with Dr. J. M. Bell's 'The Wilds of Maoriland' (reviewed 'A.J.' xxviii. 412), who expressed his indebtedness for the use made of the map accompanying Mr. Arthur P. Harper's 'Pioneer Work in the Alps of New Zealand.' The author desires to express his own indebtedness to the authors of the above-mentioned books and to the respective publishers, Messrs. Macmillan and Mr. Fisher Unwin.

Arctic Norway: two Ascents of Strandaatind.

By WM. CECIL SLINGSBY.

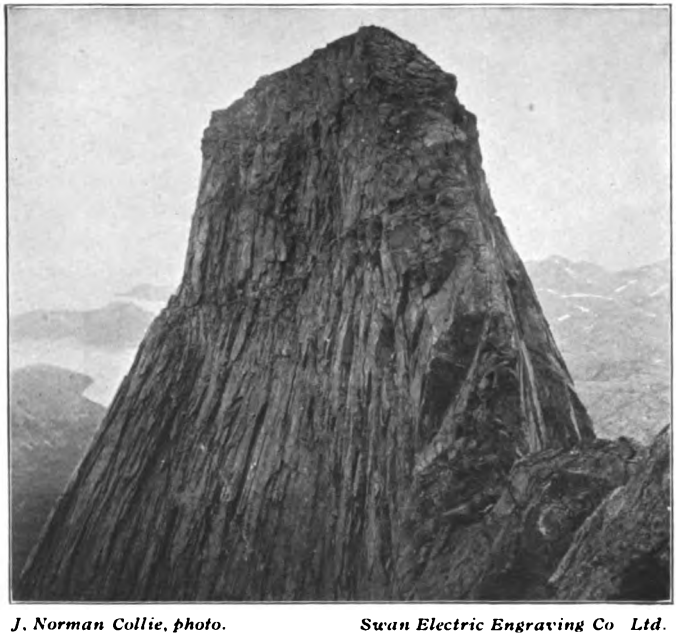
Round the shore where loud Lofoden
Whirls to death the roaring whale,
Round the hall where Runic Odin
Howls his war-song to the gale.
CAMPBELL.—*Ode to Winter.*

MANY of us were introduced at an early age by Harriet Martineau, in her charming little book 'Feats on the Fjord,' to that mystic Norse Northland within the Arctic Circle, and have been by fancy led to picture the glistening snows of the monarch Sulitelma, the shadows of its rugged rocks projected upon its glaciers and the pine forests and mountain pastures which insensibly lead the eye down to the romantic Salten fjord below. Others have had their imaginations stirred by the modest story of 'Peter and the Bear,' which treats of much the same region. Edgar Allan Poe has also invested Nordland with a halo of romance which will ever abide, and all have heard of the Mælström. Collie is right in saying 'Personally, I consider that by far the most beautiful part of the journey to the Norwegian Northland is after one passes the Arctic Circle.'* His description of the scenery in this paper in the ALPINE JOURNAL is the truest and the best that I have read.

Years ago I became the happy possessor of the best book which has yet been written on Norway by any foreigner, the mountain classic, 'Norway and its Glaciers, visited in 1851,' by Prof. Jas. D. Forbes, F.R.S. During the last thirty-five years I have very often turned over its pages and have almost invariably been attracted by a somewhat flamboyant but

* *A.J.* xxi. 91.

STEDTIND, FROM STEDFJORDNAES.
(Photo. by the late Dr. T. C. Ouston.)



J. Norman Collie, photo. *Swan Electric Engraving Co Ltd.*

STEDTIND.

yet an unexaggerated sketch of 'Mountains near Folden Fjord,' opposite page 58. In describing these, Forbes says, p. 57:

'On resuming our voyage, we passed some spots as green and cheerful as any we had seen in Norway, especially at Kjerringö, where there is an establishment on a most comfortable scale; but a few miles more brought us to a scene of desolate grandeur, rendered more striking by the contrast. The headland which divides the North and South Folden fjords may vie with the aiguilles of Mont Blanc in the fantastic singularity of its forms. I have nowhere seen summits more perfectly acuminated. . . . It is quite impossible to describe the varied grandeur of the scenery of the coast from between the Folden fjord and the Vest fjord, one of the greatest inlets on the western shores of Norway.'

Oddly enough, though I had made three mountaineering campaigns in Arctic Norway, I had only once come by this part of the coast in a coasting vessel, and that was in the middle of the night, but had always crossed the Vest fjord on an express boat between Bodö and Svolvær. Hence, I had only seen very distant views of these mountains, the existence of which seemed to me to be more or less mythical.

Early in the summer of 1912 I was invited by our fellow-members C. W. Rubenson and F. Schjelderup to join them and another excellent Norsk mountaineer, Harold Jentoft, in a mountaineering campaign on the mainland in Arctic Norway, principally near the mouth of the Sör—or South—Folden fjord, some 25 miles N. of Bodö and between Lat. 67° and 68°, *i.e.* further N. than any portion of Iceland.

I accepted this invitation at once, conditionally that I should be taken up the grim monolith Stedtind, which two of the party and Arf Bryn had ascended the previous year by the route discovered in 1904 by Collie, W. E. and A. M. Slingsby, but which at that time was rendered impossible by a gale of icy wind.*

There were also two other good reasons why I should join the party. First, because the company was excellent; and secondly, because wet weather in England had engendered a little rheumatism, and, as I had on one occasion completed a cure for lumbago by making the descent of Gaping Ghyll

* *A.J.* xxii. 624.

and joining in, to some extent, the survey of, at that time, some newly discovered passages, when we were nearly impounded by a flood caused by a thunderstorm, it was a fair assumption that camp life in Arctic Norway would be just what I needed.

The result entirely justified the prescription.

Fortunately, I was able to get from Mr. Howard Priestman much valuable information about the district we intended to visit, as he knows more about that part of the country than any other Englishman. He also gave me some photographs which proved to be a great help.

