

or that they occupied for a time the Rhetian passes. Both suppositions are far from impossible, or even improbable; but in both cases further investigation and fresh evidence seem to me called for before we can accept their presence as indisputable. If any Moorish colony did reach the Saasthal, it will, I believe, be found to have got to it from the S. and not from the St. Bernard. But I shall not be surprised if the Saracens of Saas, like the Saracens in Cornwall, turn out to be a 'verbal myth,' even though the presence of Saracens on the eastern passes should be proved by sound historical evidence.

THE SCHRECKHORN IN WINTER. By W. A. B. COOLIDGE.

ONE fine morning in January 1874, as our party was descending the Grindelwald Eismeer, having successfully ascended the Jungfrau on the day before, the Schreckhorn towered up so magnificently in the bright sunshine that we stopped frequently to admire it. On that occasion Almer, carried away by our previous successes on the Wetterhorn and Jungfrau in winter, suggested that we might possibly bag the Schreckhorn also. But though this proposal was most tempting, we were overdue in England, and had to start for home immediately on our return to Grindelwald. However, I always bore Almer's suggestion in mind. On our next visit to the Alps in winter, in January 1876, we devoted ourselves to Mont Blanc; but fate, in the shape of the weather, was against us, and though we went up to the Grands Mulets *three* times and spent *five nights* there (January 1, 7, 8, 11, 12), we were only able to make one attempt on Mont Blanc itself, on January 12, which was defeated by a violent and sudden storm when we had reached the Grand Plateau, as it was obviously worse than foolhardy to try to advance further at such an unusual season.

Various reasons prevented me for some years from visiting the Alps in winter. When parting with Almer last September I charged him to let me know how the weather was about Christmas time. He wrote in the beginning of January to say that the snow was in admirable condition, and that if I wished to do anything I ought to come out at once. This was too much for me; so, despite the warnings of some of my friends, who thought there was no need to go to the mountains to see snow and ice this winter of all others, I left England alone on the evening of January 9, and, spending twelve hours in Paris, reached Berne next day, January 11; by a long detour through Alsace and by Basel, both the Geneva and Neufchâtel routes being entirely blocked up by

snow. I continued my journey without stopping, gaining glorious views of my old Oberland friends, to Interlaken, where I found Almer (to whom I had telegraphed to announce my arrival) waiting for me with a sleigh. The drive up to Grindelwald that evening, though cold, was most delightful, the stars overhead, the great peaks towering up ghostlike in the darkness, the dancing lights from all the little houses scattered over the snow-covered hillside, the swift, noiseless motion of our conveyance, and the jingling of the horses' bells, leaving an impression never to be forgotten. Still, after my twenty-four hours' journey, I was not sorry to reach the 'Adler,' where a most cordial welcome awaited me.

Next day, Sunday, was bright and sunshiny, and was devoted to strolling about, talking to Almer, and revelling in the clear Alpine air, which I felt as if I had not breathed for ages, though in reality it was barely three months since I had turned my back on Switzerland. Almer, of course, knew my object in coming, viz. to attempt the ascent of the Schreckhorn, over which I had pondered during the past five years. But it was, of course, necessary to get into some sort of training before trying such a formidable peak. Our first excursion (on Monday) was up the Furggenhorn (2,383 mètres), the most easterly spur of the Röthhorn, just north of the village. I enjoyed the walk very much, and the views were very grand, but I was naturally rather tired after it. We mounted by the little Alpenrose hotel on the way to the Faulhorn. On Tuesday we went up to the inn on the Männlichen, which, very curiously, neither Almer, nor his son Christian, nor myself had ever visited. The ascent from Grindelwald is very gradual, and was very fatiguing in the soft deep snow. But we were amply rewarded for our pains by one of the grandest views imaginable. There was a mist over the Thunersee, otherwise the horizon was cloudless. On one side we had the valley of Grindelwald, backed by the Titlis and Wetterhorn. The Schreckhorn, Eiger, Mönch, and Jungfrau were each more majestic than the other; while on the other side Lauterbrunnen seemed to be at our feet, and beyond Mürren and the Schilthorn, the Gspaltenhorn, and the Blümlis Alp met our gaze. There is a little knoll to N. of the inn, the Männlichen proper (2,345 mètres); but we did not go there, although there must be a fine view down into the two valleys of the Lütschine, near their junction, as we had had enough of the deep snow. This spot seems to be very little known as yet. In my opinion, the view is finer than the far-famed one from the Wengern Alp, whence it is easily reached by a tolerable

