

approach in badly mapped and much cut-up country. But they are not less worth climbing for that, and I wish I could convey the joys of camping in these hills, which have an arid beauty of their own, though it is perhaps not likely to appeal to eyes accustomed to the snows and fresh greenness of the Alps. It is a pleasant life, this trekking through the hills with ice axe, rod and rifle, lazy or energetic as you care to make it, untrammelled and care-free, under skies that are practically cloudless from June to September. You can camp for a week in one place, if it takes your fancy, or move on through the deep valleys to new spots every day, in search of pools where monster trout await the fly or crags where the horns of ibex and moufflon grow to unimagined vastness. Though there are no Grépons or Brenva routes, there are mountains around you for the climbing, and when you have killed your 2 lb. trout and the proud horns of your great ram hang before the tent, you can slip out in the bitter dawn, ice axe in hand and rope on shoulder (who knows, it *may* be useful), and steer a course for the chosen peak, lulled by the familiar music of hobnails on rock and certain of yet another perfect day among hills whose fierceness and loneliness are an abiding charm.

D. L. BUSK.

Note on the Map.—Reduced from General Staff surveys, except in the region N. and W. of the Asalek pass, where Miss Stark's map has been followed with some minor alterations suggested by our experience. I am greatly indebted to Miss Stark for permission to incorporate her map in this sketch. I hope that further work during 1933 will render possible the publication of her whole map on its original scale of 4 miles to 1 inch.

In the present sketch map only the minimum of detail has been inserted for the sake of clearness.

THE FIRST ASCENT OF MT. OUBLIETTE.

AS a rule we do not remember the mountains materially as they are, but rather in a particular mood which in turn is usually transitory and often subjective. Of the Ramparts we had four very distinct and contrasting mental recollections, all extremely vivid. The first impression was that of the view from Meadow Creek at sunset, with the summit peaks of the Ramparts appearing in the distance through the pines as black silhouettes against the setting sun. The next view is that across Amethyst Lake, in full daylight, with tremendous contrasts of form and colour; the sight is of great inspiration, although æsthetically a bit too violent. The third view, profoundly real, of a much more thoughtful nature, was that which we had from the summit of Simon Peak. Forest fire had filled the huge gap with a bluish haze. The peaks of the Ramparts as seen from