So far as I am aware, the first visit of any mountaineer with designs upon the weird peaks of that wild but beautiful region of Sör Folden was that of our late member Hr. Carl Hall of Copenhagen in the year 1889. With two guides from Romsdal, first-rate cragsmen, he climbed the Folden fjord Troldtind, and the western but lower peak of the Strandaatinder. Further N. he also ascended the Tilthorn, but failed, like so many other men, on Stedtind.

On July 23 I left home and early on 25th reached Bergen where, in order to fit in with the arrangements of my comrades, I had to remain for two days and one night. The picturesque old city was as busy as ever, and bright sunshine, with corresponding deep shadows, intensified the beauty of the surroundings. I bathed twice at the headland, and so warm was the water that it seemed almost sinful to leave it. Only a few days previously I had shivered in the sea at Scarborough. I had met two A.C.'s on the way, J. W. Hartley on the voyage, and Dr. Prothero in Bergen. Alas! for these fishermen, there was too little water. At the new wireless telegraph station on the top of that high sun-baked hill I had a very interesting conversation on international politics with an official, who unbent when quite sure that I was not a 'Tusker.' *

Yes, such a jolly voyage north in golden sunshine and over rippleless waters! I even breakfasted whilst rounding that dangerous and generally most tempestuous headland, Stadt, the westernmost point of Scandinavia, and what is more I did not realise that we were so far until I said to the steward 'How soon shall we come to Stadt?' when he replied 'We are nearly round it now.'

At Aalesund, Rubenson and his bride joined me. They had been mountaineering in Jotunheim and had ascended

* Tusker = German.

Skagastölstind. The following day Schjelderup, Jentoft and a lady friend of Fru Rubenson's joined us at Throndhjem.

Such perfect weather and so little, so marvellously little, snow on the mountains! No need in these days to send a boat ashore and to buy a favourable wind from a Lap necromancer, however famous he might be. No need then to pay for such a wind the sum of 'ten crowns and a pound of tobacco.' No! these are the prosaic days of steam and not such as they were in the year 1653 when this bargain and most successful fulfilment were made. Perhaps we have the advantage, but who can tell?

On Monday afternoon, July 29, the cosy little steamer *Salten* gently glided over rippleless water into the sound of Kjerringö. As it was low tide we had to land in a large boat. In the stern of another and smaller boat sat the beau-ideal of an old Norsk viking in a sou'wester and oilskins. The viking was a Scotsman, Capt. Ferguson, who, with his wife, have fished during many summers in this most fascinating district. Though we did not then meet them, I have seen a good deal of them in Rome, where we have had many a long chat about the far North. May they return again and yet again to their northern home; and may I too join them and listen to the yarns of that dear old man, is a desire which I hope to realise.

In lieu of an inn we went to the merchant's house and were most hospitably received by Hr. Gerhard Kristiansen and his wife. Here, off and on, we spent five whole days, and it is well nigh impossible to describe the kindness which was literally showered upon us. Our convenience was invariably studied. Boats and men were placed at our disposal, and this too in spite of the fact that, in the short northern summers, there is invariably more work to be done than there are men to do it. We were treated as friends and guests, and the reverse of mere travelling tourists. Indeed nothing but the happiest of memories are centred on Kjerringö.

Across a narrow strait is a flat island strip which in early summer is the home of innumerable eider duck. The view from this island, or *ö*, is superb. Across the silver water-streak are the pier, the warehouses and the pretty white-painted wooden houses typical of the *amt* or province of Nordland. Beyond, in rich meadows, are a small settlement and the church with its pretty spire which tells the tale that Kjerringö is the centre of the district. Above are gentle rolling wooded uplands and beyond these a forbidding range of black mountains including the Troldtind. But these are minor details.

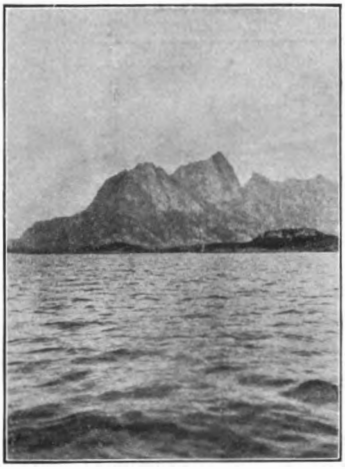
The great feature is the grand range of the Strandaatind, so much admired by Forbes, and, from the window in my bedroom, I had before me, only four and a half miles away, the view of this lovely range, which easily became impressed in my memory.

It consists of a double-peaked mountain of which both peaks rise on the S. side with most forbidding ice-planed precipices from a relatively low and partly wooded line of foot hills. At the base of the latter are smiling fields and many cosy little farms. For their upper ten thousand feet both peaks are exceedingly narrow, and the two walls, northern and southern, have been planed by the glaciers of old to a smoothness with an absence of cracks, chimneys or gullies, and consequently of subsidiary ridges, also of ledges, such as I have never seen in the Alps. There are black streaks running down the smooth sides which on the N. give the appearance of the inside of the frame and the ribs of a shipwrecked vessel. Not one of these streaks indicates a place which would afford the passage for a goat. The walls are indeed terrible, that of the higher peak being fully 2000 ft. of smooth rock, but the lines of the mountain are exceedingly beautiful.

The western and lower peak to all intents and purposes springs from the shore or *strand*. The *aa*, or river, on the S. of, and almost parallel with, the axis of the mountain probably supplies another syllable in the name of the mountain. This western peak has a broad base on the sea front which turns first into a Roman nose and then into a jagged ridge of the nature we associate with the Chamonix aiguilles.

Between this peak and its loftier rival is a great gash with a narrow gap at the bottom. At the E. side of this gash and on the side of the higher peak there is a great square-walled perpendicular crag, some 60 ft. in height and easily visible from the farms below. Above this, though the ridge is narrow and steep, there is only one place—a notch and a high crag—which would be likely to stop a determined and skilful party. This much knowledge we gained during a lovely walk which Kristiansen took us in the evening after our arrival, when Rubenson and I studied the peak carefully through our glasses.

East of the principal mountain, but detached, is a group of peaks the lines of which recall some of the loveliest in Söndmöre, and with the exception of the gaunt naked walls there is nothing to be seen on the S. side of the fearsome grandeur and ' the forms of false craters, frequent in granitic formations '



THE STRANDAATINDER,
FROM NEAR KJERRINGÖ

F. Schjelderup, photo.

Swan Electric Engraving Co., Ltd.

