ingly frank, and passed many pleasant hours in his company. He left Quito on May 24, 1880, on his way to the head-waters of the Amazons, where he is still engaged in exploration.

The long detention at Quito, although vexatious, was not without advantages. We were able to thoroughly mature plans for the remainder of the journey, and when we started southwards on June 7, were all in good condition, and were more perfectly equipped than before; so that for the remainder of the time we travelled with a certain degree of luxury. Campaña proved a great acquisition, and was excellent as a working interpreter and general assistant. Cevallos was re-engaged, for his failings notwithstanding he was a useful man. David had been unexceptionable throughout, and desired to continue; but I dispensed with the services of the jovial arriero, and engaged in his place a strong and very willing lad from Machachi, who had ambition to get upwards. These four men (occasionally assisted by others) remained with us continuously up to the last, and performed their work in a very satisfactory manner.

It was understood on leaving Quito that the mountain Sangai would have to be eliminated from the programme, as a journey to it would alone have occupied several weeks. It was our intention to ascend first Illiniza, then Altar, next Carihuairazo, and lastly Chimborazo from a new direction; and then to proceed to Guayaquil by what was termed the railway route. The manner in which this was done will be described in the next number.

(*To be continued.*)

AROUND KANDERSTEG. By ALFRED E. CRAVEN. (Read before the Alpine Club, May 31, 1881.)

I HAVE always found much satisfaction in doing anything thoroughly, and as an ordinary lifetime is too short to accomplish this with regard to the whole of the Alps, I found that the next best thing to do was to work out small districts, and, by ascending all the peaks within them, acquire a thorough knowledge of their beauties, difficulties, geology, &c.

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This I have tried to do in several parts of Switzerland, and I propose to describe in this paper some expeditions amongst the Blümlisalp and the Altels groups, my favourite ranges, and at the same time those best known to me.

The range of the Blümlisalp is a long, nearly straight ridge running about W. S.W. and E. N. E., commencing with the Fisistock on the west, and ending in the Tschingelgrat on the east. It may be considered as being divided near its centre into two parts by the depression of the Gamchilücke, the Blümlisalphorn (12,041 feet) being the culminating point of the western division, and the Gspaltenhorn (11,260 feet) that of the eastern one. To the south the range is a long precipitous line of rocks bounding the Tschingel glacier, while to the north it is covered with snowfields and glaciers of great beauty.

Each principal peak of the Blümlisalp ridge has a northern outlier; the Blümlisalphorn has the Oeschinen Rothhorn, the Weisse Frau has the Blümlisalpstock, and the Morgenhorn has the Wilde Frau; in like manner the Gspaltenhorn has a northern outlier in the Büttlassen.

Some years ago, while ascending the Kanderthal, I was much struck with some remarkable-looking peaks which dominate the Kienthal, and which from the bridge over the Kander near Reichenbach have somewhat the appearance of the fingers of an open hand belonging to an individual who has neglected to pare his finger-nails. These peaks proved to be the rocks composing the Gspaltenhörner, and I determined some day to ascend them, but many years passed before the opportunity presented itself. In 1879 my unfortunate friend and companion Dr. Moseley and myself intended to make the ascent, but bad weather set in, and we could not afford to lose time in waiting for a change, as the peak was a comparatively unimportant one. That year, however, I ascended nearly all the peaks and outlying rocks of the Blümlisalp situated to the west of the Gamchilücke, and from many of these the appearance of the Gspaltenhorn was so grand, that I determined to make it one of the chief objects of the programme of the following summer. I will here mention that the Wittwe, also called Dündenhorn (9,410 feet), is admirably situated for a view of the Blümlisalp range. It is easily accessible both from the Dündengrat and from the châlets of Ober Oeschinen. Most of the Oberland guides, when asked about the ascent of the Gspaltenhorn, shook their heads, and said it was very difficult and dangerous; some even asserted that it was the most difficult ascent in the Oberland.

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In 1867 Messrs. Hornby and George attempted the ascent, but the final slope being hard ice, they did not think the game worth the candle.* Next year Mr. F. Pollock was repulsed, evidently by the bad condition of the snow,† and Herr E. von Fellenberg, in attempting the ascent from the south, only succeeded in reaching a secondary summit of the mountain.‡ On July 10, 1869, however, Mr. G. E. Foster made the first ascent, the snow being again in a bad state, and considerable difficulties being encountered.§ Later in the same year Herr Bohren made the second ascent, followed shortly after by Herr Häberlin. The latter gentleman gives a terrible account of his ascent;‖ his difficulties seem to have been endless, and the condition of his party on reaching the Bundalp in the Kienthal was really such as to raise compassion in the most stony breast. They arrived at that spot 'minus' ice-axes and caps, but 'plus' wounds on their knees and shoulders, after having spent a very long time on the mountain. He gives a very good sketch and outline of the peak from the Sefinenthal. But Miss Brevoort and Mr. Coolidge, who in September 1872 made the fourth ascent with Christian Almer,¶ encountered fewer difficulties than their predecessors, taking a little over 4 hrs. up from Messrs. Hornby and George's *gîte*, and little more than 2 hrs. down. The fifth ascent was made by Herr R. Lindt in 1879.** Christian Almer, who had made the first attempt on the mountain with Messrs. Hornby and George, did not share the opinion of the other guides as to the difficulty of the ascent, and I was very glad to obtain his services and those of his son Christian. Accordingly, on August 24, 1880, we arrived in drenching rain at the Hôtel Mürren, where I was determined to await fine weather for an indefinite period, should the fates so will it. Mürren, as is nearly always the case, was full of pleasant company, among which were many attractive young ladies, and had I been detained there by weather for a few days, I should not have bemoaned my fate. The arrival of a mountaineer, with all the accessories of guides, ropes, axes, &c., is not an event of everyday occurrence at Mürren, as it is not a convenient starting-place for many 'grandes courses.' It was soon known that the Gspaltenhorn

* 'Alpine Journal,' vol. iv. p. 54. † Ibid. vol. iv. p. 156.
‡ 'Ueber Eis und Schnee,' by G. Studer, vol. i. p. 258.
§ 'Alpine Journal,' vol. iv. p. 382.
‖ 'Jahrb. d. S. A. C.,' vol. vi. pp. 32–57, with 2 plates.
¶ 'Alpine Journal,' vol. vi. p. 146.
** 'Jahrb. d. S. A. C.,' vol. xv. pp. 542–545.