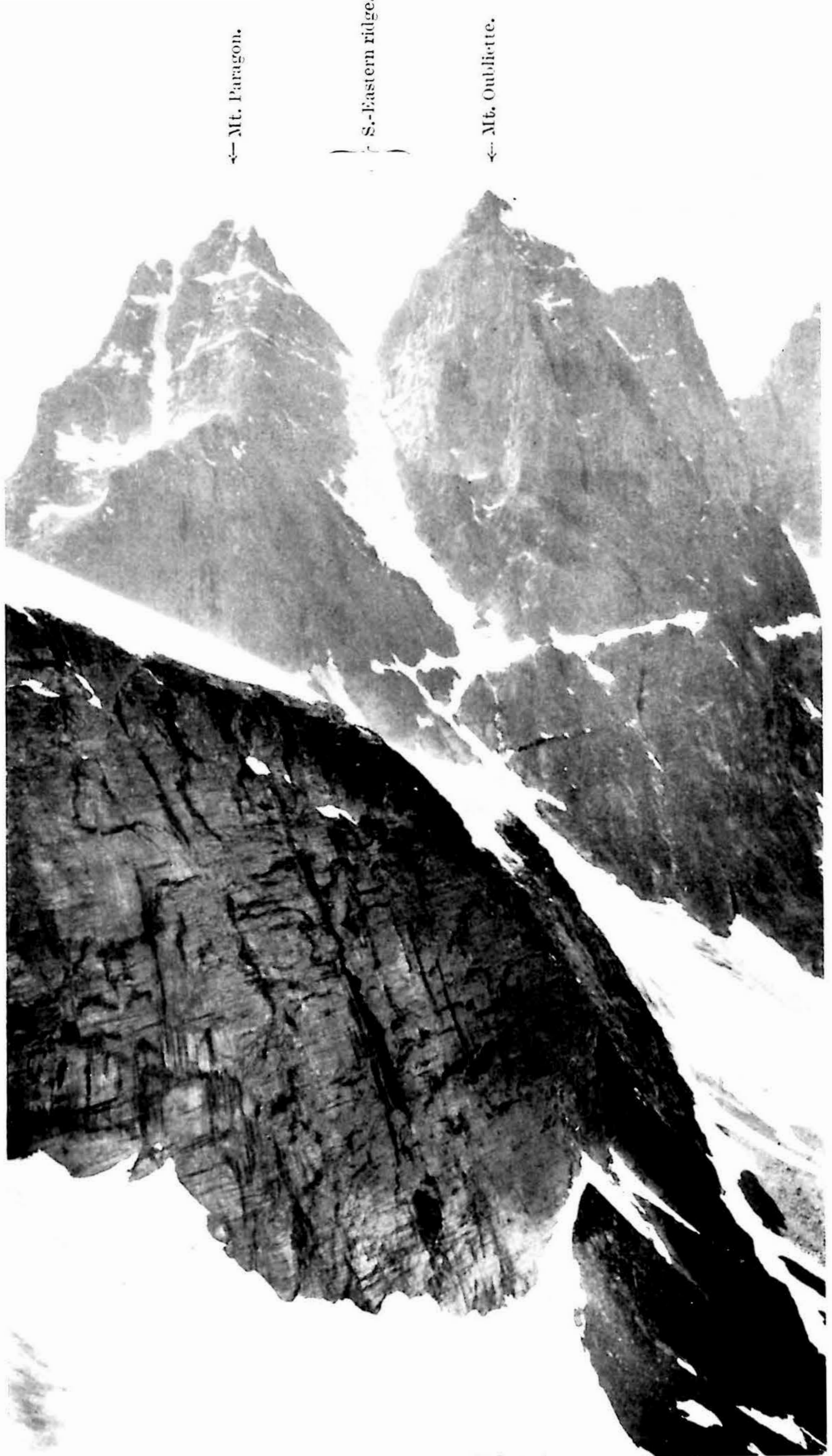
the west are not exactly æsthetic, they are human; they form a huge, black, grim wall of ice and rock, bearing signs of the physical weakness of the structure. This face of the mountain offers the easiest route of access to all the peaks. The final view, the most impressive, heroic but overpowering, we had from the summit of Surprise Point. Here the mountain is built along straight lines, with huge couloirs, separating vertical walls and ridges that resemble broken columns.

It may seem strange to some that with many districts of the Canadian Rockies still offering a more virgin ground for the climber we should select the relatively frequented group of the Ramparts. One is conscious of a progressive dislike for long exploratory trips which, at least in the Canadian Rockies, may lead to climbing a peak of doubtful Alpine interest, perhaps after long days of hard work. Exploration is unquestionably highly interesting, but if you do wish to *climb*, it is not necessarily a desirable thing at all times. It is not advocated by this that the climber's ideal is a perpendicular rock wall just outside a hut, requiring the employment of all the paraphernalia of up-to-date technique. These are both extremes contrary to the spirit of mountain climbing, calling for hard fights with mountains of all sorts and in all moods. While sometimes willing to avail himself of artificial means in climbing, the real climber as a rule avoids such excesses as have been reached in certain portions of the Eastern Alps. These are more a local phenomenon brought about by the progressive exploitation of anything that sounds new or nearly new and the development of a super-technique. However, the directness of the climbing offered by the Ramparts makes them extremely desirable from the standpoint of thoroughly enjoying a climbing holiday.

Our first objective peak was Mt. Oubliette. Atmospheric conditions made it the only one, but we found it of such a standard as fully to justify dedicating our whole summer's freedom to it.

We arrived at the Memorial Cabin on Pennstock Creek by the Portal Creek route on the evening of July 24, 1932. A torrential rain delayed our start until 7.30 next morning. With Hans Fuhrer we crossed Para Pass, proceeding along the great ledge that crosses the western face of Mt. Paragon till we reached the Paragon-Oubliette col (12.20). The weather took a definite change for the worse, with a cold sharp wind and a fine drizzle.

We turned to the S.E. ridge, which rises very abruptly for over 600 ft., in a succession of gigantic steps broken by vertical fissures. The way is easy for about 50 ft.; but after that the difficulties were continuous and such as to leave each passage a matter of permanent mental record. The first difficulty was an overhang, which the leader could overcome only by using shoulders and ice axes to supply the missing holds. The roof of the overhang was made by a smooth steep slab, narrowing and folding into a short crack, leaning to the left. This passage was extremely difficult, and Hans badly injured



Photo, M. Strumia.]