NORTH WALLS OF THE STRANDAATINDER,
RISING OUT OF THE CIRQUE OF LAATERBOTN.

The highest peak on the left.

The western and lower peak on the right.

The Great Slab.

Rubenson on the Great Slab.

F. Schjelderup, photo.

Rubenson "swinging like a spider on its thread."

Swan Electric Engraving Co., Ltd.

"Meget morsomt."

such as are seen from the sea on the W. or N.W., and which are so well and so truthfully described by Prof. Forbes. There is nothing oppressive in the view. On the contrary, all is bright and cheerful.

Next day, July 30, was Rubenson's birthday, and moreover it was his lucky day, as two years previously he had led his party up to the top of what Woolley describes as 'that singular caprice of nature, the smooth and naked Stedtind.' *

We left the house at 9 o'clock with little, if any, intention of doing more than to prospect the route to be followed later. Indeed we thought we should return in the afternoon, so took very little food with us.

For 4½ miles we followed a good road through smiling fields of potatoes, hay and barley—the latter, then green, would be ready for harvesting within a fortnight, thanks to the well-nigh nightless days and the warm sunshine. Cosy little farm-houses, and men, women and children at work in the fields, all added to the interest. Many peasants told us that they 'had seen the Dane on that very top,' the lower peak. As we advanced, the higher peak put on a very ferocious aspect, so much so that, according to Schjelderup, I called it 'a beastly monster,' to which Rubenson, remembering that it was his birthday, added 'and I ought to build a cairn on it to-day.'

For an hour we followed the coast line, sometimes on the coral and shell-besprinkled sands, at others along cattle paths. Most beautiful it all was. In time we rounded the blunt end of the mountain and for the first time we saw into the grand cirque, Laaterbotn, well shown in Prof. Forbes's sketch.

Here, through forest and ling, over the crags and up the beck courses in order to avoid the trees, we found our way.

Even at an earlier period I had discovered that the legs of two of my Norsk friends were abnormally long and those of the third were very muscular and strong. Now, the fact was more than evident, and I realised too that 'Anno Domini' had something to say on my behalf. There was one redeeming point—the moltebær (cloudberry) in golden ripeness grew in profusion. Still, if the Norskmen liked the delicious fruit, so too did the Yorkshireman; and it was hot, very hot.

Above the tree line the interest increased and the northern face of both peaks looked ever more and more forbidding. Hardly was there a place for a sea eagle to perch on that gruesome wall. Near the sea end of the western peak is a

* *A.J.* xxv. 375.

small northern buttress and a corner. Obviously this led to a gap on the main ridge. In ordinary summers the top of the cirque into which we had now arrived must hold an immense amount of snow. Now there were only patches.

Up to the corner we went with little difficulty though care was needed here and there. We knew from Hall's account that we could at least climb the lower peak. We reached a gap in the ridge, at a height of some 2000 feet. I was tired and went slowly. Rheumatism also troubled me in one knee. Still, I could climb. I had tested this during a couple of hundred feet where we had some easy climbing. Moreover, the great interest had begun, the rocks ahead partook of the Chamonix aiguille character and were absolutely sun-dried and warm. I knew I could reach the first summit. Yes, but there would be no need to build a cairn upon it, as there was one already.

Should I continue and, to some extent, keep back my companions, who, I felt sure, would at most only reach the great gap between the two peaks, or should I return? This question was one which I had not often had to put to myself. I quickly realised that it would not be fair to the others for me to proceed, though they pressed me to do so. I told them that I would return. One other great factor which led to my decision was that we had so small a supply of food with us. After handing some of my share of this necessary commodity to Rubenson I sent them off with my best wishes, and climbed a little crag behind so that I could see them the better. Yes, it is quite true my feelings were mixed.

For 200 or 300 feet I watched them closely, overcoming one obstacle after another under Schjelderup's skilful leading. When they vanished, I turned towards the Lofoten Islands, a serried line of gabbro peaks, clear-cut against the deep blue sky some 70 odd miles across the Vest Fjord. This made me supremely happy.

With due care I descended into the basin of the high mountain cirque close to a tiny tarn where I sat on the sun-warmed rocks, watching my friends gain the first summit. Then they vanished for a long time but reappeared at the gap. Unexpectedly, a shower of rain came on, the only one which I saw in Norway that summer. I sheltered awhile; then, noticing that they were closely examining the great slab of rock at the foot of the higher peak, I realised that they contemplated the remote possibility of its ascent.

Meanwhile I closely studied with my field glass the N.E. arête in profile. This was a route which I had advocated

the previous evening, though, truth to say, I had not seen the arête itself, as it was at the back and then out of sight; but I was certain that one existed, and that it must start from a relatively high gap. Two conclusions were soon arrived at: first, that the gap between Strandaatind and the Laater fjeld could be reached, and secondly that some two thirds of the way up the arête there would almost certainly be much difficulty.

About two hours later I got to the hamlet of Strand, and looking up I saw a figure on the top of the great slab in the gap. A farmer came to me and pointed out the figure to me. Others came and their interest was intense. I think at first they looked upon me merely as a chicken-hearted foreigner but were pleased when they found I could speak Norsk. As was most natural they were mightily pleased when I told them that all the three up there were Norsk, also that their success was almost assured.

> 'In cold laborious climes the wintry north
> Brings her undaunted warriors forth,
> In body and in mind untaught to yield,
> Stubborn of soul, and steady in the field.'

When I arrived at Kjerringö, I found Kristiansen standing on a little knoll above his house with a Norsk flag ready to hoist on the flagstaff. He had seen the party in the gap and was fully prepared for the result. At 8 P.M., a few minutes after my return, we were delighted to see the gallant trio reach the summit, and the national flag was duly hoisted and dipped in their honour. With Kristiansen's powerful telescope we noticed them building the inevitable cairn.

Rubenson had therefore again celebrated his birthday on the summit of a maiden peak in Nordland and had successfully accomplished a bold deed, which he thoroughly deserved.

