

higher monolith to mock my efforts. For the descent I fixed a rope ring round a slight bulge forming the highest point, and double-roped first into the chimney, and finally all the way down to the platform. For two competent climbers this summit would be easy enough with no equipment other than a short rope, but for one it is a problem requiring great care. One is justified in tackling it alone because one can bring a spectator to the platform immediately below.

In conclusion I would urgently advise mountaineers who may be passing through the Far East to include a visit to Korea. Seoul is but 36 hours by rail from the Japanese Ports and is on the main rail route from Peking to Japan. By the air route it is less than a day's journey from Japan to Korea. From Seoul to the Outer Diamond Mountains is only another 20 hours. The intermediate seasons, April-mid-June and September-October, are the best. Heavy rains and heat impede the most interesting expeditions in summer and disorganize communications, while in winter glazed rocks and extreme cold render northern faces impassable. Companions are the main problem, but, if I were given notice in advance, I might be able to mitigate this difficulty. Since the expeditions described, I have found in a Japanese resident of Seoul named Hayashi, a keen and capable rock-climber, who had done some pioneering among these peaks before I met him. After seven years in Japan and two in Korea, I can confidently assert that while the Japanese mountains are higher, those of Korea offer many more serious challenges to people who aspire to do something more than follow a well-established path: and so little climbing has as yet been accomplished in Korea that it may well be that the finest districts are still unrecognized.

SOLITARY CLIMBS.

BY THE LATE ROBERT PHILIP HOPE.

[This paper, addressed to the Editor, 'A.J.,' was found among Mr. Hope's effects. It is published in a form as near the original as possible. The complete list works out at 47 climbs accomplished by the writer, *alone*.]

I HAD been to Switzerland three times as a child, but the last of these occasions was when I was 9 years old. So that on my next visit when I was 18 everything was 'as good as new,' especially my first realization of the heights of the great mountains. This



Photo, A. Gysi.

Left to right, Monte Sissone, Eastern Torrone, Ago di Cleopatra, Central and Western Pizzi Torrone and Colle della Rasica, from Cima di Cantone.

was a sudden glimpse, through a break of the clouds, of the snout of the Bider Glacier, above Saas, seen from the valley path. That year, having never even been on snow, I walked alone to the Antrona Pass. It is defended by a tiny glacier without crevasses, but I avoided it as long as I could. Finally forced on to snow, I progressed with terrific caution. I drove my alpenstock as far as I could into the snow a yard in front of me, repeating the process a little to the right, and again to the left; then advancing one pace, I began again.

Soon after my arrival at the pass, I saw a solitary lady with a red parasol over her head walking up the centre of the glacier; an Englishman followed a little later, and I learned that I had been unnecessarily cautious and returned more boldly. I also learned this day that while it is pleasant to cool one's hot feet by lunching with them in a stream, yet they do not get on so well in one's boots for the rest of the day.

The same year I walked alone up the Corne de Sorebois from Zinal, and two years later the Pic d'Arzinol from Evolena, mere walks both of them, but with lovely views. In '99 I did the Reissend Nollen from the Engstlen Alp, an eventless grind up a long snow slope.

My first walk alone over a crevassed glacier was in 1898. By doctor's orders I was not climbing, and though I was with Kirkpatrick some of the season, I only got as far as the huts and watched his party from there. From near the Ober Aletsch hut I saw them descend from the Aletschhorn, crossing the bergschrund in a manner which brought my heart into my mouth. The middle man started the move suddenly, drew the last after him, and, as the rope tightened, the others followed in due course. But as to which actually shot the bergschrund first, I cannot say; neither probably could they. In a couple of minutes the caravan proceeded on its way, to my great relief.

Later with Kirkpatrick, I walked from the *Furgggrat* to the Theodulhorn; he then went home. I proceeded to the Riffel and wandered about. One day, starting at 10 o'clock, I went up the Findelen Glacier and lunched at what, from the dangerous quantity of broken glass, I judged to be the usual place. Afterwards I became ambitious of getting alone to a summit, so went back across the glacier and up its left bank. Then very slowly, as I was obliged to go, I plugged up the Triftje Glacier to the Stockhorn. I do not think I crossed any crevasses, though I had 1500 ft. of glacier to mount, and returning by the Hohthäligrat and Gornergrat, encountered the worst dangers between the Riffelhaus and Riffelalp. The logs that prevent the path being washed away in rainy weather may be necessary, but are risky to one's ankles when descending in pitch darkness at 8.20 P.M.

In 1900, Kirkpatrick having left Arolla on the afternoon of August 31, I started next day at 9 A.M. for a 12,000 ft. peak which

I accomplished and was back by 6.30 P.M. Perhaps it was hardly worthy to be called a peak, for it was only the summit of the Douves Blanches; not the difficult rock climb above the Bertol Glacier, but a perfectly easy and safe point just S. of the Tsa, with similar view, which is all that can be said for it. I repeated the climb in 1905 with H. V. Reade, the excuse being quantities of new snow which prevented anything more difficult, and I think I must be the only person who has ever twice toiled up to this point. At the Bertol hut I then joined a party, too large for comfort, as of course the provisions were squandered and ran short. We accomplished with guides the Dent Blanche and Bouquetins and returned to Arolla. Next day but one I walked down to Haudères with Girdlestone,¹ who was going to cross to Zinal by low passes. So I had not the excuse of being without a companion; but I wanted to do something bigger, and as he did not feel equal to it, I went on alone to Ferpècle. I had seen the Grand Cornier well from the Douves Blanches and had obtained much information from Girdlestone. Leaving Ferpècle at 3.10 next morning, I lost my way and some time in the dark; but reaching the left moraine of the Bricolla Glacier at 5.10, I followed it for an hour, and breakfasted for the same space of time. I then followed up the S. side of the glacier till I saw a good route across it, then kept close to the right bank till I reached at 8.50 the lower end of the broad shelf. This leads with great ease up to a point just under the summit which is gained by easy rocks. The weather looked bad, thunder to the W. and snow falling. I followed the ledge up for about half its length, when I decided that the weather was too uncertain, and that I had better secure my retreat by the Moiry Glacier before it got worse, so went fairly straight up to the N. arête of the Grand Cornier, some way along the Moiry Glacier. This arête is not well shown on the map, which indicates a broad strip of snow reaching nearly to the summit, while it actually is a narrow rock ridge. I now saw my way of retreat was easy, so although some snow was falling I continued up the arête. But not for long; soon I had to traverse on the E. side, crawling up a ledge on hands and knees, with a tremendous drop below me. Ahead it looked even worse, so I retreated at 11.15, having to crawl backwards down the ledge, so overhung by rocks that any other method was impossible. In half an hour I reached the highest point of the Moiry Glacier and halted a short time to eat, and then went easily down the snow to the top of the Bouquetin, snow falling lightly all the time. Here I felt I was clear of difficulties, so continued my meal and then went leisurely down by the S.E. face and ridge to the Durand Glacier, attaining Zinal at 6.10 P.M. It must have been a 'hungry' day, for starting at 3.10 I fed from 6.15 to 7.15, 11.45 to 12.15, 1.40 to 2.15, and again 3.50 to 4.35. I was very

¹ The late Rev. A. G. Girdlestone, see *A.J.* 42, 301.—*Editor.*

unlucky with the weather, as it never became really bad, and if I had stuck to the ledge on the W. face, I should certainly have got up, but would have had to return the same way till I could attain the surface of the Moiry Glacier. The N. arête of the peak is not at all easy and would have been too much for me. But the Grand Cornier is 13,000 ft. and I was prudent in not taking it lightly in bad weather.

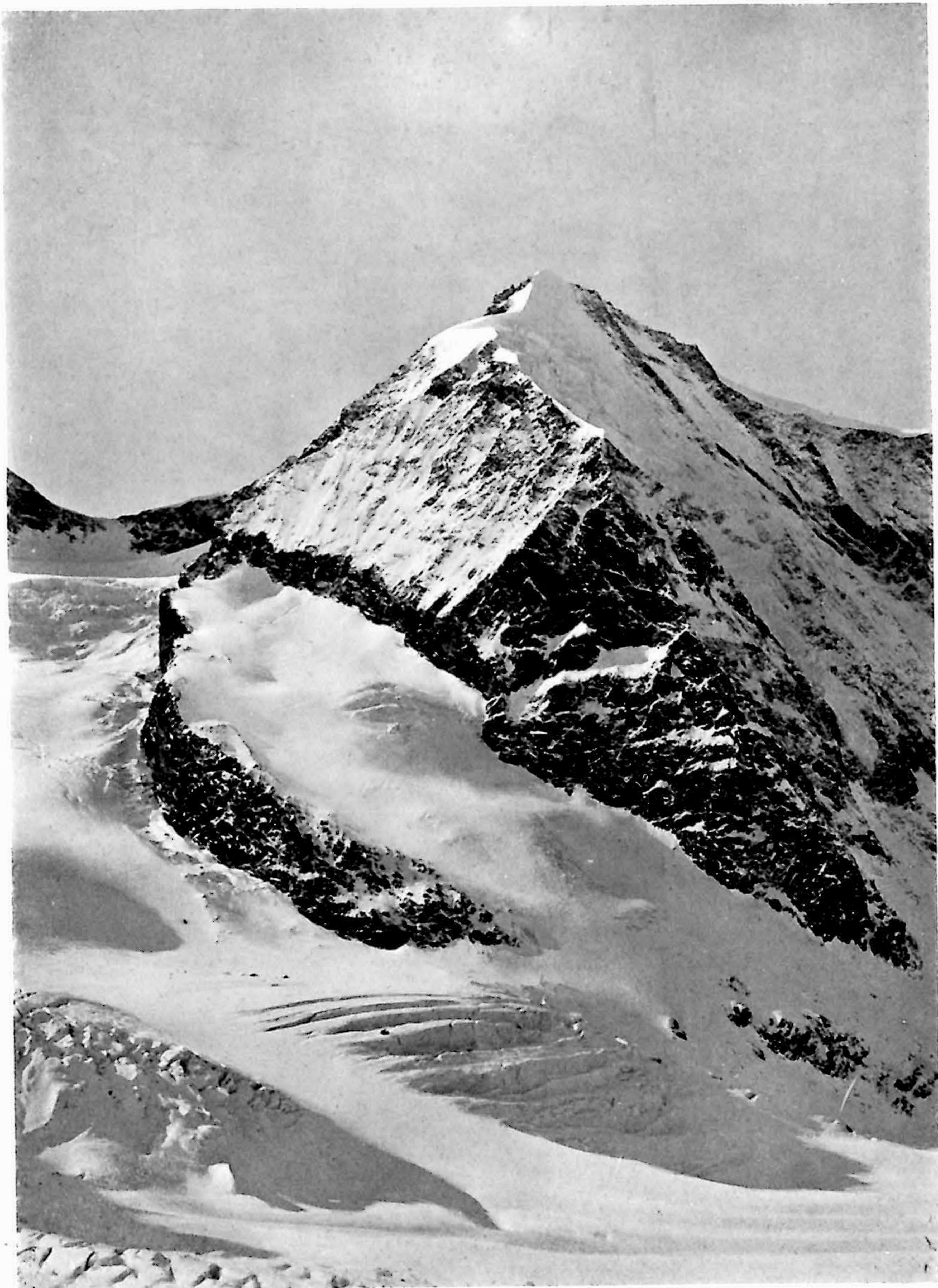
Girdlestone had reached Zinal before me, but I had had a more interesting day, and it was owing to my knowledge of the easy route down the W. face that Kirkpatrick and I in 1908 were at 6.30 P.M. peacefully plodding up the opposite side.²