MT. OUBLIETTE (RIGHT, 10,100 FT.) SEEN FROM SURPRISE POINT.
LEFT, MT. PARAGON.

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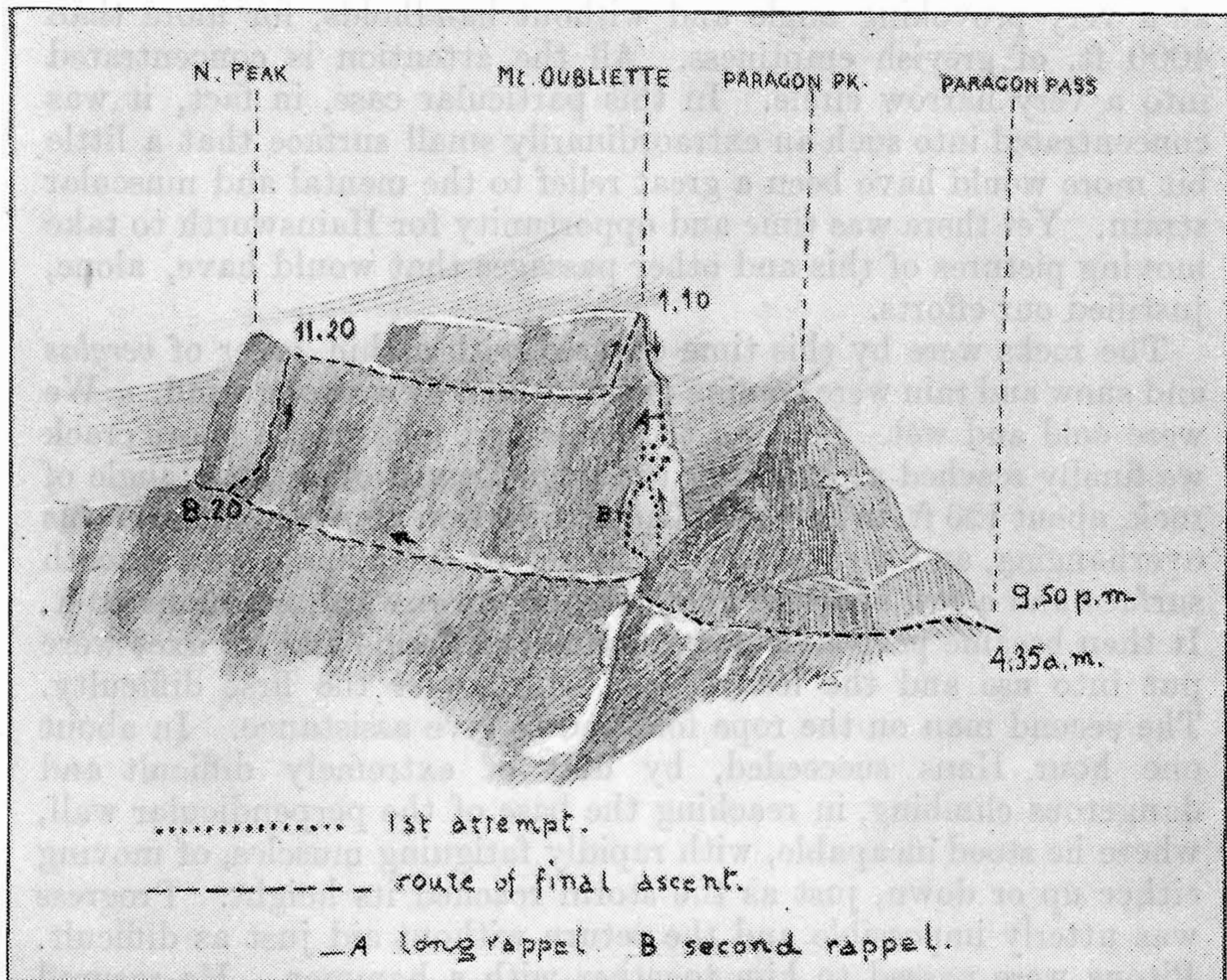
his hand in forcing his way along a narrow fissure. It began to snow, but we were now conscious only of the rock and intent on our slow progress over it. We proceeded for a short time zig-zagging across the ridge, by a series of vertical steps, each leading relentlessly and without interruption to the next. A smooth high wall soon after stopped our progress along the ridge. The Amethyst Lake slope at this point was absolutely vertical and lost itself above and below in the haze of falling snow. We crossed to the western face, and proceeded horizontally along a narrow ledge, leaning downward at a very provoking angle and without handholds, for more than 4000 ft. of greyish emptiness. All the attention is concentrated into a very narrow circle. In this particular case, in fact, it was concentrated into such an extraordinarily small surface that a little bit more would have been a great relief to the mental and muscular strain. Yet there was time and opportunity for Hainsworth to take moving pictures of this and other passages that would have, alone, justified our efforts.