We went to bed as usual, well knowing that the party could not return for several hours, though there was no darkness to hinder them; but we were up betimes. Six o'clock came, and then seven and eight, when we became a little uneasy and prepared to meet them. Kristiansen, armed with a long Alpine rope, and I with food, set off at 8.30. We met them two hours later. They were desperately hungry and (shall I say it?) they were tired. When they reached Kjerringö, they had been 26 hours out.

Truly a good training walk!

I would not like to say that the Yorkshireman could not have done it, even with a few twinges of rheumatism; but I will say

that if he had done so, the length of the expedition would have been extended at least to 30 hours.

Other mountaineers have before now planned huge expeditions as mere training walks. Not many years ago I joined, at the eleventh hour, a party of stalwarts who looked upon the crossing of Mont Blanc from Chamonix to —— [Here the censor has deleted a sentence], an exceptionally difficult descent, to be eminently suitable for the purpose. I did not grumble, but I made one stipulation, so far as I was concerned, viz. that the principle of taking three, instead of two, bites at a cherry should be adopted. The first bite was to be Chamonix to Pierre Pointue, where I was to sleep; the second to the Grands Mulets, where also I was to sleep; the third the complete ascent and descent to —— somewhere? The two first bites came off successfully, the third was successful only so far as the Vallot Hut, when a gale of wind hopelessly defeated us.

In the 'N.T.F. Aarbok for 1913' Schjelderup has given a graphic account of the ascent of Strandaatind. The traverse of the lower peak was sensational, interesting and certainly difficult. When, however, they reached what from below we deemed to be the crucial point, a 60-foot slab, smooth and perpendicular, their hopes of success were faint.

At the foot of the slab they found a cairn built by Hall's guides in 1889. This plainly said,

'Thus far shalt thou go, but no further.'

The three hardy Norskmen, with whom I would trust myself as readily as with any men living, were not the men to give up without a trial, even when damped by the one shower of the campaign. There was not a chance of turning the obstacle, as on each side was clear inaccessibility.

It was Schjelderup's turn to lead and he would have loved to have done so, though probably his reach would have proved too short; but, as it was the birthday of the hero of Kabru, Schjelderup, with rare self-denial, gave up his turn to his life-long friend Rubenson.

The leader put on rubber shoes as the rock was as smooth as the bald pate of an alderman, and the slab was 60 feet in height. Fortunately, detached from, but near to, the great slab was a rock of some 20 feet in height. This gave Schjelderup an opportunity of giving a little support to Rubenson's feet. Jentoft, lower down, was holding Schjelderup in. The only chance of success lay in the remote probability of being able to traverse diagonally up the slab towards the S. side, where a

flake of rock suggested the existence of a miniature chimney, or crack, up the edge of the slab, but yet out of sight.

A few mere scratches on the face of the slab afforded but little hold for hand or foot, and Rubenson's great length of arm and leg was none too much. He came down once, and all three took a good breath. In a couple of minutes 'Jentoft the tall' held Rubenson's feet in and slowly yet surely the bold leader advanced, whilst Schjelderup took a photograph of him at work. As usually is the case, the tendency was to fall outwards. The miniature chimney did exist, but was of little service. The rain shower had wetted the rocks, the rubber shoes were unreliable and Rubenson longed for his nailed boots. The situation became critical, a hasty conference was held, and meanwhile Rubenson's fingers became cramped.

A small notch was noticed in the edge of the rock flake. Happy thought! 'Switch a rope over it, if possible.' After several trials this was done. Very gently, very firmly, it was held and Rubenson pulled himself a few feet up and behind the face of the slab and above a ghastly mural precipice many hundreds of feet in height. In due time he stood as a conqueror on the flat top of the slab, and there I saw him when I was talking to the farmers in the rich lowlands. Rubenson frankly admitted that this was much the most difficult climbing that he had ever done. This means much, The two others found the difficulties very great, even with the rope above them.

The second great crag on the ridge, which Rubenson and I had examined very carefully through our glasses, proved to be more sensational than difficult. The climbing of the whole of this narrow ridge was really first-rate. In three hours from the gap the summit was reached. Mummery says 'To set one's utmost faculties, physical and mental, to fight some grim precipice, or force some gaunt, ice-clad gully, is work worthy of men.' Yes, this was a magnificent climb, and one which called forth the full powers of the men who undertook it, and it was worthy of them.

The descent was difficult enough, and, hanging down the faces of the two great crags, ropes will probably remain for many years to puzzle the inquisitive eagles or ravens which may chance to perch thereon.

At 10 P.M. they reached the gap. After a short rest they tried to descend due south between the two peaks. Some 1200 feet down their way was blocked by impassable crags. They were dog-tired, there was grass. Surely, too, sleep would come! At 2.30 A.M. they got up and at 4.30 reached the gap

once again. They recrossed the lower peak and at last were heartily welcomed by Kristiansen and myself at the little hamlet of Strand.

This brilliant success, on a mountain which had been attacked on several previous occasions, and Rubenson's birthday were duly recognised by our genial host and his wife, and I am sure that the remembrance of the first ascent of the mountain which ennobles the more placid beauty of the rich farm-lands at its base will be cherished by the farming-fisher folk, their wives, and families, for many years to come.

Without much difficulty I persuaded my companions to set aside a day for us to attempt the ascent of Strandaatind by the route which I had chosen, namely by the N.E. ridge. I, on my part, offered to cancel the arrangement which had previously mainly interested me, that my friends should accompany me on an ascent of Stedtind. This was to follow some expeditions in Sör Folden.

Ascent of Strandaatind by the N.E. Arête.

We had scored some successes in Sör Folden, but, alas! had suffered one notable failure. Here we found ourselves in the lap of luxury once again at Kjerringö. The weather was perfect, as it had been the whole time we were in Arctic Norway. Yes, we have every reason now to look back upon the summer of 1912 as ideal. What a contrast to 1912 in the Alps, practically to that of the whole Continent, to England, also to South and Central Norway! The only weak point was the relative crudeness and lack of the lovely half-tones of colour, which form usually such a distinguished feature of Nordland. This was due to the dry weather.