On September 6, 1901, Kirkpatrick went home from Zinal, and next day I walked by the Col de la Lex and Col de Couronne to Arolla. I consumed 11 hours on the journey, and not feeling inclined for a very early start next day, rested, but made up for it on the following day by starting at 1.45 A.M. for the Col Collon, hoping to reach Courmayeur and catch another party the same day. I lost the path and much time at the point where it begins to rise steeply from the moraine of the lower glacier, and again on the Plan de Bertol, where a vague track leads off to the upper glacier. Here in fact I had to wait for some daylight, as I had never been on this path. I do not know how long I waited, as I found my watch had stopped and would not go on with any available treatment, including stirring up its works with a toothpick. So the rest of the day I was going against time down a valley the length of which I did not know, in order to catch a diligence, starting I knew not when, from Aosta; my only idea of the hour of the day being gained from the position of the sun. Anyhow, I reached the Col as soon as the sun, and pressed on down the beautiful but physically wearying valley, climbing in intense heat the many ascents which the descent of the valley entails. Either from fatigue or heat I got rather light-headed. I met some Englishmen who told me the name of the best inn at Valpelline, which was as far as I now hoped to get. Lest I should forget it, I kept repeating this name to myself, only to find on arrival that no such inn existed. But the name was near enough, and I got to it at 3.30 P.M., sleeping the rest of the day. Next day I strolled down into the furnace of Aosta and caught my party at Courmayeur in time.

In 1902 I went out ahead of Kirkpatrick, who was to join me in Dauphiné. I reached Aix-les-Bains on July 8, straight from the rigours of a Scotch summer and the heat was at first overpowering. After a night journey, I required a hot bath to get clean, followed by a cold one to get cool. Though I found some cousins here, I only stayed one night. Baedeker's³ description of the Chalet Hôtel

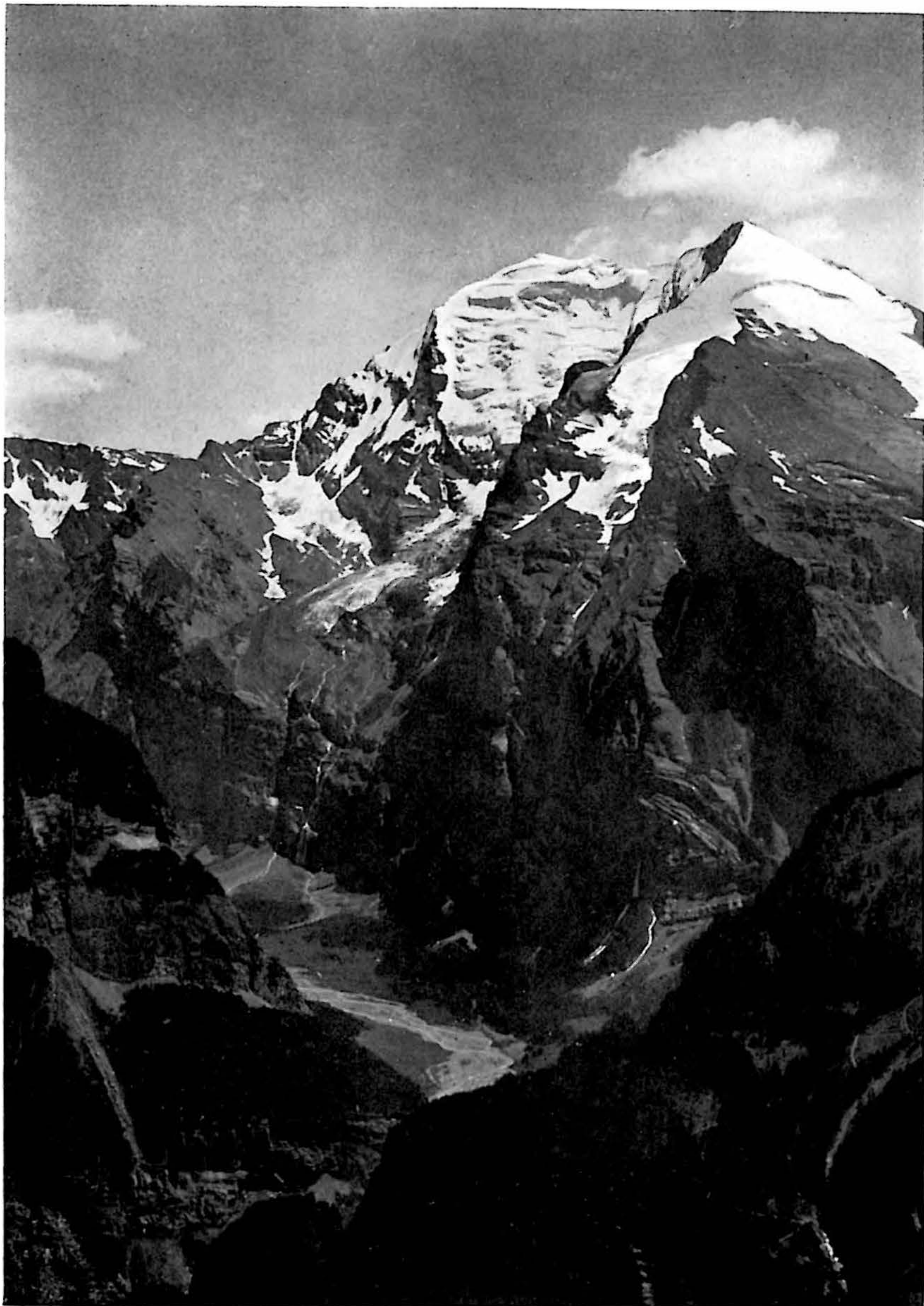
² We saw the sun set from the top at about 7 P.M., but reached Bricolla at midnight.—*W.T.K.*

³ Baedeker is, on the whole, still very unreliable as regards Dauphiné.—*Editor.*



Photo, Sydney Spencer.

GRAND CORNIER from the E.



Photo, Sydney Spencer.

BALMHORN and ALTELS from Alpschelenenhübel.

des Sept Laux, 7160 ft., sounded attractive, and as I was not at all well, I hoped to rest and walk about there, bathing in the lakes; I accordingly took train and tram to Allevard: it had been a heavy dull evening with the thermometer marking 92° (F.) in the shade, so I was off at 4.45 next morning. I lunched at the inn at Le Curtillard in a thunderstorm, and in the afternoon continued upwards, slowly, as my heart was not quite right, and I had been warned against hurrying up hill. But a further thunder and hail-storm made me disregard this, and I ran for a cow-shed just in time. My diary states that the hailstones were 1½ inches across, and anyhow they were bad enough to make shelter absolutely necessary. The last part of the walk was cold and dreary, and so was the 'hotel.' No chalet-hotel, but a stone hut, dirty outside and inside, the stone floor wet and a lean-to at the back still full of ice. Not at all what I expected. The hotel staff consisted of one villainous old man. I felt rather ill in the night, and very miserable; next day was dull and so was I. My host offered me for lunch something which came out of the lake. The idea of fish cheered me, but his fishing operations puzzled me, and when I saw the raw frogs' legs in a dish on his return, I declined them. I did not feel inclined to bathe as the lakes were half full of snow and ice.

Next day I departed without regret to Bourg d'Oisans. On the 14th I left by an early train back to Allemont and, being the French fête day, got no breakfast before starting. An hour's walk took me to Oz, where I breakfasted in a filthy inn. The remains of last night's carouse lay on floor and table, and the room also served as a dog-kennel. The landlord breakfasted at the same time, but his meal was contained in a liqueur glass. I had a hot walk up to the Fare hut. The way is over grass alps to the foot of a rocky slope. Here I procured wood and milk and continued to the hut half an hour higher. It was my first expedition to a hut alone, and I had it to myself. My food was simple: bread, jam, chocolate, soup, and the position of the hut gave me the feeling of the solitary hermit.

The 15th was a hot morning, and starting at 4.30 A.M. I went up grass and snow patches to the upper Fare lake, which was frozen. Débris and a small snow field brought me to the foot of the arête of the Grandes Rousses, up which I climbed by a rib, reaching the main ridge at 10. I felt I had done enough, so did not proceed to either summit. I had a good view of La Meije and the Aiguilles d'Arves, and at 11.30 started down, reaching the hut at 3.0 P.M. After luncheon it felt fearfully hot and stuffy, although at a height of 7270 ft., so I went to sleep till it got cooler. At 5 o'clock it was still hot, but I went down, halting often on the way to rest and cool, and not till 10.30 did I reach Allemont, where I slept. I saw many glow-worms on the way.

