clusion, I would urge those who wish to test the accuracy of my statements as to the magnificence of the mountain scenery of Dauphiné, to go and see it for themselves. I do not think they will be disappointed.

La Grande Aiguille. By W. M. Pendlebury.

[*This Paper forms a Supplement to Mr. Gardiner's Paper published in the last Number*, p. 80.]

Holding it a waste of power for all of us to spend a day in inspecting the Roche Faurio, my brother had proposed to fill up his time by an ascent of the Grande Aiguille, of which the summit can be seen from La Bérarde. The mountain itself rises at once and precipitously from the opposite bank of the stream, and occupies the angle formed by the main valley of the Vénéon and that of the tributary which descends from the Glacier de la Pilatte. Cox and I decided to join my brother, and it was settled that we should have two of the guides, Peter Baumann and Lochmatter. Having crossed the little rickety bridge leading to the left bank of the river, we followed a narrow path, which, turning down the valley, mounts rapidly along the hill-side; where or how we lost it I cannot tell, but finding ourselves at an elevation of some thousand or fifteen hundred feet above La Bérarde, struggling through brushwood, with no traces of a path any longer to be seen, we turned sharply to the left, and ascending obliquely in the opposite direction arrived in front of a small cirque overlooking the valley of the tributary Vénéon—a sort of amphitheatre with a gently rising floor, filled with snow, encircled by precipitous walls of dark rock, and crowned by the peak itself. Having surmounted this wall to the right, we halted for breakfast, the summit above us looking so near and easy of access that Baumann cried out in glee, 'An hour and we are on the top.' Lochmatter objected; 'I know what rocks are: three hours will not do.' A lively debate ensued, closed by a wager. The guides were to drink I know not how many bottles of wine and lemonade on their return to Rodier's, to be paid for by Lochmatter if we got up within two hours, by Baumann if we did not. I fancy we all looked upon Lochmatter as a victim to an exaggerated estimate of difficulties; but we were wrong, or he was lucky; it took us, as nearly as I can remember, two hours and three quarters to reach the top, though Baumann, who led, did his best to win. Our road led along a ridge, suggestive, in the rottenness of its rocks, of a moraine, one of several converging upon the summit, all laden with masses of most miserable snow that tumbled if only looked at. Every half-dozen steps were marked by an avalanche; a stone dislodged by the foot started a rivulet of snow, which, growing in size as it slid down the slope, curled out of sight with a hiss, followed a second or two later by a roar amongst the rocks below. To avoid the snow was, however, our only difficulty, though now and then we found ourselves obliged to cross patches of greater or less extent, and at noon exactly, six hours after leaving La Bérarde, we stood upon the top, a

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sharp, broken, but nearly level ridge. At one we turned to descend, Lochmatter leading. Now Lochmatter is a rock man, he hates the snow at the best of times, and its condition to-day had not improved during our stay on the top, so that from time to time, when Lochmatter hesitated before the inevitable, we were amused at Baumann's line of encouragement: 'Geh! Geh! Der Schnee ist ganz gut!' (O go on! go on! the snow is quite good.) On one occasion, Lochmatter, after seeking in vain to turn a sheet of snow that we had crossed in ascending, slipped slightly in stepping on to it; at once the surface of the mass, to the depth of a foot or more, shot away with a loud hiss, and leapt out of sight over the brow of the hill, leaving poor Lochmatter as white as itself.

It was after six when we reached La Bérarde. During the latter part of the descent we had given utterance to our earnest hopes that the Roche Faurio might have proved inaccessible, or that something might have turned up; anything rather than that we should have to turn out again. Cox had so far made up his mind, that, without enquiry, he proceeded to pull off his boots and make himself at home for the night. But our hopes were doomed to disappointment. Rodier soon came to us: the Roche Faurio could be done; our friends were encamped at the head of the Glacier de la Bonne Pierre; we were to go to them at once, and take with us Heaven knows what. This was all very well; but the question was whether we should go at all? For a quarter of an hour the matter hung in suspense, and then in desperation we started. We had no time to eat; the *gîte* was at least two hours off, so said Rodier, but exactly where he could not tell us. The road lay over the Glacier de la Bonne Pierre. The latter half of this name is well deserved, though the first must have been bestowed in bitter irony; at least we thought so, as we struggled up in the twilight, wondering whether we should find our friends; nor were our tempers improved when we did at last light on their *gîte*, by the information, quietly and unconcernedly given, that they had concluded we should *dine* at La Bérarde, and so had nothing for us to eat!

To return to the Grande Aiguille: we had acquired, I don't know how, a false idea of its elevation. We took it to be a little over 9,000 feet; it is really over 11,000 feet; thus we started with a miscalculation; added to this was the extraordinary state of the snow. I have never seen anything like it. Assuming, however, normal conditions, the Grande Aiguille, if something more than a lady's mountain, ought not in any respect to be called difficult, whilst the view will, in our opinion, be found unrivalled in Dauphiné as a panorama. I say, will be, because we found, on reaching the summit, that all the SW. region, previously hidden from view by the hill itself, was buried in dense mist. To the N. and E., however, and as far S. as the Col de la Pilatte, the sky was clear, and not a peak of the main ridge, or of its great eastern buttresses, including all the higher summits of Dauphiné, but was spread out before us.

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