At Kjerringö the thermometer often showed 88° to 92° F., and once 90° in the shade, and at 9 o'clock in the evening!

My last available day for mountaineering this summer, August 10, arrived all too soon, but we were determined to make the best of it. For once we were up in good time and were rowed by an old fisherman to the coral cove, and enjoyed to the full the view from the sea which inspired Prof. Forbes with enthusiasm and led him to make his sketch of 'Mountains near Foldenfjord.' This sketch, which is from the W., well shows the lower part of the cirque, though not a wicked-looking buttress which divides it in two, the buttress being hidden by the lower peak of the Strandaatind in the centre of the view. The highest peak is that on the right. Its summit is barely 3000 ft. above the blue waves.

The little journey by boat had been most enjoyable and I think we were all sorry to land. However, we found the now well-known cirque, the Laaterbotn, as beautiful as ever, the slopes as steep, and the cloudberries, though not quite so numerous as on our previous visit, if possible more delicious.

Camp life and plenty of exercise had not only driven away my rheumatism, but had put me into rather better training than when I toiled up through these woods and up the bare rocky hill slopes a short time before.

When under the northern walls of Strandaatind, we turned to our left instead of the right as before. My love of snow led me a little out of the way to two little snow-fields. To my mind the only disappointing part of climbing the grim aiguilles and horns on the mainland and near the coast in this part of Nordland arises from the absence of glaciers, or even of snow gullies in the summer. It is very different in the Lyngen peninsula and even at the head of the Sör Folden fjord where there are large glaciers.

Two or three hundred feet of rocks gave us a little climbing to reach our real starting point, a saddle between Strandaatind and the Laaterfjeld.

The view from this saddle of the northern wall of Strandaatind was most striking. Here could we see our work now fully revealed to us, and it was easy to realise that success could not be attained without a struggle. Indeed, the issue was doubtful. Our feelings were probably mixed. A failure here could not possibly mean so much to my comrades as it would to me. Indeed, it would add a lustre to their mountain. Yes, surely it would be rather hard too on the long-called inaccessible and unconquerable mountain itself if a second feasible route should be found up it? Hr. Hall had declared it to be absolutely hopeless to try new routes, or apparently any route at all, as he had failed on the W. arête.

I, too, was the one who first believed that there was a fair chance of success on this ridge, and I had brought Rubenson also into my way of thinking when we saw the peak from a hill above Kjerringö. The others with rare good nature were willing to help me to indulge in my idiosyncrasy.

From the saddle the ridge, or rather blunt but narrow end of the mountain, resembles the N. face of the Pillar Rock, but is steeper and not a third of the width, and fortunately a Pillar Rock minus moss, bent grass, bilberry roots and Sedums.

As in the case of the other route there were manifestly two crucial places. A crag, fairly low down, and a black chimney

in the narrow face, both unavoidable. Lunch on dry moss. [No, we didn't eat the moss.] Then the inevitable pipes. Very suitable too. Delightfully warm and such a grand view of the Lofoten peaks across blue seas.

'Come along, you fellows! I want to see that black chimney.'

We were soon hard at work, up and over, or under and through, a maze of huge blocks which had thundered down the mountain at a place where the ridge had become very narrow. A square-cut and partly overhanging crag barred our way.

'Hallo! Here's a cairn.'

'Ah, yes! Only another "Thus far shalt thou go, but no further."'

'Why, it's only 15 or 16 feet high at most.'

'I wonder who built that thing. It was not many years ago.'

'Evidently it was built by novices.'

Schjelderup was hoisted up and on to Jentoft's head and steadied by an axe to where he reached a good hold. A few pulls and he soon stood on the top, saying 'This is the place for a cairn.'

We had discussed the question whether we should use the rope before now or not, but agreed to wait a little. Now it was needed and for a couple of hundred feet we had really good rollicking fun. The rocks were mostly firm and gave excellent hold. Narrow ledges, some flat, others inclining upwards, alternated with little chimneys, then letter-boxes where we posted and delivered ourselves; or, as a change, came steeply inclined blocks up which we went a-straddle. It was the orthodox Chamonix-aiguille type of climbing, barring one great feature—the presence of snow or ice.

We approached the foot of the black chimney, and the nearer we came to it the less we liked it. Rubenson prospected the ridge itself which we had left. It was very narrow, terribly steep, and altogether most unpromising, and he came down to us.

In order to get into the chimney it was necessary to traverse the plinth of a huge rough natural pilaster which formed one side of the portal of the chimney. There were no handholds and the diminutive ledges of which the plinth was formed sloped downwards at an angle of about 35°. Moreover they were wet or greasy. Below this was a ghastly precipice.

Schjelderup led and was paid out by a long rope which, after all, was not long enough. Jentoft followed, and when he got into a position of rather less unstable equilibrium than usual Schjelderup advanced to the actual foot of the chimney,

where he had the semblance of a handhold. Rubenson and I followed and the two others had to move up. The chimney was perpendicular and about 150 ft. in height from the place where we struck it. A mid-rib divided it in two for about 12 ft. in height, and this was the only relatively easy place in the ghyll. Above this a tall man can go up by back and foot progression. A short-armed man has to do as best, or as little bad, as he can. As Schjelderup was too short in the limbs, Jentoft went first and climbed this horrid place brilliantly. Near the top the rocks bulged outwards and there was a well-nigh unconquerable inclination to fall out. It was certainly an unpleasurable place and we all disliked it. The view between one's legs downwards was not of the nature to stimulate any latent artistic tastes.

Well! All of us have been in such places and most of us may again, but we only go there as a means to an end. For a few feet near the top I was hoisted up like a sack of potatoes. This mode of progression at least saved time.

How we enjoyed the bright sunshine when we reached a platform at the top of the ghyll can easily be imagined. From here the climbing was thoroughly enjoyable, neither too easy nor yet too difficult. We reached the summit rather unexpectedly in 2½ hrs. from the saddle, and I had the pleasure of photographing the three gallant Norskmen who had made the first ascent of the mountain only ten days previously.