August 21, 1902, found me alone at Chamonix. There was nothing there that suited my wants; everything is too big, though

I imagine the Moine would be possible alone. But I had spent one rainy day from the Montenvers with Kirkpatrick trying to get up it, by a wrong route, and considered it should be reserved for future use in similar conditions. The grind up to the Brévent I have always shirked. I did get as far as Planpraz, struggling up through the forest, for some reason. I wanted to photograph, but it was too early in the afternoon, so slept for a couple of hours on the alp and woke up cold. However, I got some good photos and a view of Mont Blanc above a sea of cloud. Next day I decided to make for the Orny Glacier, so walked to the Col de Balme to obtain an early start up the Tour Glacier. It is a dull walk in this direction, as all the view is behind one.

The next day, August 23, was cloudless. I started at 6.30 A.M., rather late, but I had been delayed the night before, so spent some time in the morning making out the best route to the glacier. For there is no path or recognised route, as Kirkpatrick and I found in 1913, when trying to reverse the walk. I managed to strike a good line and had not to descend much to the glacier. I kept more to its centre than is usual. I got on the ice earlier, too, preferring it to moraine and followed up the easiest line, leading me some way into the centre. Later, I bore more to my left and came back to the right route. When alone it is sometimes safer to keep well out and follow the hollows and valleys of ice, so avoiding crevasses, at the expense of greater distance in détours. I reached the Col du Tour at 12, having spent some time photographing the Chardonnet. The snow was hard and I had no trouble. From the Col I went to the Fenêtre de Saleinaz and, keeping well round under the Aiguilles Dorées, reached the Col d'Orny. There were no crevasses visible on this part, but I did not altogether like it. It is so level, and one could not tell where they might be. On a steeper glacier one can usually have some idea and, at any rate if some crevasses are visible it is possible to obtain an idea of the condition of the bridges over others. When I strike a good big open crevasse, I am at least sure that by walking 3 or 4 feet from it, I am quite secure. From the Col d'Orny the glacier is quite safe, and I could have gone faster, but did not hurry for the day was so glorious and there was no object in reaching Champex long before dinner-time. I took an off-day next day from choice, and another from necessity—rain. Still rain the following day, but at 5 P.M. I started in a fair interval with a porter. He led the way, though I knew it well enough, and I did not like to cry a halt as I carried nothing, so we got to the hut in 2¼ hours. That night there was a storm, and I realised why the beams and iron ties of huts are made so heavy. The Orny hut is not at all in an exposed situation, but it rocked and quivered so much that it kept me awake for some time.

Next day was cloudy but fine. The obvious climbs were the Portalet and Pointe d'Orny. But I had already been up the former, and had seen the latter from various places, so could raise

no enthusiasm for such a hump of a 'pointe.' Feeling rather slack I wandered up the Orny Glacier and was attracted by a fine pinnacle on the Arpette ridge to the N. I went up to its S. foot, but saw no way: I traversed accordingly round to the E. to the main ridge, passing the correct route up a chimney, but seeing no possibility of getting into it alone. The N. face was worse, overhanging in parts, and I came round to the W. and finally S.W. side, where I found a broad open chimney at a gentle angle. Climbing the right side with ease, I finally got up to a very smooth part, not steep, but the only hold for further progress was a wedged stone of doubtful security. And when you are alone, such things must be left alone. So I crossed to the left side. To do this entailed a very nasty long step from one narrow ledge to another not more than 2 inches wide. No hand-hold at all, but the slope was gentle and I did the step with great caution, and, mounting a little way with ease was able to get back over the top of the chimney on to the main arête, and so easily to the top. I saw the hut and, lest my ascent should be questioned, fixed several pieces of paper in the small cairn. The descent was no more trouble than the ascent. It was some satisfaction that when, next year, I took Wright and Kirkpatrick up as a training scramble (I had been out in the Alps some time before them), neither of them, although better rock climbers, liked the step, and I was allowed to lead. We all agreed in coming down by the W. arête, which entailed a double-rope over an overhang.

On returning to the hut I learned that I had made the fourth ascent of the Aiguille d'Orny, and by a new route. In fact, it cannot have been repeated until a few years ago, when it was claimed as 'new' by a Champex guide. My signal had been seen from the hut, from which the Aiguille shows up well over an intervening ridge. Next day I started at about 8 A.M. with a heavy sack, opened tins of meat and condensed milk bulging in my coat pockets. I left my sack at the Col Droit and traversing the S. slope of the ridge worked up to the foot of the Tête Crettez, the first and easiest of the Aiguilles Dorées. There is only one awkward step, and if one slipped one would only be in a position to try again. I then looked at the Aiguille Javelle, but could not get into the chimney, and, as I know from our attempts next year, could not have got up it if I had. I returned to the Col, descended on the S. with ease and crossed the Saleinaz Glacier to the Saleinaz hut. Rain came on before I reached it, and the presence of ladies prevented any very extempore hut costume, so I caught cold. As a result I did not feel inclined for much next day; I lost nothing, as rain came on in the afternoon. But the following day was fine, and I walked up to the Col de Planereuse. The appearance of the Planereuse Glacier on the other side of the col was more imposing than encouraging, so I retreated and passed round the north of Tita Neire to the higher col, having to exercise some caution over the bergschrund.

It was in fact the first doubtful one I had crossed up to this date, and I avoided it on my return. I now saw the whole of the Petit Darreï Glacier, with a good deal of new snow on it. The Grand Darreï lies on the far side, some way up. I kept along the ridge I was on, leading to the Petit Darreï, till it became less easy, when I took to the snow-field. There were no crevasses here as far as I could see, but I was over my boot-tops in new snow and had to sound in front of me at every single step. However, the glacier is only a miniature one, though a little below me it had some quite imposing crevasses, and I was not long in reaching the foot of a snow slope leading up to the E. ridge of my peak, the Grand Darreï. At first this was all right, but near the top the snow was thin with ice underneath, and though I had not to cut, it only just held me. The final ridge was easy and I reached the top at 1 P.M. The day was almost perfect, and, perhaps because I was alone, the view seemed one of the finest I had ever seen. Not extensive, as it only included the La Neuvaz and Saleinaz basins. But the light was perfect and showed up the jagged ridge of the Aiguilles Rouges du Dolent, the long ridge stretching to the Col d'Argentière and a beautiful curved snow arête leading to the Col Supérieur du Tour Noir. The great snowy E. face of the Aiguille d'Argentière, with the Couloir Barbey, was in full view with the Aiguille du Chardonnet beyond. I stopped here to photograph, but could not afford time to lunch as I was rather anxious about the ice slope. But, though still more shaky than on my ascent, it just held, as it faced N., and I got quickly down to the glacier. Remembering the bergschrund, I departed from my rule of returning exactly the same way and, as soon as I got out of the deep new snow, struck straight down the glacier, leaving it on the left for the rocks of the Tita Neire, where I had a late lunch. Getting on to the snow again, I reached and crossed the Col de Planereuse and was back at the hut at 4 P.M. Putting my spare clothes into my sack, and the rest of my provisions into myself, I hurried down and across the rather dangerous part of the path, where the Clochers de Planereuse aim occasional stones, and then continued in more leisurely style to the valley. Too leisurely, for on reaching the level I lost my way in the dark forest, missing the bridge. I was tired, hungry and had done my last climb of the season, also I had toothache. But I found a chalet and was directed on my way by its owner, whom I afterwards heard was M. Louis Kurz. At 9 P.M. I reached the comforts of Praz de Fort.

On August 10, 1904, I found myself alone at Belalp. On July 28, I had left the Grimsel with the late Rev. W. F. Wright ⁴ and twelve days later reached Belalp, having climbed the Hühnerstock, carried five days' provisions over the Strahlegg, climbed the Schreckhorn, Finsteraarhorn by the N.W. arête with descent to Concordia, the

⁴ Who was killed in the Gran Paradiso in 1905.—*W.T.K.*

Jungfrau, and finally traversed the Aletschhorn. I have never before or since done so much climbing in the time, nor been so long above the snow line. I joined a man, whom I met for the first time, in an attempt on the Nesthorn, but we found the crevasses too bad and I stayed on alone at the Ober Aletsch hut, making a slight attempt on the N.W. arête of the same mountain; I completed this, a new route, with Kirkpatrick next year. Then I decided to make for the Laquinhorn, which I had noticed as an easy solitary climb when descending the Fletschhorn in 1899, but decided to try Monte Leone first, having already seen most of the ascent while crossing Passo di Fnè with Kirkpatrick in 1903. So I walked from the Ober Aletsch hut to Brigue. I lunched at the half-way hotel, perhaps too generously after three nights in a hut, and slept under a tree for two hours afterwards. But the thunderstorm which arrived at 10 P.M. may have contributed to my drowsiness. I drove next day to the Simplon Kulm Hôtel, where I found Mr. and Mrs. Cannan—who was Miss Wedderburn-Maxwell—and Mr. Godley. The two men were bound for Monte Leone next day and I tried to find out what time they meant to start, so that I could get off first. For similar reasons, they avoided disclosing the hour. So I set my alarm watch for 3 A.M. to be on the safe side, but unluckily went to sleep again and when I woke up at 4.10, I saw their lantern some way off up the hill. In 35 minutes, which was fairly quick for a hotel start, I was off in pursuit. I crossed the edge of the Kaltwasser Glacier, and by mounting a wall of rock which divides it from the Hohmatter Glacier, I avoided following them, and actually took a more direct though steeper line. I passed them at some distance on this glacier, and continued up easy snow slopes to the Alpien Glacier. Here I kept well to my left close under the bergschrund, so as to avoid crevasses, for I was going in the same direction as the crevasses but was secured by the proximity of the schrund. The final scramble up the peak was very easy and I reached it at 8.30—3 $\frac{3}{4}$ hours including 15 halts. The others arrived at 9.20. A good view to the N. but none to the S. My descent was more leisurely, as, including halts, I took as long as for the ascent, keeping more to the S., the ordinary route. A rainy day followed, and the next was little better, but I walked over the Bistenen Pass, and at about noon had a view, up the Gamser Thal, of the Simeli Pass, which I was making for. I studied it carefully, in case mist should come down again, but have never seen it since. I got down into the valley and walked up it into the mist. I had only Baedeker's map, and could only guess at where I was. I came to moraine and then snow-covered glacier, but no crevasses. I toiled up in a fog, mental and physical, noting many large stones which had fallen on my glacier from invisible rocks. I decided that if nothing was visible by 5 P.M. I must turn and trudge down the valley. At 4.45 there was a sudden clearing and I saw the ridge not 500 ft. above me and easy of access. On getting to it

I found everything clear to the S., discovering that I had not come by the Simeli Pass but by one more to the E., the Gamserjoch. It was too late to try a 4 or 5 mile stony traverse to the Weissmies Hôtel, so I dropped down to the valley and slept at Hutegg.

