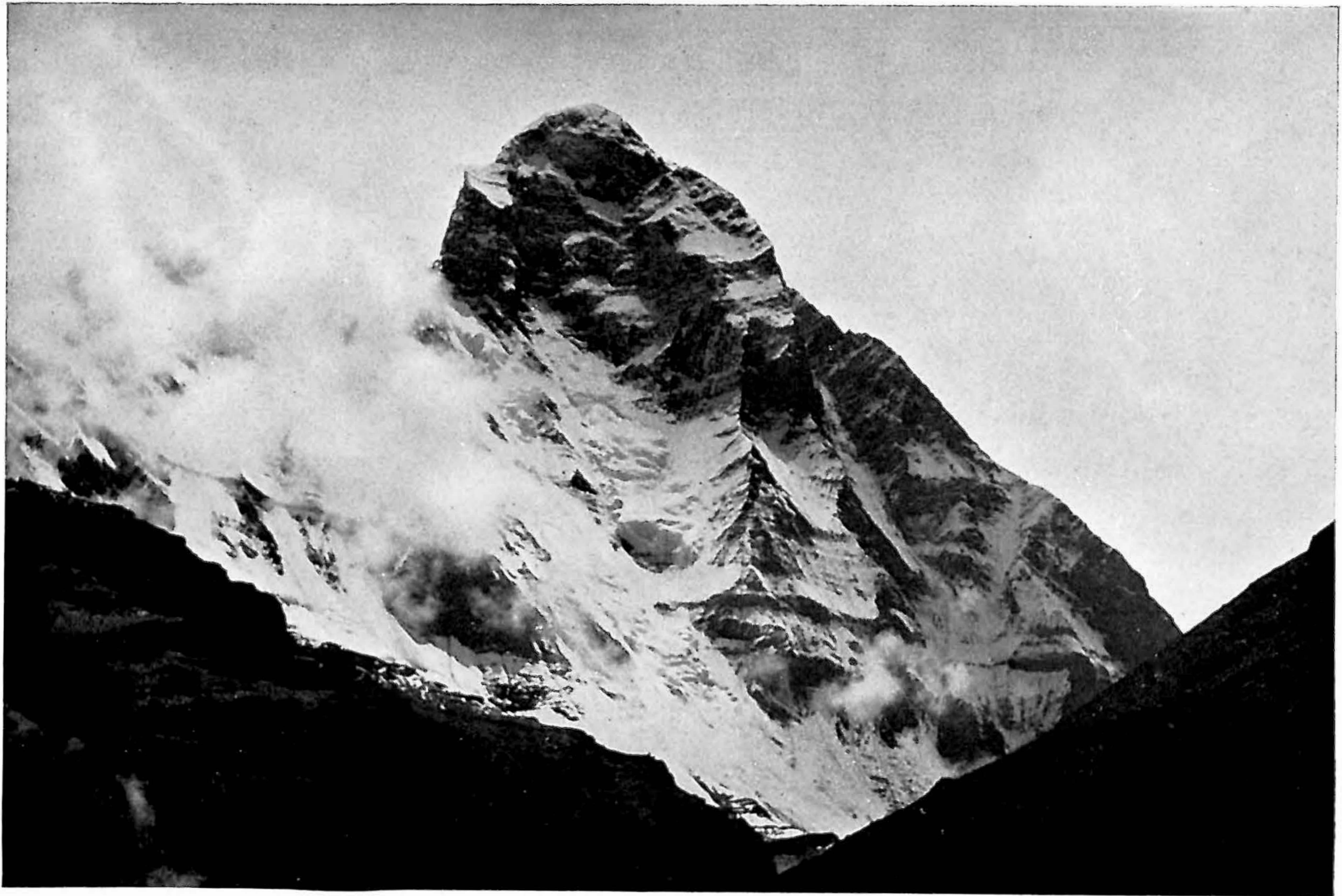


## NANDA DEVI, 1936

## A NOTE

The British-American Himalayan Expedition of 1936 consisted of A. Carter, A. B. Emmons, C. S. Houston, W. F. Loomis, P. Lloyd, N. E. Odell, H. W. Tilman, and T. Graham Brown. Two of its objects were to attempt a major Himalayan peak during the monsoon, and to do so with as little aid as possible from native porters on the mountain itself. Nanda Devi (25,660 ft., in Garhwal) was eventually selected for the attempt, and, with this end in view, Tilman ascended the Rishi Nala with Loomis in June and made depots of porters' food for later use, then returning to Ranikhet. Save Carter, who joined it a month later, the party left Ranikhet on July 10 with 6 Sherpa porters and 37 Dhotial coolies. On July 20, at Joshimath, 11 extra porters from Mana village were engaged, and the whole party set out from Tapoban on July 21. The Outer Basin of Nanda Devi was gained over the Rhana Khori Pass, and the near bank of the Rhamani Torrent was reached on July 26. The torrent was in spate and the 37 Dhotial coolies refused to go further next morning, but the Sherpas and the fine Mana men remained loyal. The defection of the coolies enforced heavy carrying for all the remaining members of the party, and double journeys had henceforth to be made.