The view is inexpressibly grand. The recesses of numberless unknown fjords are unfolded. Smoke issues from cosy homesteads in many an unexpected corner. E. and S. are several truncated pyramids, ugly enough in themselves, but which harmonise with their savage surroundings. Some of these we had ascended. Far far away E., at the head of Sör Folden, are range upon range of snowy mountains, on or across the Swedish frontier. Sulitelma, that mysterious ice-girt mountain, invested with so charming a halo of romance years ago, was one of these. Kebnekaisse, explored and ascended by the gallant Frenchman M. Charles Rabot, is there, white and glittering. Further N. are the ice-bound fjelde and nunataks of Frostisen, ascended by Mr. Hastings, but about which he has told us so little. Yes, that is Stedtind, and mellowed by distance it looks less ferocious than usual. S., the glaciers of Svartisen sparkle in golden sunshine. Nearer to us are dozens of sharp peaks. But look below the terrible precipice on which we are standing, see the smiling homesteads of the many farmer-fisher folk. They are now cutting the barley or

leading hay, but see their boats in land-locked safety, ready for the herring in summer or for the cod in the winter. See the forest lands and be thankful for the comparative absence of the pernicious goats, the ruthless destroyers of all young trees. That white-painted house is the school, wisely closed during the harvest months. In every direction there is something which fascinates us.

Yes, but look 70 miles away across the placid waters of the Vest fjord! See that grand array of sky-piercing gabbro peaks, standing out clear-cut against the deep blue sky. Where but in the Lofotens can such a glorious line be seen? Deeply cut is this line in some places, because the Lofotens consist of many islands great and small. Still, in all respects, it is a chain, here and there a doubled or a trebled chain, of mountains, 80 miles in length. Even at that distance, through the clear atmosphere which usually prevails in Nordland in summer, we easily recognise many old friends in the serried ranks of peaks. First of all let us greet the noble Vaagekallen, the long-called 'inaccessible aiguille,'* which rises so superbly out of the deep waters; nor must we omit to take off our hats when we see the island Skraaven, where I trust still lives the greatest of all Nordland mountain pioneers, Martin Ekroll, who, many years ago, disproved the inaccessibility of the peak of which a glorious view is to be seen from the windows of his pretty house.

Naturally the twin-peaked Rulten claims my homage and the sight of it awakens many delightful recollections. Hermandalstind and many others claim notice. Rubenson and Schjelderup naturally greet Rörhoptind with enthusiasm.

Ah, what happy memories of hard work and successful endeavour, of failures which were almost triumphs, of staunch friendships which still abide, of adventures on the sea as well as on the mountains, does the sight of those Lofotens bring back to me! What an intense longing I have to return yet once again to camp on the shores of those lovely fjords! Yes, and to climb some more of those most fascinating peaks of the far North!

Let us look at the island Moskenesöen. Yes, the Mælström is only a mile or two away from its southern headland!

Have we not had our sympathies awakened when we pictured the full-rigged ship—did we ever think of the crew?—or the ponderous whale being drawn into the vortex of the Mælström? Can we not in some measure also follow Kircher in his weird

* *A.J.* iii. 23, and illustration p. 24.

imagination and see the same ship and the same whale, possibly rather bruised, as they emerge from their subterranean voyage on to the placid waters of the Gulf of Bothnia?

A cold wind and the remembrance that we were to leave Kjerringö by steamer soon after midnight warned us to be off. In addition to this we wished to be below that most gruesome black chimney.

We had noticed, soon after regaining the ridge or nose of the buttress which ends the mountain on the S.E., that a little crack, or an undeveloped ghyll, existed just over the main axis of the buttress from the side of the black chimney. It was worth trying whether we could descend by this to some ledge along which we could traverse to a place below the mouth of the black chimney, but yet on our original line.

We started merrily and we got into a broad shallow gully; very steep it was, too, and we saw that the steepness was approaching perpendicularity. Fortunately we found a natural pillar, an Arctic milestone, on the side of this gully. It was perfectly firm and we knew that we could rely on its stability. The gully continued some 50 or 60 feet below the milestone and then ended at the top of a shoot.

Rubenson and I stopped at the pillar, and having anchored ourselves we lowered the two others down to the top of the shoot. Here there was an overhanging rock on the top of which was a notch which made a partial hitch, but only when the rope was held to its place. Jentoft was then lowered to a very small ledge, and guided by the rope above him to the main ridge. Then, after I had come down to the top of the shoot, we lowered Schjelderup. Rubenson meanwhile discovered what he conceived to be an easier place to descend than over the shoot proper. With the help of a rope which I had hitched, he got down to the little ledge but could go no further for want of rope. The Yorkshireman felt that he was 'up a tree' and awaited developments.

'Now then, Slingsby; put your rope on to that notch on the overhanging rock, and climb down.'

This was all very well in theory, but it would absolutely fail in practice because the notch was but a snare and a delusion. Very shallow it was and only one-sided. Such, in fact, that the pull of a rope from below must inevitably cause the rope to slip off. True, the distance to be descended to the narrow perch below was only some 50 or 60 feet; but, many hundreds of feet below this, one looked down at a terrific angle upon a cheval-de-frise of sharp rock needles, and most fiendish and

threatening they appeared. In fact I have rarely, if ever, seen such truly savage rocks.

We were now perched in three places. Two were for the moment in perfect safety, but could not climb up to any position where they could help me. Rubenson could not proceed for want of rope, and he and I were sticking to the rocks like limpets as best we could. After a futile suggestion on my part that I should try to climb down without help from above, a short conference was held. The outcome of this was that Rubenson climbed up again to me with the aid of the rope and then up to the Arctic milestone round which, having cleared away a few stones, he ascertained that a rope could be drawn safely. I was then lowered, and drawn on to the ridge below. Even this process was not too easy. Meanwhile Rubenson was at the Arctic milestone and out of sight. An extra 60-foot rope was tied on to the long one we had been using. Schjelderup climbed up some 20 or 30 feet on the ridge and held on to the rope whilst Rubenson tied himself on the other end and began to descend. The rope ran beautifully round the smooth milestone whilst Rubenson descended to the top of the shoot. Then he swung himself carefully over the edge and, according to Schjelderup, 'he hung dangling like a spider at the end of a long thread, and swaying about in the wind like a pendulum.' We drew him in carefully and the other end of the rope ran beautifully round the milestone and we all stood in safety in a little gap on the ridge.