The rocks were by this time covered with a thin layer of *verglas* and snow and rain were coming down, driven by a strong wind. We were cold and wet. Leaving the ledge and following a short crack we finally reached a portion of the ridge formed of an open angle of rock, about 120 ft. in height. The first portion above a platform was overhanging, and then proceeded at a very steep angle with smooth surface and a few abortive holds, leaning downward, for about 60 ft. It then became perpendicular. Shoulders, hands and ice axes were put into use and the leader was helped over the first difficulty. The second man on the rope followed to give assistance. In about one hour Hans succeeded, by dint of extremely difficult and dangerous climbing, in reaching the base of the perpendicular wall, where he stood incapable, with rapidly fatiguing muscles, of moving either up or down, just as the storm reached its height. Progress was utterly impossible and the return without aid just as difficult. Pitons were passed to him together with a hammer. He secured himself and, after a short rest, doubling his own rope, contrived to slide down. It was 3.30 when we turned back, 200 ft. from the summit. We could not return by the route of the morning. We kept away from the ridge towards the western face. Two more pitons and a *rappel*, under an extremely violent and cold wind with snow, brought us at 6 P.M. to the Oubliette-Paragon col.

By this time the ice axes were humming with blue flickers and thunder was crashing on the rocks above. As we stood on some precarious ledges deciding what the next step should be, we were suddenly enveloped by a bluish light with the whistling and cracking noise of a whip. The light appeared to lengthen into a streak, reaching through the mist towards high clouds whence came a tremendous roar. The rocks were now covered with fresh snow and the wind very strong. Below Para Pass a thick blanket of fog added to our misery. After a victory it is not difficult to preserve

one's good humour under trying conditions, but in defeat it takes more than most of us could offer. There was one consolation: when we reached the flats below the moraine it did not seem to any of us objectionable to sink knee-deep into the thousand muddy water channels. We were in the hut at 10.20, after 15 hrs. of very exhausting labour.

Our second adventure on Mt. Oubliette began at 3.20 A.M. on July 27. There was a cold breeze that morning, the snow was hard



Figures indicate time of final ascent. A also represents highest point reached in first attempt.

and we felt in the clear air the promise of a great day. At 4.35 we crossed Para Pass and turned once more to follow the corridor just as the great corniches on Mt. Simon were lit up by the rising sun. The traverse of the snow couloir below the Paragon-Oubliette col was awkward. Hans had not found snow in his first visit there. At 8.20 we were close to the Oubliette-Dungeon col, a thin wall of tottering rocks. We retraced our steps for a short distance and started up the western face by crossing two ledges. Then came a steep, difficult step with an overhang, followed by a 25-ft. vertical slab of great difficulty, which a piton and *Karabiner* made however reasonably safe. We then zigzagged right and then left,



Photo, M. Strumia.]

OUBLIETTE, PARAGON COL.

To the left, the S.E. ridge followed in the first attempt.



Photo, M. Strumia.]

LEFT—THE W. FACE OF MT. OUBLIETTE.

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Photo, M. Strumia.]

MT. DUNGEON. SEEN FROM THE W. FACE OF
MT. OUBLIETTE.



Photo, M. Strumia.]

THE SUMMIT OF MT. OUBLIETTE SEEN FROM THE
N. PEAK.

finding a break in the upper wall which brought us to sunshine and the summit ridge at 11.20, a few feet to the S. of the northern summit. The sight was well beyond power of description; as we stood there a huge portion of the cornice silently sank disappearing down the immense couloir; next came the roar of the avalanche stilling us in our position until the last rocks had crashed 3000 ft. below over the small glacier to the moraines.