The difficult Rishi Gorge was successfully ascended by Shipton and Tilman's 1934 route and the Inner Basin was entered. Camps on the meadows and on the right (N.) moraine of the South glacier led to the foot of the S. (or S.E.) ridge of Nanda Devi. Carter having now joined the party, an advanced base camp (about 16,600 ft.) was made a little distance below a neck in the ridge and about 1000 ft. above the level of the glacier. This camp was finally established on August 7, about a week later than had been planned, and a heavy snowfall caused further delay. The Mana men having been sent back with one sick Sherpa porter, the rest of the party established Camp I (about 19,000 ft.) on August 11, three 'Logan' tents and one bivouac tent being pitched on built-up ledges. Emmons now remained in charge of the base camp, and on August 14 Camp II (about 20,400 ft.) was established on a very narrow ledge. All the Sherpa porters went completely out of action at or below this level, and the carrying of loads had to be done entirely by the seven climbing members of the party. A narrow and steep snow ridge led to Camp III (about 21,200 ft.), which was established on a snow shoulder on August 16. All the climbers reached this camp by August 20, and further work was delayed by a severe blizzard on August 22 and 23. This camp was re-established about 400 or 500 ft. higher on the snow shoulder (Camp IV, about 21,700 ft.) on August 24, and on the following day a bivouac tent was pitched



*Photo, T. Graham Brown.]*

NANDA DEVI (FROM W.) FROM 'PISGAH RIDGE.'  
The route of ascent is on right (S.), but is round the corner (not seen).