Although the descent of this formidable though short place had occupied two hours of hard and careful work, we had avoided the black ghyll which would have taken all our powers and care to descend safely, without giving us any compensating pleasure. Our new route, on the other hand, was very enjoyable.

The rest of the ridge or buttress gave us much interest, and though it was not absolutely essential, a length of rope was cut off at the rock above the 'Thus far shalt thou go, but no further' cairn, and we used the now much too common 'abseilen' method and soon stood on the great saddle and below our climb. From here we descended in a S.E. direction by rocks, sheep lands, and down rock terraces covered with primeval forest which was hot and not too easy for quick walking.

In due time we gained a little hamlet and drank much delicious milk. A six miles' walk through rich pastoral lands brought us once more to Kjerringö, where, though it was 1 A.M., we found an excellent supper provided for us.

It was by no means an easy matter to leave so lovely and so interesting a place, and we parted from our kind host and hostess and other good friends with regret. My companions were bound for the Lofotens, whose peaks we could see clear against the blue skies. It was only 5 A.M. when we left, and at that time Strandaatind and the forest-clad hills below were suffused with a deep purple hue which, owing to the warm weather, had not been so general as usual.

'Farvel Kristiansen. Lev godt.'

At Bodö our party broke up. Rubenson, taking advantage of the opportunity of getting a well-earned nap, was left on board the coasting steamer which quickly left the quay. We took a boat and found him fast asleep and chaffed him a good deal because the little steamer was soon to set off with a party of a hundred teetotallers for a day's trip up the Salten fjord. My friends left for Svolvær, to join Fru Rubenson and her friend, and ascended the Svolvær Gjeita.

I had perfect weather on my voyage and this continued in England. It was the same also when I went to stay with friends in Skye, when I was able to compare yet once again the scenery of the gabbro peaks of the Coolin with those of the Lofotens. In addition to the two ascents of Strandaatind we made two most successful expeditions from a sunny camp at the bend of the Sjunk fjord* and on returning from one had a very narrow escape of having our boat capsized in a sudden storm. My companions, excellent oarsmen, fought manfully against a head wind; but we were driven back and had a walk of many weary hours along the pathless shores of the fjord, in some cases over huge avalanche débris overgrown with alder and Scotch firs. I lagged terribly behind, and I shall ever remember seeing Rubenson awaiting me when I thought him a half hour ahead. Ultimately he got me a boat which brought us to camp. The two other men had wisely gone ahead to prepare a much-needed meal.

On another expedition * we failed to ascend our mountain, partly owing to two facts. First, we got off much too late in the morning; and secondly we had been misdirected by kind and well-intentioned natives, but by this we went some 10 miles out of our way, and were tired and declared the peak inaccessible without trying the 200 or 300 ft. which could obviously be ascended.

Others have succeeded and well deserved their success.

* *A.J.* xxvi. 466.

I did, however, state that the mountain was 'absolutely unassailable and invincible.' However, a view of the mountain in profile, which I saw some months later, made me doubt my formerly expressed opinion.

There are still many grand and new mountain expeditions to be made in Arctic Norway. Of this fact the Norsk mountaineers are now fully aware, and year by year the number of maiden summits gets less and less. Let members of the Alpine Club note this fact.

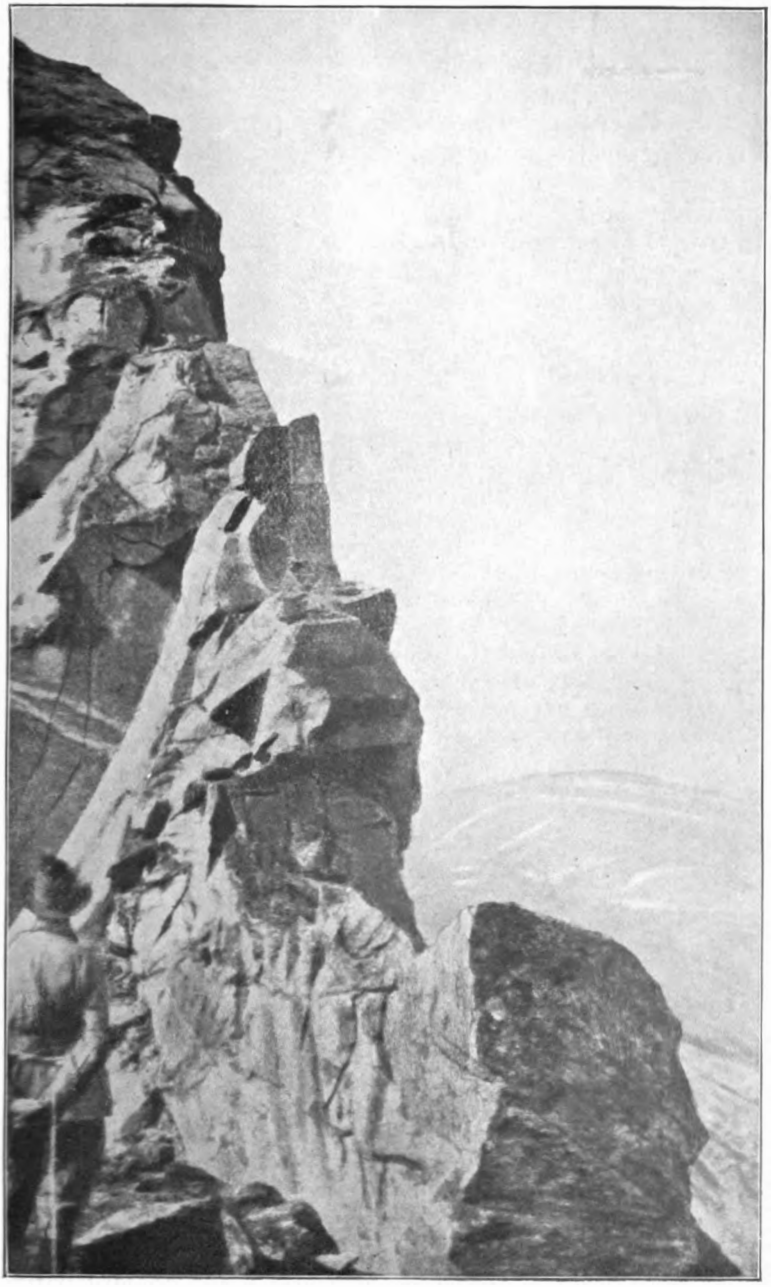
STEDTIND. THE ANVIL PEAK : 5200 FT.