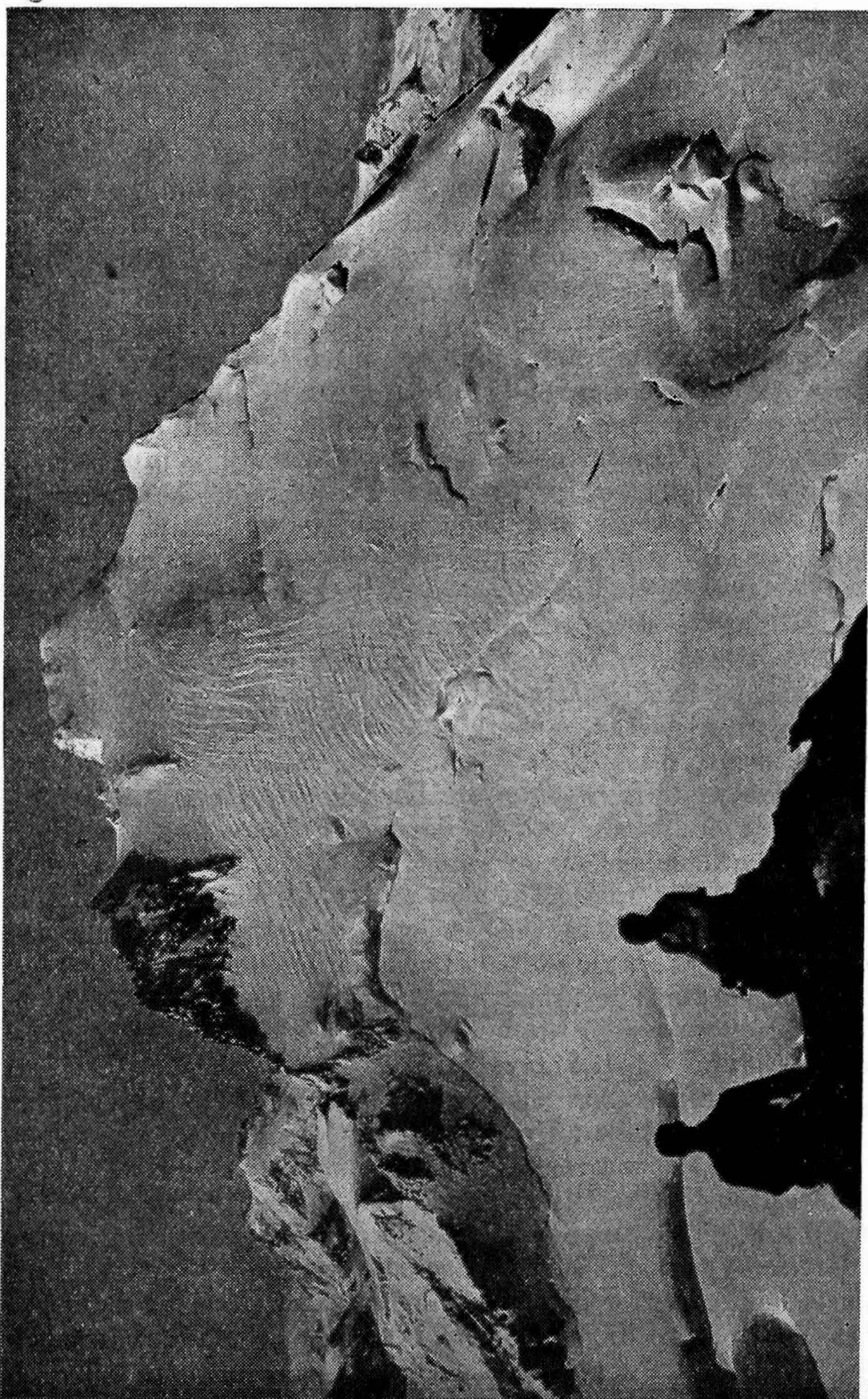
August 24, 1904, is noted in my diary as a doubtful day. As I walked from Sass Grund to the Weissmies Hôtel, sheltering from the rain on the way for two hours, and continuing my walk in rain, snow and mist, it hardly seemed 'doubtful.' Naturally I was the only guest, but the wonderful five-course dinner, for which the hotel is famous, included fish, not sardines or tunny, and asparagus. It snowed all next day, so after lunch I undressed, put on my pyjamas, and went to bed, but first replaced all my clothes, including gloves, mittens, and a second pair of stockings and puttees. The dignity of a private room at 9000 ft. does not compensate for the loss of warmth afforded by the combination of bedroom and kitchen in a hut.

Next day was fine but cold, with 6 inches of new snow at the hotel. I started at 8 A.M., and getting on to the W. arête of the Laquinhorn by its S. slope, followed it to the top, attained at 12.45. Of course the peak was in a horrible mess with the new snow, but except for the last snow slope of 200 to 300 ft. there was absolutely no difficulty whatever. I do not think that it is possible anywhere else in the Alps to reach 4000 m. (13,123 ft.) with such absolute ease and safety. Not a single crevasse need be crossed and in good conditions any able-bodied man with a walking-stick could get up and down. I felt that a blinding snowstorm on the top and all the way down would not have disconcerted me in the least. As it was fine but too cold to lunch, I descended some way before doing so. For variety I left the arête on its N. slope and reached the hotel at 4.30 P.M. Some Germans took 8 hours to reach the top of the Weissmies from the hotel that day, so the condition of the mountains, or of themselves, can be imagined.

I should think that the only ascents to 4000 m. approaching the Laquinhorn in ease are the Weissmies from the Zwischbergen Pass, which I have done with Kirkpatrick, and Punta Giordani from the Colle d'Olen, which I have seen *en route* to the Capanna Gnifetti, but not climbed.

On August 28, 1904, I left Randa at 10.20 A.M., reaching the Festi hut, after various halts, at 2.40 P.M. There was no water near and I had to fetch some from the glacier, so it was 3.45 before I sat down very hungry to a late lunch. The day was perfect, as were also the two previous days, but before that there had been five days of bad weather, so I was doubtful about the condition of the N.W. arête of the Dom. I was disappointed not to have the hut to myself, as an Austrian and two guides arrived after lunch, one from the Oetzthal and the other a Burgener. The latter disgusted me by spitting into the straw as he lay next me, but they were all very civil to a solitary climber, which is not always the case. I dispensed

with dinner and we turned in early. The alarm went at 2.0 A.M., and I got off first at 2.45. There was bright moonlight and I had



DOM FROM NADELHORN.

Photo, Gaberell.]

no trouble in following the path and then the glacier. Old tracks helped me through the small crevassed part and I reached rocks near the Festijoch at 4.45. The daylight was not good enough to

see the exact route up to the Festijoch, so I took 10 minutes' rest, watching the sun strike the Weisshorn, Matterhorn and Rothhorn. It was a perfect morning, and to sit alone in the shadow of the rocks, looking at the view, was worth the loss of time. Another quarter of an hour took me to the Joch and I walked up the easy arête for another quarter-hour, and then spent 40 minutes over my second breakfast, as it did not seem likely I should find another good place for some time.

During breakfast the other party reached the col and passed on to the Hohberg Glacier and soon out of my sight. At 6.50 I started again up easy rocks, but soon came to an ice slope. The ridge here is overhung by a bulge of the Hohberg Glacier which intercepts it. To follow the watershed would have brought me into bad crevasses in the bulge. So putting on my light one-piece, four-spike crampons, I set to work cutting diagonally up to my right on a gentle slope. There were some old steps but they were of little use and this was the worst part of the climb, for though the slope was comparatively gentle and it was quite warm, there was a continuous ice-slope of at least 1000 ft. below me and below that gently inclined glacier. About thirty steps took me to another rock patch, and then I had only one or two more and a rather awkward corner off the ice, before regaining the ridge. There was no further difficulty. When nearing the little plateau N.W. of the summit, I saw the other party level with me at its further edge. This, and a steeper bit of rock on the ridge, made me take a short cut out on the edge of the glacier. I was just getting back to it, about 10 ft. distant, when I found myself in snow up to my waist. Rather disconcerting, but it was a small crevasse and there was no danger, so near was the ridge. However, the others beat me by a quarter of an hour, and I reached the top of the Dom at 9.15. The view was cloudless. The Austrians offered to take me down by the glacier, and this would have saved me much time, but I wanted to do the whole expedition myself and also required my third breakfast. So they soon departed, leaving me seated on the very top of the mountain while I cooked Irish stew and chocolate. I started down at 10.10 and following my old route, except the crevasse, reached the bottom of the ice slope at 11.20. The halt to take off my crampons lasted twenty minutes, as I felt entitled to it, now that all difficulty was behind me. Twenty-five minutes took me to the Festijoch and another fifty-five to the hut at 1.0 P.M. This last piece was slow, but the glacier was softer and I dared not go fast. I cleaned up the hut and, in spite of three breakfasts felt ready for lunch, which I took at a spring close by. I felt rather tired, so did not hurry, reaching Randa at 4, whence I railed to Zermatt. I now began to feel the result of a 5,000 ft. ascent and 10,000 ft. descent alone; had a bad headache and little inclination for dinner. But Dr. Wherry, who was at the Monte Rosa, prescribed Bouvier, and thanks to it I went to bed happy, having successfully completed my highest solitary climb.