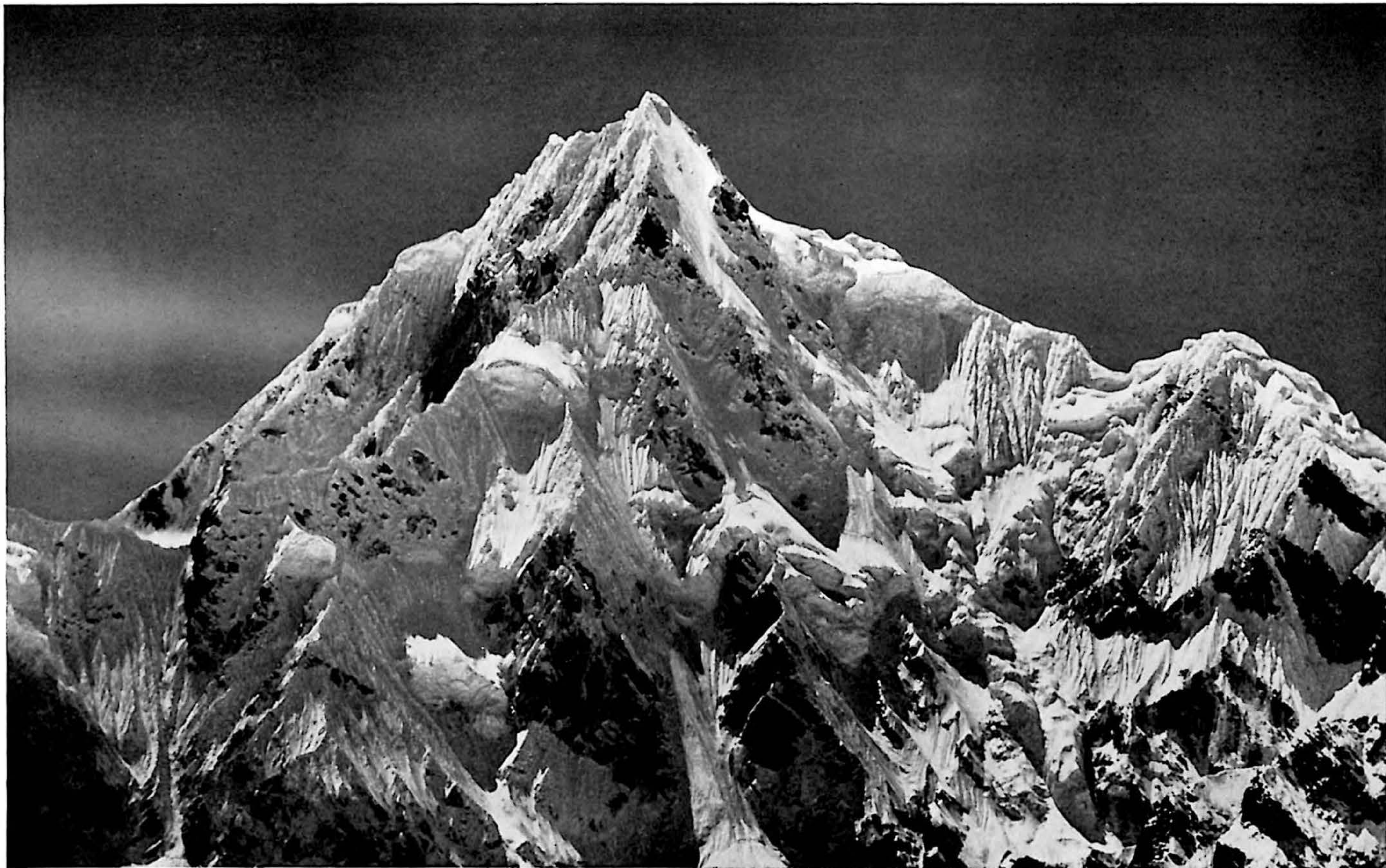
*[To face p. 312.]*

at about 23,500 ft. Odell and Houston slept there that night in order to make an attempt on the summit. On August 26 they explored the lower part of the route, but illness during the night forced Houston to descend next day, his place being taken by Tilman. On August 28 Odell and Tilman carried the bivouac tent to a higher platform (Camp VI, about 24,000 ft.). Setting out at 06.15 on August 29, they reached the summit of Nanda Devi at 15.00 after an arduous and difficult climb, the summit being quitted at 15.45 and Camp VI regained, in 2 hours of descent, at 17.45. The approach of bad weather and pressure of time prevented further ascents, and evacuation was at once commenced, all reaching the advanced base camp by August 31. From this, on September 3, Tilman and Houston crossed the pass over the rim the crest of which was reached by Longstaff in 1905. The rest of the party returned with the equipment and instruments by the route of entry, all reaching Ranikhet again by September 21.

As was anticipated, the approach to the Inner Basin proved to be arduous for a heavily laden party. The mountain itself, as also anticipated, provided climbing of high Alpine standard. The successful outcome of the expedition seems to show that even difficult major Himalayan peaks may be tackled under monsoon conditions. It shows also that such objectives may be within the compass of comparatively small parties aided by a minimum of native porters, and that the actual load-carrying on the mountain itself may be successfully accomplished by the European members of a party. There were no casualties and no serious illness amongst the European climbers. The Sherpa porters were prevented by illness from going higher than Camp II (reached by two only) while one, Kitar, who did not go higher than the base camp, died there of illness contracted on the way in.

T. G. B.

[A full account will appear in the next number.—*Editor.*]



*Photo, Vittorio Sella, 1899.]*

SINIOLCHUM.

German party took the W. (right-hand) ridge.

*[To face p. 313.]*