THOUGH there have been many references in the ALPINE JOURNAL * to Stedtind, until now, so far as I am aware, there have been no illustrations of what is probably the most remarkable natural obelisk in the world. When seen from a boat close to the head of the fjord, Stedtind does indeed seem to have been well named, and the Anvil is seen to have the usual shoulder, while the top of the Anvil itself is broad and flat. It is not beautiful, and, with the exception of a narrow shore of loose stones, probably the lateral moraine of an ancient glacier, this wicked-looking monolith rises to the stupendous height of 5200 ft. out of the blue waters of the fjord. Some two-thirds of the height there is certainly a ledge or a crack, which runs diagonally up and across the face of the rock ; so the captious critic may, if he likes to do so, claim that the mountain consists of two stones. I prefer the term 'one stone with a crack across it.'

It is a strange fact that though the words 'sted' and 'stedje' are good old Norsk words and are also used to-day, the Norsk folk, with the now prevailing eagerness to simplify their language, only a few years ago omitted the letter 'd' in the name of the mountain until I pointed out the necessity for its reinstatement, now readily acknowledged. As I am a Yorkshireman, I naturally recognised in Stedtind, Nature's gigantic anvil in Arctic Norway, because in my native county the words 'steddy,' 'stede,' 'stiddy,' and 'stithy' are all forms still used for an *anvil*.

Stedtind is triangular in plan, and the top half may well be described as a truncated triangular pyramid whose smooth, steep, ice-planed and polished walls are really hideous. At the back, or away from the fjord, there is what for many years has been called the 'bridge,' a narrow causeway perhaps 30 to 40 yards in length which connects Stedtind with a broad Norsk fjeld. On one side the wall of this bridge is perpendicular, and from between 1000 to 2000 ft. below is a small glacier which is held up on the fjord side by the shoulder of the anvil. This glacier is of no use to mountaineers wishful to

* *A.J.* xxii. 396-399, 624-625; xxv. 363.



Schjelderup, photo. *Swan Electric Engraving Co., Ltd.*

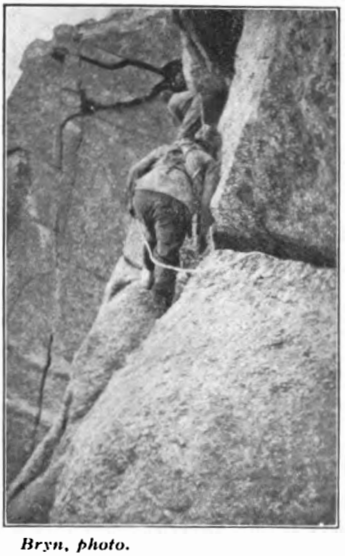
STEDTIND.

The two steps; a cairn is to be seen on the lower one, the highest point reached before 1910. The hand-traverse leads to the back of the two steps.

STRANDAATIND.

The North-East Arête.

The Black Chimney is shown by the letter B.



Bryn, photo.

Rubenson leading on the hand-traverse.

Swan Electric Engraving Co., Ltd.

Schjelderup on the hand-traverse, following Rubenson.

STEDTIND.

ascend the peak. The other side of this remarkable bridge is not perpendicular, but still a stone dropped over the edge would slide merrily down at least 3000 ft.

Every attempt to climb Stedtind has been made on the side of the bridge, and several cairns mark the various points reached by the hardy adventurers. Some of these never even touched the bridge. Nor is this to be wondered at.

The first mountaineers who really had specific designs of ascending the mountain were Martin Ekroll, an excellent mountaineer as well as an Arctic explorer, and Dr. Paul Güssfeldt. This was in 1888. Ekroll was virtually the discoverer of the bridge. The next attempt was made the following year by our late A.C. member, Carl Hall of Copenhagen, and his guide, Matias Soggemoen. Since then there have been several others, notably that of H. Priestman, in 1904, and later the same year that of Professor Collie.

To return to the bridge. At the far end are the two steps or huge blocks of gneiss or granite which entirely block the way. We in Collie's party fully realised that, if these two obstacles could be surmounted or turned, the greatest mountaineering prize still remaining unconquered in Arctic Norway would be won. The lower step, about 25 ft. in height, was climbed by W. E. Slingsby, whose cairn is visible in the accompanying photograph of the 'steps.' The second step, some 30 ft. in height, alone blocked the way. After this Collie and W. E. and A. M. Slingsby discovered the hand traverse, and though a gale of icy wind then prevailing rendered this route at the time utterly impossible, it was realised that the mountain had at last revealed its great secret, and that success was assured to the first strong party of mountaineers who attempted the ascent in good weather. Meanwhile, Woolley, Baly and I had been shivering in a hole at the other end of the bridge, and with the aid of our glasses we had also felt sure that, though the climbing would be difficult, Stedtind would be climbed by the first party who passed the two steps.

Early in the spring of the year 1910 Schjelderup came to stay with us in Westmorland. Needless to say, we talked much about Arctic Norway, which was then unknown to him personally. Maps, photographs, and sketches were brought into service, and the outcome of his visit was the successful ascents of Stedtind and other peaks in Nordland by Schjelderup, Rubenson, and Arf Bryn, three first-rate mountaineers and sons of Norway.

They, as well as I, were aware that during the last few years several German mountaineers had been prowling about Arctic Norway, and though they had not accomplished very much we thought it quite within the limits of probability that they might turn their attention to Stedtind and attach a name, of which we are not at present much enamoured, to the bridge, the hand traverse, or even to the view.

WM. CECIL SLINGSBY.