path. The Männlichen inn itself is connected with Grindelwald by a good bridle path, and there is a steep footpath to the village of Wengen. I strongly advise all who have not been to include it in their next journey; as for myself, I can only say that I regret having so long neglected to visit this lovely spot. The thermometer in the midday sun near the inn marked $+ 21\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ Réaumur (= c. $80\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ Fahrenheit).

Next day was dull, the Föhn wind having begun to blow, and producing the curious blurred effect on the high peaks so well described in an article in the 'Saturday Review' of February 22, which I think I am not mistaken in attributing to Mr. Leslie Stephen.

I will not weary my readers with details of all our excursions. We went up to the Eismeer twice to see how the snow was, but it was still very soft and powdery, there having been a heavy fall between the writing of Almer's letter and my arrival. On one occasion we were caught in a small avalanche on the Bänisegg, from which we luckily escaped with the loss of an ice-axe and a pair of spectacles. Another day we went up the highest point in the ridge between the Faulhorn and the Schwarzhorn, called by Almer the Grosseneggspitze, not very far, I think, from the 'Mittaghorn' of the Federal map. The Föhn wind alternated with snowstorms, so that the ascent of any great peak began to seem very problematical. A glorious day's walk to the Kuhmattenhubel, the little knoll just to N. of the Grosse Scheidegg, led us to undertake on January 21 the ascent of the Schwarzhorn (2,930 mètres = 9,613 feet), which we accomplished most successfully ($5\frac{1}{2}$ hours up, 2.25 down), though there was a bitter wind at the top, and the view rather cloudy. The ascent was made by the Grindel Alp and the ridge of the Gemsberg, the snow in parts being very soft and deep. That evening I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Leslie Stephen and his nephew and M. Loppé. The two former repeated the ascent of the Schwarzhorn next day, and the day after the whole party crossed the Grosse Scheidegg to Meiringen, being probably the last travellers who saw that village before the disastrous fire.

We arranged to start to sleep out for the Schreckhorn on the 22nd, but the Föhn was too much for us. My time was drawing short, as I was obliged to be in England on the night of the 31st, and wished, if possible, to spend a day at Basel on my way back. On the 23rd, another dull day, we had the adventure on the Bänisegg, of which I have before spoken; and on the 24th in despair we crossed the Wengern Alp in

thick mist and a snowstorm, finding a tremendous thaw going on at Lauterbrunnen, which brought the Staubbach to life again, as, from the Männlichen, all traces of it had so completely disappeared that even Almer could not point out its exact position.

Next morning we held a grand consultation. The question was whether we should go up to Mürren for the Schilt-horn or return to Grindelwald in hopes of at last accomplishing the principal object of my journey. A sudden glimpse of the blue sky radiant with sunshine made us adopt the latter course, most fortunately as it turned out. For next day, the 26th, we were able to start for our sleeping quarters on the Schreckhorn. The party consisted of myself, Almer, his sons Ulrich and Christian, and a second porter, Friedrich Deutschmann, who had been with us on the Jungfrau in 1874. It was of course necessary to take provisions for three days, and abundance of wood and covering. We followed our old tracks up the Eismeer, not by the usual way to the Bärenegg hut, which is much exposed to avalanches, but along the base of the Mittellegi, then through the icefall of the lower glacier, and up the middle of this last to the Eismeer, a perfectly safe course, which Almer had taken at Christmas time with two English gentlemen on the way to the Zäsenberg. Having passed the ridge of the Bänisegg and searched in vain for traces of the missing articles, we took to the right bank of the glacier up a well-known gully, which was now in a very bad state, the earth being frozen as hard as iron and covered with fresh snow inclined at a high angle—altogether one of the nastiest bits of the entire expedition. It was dark when we reached the new Swiss Alpine Club hut, known as the Schwarzenegg Hütte, some way east of the old Kastenstein cave. It was half filled with snow, which was speedily cleared out; but there was plenty of straw, and we managed to pass a tolerably comfortable night.

