), after a series of adventures unparalleled in the records of mountaineering, that we reached our destination. Thus we had expended three days over a 'second-rate' mountain—for we did not feel up to anything more that morning. Pushing the cart uphill was a very tiring finale to our day's work.

On August 8 we traversed the Sassièrè (11,323 ft.) from W. to E.; the climb did not come up to our expectations, but we consoled ourselves by loitering for an hour and a half on the shores of the beautiful tarn at its foot. For the first time that season we came across the tracks of another party, Mr. Farrar having traversed the peak a few days previously in the reverse direction on his way down from the Tsanteleina.

Next day we crossed the Col de Galise in a blizzard, which precluded any attempt on the Pointe de Galise and Punta Basei, which we had hoped to climb. We emerged quite suddenly into brilliant sunshine on the Italian side. The sky was its own colour again, and the valley distances were purple instead of the black and green of the ranges we had left. The Cerru and Agnel lakes, and the head of the Orco Valley, seemed much more beautiful than anything we had seen on the French side, and the Levanna looked far more imposing. The indescribable charm of Italy laid hold of us at once, and not Circe or Calypso ever found more willing victims.

We tore ourselves away at last, and went over the grassy Col della Gran Croce—a mere variation of the Col de Nivolet—to Pont, where we hoped to meet the Men of the Meije.

Here we were so comfortable that we took a day's rest, but, as our friends did not come, walked down to Dégioz in the evening, intent on the Grivola.

In Val Savaranche we had what was, from a purely mountaineering point of view, our most successful week, but it very nearly began with a fiasco.

We intended to attack the S. face of the Grivola by the Col de Belleface track and the Bocconere glen, but just as we were going to turn in for the night, we heard that a large herd of bouquetin had been collected there for the royal shoot a few days hence. We heard of this in the most casual way, and might easily have spoilt the drive. On consulting the

head forester we found that the mountain was not absolutely closed to us, but that we should have to travel by the Levionaglen towards the Col de Lauzon, and then climb the Punta Bianca, so as to get above the herd. We had no time to find the faint track through the woods, so suggested that a keeper should be sent to show us the way and keep us clear of the game. Needless to say the request met with the kindest reception.

It was a considerable addition to our day's work; so, in spite of our convictions, we started at 1.30 A.M. and suffered accordingly, as will be seen. At the foot of the Punta Bianca we said good-bye to our guide and his rifle, and climbed the steep slopes almost to the summit of that peak. Here we found the wind so strong that we were quite unable to proceed; indeed, it was almost impossible to breathe at the most exposed corner. Retreating into comparative shelter we waited during a bitterly cold  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hr. until it had moderated. We got round at last and traversed the slopes on the W. side of the Col de la Grivola. The bouquetin were out of sight below us, as we had been told would be the case. Mounting the great southern face rapidly by ribs and gullies, we reached the summit in 2 hrs. (11.30); but we were in the clouds, and though we stayed there an hour they would not disperse, and we were cheated of the glorious view of Mont Blanc.

Descending to Dégioz by the same route in 4 hrs., we walked up to Pont and met our friends, who had come that day from the Piantonetto hut over some half-dozen peaks and passes, as will be duly set forth in another place.

Next day six hours were spent in fruitless endeavours to find porters—previously ordered at Dégioz—to bring food for both parties up to the Victor Emmanuel hut.

All the men had gone down to Villeneuve to see the King, and at 4 o'clock we set off with a small maiden, a minute boy, and the biggest sacks we could stagger under. The latter steadily increased in weight, both from their natural habit and from the constant addition of firewood.

On the following morning (August 13) we all climbed the Paradis in glorious weather tempered by a cold wind. On the 14th a party was arranged for the Charforon and the Monciair,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  hrs. being spent on the top of the latter peak, the better to enjoy the marvels of the clouds over the Lombard plains. The Apennines and the Maritime Alps were indeed invisible, but a little imagination could conjure up range after range of enormous peaks climbing to impossible

heights in the brilliant sky. As though to console us for past buffetings, the air was quite still, except for an occasional breath which brought the sound of some distant stream up to us:—

Borne on the wind an instant, and then gone  
Back to the caverns of the middle air.

That evening twenty-four members of the C.A.I., with guides and porters, came up to the hut. They showed us the greatest consideration, and, although guideless among guides, we suffered no inconvenience over the cooking stove.