We roped down a vertical passage, no more than 10 ft. in height, where we left a rope loop to secure our return. Then we recrossed the whole western face, this time no more than 100 ft. below the summit. The traverse proved delicate and in addition subject to snow and rock falls. We thus came once more within sight of the S.E. ridge, when turning directly up the western face, suddenly and without further difficulty, found ourselves on the broad expanse of the summit.

At 2.40 we left the summit and followed down the whole of the S.E. ridge. The first steps were easy but did not last long. Then we began a slow and difficult descent over a series of short vertical steps with much time consumed wandering along rotten ledges looking for the vertical wall that had stopped us in our first attempt. We reached it at length (5.15 P.M.), leading off to the left from the ridge. As we first looked down upon the open vertical rock angle, our hearts sank. Our spare rope, shortened materially by the loop left on the summit ridge, could barely reach the inclined smooth rocks upon which Hans had struggled more than 60 ft. below us. But there was no other choice—a rope ring was fixed with two pitons, and then we began the descent. When the spare rope gave out we scrambled down smooth rocks; then came a combination of pendulum-swinging and side-jumping for the first man down, and some acrobatic work for the others to reach a platform considerably off to one side. This aerial journey took us one hour; the only victim being a camera that came out of one of the sacks as they were lowered and went tumbling down some 300 ft. However, the said camera jealously kept the impressions stored within and, although reduced to a rather pitiful condition, served its purpose for the rest of the trip.

For the remainder of the descent we followed the route used on our previous return—a long, weary journey. Darkness overtook us at the Para Pass (9.50 P.M.), and then came the eternal scramble down the snow couloir, followed by loose rocks, soft glacier, unstable moraine, with the final bath in the cold stream of the flats. This appendix to the climb was ugly; it had only one redeeming feature—that moment when one is rid of the abominable weight of the sack. That happened to us at almost 1 A.M. on July 28.

On the same day we moved our camp to the timber line below Drawbridge Pass, accompanied the whole way by an uninterrupted and very pictorial series of thunder-storms with violent wind and rain. On July 29 we thoroughly explored the approaches to the

N.W. ridge and the western face of Mt. Dungeon. On crossing the great couloir from Mt. Redoubt we had the dubious distinction of just missing a formidable rock fall; we descended upon Bennington Glacier, which we followed to the end, returning to camp by way of Drawbridge Pass. The unfavourable weather definitely precluded any possibility of further attempts on Mt. Dungeon. We feel unquestionably, however, that a route can be worked out on the N. arête and W. face.

The Ramparts have impressed us as being a group of tremendous interest to the climber desiring rock-work of difficult type. Up till now the whole western face overlooking Amethyst Lake has been practically untouched. The Memorial hut is located in such position that it facilitates the climbs only in the southern portion of the group as far as Mt. Oubliette. Even so, the hut will be a great help as soon as a good trail is built along Amethyst Lake.

M. M. STRUMIA.

W. R. HAINSWORTH.

IN MEMORIAM.

ALFRED VALENTINE VALENTINE-RICHARDS.

(1866-1933.)

ALFRED VALENTINE VALENTINE-RICHARDS, whose death occurred suddenly on April 5, was elected a member of the Club in 1897 and of the Committee in 1902, when he undertook to edit the revised *Ball's Guide*.

My acquaintance with him, like that of T. H. Fitzpatrick, who has contributed to this obituary notice, dates from 1880, when he came to Uppingham. I well remember the amusement caused at a Masters' meeting in Edward Thring's study by the recitation of this new boy's full name. From Uppingham he won an open scholarship at Christ's, Cambridge, and in 1885 his name appeared in the Mathematical Tripos as 4th Wrangler. A year later he had taken a First in the Theological Tripos, and had won the Carus Greek Testament Prize and the Crosse (University) Scholarship. For a short time he lectured at Selwyn College; but the care of an invalid step-mother claimed him for some years of comparative retirement at Wimbledon, until, in 1904, his College invited him to accept a Fellowship, with a view to Ordination and a lectureship in Theology. From 1906 to 1926 he held the office of Dean at Christ's, and in 1910 the Bishop of Ely (Dr. Chase) made him one of his examining chaplains.

Through a chance meeting at Kandersteg in 1895, he and I began a series of climbing seasons in the Alps, with H. T. Rhoades of Rugby, in 1905 and 1908. The last of these was in 1913, when we visited