Early next morning, our last doubts as to the weather were removed. It was decided to take Deutschmann to the top with us, as we had not sufficient wood to allow him to keep up a fire in the day time, and it was more prudent to have a man to relieve the leaders in case of need. We started on January 27 at 6.40 A.M., just at dawn. The snow proved to be in admirable condition, a trifle too hard if anything. We ascended the couloir near the Kastenstein glacier with unexpected ease, then mounted the glacier itself, and, halting for twenty-five minutes for breakfast (during which we were surprised by a piercing wind, which died away directly after), reached the 'bergschrund' at the base of the great wall of the

Schreckhorn at 9.35 A.M. All were in high spirits, and the weather left nothing to be desired.

On my previous ascent on July 24, 1872, owing to a succession of thunderstorms during the night the snow had been in a very 'avalanchy' state, and we had been obliged to climb up to the Sattel, along the crest of one of the rocky ribs which seam the wall, with the snow hissing down the couloirs on either side. Now, having crossed the bergschrund, we cut up to the rocks on the right hand, and climbed up them for forty-five minutes, meeting on the way with two slight mishaps—the loss of my field glass, my companion in the Alps during seven summers, which escaped from the fingers of one of the party and was immediately dashed into a thousand pieces; and of Almer's bat, which was later recovered. The rocks were very slippery, and it was determined that the best and shortest route was to cut up the great wall or central couloir. This we accordingly did; but the snow was extremely hard, and much labour was required to make good steps, which we expected would aid us on our descent; besides, as the sun mounted higher in the heavens, small stones rattled down from above, being released from their icy bed, and greatly annoyed us, both Almer and myself being struck, though no harm was done. Most singularly we found near the Sattel distinct traces of the last party up the Schreckhorn on October 5. The foot-prints had been frozen hard, and filled with snow like a mould, which had again been blown away by our enemy the Föhn.

We reached the Sattel at 1.35 P.M. only, much later than we had originally hoped, having been four hours (including a ten minutes' halt) from the bergschrund. Here of course a glorious view to the East burst upon us; but we were so intent on the summit that, after a stoppage of 25 minutes for dinner, we abandoned the greater part of our provisions and started at 2 P.M. for the top. We got on pretty well as far as the 'Elliotswang' and even farther, the rocks offering good hold, and there being little snow on them. Things grew, however, worse and worse; and when we gained the first top or S.E. end of the final Kamm, I confess I feared that our expedition would be a failure. The ridge stretches very nearly at a level to a rocky knob, then after a depression rises to the true summit. In its ordinary state it is not difficult, but matters were very different now. A delicate crest of fresh snow, in some places perhaps two feet high, lay along the rocky ridge in its entire length. To pass along it, it was necessary to sweep the snow away, so as to get at the rock beneath. This was extremely laborious, and even then the