On August 15 we set off at a disgracefully late hour for the Herbetet, followed still later by the others. Crossing the Lavetiau and Montandeyné glaciers we reached the Col Bonney, thanks to our crampons, in less than 2½ hrs., getting fairly close to a solitary bouquetin on the way.

We found the S. ridge of the Herbetet\* most interesting and quite sufficiently difficult. It is often impossible to follow the actual ridge for the simple reason that one cannot get on to it. The precipices of the E. face, shown in Mr. R. P. Hope's photograph on the opposite page, appear steeper than those of the Mer de Glace side of the Grépon. One traverse on the W. side was particularly difficult and exposed; it was necessary to cut steps along a steep ledge of hard ice at the foot of a perpendicular rock wall, only one hand being free to use the axe. This must be the place that the poet (a mere gymnast) was thinking of when he wrote:

Here is adhesiveness; it is not previously fashioned: it is *à propos*.

The last awkward bit is on the actual ridge, and requires acrobatics of a high order. The crux of the matter is an overhanging mantelshelf which is comparatively easy to get hoisted on to, and to which the leader can be pinned with a skilfully applied axe. He now develops a singular pleasure in his present position, and asks the second man to share it with him. The second man talks of splendid isolation and adjures him to stand alone, offering to field him in case of accident. The advice is taken and the difficulty overcome, for the wall above, though perpendicular, offers good holds. Copying the example of his betters, the leader tried to induce the second man to bring up both axes and the two sacks, which were rather heavy. But climbers are not what they were!

Having taken 3 hrs. 20 min. on this short ridge we had to

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\* Described in Mr. Oliver's paper in vol. xviii. pp. 84 foll.



*Photo by F. P. Hope.*

*[Swan Electric Engraving Co.]*

THE SOUTHERN RIDGE OF THE HERBETET, FROM NEAR THE SUMMIT.

be content with a bare  $1\frac{1}{2}$  hr. on the summit. We congratulated ourselves on making what we think is the first guideless ascent of this fine ridge, and shouted ourselves hoarse in fruitless endeavours to make our friends turn back, so that they should not share in it. But they heard not, or hearing paid no heed to our croaking.

Descending the uninteresting N. ridge and the northern arm of the Gran Neiron Glacier, we reached our old friend the Leviona Glen. Here we disturbed several parties of chamois, and after one or two halts reached the little inn at Dégioz, where we dined off a bouquetin shot by the King the day before, and revelled in a real wash and a real bed, to which we had been strangers for the last three nights.

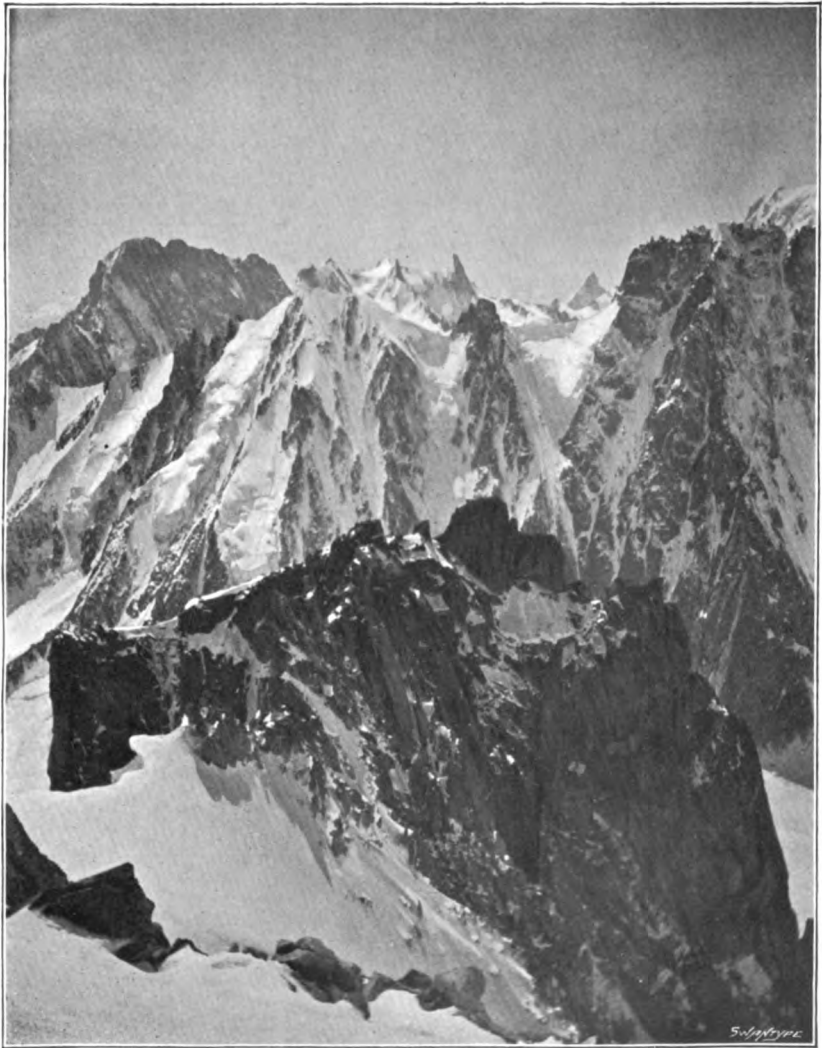
On the following day we went to Courmayeur and arranged to go up to the Dôme hut next morning. However, it rained hard, so we visited the Brenva Glacier instead.