Time of ascent, exclusive of halts, $5\frac{1}{2}$ hours. Descent to hut, $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

In 1905 I had a short tour alone at the beginning of the season, and so did not try anything hard. I went from Champex up the Catogne, and then walked over the Fenêtre d'Arpette to the Tête Noire Hôtel. Then from the Barberine hut I climbed the Tour Sallières and slept at Salanfe, continuing my way by the Col Susanfe to Champéry. From here I climbed up to a col on the Dent du Midi, between l'Éperon and La Cathédrale. The col led nowhere so far as my capabilities were concerned, but my ascent was easy enough though exposed to stones. In fact, for some time I wore an aluminium plate that I had, in the crown of my hat. Its efficacy was not tested. At the end of the season at Chamonix I had a try for Mont Blanc. I was told that the St. Gervais route was in excellent order and there was a good useful moon: so on September 12 I walked up to the Tête Rousse inn, the day being very fine. But alas, it deteriorated in the evening, and though I got up and looked out at all hours from 11 P.M., it only got worse, clouds pouring over from the south. A party of guides with one or two girls, natives of the valley, were there, and knowing the weather better than I, made merry, to the disturbance of my sleep. The next day I only accomplished an ice descent. Walking across the Tête Rousse Glacier⁵ after lunch, I suddenly saw a man appear out of a crevasse. It was one of the workmen engaged in the preventive works in the glacier: at his suggestion I visited the tunnels. We walked down an ice staircase in the crevasse, and then through various tunnels, first in ice and finally rock, which led out through the ridge on the S. bank of the glacier. I must have passed under ice for 150 yds. or more. The object of the work was to drain the crevasses of water, the sudden outrush from which had destroyed the St. Gervais Baths in 1892. Various branch tunnels led into different clefts, but I saw no very large crevasse.

Next day was still bad, but I started at 5.5 A.M., keeping along the S. edge of the Griaz Glacier till I reached the foot of the Aiguille du Goûter. I went up the rib opposite the end of the ridge on my right, that bounding the glacier, and almost immediately crossed to my left. This passage is exposed to stones, but only takes 5 minutes, and, as the stones can be heard coming, it is easy to run back into shelter. Having gained the rib on the other side I found almost a path and the only steep part is just below the top. I believe that by taking the rib rising from the N. side of the glacier, which is nearly as easy, one can go up in perfect safety all the way. I reached the top at 7.20 and walked along the crest to the S. But the wind and clouds were pouring across the snowfield, and I doubt whether any party would have gone on. I could not see more than a hundred yards. As it was, it would have been of course

⁵ ? Glacier de la Griaz or de Bionnassay français.—*Editor.*

madness to proceed, so I retired to the little hut, had a meal and waited till 9.15, when I gave it up. I was back at the Tête Rousse in an hour exactly. Two hours' halt in the hut had left me stiff and cold, so that the time for a descent of 2000 ft. shows that the way was easy enough.

The guides had never started. They knew from below that it was no good, but I wanted to do something after having spent two nights at the inn. If only I had been one day earlier I should have had a good chance, as the weather was fine the day I came up to the hut. I had in a previous year tried this route with Kirkpatrick, though wind prevented us getting beyond the Vallot hut. I had also been to the top by the Italian Dôme route, so all the way would have been known to me.

On September 1, 1906, Kirkpatrick left me in perfect weather at Samaden. I was not obliged or inclined to return home, so decided to explore the Forno Glacier, of which I knew nothing beyond what is contained in Baedeker.⁶ The high tariff he gives for the Pizzi Torrone, 70 francs for the eastern and 50 francs for the central and western,⁷ indicated them as the best climbs, and I did not take his warning of 'very difficult,' 'many crevasses,' as seriously as if I had read something similar in a *Climbers' Guide*. And I saw that two were under 11,000 ft.

I took train to St. Moritz and filled my sack with necessaries and luxuries, driving on to Maloja for a late lunch. Afterwards I met for the first time Mr. (now Sir) J. J. Withers, who had just come down from Monte Disgrazia with two Saas guides. I inquired about the mountains and the Pizzi Torrone especially, and was not encouraged to hear they were all very icy and the Orientale in particular appeared to Withers's guides as in an impossible condition. However, I only added some more luxuries to my pack, till it would not close and started at 5.30 P.M. I had a heavy sack and went slowly till I realized that I must push on to get off the glacier in daylight. I just did so but it was some trouble to find the hut in the dark. Luckily there was water close to the hut, and I enjoyed a good though solitary supper and, having all the blankets at my disposal, slept soft and well. I carried no wood of course, depending on a very small spirit stove.

Next day I made a lazy start at 9.25 A.M. up the easy glacier towards the Torrone, but not as far as the foot. A distant view of Torrone Centrale was enough to put me off it. Solid ice-slopes, threatened by falling stones. So I bore to my right and worked my way to the Colle del Cantone. I shirked the long détour which is the easiest way and kept more to the N., and so had some deviations to make round crevasses. Just below the col I was nearly stopped by finding an enormous one in front of me. It was more

⁶ Baedeker is notoriously bad for the Bernina, W. wing.—*Editor*.

⁷ The *western* P. Torrone is far the more difficult.—*Editor*.

like a snow valley. The whole ascent of the Forno Glacier from the surface of that glacier would have been dangerous alone, had it not been such perfect weather. Every crevasse was visible and the snow in perfect order. At 2.30 P.M. I reached the ridge to the N. of the col and found myself cut off by a spiky arête from the true pass and the foot of the Cima di Castello. I tried to descend on the W., in order to traverse on that slope, but after cutting a few steps in ice, saw a large stone slide down over the steps I had descended; so returned and went N. along the ridge to a minor summit, reached at 3.30. It was too late to go on to Cima di Cantone, so I returned to the hut, which I reached at 6, finding it still empty. It had not been a long day, less than 9 hrs., and an ascent of only 2000 ft., but the continual care necessary when alone on snow-covered glaciers had tired me enough to cause me to disregard my alarm at 4 next morning and I slept for 4 hrs. more, not starting till 9.45 on September 3. I walked for an hour up the glacier and then spent a full quarter of an hour examining the Torrone Orientale. I decided to try it, though the long crevasses which stretched right across the bay of glacier to the E. of the peak made success seem doubtful. When I reached them I found I had to zigzag backwards and forwards across the glacier, and once to descend some hundreds of feet in order to get round an impossible chasm. One crevasse was practically a cliff on the upper side, and I was driven to the right and had to get on to and up a part of the icy ridge plunging down northwards from the peak. This entailed thirty steps in hard ice, but enabled me to get back on to the glacier again, only to be obstructed by a crevasse stretching right across the bay. There was no way round and no bridge. Just in front of me there had been one, but it had now a gap in its centre 18 inches wide. Nothing of a step in itself, but it was uphill and I could not see how much of the overhang was on my side. So I turned my back on it, and spent an hour and a quarter in a good meal, smoke and rest.

The gap now looked smaller; I stepped over and was on the plateau below the E. schrund. This also stretched right across the bay. The only possible way over was in front of me, but it was exposed to stones falling from the peak and, though now in the shade, I did not care to chance one while cutting my way up, so went more to the right and crossed on some fallen blocks of ice. I was now on the N. ridge again and, not being able to traverse above the schrund to reach the highest snow plateau, had to cut straight up, twenty-five steps, in hard, dirty black ice with the open schrund below me. I reached the rocks and crept along their edge till stopped by a very nasty place. I was on a little boss of rock just above the ice, and had to step up on to a slab, not quite level and covered with loose débris with no hand-holds. Just below me all the way was the black ice slope of perhaps 40° and then the open schrund. I got as far up the boss as I could to get a decent right foot-hold, stepped up on to the slab and then dropped on my knees and scrambled up till

I could get my hands into the débris which lay closer at the top. The rocks then were easier, and after a few more steps in ice I reached easy ground at the E. foot of the peak. I went S. some way over stones till I came to slabs which I disliked, especially as there were large loose-looking stones above which I should have had to use as hand-holds. This was the right way, and easy, but I could not risk a big stone slipping, and so went back climbing straight up above me. Here the rocks were steep but good, and I had no difficulty except in one place.⁸ It was an open chimney with no holds except a sort of hand-rail rib which I could only grip with hands and knees. The hard place was only 6 ft. or so, and I got up, but hoped that I should not have to come down the same place. The rest of the way to the ridge was easy, and 5 minutes along it S., took me to the top at 4.30 P.M. Clouds had come up by now, so I only stayed 5 minutes and then tried to find a way to avoid the chimney. I could not, so after looking at it for a long time, I started down face to the rock. On reaching the worst part I could only grip the hand-rail and hunt with my toes for some sort of hold. I expected to slip and shortly did so, but as I knew the landing was a nearly flat slab I only slid about 4 ft., and landed on my feet with the loss of some skin and a button off my coat. On reaching the next bad place I knew it was impossible to step down backwards off the slab on to the small footholds in the rocky boss, but I could easily reach the ice before getting to it, where a dozen good steps took me down and round the boss, and I rejoined my old route. The step over the open bridge was nothing in descending and I followed my old tracks exactly, till at 6.30 I reached the surface of the glacier. I have never been so glad to get back to easy ground as I was this day, and on the spot vowed I would never tackle such a climb again, alone.

I saw some people at the hut and hurried on in case they could not get in. I had hidden the key under a stone, leaving a notice in English, which could only be read by respectable people, and not by smugglers. On reaching it at 7.30 I found an Italian family with a guide, and a German with his guide, all with their own keys. After two days' climbing, and absolute solitude for 48 hrs., I was very glad of their company, even at the expense of closed windows at night.