rocks were very wet and slippery. We had a snow shovel with us, brought up to make steps in the soft snow (for which it had not been brought into requisition), and with this, until it snapped short at a critical moment, and a solitary ice-axe (the others having been left at the base of the last rocks), we ploughed our way along. Almer, who had led during far the greater part of the ascent, worked with indomitable courage; but after passing the middle knob there was a very nasty bit, and even his strength failed. Deutschmann, who was just behind him, was fortunately comparatively fresh, and was able to take his place. The 'mauvais pas' was overcome, and at 4.35 P.M. our little party of five stood on the highest pinnacle of the Gross Schreckhorn (13,394 ft.). We had been a little over $2\frac{1}{2}$ hours from the Sattel. It is scarcely necessary to say that, late on a January afternoon, none of us wished to spend a long time on our airy perch. There were a few clouds on the horizon, and the sun was beginning to set. Having lost my glass, I could hardly take in the view; but I caught a glimpse of the Vierwaldstättersee glittering in the sun, and was able to admire the grand masses of the Finsteraarhorn and Wetterhorn, lighted up by the rays of the setting sun. We had the key of the case of the 'Thermométrographe' placed by the Swiss Alpine Club on the summit; but time did not allow us to open it. My own thermometer gave a reading of + 2 Réaumur (= $36\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ Fahrenheit); but I am convinced that it must have been affected by some snow in my pocket, as the temperature on the summit was really deliciously warm, and I think the actual reading did not represent the true state of the case. I left my card in a bottle on the summit, and took that of Herr Loschge of Nürnberg, as a proof of the reality of our ascent, and, having finished a bottle of champagne, we turned to descend at 4.45 P.M.

It was evident that, if we were not to spend the night out on the rocks, we must use all diligence in getting down. We raced down to the Sattel in 35 minutes, stopped 5 minutes to pick up our things, and then resumed our headlong course. Our steps were frozen hard, and so well made that I ceased to regret the apparent loss of time employed in hewing them on the way up. As twilight came on, my eyes as usual gave way, and it was just as darkness was becoming total that we crossed the bergschrund at 6.55 P.M. Fortunately the moon rose, and, by the aid of her rays and the bright starlight, we managed to get on pretty well, especially as all real difficulties were over. We stopped 10 minutes to recover Almer's hat, and 15 minutes lower down to consume some provisions we

had left on the way up. The couloir was in a capital state, and we ran down it, singing and shouting in honour of our success, and regained our hut at 8.20 P.M. The ascent had taken us 8.55 actual walking, and the descent 3.5—total 12 hours walking. It was not long before we retired to rest, pretty well worn out with the fatigues of the day.

Next day the Föhn was again in the ascendant; we congratulated ourselves on having hit on *the one* day, during my stay in the Alps, on which an ascent was possible. Not wishing to *descend* the gully of which I have spoken, we crossed above the upper icefall to the left bank, and descended by the 'Enge' (which was in a very ticklish state) to the Zäsenberg hut, regaining Grindelwald early in the afternoon by our previous route. A violent thaw had been going on there, and near the village I gathered several flowers and ferns, quite clear of snow.

Our success caused the greater astonishment, in that we had not revealed our intention before starting save to one or two persons; and I think I may fairly say, without boasting, that the Schreckhorn is the most difficult peak which has as yet been conquered in mid-winter—a triumph which I certainly owe to Almer's unequalled skill and thoughtfulness. I left Grindelwald early on the 29th, spent the greater part of the 30th at Basel, and reached England late in the evening of the 31st in time to keep my appointment next morning; and on February 4 I received the congratulations of my Alpine friends at the Club meeting that evening, eight days precisely after my victory.

MOUNTAINEERING IN DAUPHINÉ WITHOUT GUIDES. By F. GARDINER. Read before the Alpine Club, April 1, 1879.

IN a note written in 1870 by Mr. Leslie Stephen, then Editor of the 'Alpine Journal,' as an appendix to Mr. Grove's admirable paper on the 'Comparative Skill of Travellers and Guides,'* it is stated as an axiom, agreed to without a single dissentient, at a meeting of the Club, that 'mountaineering without guides' is a proceeding 'totally unjustifiable and calculated to produce the most lamentable results,' or, as Mr. Grove himself put it, infinite tribulation, to the Alpine Club. Now, in the face of such statements, I and my companions, Messrs. Charles and Lawrence Pilkington, almost feel in the position of 'prisoners at the bar' charged with heresy;

* 'Alpine Journal,' vol. v. p. 96.