On the 18th we drove up the Val Vény to La Visaille, where we were met by two porters who carried our wood and provisions up to the Dôme hut. In the evening our friends joined us again, and a Viennese gentleman with two first-rate Courmayeur men, Savoie and Brocherel, also came up. Next day we all crossed Mont Blanc, and had the pleasure of seeing some score of Chamonix toilers turn back at the Vallot hut, unable or unwilling to face the wind.

We had been absent from our luggage for ten days, but one morning in Chamonix was enough, and we fled with a third sufferer (who should pull us out of crevasses on the Argentière Glacier) to Lognan.

August 21 was dedicated to Javelle and we had a most enjoyable climb on the Tour Noir. Our holiday closed on the morrow with the ascent of the Argentière, on which we lingered so long that we were almost benighted in the woods below Lognan and reached Chamonix by moonlight.

The lesson that we learnt is that the lesser ranges are the ones intended by Providence for the guideless climber. Here he is not so absolutely at the mercy of the weather as among the big peaks, and he has time to remedy mistakes in route-finding. He can climb every day if so inclined. He does not forfeit a good half of his pleasure by having to follow in the wake of other caravans, or, worse still, being passed by them, owing to his lack of local knowledge. But, above all, he has the inestimable advantage of being able to climb with only one other companion, and thus making up, by increased speed, some of the time always lost on guideless excursions. The faculties of both must be exerted to the utmost, and



*Photo by T. G. Longstaff.*

*[Swan Electric Engraving Co.]*

**VIEW FROM THE AIGUILLE D'ARGENTIÈRE LOOKING S.W.**



their mutual responsibilities are great ; but the reward is in proportion to the effort.\*

THE JUNGFRAU AND MÖNCH IN JANUARY.

By C. M. MURRAY.

WINTER climbing—in the Alps—is a branch of that most fascinating pastime which is, as yet, pursued by comparatively few mountaineers. Last winter, while at Grindelwald, I was fortunate enough to reach the summits of both the Jungfrau and the Mönch, and perhaps a brief account of our experiences may not be altogether without interest.

It will be quite unnecessary for me to give a detailed account of the route followed, as it will be known personally to many, and by description to many more. Fine weather is of primary importance in winter, as storms—which are trying enough in the summer—when combined with the great cold of winter would be almost beyond endurance. The weather during the early part of the winter had been unusually bad—thoroughly unsettled, in fact—and numerous heavy snowfalls had made it look as though any expedition would be out of the question.

However, about the middle of January a break came. The sky cleared, the wind dropped, and the glass began to rise.

\* The diary was briefly as follows :—

- July 26, Pointe de la Réchasse.
- "   28, Grande Casse.
- "   29, Pointe de la Glière.
- "   31, Col d'Aussois.
- August 1, Col de l'Arpont to Bonneval.
- "   2, Levanna.
- "   4, Aiguille Pers and Mont Iseran.
- "   6, Mont Pourri.
- "   8, Sassièrè.
- "   9, Col de Galise to Pont.
- " 11, Grivola.
- " 13, Gran Paradis.
- " 14, Charforon and Monciair.
- " 15, Herbetet.
- " 16, Courmayeur.
- " 18, Dôme hut.
- " 19, Mont Blanc.
- " 21, Tour Noir.
- " 22, Aiguille d'Argentière.