The next day I started at 9.30 and crossing the glacier walked over the easy Casnile Pass. I felt very slack, and my lunch halt lasted from 1 to 3 P.M. Even then I felt too lazy to face the Cacciabella Pass over to the new Sciora hut, and went down instead to the top of the Albigna waterfall.⁹ There was a rough stone hut here, but it was very dirty, and though I had lots of provisions (for I had left Maloja with four days' food) the only water near was the glacier

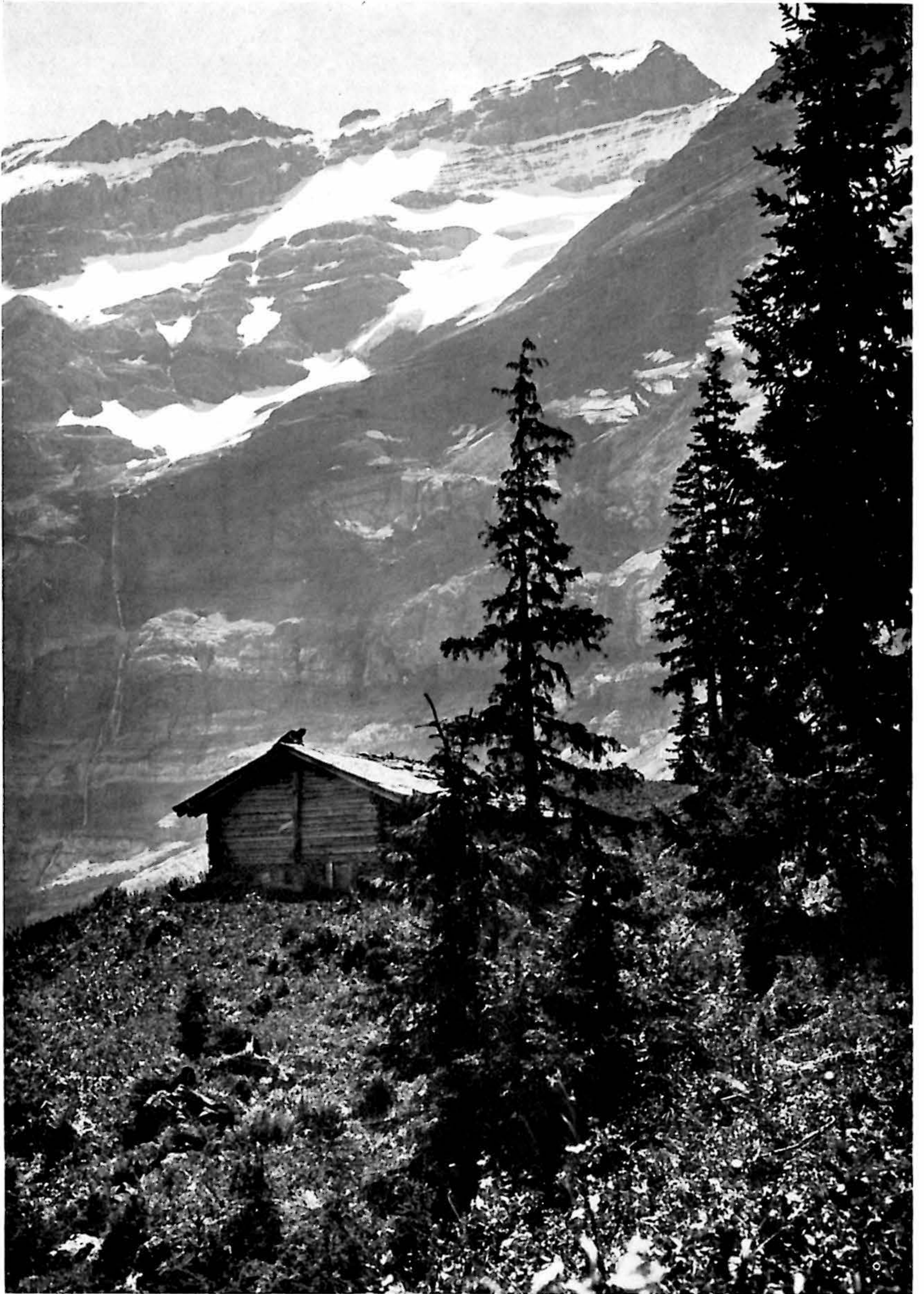
⁸ Mr. Hope took the now usual and far safer route.—*Editor.*

⁹ Just above which is now situated the excellent Albigna Club hut.—*Editor.*



Photo, J. Gaberell.

TSCHINGELHOERNER, MARTINSLOCH and neighbourhood of SEGNES Pass.



Photo, J. Gaberell.

Les DIABLERETS.

torrent. Tired as I was, I gave up the joys of a fourth night in the mountains and followed the path down to the Maloja road, reaching Vicosoprano at 8.30 P.M. Next day I drove to Maloja and slept most of the afternoon. The day on Torrone, though only a climb of 2500 ft., had taken more out of me than many a long day of 18 hours or more, on a big mountain. A good view of the peak is to be found in the S.A.C. *Jahrbuch*, 1911, p. 32. But at the time of my ascent there was less snow and more crevasses, while all the steep slopes consisted of pure ice, so that I could not follow the ridge leading up to the peak, and so avoid the said chasms.¹⁰

The following expedition was lazy throughout; I was the solitary passenger in a comfortable diligence from Reichenau to Flims. The heat was tremendous and I had not walked far from Flims before finding an ideal lunch-place in a glade of the forest, suitable for a luxurious feed and siesta. I thus consumed 6 hrs. in reaching the Segnes hut. Though I started at 6 next morning and loafed up to the dirty little glacier under Piz Segnes, I was too lazy to toil up this dull-looking mound and so walked straight up to the Martinsloch, the object of my expedition. The way was easy up a slow slope to the W. of the hole, and then by a broad shelf leading into it. As I remembered that Conway's strong party had found the descent difficult and he himself had confessed to descending an impossible chimney on the rope, I fully expected to return the same way and cross the Segnes Pass, but the chimney on the N. was not too bad and I strolled down over endless grassy alps to Elm.

This was the only time I have carried a novel with me and I must confess to having spent some time on the way down finishing it. But apart from the Loch itself, the whole walk was utterly dull with no view, as there was nothing to see. Not till I got home did I discover that even Jupiter may nod. For Conway passed the Martinsloch in the opposite direction, and his gymnastic descent was on the side which I mounted with my hands in my pockets.¹¹

In 1907 my only solitary climb was a walk from Trient to Champex by the Col de la Lys, a variant of the Fenêtre d'Arpette, pleasant, but without incident, except that a raw egg in my rucksack became confused with my spare stockings on the way. Next day at Orsières I found Larden, Brushfield and Legh Powell, and we went to Ferret and climbed the Tour Noir, a very long day.

Next year, 1908, I had only one climb alone—Mont Brulé. I started at 6.40 A.M. from Arolla, reaching the Col Collon at 11.30. Thence I followed the arête to the top of Mont Brulé, staying there from 1.55 to 3.15 P.M. I was in mist for a good deal of the time and had

¹⁰ The eastern P. Torrone is frequently impossible of access from the N. late in the season, and could not be climbed at all in 1929.—*Editor*.

¹¹ Others besides Sir Martin Conway have found trouble on this normally easy pass.—*Editor*.

to go cautiously, but had a fine clear view from the summit. Returning the same way, I reached the hotel at 6.50 P.M., my actual running time—and it was running—being $2\frac{3}{4}$ hrs., while the distance is just about 7 miles. There was no particular interest, though a fine walk, but as I had done almost all the Arolla mountains already, I did not think it likely that I should ever climb this dull peak with Kirkpatrick. It gave me a good view of the Dent d'Hérens route, which I wanted to see.

In 1909, on August 29, I walked over the Pas de Chèvres alone, finding it harder than I used to formerly. Perhaps the crack at the top has got narrower, and the slabs below more slippery. I slept at Pralong, the only guest, except for a Swiss padre and his wife with their pension of school-girls. They had gathered a mass of fungi and offered me some of the dish. The padre assured me he knew what was safe; as I did not think he would poison his pupils, I ate some. The flavour was not equal to mushrooms, but I was none the worse. There was an end-of-the-season dance for the servants that night, the band consisting of the porter with a mouth organ. He danced at the same time.

After a day's rest (why I do not know), I walked up to the Col d'Allèves and passing through it wandered round the head of the Val de Nendaz, coming at 5.20 P.M. to the Cleuson Alp. On inquiring the distance to Sion I was told 6 hrs. However, I did it in $3\frac{3}{4}$, getting in at 9 P.M. These two days gave me two new valleys. The Val de Dix is dreary at the top but pleasant below the cliff dividing the upper and lower parts. The Nendaz glen is just an average valley; very few tourists I should think ever pass through it. There is no hotel, and the mountains at its head can be more easily reached from Fionnay.

On September 2, 1909, I walked up from Sion to the Zanfleuron hotel. The following day was misty and a late arrival the night before induced me to take a lazy day on the Zanfleuron Glacier and the curious limestone wilderness at its foot. But on the 4th I started up behind the hotel at 6.30 A.M. and, keeping well under the Geltenhorn, reached the Brozet Glacier, where I breakfasted. I knew there was a route hence up the Wildhorn but it looked too difficult, so I traversed to the S. foot of point 3186 m., now called Mont Pucel, a prominent excrescence on the S. arête of the Wildhorn.

In 1903 I had attempted the Wildhorn with Brushfield from the Wildhorn hut. Bad weather delayed our start and on reaching the W. end of the long N.E. snow ridge, we did not feel equal to the snow grind, so descended on the S. and parted, as he was bound for the Rawyl to join friends, while I was making for Martigny for the same reason. But before we parted I had to promise not to try the Wildhorn alone that day. He felt partly responsible for me, and it would certainly have been unpleasant for him had I got into trouble. So I walked to Zanfleuron, a wild sort of barren limestone country with no difficulties except the col near Les Blèches.

The W. side is a cliff and I had to mount 800 ft. or so up towards Mont Pucel and descend the same, or more, on scree. My route by the Brozet Glacier avoided this scree and I traversed easily round by the E. to the snow ridge joining Mont Pucel to the Wildhorn, and walked up a broad gentle arête to the top of the latter. It was misty, so I had no view. I returned to the foot of Mont Pucel and went down by Donin to Sion. The whole expedition was perfectly easy and safe. The col between Mont Pucel and point 3166 m. is not as indicated on the map but is now a steep rock wall on the W.

On September 1, 1911, I began mildly enough with the Röthihorn and Simelihorn, which lie in front of the Faulhorn from Grindelwald. As this day was intended to be only a walk, I left my axe and did not even take a walking stick. I rather felt the want of an axe, as I found some ice between the two summits, and was only just able to avoid it. There were also some flat shelves of rock covered with *débris*, where I should have been glad of my axe.

Starting at 9.30 A.M. I only reached the foot of the Faulhorn at 4.30 P.M. As I had seen the view, I left the Faulhorn on my right and made as fast as I could for the Winteregg, the chief object of the day. This ridge is conspicuous from the Scheidegg railway, a straight level ridge with one curious deep bite taken out of it. It was broad enough at first, and I ran along, but near the gap it thinned out, and finally was not more than 2 ft. wide, fairly steep on the S. and sheer on the N., covered with tufts of long grass and loose *débris*. There was nothing to hold to and bad footing and, as there was nobody to see me, I finally crawled. I could not have believed a level grass-covered ridge could be so unpleasant. The last descent into the gap was rather steep and of course rotten, so I retreated some hundred yards and went down on the S. and round into the gap, which certainly is not a possible pass. Here I had afternoon tea and then walked on under the ridge to a corner where it fell steeply, giving me a grand sunset view over Lake Thun. As the sun left me (7.5) I made for home as hard as I could, for I had no lantern. I ran down the steep grass slopes of the Buss Alp, my arms waving wildly to help me to balance. Afterwards I saw signs of a moon which I had not thought of, and went slower, reaching Grindelwald at 9 P.M. I was glad I was not encumbered with Kirkpatrick or I should never have been able to wait up there for sunset,¹² a delay which entailed an unnecessarily late dinner.

On September 3 I took train to Lauterbrunnen, and after visiting the Trummelbach fall was lucky in just catching a train up the funicular to Grütsch Alp, walking on to Mürren to enjoy the famous view, which I had not seen for 32 years, so that it was really new to me.

At 7.30 A.M. next day I was off to the Schilthorn. I took my own

¹² I always preferred to get back in reasonable time for dinner!
—W. T. K.

route, avoiding the path, and nearly managed to get stuck on the rocks of Birg (2678 m.). Not content with this, I went right up the little glacier on the N. face, and just at the top had some awkward ice steps. Care was needed, as the ice slope was so thick with broken glass that I dared not touch it with my hand.

Two hours were well spent here—12 to 2—and then I walked over débris and some snow direct to the pass marked Telli, and found an easy enough way down into the Kienthal. This was a shorter route from the Schilthorn than the Sefinen Furgge would have been.

On September 5, 1911, feeling more ambitious, I decided to try the Blümlisalhorn. It is only 3000 ft. above the hut, and I concluded the little glacier would be easy enough at this season while I hoped the arête would not be bad, so walked up to the Frauenbalm hut, a hot day and a hot grind. Here I found two pleasant German students and together we speculated whether we were already at war with each other, as the Agadir crisis was then raging.

I started at 4.30 A.M. next day, as soon as it was light. To my consternation I found the glacier in a horrid mess. Patches of newish snow, ice, névé; ice-crevasses covered by 2 ft. of dirty snow, a thing I especially dislike even with a companion. I had to go with great caution and have seldom crossed such a dangerous glacier alone. On reaching the col between the Blümlisalpstöck and Weisse Frau, I saw the rest of my way. The traverse of the next bay of glacier was over easy and safe névé, although I was skirting the crevasses.

The bergschrund at the next col between the Blümlisalhorn and the Blümlisalp-Rothhorn looked worse from a distance than it really was, and I stepped over some fallen blocks of ice and up a short scree slope to the col, 6.30 A.M. The arête was easy enough though care was required. It consists of limestone, hand-holds were wanting, and one had to depend on foot-holds. The last part was constituted of snow and some ice. Here, as I had been told, I found steps cut, although of little use after yesterday's hot sun. However the slope was gentle and a dozen steps were all I had to cut. The day was cold with a N.E. wind and I began to wish I had not discarded my gloves as useless and unnecessary weight when climbing alone on small mountains. I reached the top at 7.45, the last part in mist, so I had little view. I allowed myself an hour for rest and refreshment and then the mist began to clear. But this, instead of making me wait for the view, hurried my departure. I thought of the vile glacier and wasted no more time. Fifty minutes took me to the col and another hour to the hut. I followed my route step for step, and was glad when I landed on rock near the hut at 10.30. The glacier had evidently experienced more sunshine than I had, for it was even worse than on the ascent.

I was 'taken in' over this climb and should not have tried it had I known beforehand of its condition. From the upper col I looked down at the Oeschinen See, meditating a safe retreat that way. The upper part was easy scree, and had I known that there



Photo, Ad Astra.

BLÜMLISALP Group from N.W.



Photo, P. Montandon.

WEISSE FRAU—BLÜMLISALPHORN ridge from Weisse Frau.

were no awkward cliffs lower down, I should have faced the long descent and re-ascent to the hut. I wasted a couple of hours at the hut, perhaps due to the strain of the bad glacier, and then made my way right down the Kienthal, visiting the various waterfalls and 'Kessels.'

Subsequently I regretted my wasted hours at the hut, for my luggage was in the post office at Reichenbach and I had to make a rush to get in before 8 P.M. and release it. I was just in time and very glad of a change and bath. The Blümlisalp glistened beautifully in the evening light, and I could hardly believe I had walked from its summit since sunrise. It is only 11 miles, but I have never before had such a long tramp down a valley after a climb.

The next day I was justifiably lazy, and took the train to Spiez. I found the heat there very oppressive, and after dinner got into pyjamas, sleeping on the top of my bed.

Next morning, September 8, was hot but fine and bright and, after some hesitation I again made for the hills. Train to Frutigen, where I lunched and laid in stores. Then diligence to Kandersteg and a walk by the Gemmi path to Schwarzenbach. A gloomy and dirty inn,¹³ but welcome, as I got in only 5 minutes before a storm.

I was off at 5 next morning, *en route* for the Balmhorn, though the day was doubtful with a north-west wind. Retracing my steps down the Gemmi path, I found a good track which traversed the foot of the Klein Rinderhorn to the Schwarz Glacier, which name is fully justified. Depositing my spare clothes and food under a rock I walked up the glacier slowly, for I was short in the wind. The bergschrund at the foot of the Zagengrat was well bridged and old snow and loose rock slopes led to the Zagen Pass at 8.45, halts on the way taking 40 minutes. The view was fine, though rather hazy: breakfast lasted till 10. A path led along the almost level ridge: this part was followed by snow at a gentle angle, finally ice. The slope was still quite gentle, but the slushy snow was not deep enough to give a foot-hold, and I had to cut 150 steps (I counted on the way down) in the gentlest ice slope I have ever cut in. How I wished for crampons! At last I got to the top of the Klein Balmhorn and expected a few minutes more would lead me to the main peak, only 100 ft. higher and at no distance to speak of. But there is a little saddle between which was in a very soft state, while the crevasses seemed to follow no obvious rule. I must have taken nearly half an hour feeling my way across and did not reach the top till 12.50 P.M. The view was hazy, which was disappointing, as I believe it is notable. Also I could not make my stove burn satisfactorily; it is a very small one, and I think it was the first time I had used it on snow; it was also too weak.

¹³ Excellent in 1927.—*Editor*.

I got back to the Zagen Pass in 65 minutes, reaching the Schwaren-
bach inn at 6.30. Very thirsty, I nearly drained the water-bottle
in my bedroom. At dinner I demanded water. The waitress
refused, saying it was unfit to drink, and I was obliged to have some
mineral water. I thought at the time this was a fraud, in order to
boost their wine, but some Englishmen later in the evening told
me they had seen the water supply, a pool covered with green! I
was further convinced of the quality of the water during the next
day—or it may have been the large supply of fine pears I had
bought at Kandersteg.

I had studied the route up the Altels as I walked to the
Schwarenbach, but when I reached the Balmhorn I at once saw that
the connecting ridge was in no condition for me, so gave that idea up.

September 10, 1911, was a doubtful morning with N.W. wind.
I started at 8.20 A.M., found the plank bridge over the Lämmernbach
directly and so went up its left bank to the glacier. Still keeping
on this bank, I mounted by some rocks and got on the glacier a
little way up and followed it to the plateau below the upper icefall.
I wanted to go up the Wildstrubel and descend to Lenk, but had
no information of any sort but the map, and could not be sure from
that. It looked bad in fact, and I knew the N.W. arête was beyond
my inclinations as an untried descent, for I had seen it in 1903,
when with Brushfield I had ascended from the Enstligen Alp and
followed the crest, descending by the Plaine Morte Glacier to the
Iffigen Alp. So I knew that I could mount to the col W. of the
Gross Strubel and retrace my way to Adelboden if the descent to
Lenk looked too hard. But the long scree couloir (not snow, as
on the map) deterred me, so I went to the S. end of the icefall.
The centre was impossible and the N. meant a long walk over
névé. On the S. was a rock wall, rather forbidding and exposed to
some extent to falling ice and stones, but once up this I saw my
way was easy and safe. There was a long step over the chasm
between rock and glacier and a scramble up the rock—wet limestone
with a damp gulf below. Some easy rocks led me to my left; I
mounted as hard as I could—just as well, as some ice fell a few
minutes later, which would have upset me if nothing worse. Then
up a little ice slope, where I could get out on to a promontory,
which was safe, so I accordingly sat down and ate pears. Then
up more ice-slopes, cutting at first and then scrambling in soft
snow on ice, till the slope eased off and the snow became good.
I could now move easily and dodge any stones coming from the
ridge above me, but none came near me and a gentle ascent due W.
took me on to the ridge between point 3157 m. and the Lämmern-
joch. It was the flattest ridge I was ever on, 30 ft. wide, level,
rather like a badly-built stone pier. It was a delightful and easy
pathway, bounded on each side by the great snow-fields, and quite
unlike anything else I have seen in the Alps. The descent of the
Rossruck to the Berliner hut in the Zillerthal is somewhat similar

and the glaciers finer, but it is steep instead of level. I walked along to the Lämmernjoch where I met a guide and tourist who had come up from Sierre. They asked about my route, and I tried to explain that, though easy, it would be getting less secure as the sun got on to the ridge, and that being a party of two they would be safer on the N. side of the glacier. However, they took my route and I suppose got down in safety. I reached the W. Strubel at 1 P.M. and lunched on the W. side, trying to avoid a curious gusty wind that blew at intervals. It was so strong that I had to put big stones on my food bags and even on my aluminium pans when not in use. Thin flakes of shaly rock were caught up into the air. Then followed absolute calm: one piece of paper escaped and fluttered about in the air over the Lämmern Glacier for fully five minutes, before coming back to rest not far from me. At 2.30 I set off down easy snow and débris to the right bank of the Rüzli Glacier, and walked down it till an icefall drove me to the bank again. Looking across at the lower side of this I saw a curious ice formation. A large glacier surface stream came down the far W. side of the icefall, forming a waterfall. Below this it was caught by a long crevasse that had closed up below the icefall, the stream being led very nearly straight across the glacier for half its width. Bearing away from the ice, I followed a débris-covered buttress down to a col, from which a grass slope led towards the Fluhseeli. It was my last day in the Alps and the situation was perfect. The stream, leaving the lake near a grassy bank, disappeared over the cliffs below me. I looked right down the Lenk valley and the afternoon light on the Gastlösen and grass summits nearby was perfect. So though it was only 2½ hours since luncheon, I determined to have a good tea and enjoy the view. This I did with all the greater comfort having seen that a good new path had replaced the rough track down the cliffs. The walk down to the valley was pleasant and I diverged to examine one of the springs. The water gushed out over a flat projecting stratum of limestone, the grass and flowers growing thickly down to where the broad stream poured out. It was 8.15 before I got to Lenk, the last few miles on the flat being very wearisome after such a pleasant day. In fact, perhaps the pleasantest solitary day I have had. No long grind uphill, a peak traversed by routes both quite new, the only risky part early in the day with no need to descend by it; plenty of time, food, with fine weather and fair views.

On September 8, 1913, I walked from St. Maurice to Bex, and thence to Les Plans, one of the hottest walks I ever had. My rucksack showed it. Next day I went up the valley to the Col des Martinets and along the Grande Vire, a fine gently ascending shelf overlooking the Rhône Valley. This shelf took only one hour of easy going and not two as Ball states. Perhaps the military occupation has improved the path, as there are forts and huts in the rock all along and about the Col des Martinets. From the end

of the Vire it is an easy walk to the top of the Grande Dent de Morcles. Unluckily it was cloudy all day and the summit was in the clouds. I found sentries on the top as manœuvres were going on: they said the summit was at present forbidden to tourists. I explained as best I could that I was there, could see nothing owing to fog, and would not mention their presence at Les Plans, the 'enemy' headquarters. They then helped me to procure some snow and I had a meal. Afterwards the sentries showed me the short cut down, a new path descending direct on to the Grande Vire; it brought me back to the Col des Martinets in about three-quarters of an hour.

It rained all night and most of next day, but cleared in the evening and I prepared for a fine day. The soldiers were off at 2.30 A.M. on the 11th to attack the fortifications round the head of the Val de Nant. I followed at 4.5, but was too late. Mounting the path towards the Grand Moeveran hut, I heard much firing and saw some flashes and signalling. But by the time I reached, soon after daylight, a point whence I could see the whole valley, the fight was over and the attack had failed. The upper part of the path was slippery with new snow and glazed rock; some ice and stones fell near me at times. I reached the Frête des Sailles at 8.45 and the hut 5 minutes later, having halted for 55 minutes on the way. Here I found a guide and a Swiss girl, who had come up from the Rhône Valley. They had meant to climb the Grand Moeveran, but as it was too dangerous from new snow and falling stones, were going to the Dent aux Favres instead, and asked me to join them. However, I wanted breakfast, in any case, and said I might follow later. I did not do so till 10.30, for after breakfast I delayed, looking longingly at the Moeveran. I hated to give it up, but the local guide's advice was emphasised by a big fall of stones, and I set off at once after them. I was glad of their tracks, as everything was covered by new snow and I had not studied the route. Keeping W. of the Petit Moeveran and E. of the Pointe d'Aufallaz, where one short drop was not quite easy, I reached the Dent aux Favres, rejoining the others at 12.50 P.M. The view was magnificent and I could point out to the guide many mountains he did not know. They soon left me, going down to the Rhône Valley again. I wrote down the peaks I could identify.

[Here follows a list of 65 great Oberland, Pennine, Mont Blanc, Graian and Dauphiné peaks, nearly all of which had been climbed by Mr. Hope.—*Editor.*]

With the exception of the Grandes Rousses these were all identified without a map, one or two being uncertain. The Grandes Rousses showed up very clear, right at the end of the Chamonix valley, and I did not know what they could be till I returned to Les Plans. I had never seen them from any point in Switzerland before that I know of. Most of the view was visible all day from 9 A.M. till 7 P.M., and I never had such a continuous fine view on

a long walk. Leaving at 1.45 P.M. I did not attempt to follow the ridge, but kept down on the S.E. over easy ground by the Col de Fenestral, reaching the end of the Grande Vire, after an hour's rest and meal, at 5.45. An easy hour's walk took me to the Col des Martinets, and I was surprised to find that all the soldiers had vanished. In spite of the late hour, I was loathe to leave the glorious view and plunge into the dark valley of Nant, so followed on to the Pointe des Perriblancs, and down beyond to the head of the Javernaz valley. It was just sunset and I could delay no more, so raced down over grass slopes to Javernaz, 8 P.M. A quarter of an hour's halt for supper, and I was off along a good path, later road, to Les Plans at 9.20 P.M., more supper and early bed after 17 hours of the most perfect walk I ever had. From 9 A.M. to 7 P.M. there was never a moment when I had not a view worth a day's walk in itself. It was not till 3.30 P.M. next day that I lazily started for the Col des Essets, a pleasant walk, though I suffered loss of time by disregarding Ball's warning to keep to the path. Reaching the col at 7 P.M., I spent some time looking at the route up the Diablerets and then ran down over grass to Anzeindaz. There are two so-called inns here and it was hard to choose in the dark. Finally I think I got to the worst one.

It was certainly primitive; one enters into the common room and kitchen of the chalet and on two sides of this are dark rooms connected with cheeses. On the other side was a little *salle-d-manger*, apparently also the spare bedroom, as a boy of ten or so came into it and calmly went to bed while I was having supper. Above it I had a nice clean little room.

I had a couple of eggs for supper, with bread and butter, and the same for breakfast, so the bill of 7 francs was not cheap.¹⁴ It rained early (3.30) next day, September 13, so I did not start till 7 A.M., weather still doubtful. However, I walked to the highest grass under the col in an hour and a half, and after a rest of 20 minutes, decided it was worth trying. The route is not very easy to find, and one has to zig-zag about a bit in the lower part. Then bearing E. at the foot of steep slabs, I got round a corner into the foot of a big gully ending there abruptly. Thence the route, bearing ever E. and upwards, is plain. There is no real climbing, but many loose stones and places with little or no hand-hold. The slope is gentle and there is no reason to slip, if you are careful with your feet. On the other hand there would be no possibility of stopping if you did slip and the big gully ends abruptly. I did not follow Ball's advice and keep W. of it, but crossed quite low down, and this from the tracks seemed the usual way. I reached the ridge a little above the Col du Refuge at 10.30 and spent an hour over a chilly meal. Thence I followed the ridge easily past the ruined Refuge to the Pas de Lustre. Here one or two stanchions

¹⁴ In 1913!—*Editor*.

helped me, and the last part of the ridge was broad and easy, in fact it was not a ridge at all. I gained the rocky summit at 12.15 P.M. thence going a little way towards the snow summit¹⁵ which is 100 ft. higher. But the mist became very thick and I saw it was hopeless to think of going over it and down to the Ormont Valley. I did not trouble to go on to the summit in the fog, but started down at 12.35 and almost at once it began to snow very hard, large wet flakes. I had followed tracks up the last rock-face, making arrows in the snow patches that I came across, but now I soon lost my route, and, on reaching an arrow, could not remember whether the arrow pointed the direction of ascent or descent—it was in a horizontal snow band. I got a little flurried as there was only the one way down by the stanchions, and I could not see 10 yards. The rocks were wet and there was no ridge to follow. But in a few minutes I struck ground I recognised and reached the *mauvais pas*. It went easily enough, though I had to approach it by sitting down on a slab covered with slush. At 1.15 to 1.30 P.M. I got below the snow storm, could see, and took a short halt to recuperate. I got off the rocks at 2.25 without trouble, though they were wet and of a type easier to ascend than descend. I reached Anzeindaz at 3 and Gryon at 6.45 P.M. The lower part of the walk was delightful and I had my last happy meal under a tree in great comfort and contentment.

[We publish Mr. Hope's interesting paper with pleasure, but, at the same time, disassociate the JOURNAL from sharing the lamented writer's views or methods of solitary mountaineering.—*Editor, 'A.J.'*]

THE FIRST TRAVERSE OF THE TWIN PEAKS OF
MOUNT KENYA.

THE traverse of the Peaks of Mount Kenya was a project which had been occupying my mind for nearly two years—perhaps even before Wyn Harris and I had succeeded in making the ascent of the Twin Peaks in January 1929. The first ascent of the highest peak—Batian—had been made by Sir Halford Mackinder with the late César Ollier and Joseph Brocherel, who climbed the S.E. face of Nelion as far as the head of the S. ridge, and, failing to reach the summit of Nelion, traversed to the Diamond Glacier reaching the summit of Batian thereby.¹ Our route was also up the S.E. face of Nelion but we traversed the latter and crossed over to Batian.

¹⁵ *Sic*—Mr. Hope has omitted the name of the peak. It appears to be the Diablerets.—*Editor.*

¹ *A.J.* 20, 102–10.