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was to be ascended, and, as the summit is plainly visible from the hotel, much interest was taken in our proceedings.

The following day, the 25th, was fine, and at 1.30 P.M. we made a start for the sleeping-place, accompanied by a porter to carry blankets and cooking apparatus. I strolled on ahead of the party, and was not overtaken by Almer for some time, when, to my astonishment, I saw he was carrying an eight-foot pole. This being a weapon I had never seen used on a mountain before, I inquired what it was for, and Almer told me that Herr Sterchi, the landlord of the Hôtel Mürren, had begged him to carry this pole to the summit, and there attach a red flag to it, as a source of amusement for his guests. I own to objecting to flags on mountain-tops, but on this occasion I gave way to Almer's entreaties and allowed him to take it, on the strict condition of my having nothing to do with it, and of his telling them this on our return.

Crossing the Sefinen Furka at 4.45, we kept to the left, and, after having made a few useless *détours*, owing to the mist in which we were now enveloped, we reached at 6.50 the overhanging rocks above the Gamchi Glacier, which had afforded shelter to our predecessors. As far as mountain sleeping-places go, this one is pretty comfortable; its elevation is about 7,500 feet, and there is a spring of delicious water close at hand. By the time we retired to rest the sky was cloudless, and Almer pronounced the weather to be 'ganz sicher' for the morrow. We got off next morning at 3.25 A.M., leaving our porter to return to Mürren, and proceeded to toil up screes, varied by slaty shales, to the Büttlassenlücke, which we reached at 4.55. We then roped, and proceeded up some more screes, and up an easy snow-slope, till we reached some fine bold rocks, which Herr Häberlin has called the Leitergrat. A short time before reaching this spot, we passed the remains of what may be termed a ladder; it was composed of a single spar with a number of holes drilled through it, and into these the rungs were inserted and made to project on either side. It was cast on one side, not having apparently been used for some time, and was a very ricketty contrivance. In descending I saw a similar article on the lower rocks of the Büttlassen.

A short scramble brought us to the top of the Leitergrat, and from this point a slight descent is necessary, as there is a sort of notch in the ridge; this is easily effected by a convenient little gully, which lands one on the ridge in the depression. From here the mountain looks very well, falling away in grand precipices on both sides. We indulged in 10 min. halt, to take in the view and also some refreshment, and after this, our

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only stoppage during the entire ascent, followed the arête, which soon broadens out considerably, till we reached the foot of the Böser Tritt. It is from this point to the summit that the much heard of difficulties were supposed to exist. We found the first part composed of very steep and rotten rocks, but with care we soon managed to scramble up them and reach the final arête, consisting of snow even then in a bad condition, although it was only 7 A.M. This snow rested on hard ice on the Sefinenthal side, and on very much disintegrated rocks on the Kienthal side; keeping as much as possible on the latter, and moving only one at a time, by way of precaution, we reached the summit at 7.30. Almer unfurled his flag, and with my glasses I soon saw that it had been made out at Mürren, by the rush made from the hotel on to the terrace, in order to get at the large telescope placed there. The weather was lovely, and a few light passing clouds did not interfere with the view, which is very pretty looking down the Sefinenthal and the Kienthal, but not otherwise very striking.

At 8.20 we left the summit and descended the arête, as nearly as possible in the same steps we had used in ascending. The snow, bad before, was now in a detestable squashy state, after an hour and a half's sunshine, and great caution was necessary in every step.

On reaching the bad rocks young Christian and myself unroped, and paid out the rope to old Christian as he descended, till, when we had but a few feet more to spare, he found a tolerably secure spot where he could wait for us, and we hauled the rope up again. I then followed in the same way, and last of all young Christian, his father and I hauling in the slack of the rope as he descended. Repeating this manœuvre, we found ourselves at the base of the Böser Tritt, and thus across the only bad part of the mountain. It was in descending these rocks, I believe, that Herr Häberlin's party lost their axes and instruments; we luckily lost nothing, and did not cut either our knees or shoulders, but proceeded down to the Büttlassenlücke, which we reached at 10 o'clock. After a good breakfast we went leisurely back to Mürren as we had come, across the Sefinenfürke, reaching the hotel at 3.20 P.M.

About an hour from Mürren we were met by a large detachment of the beauty and fashion staying at the hotel; a warm welcome greeted our return, and a good dinner and an animated dance finished the evening. Altogether the day had been a most charming one, in fact one of those of which every mountaineer has a little collection stored away in his memory.

As to the difficulties of the Gspaltenhorn, I can only say

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as Mark Twain did of the industrious ant, that I think he is a 'strangely overrated bird,' but I have no doubt that under different conditions a good deal of difficulty might be encountered. First-class guides are necessary, and should be taken by anyone making the ascent.

From the summits of the Blümlisalp and the Doldenhörner, especially from the latter, one of the most striking sights is the northern face of the *massif* of the Balmhorn and Altels. A large glacier descends between these two peaks towards an alp, the existence of which can hardly be realised from below; both the glacier and the alp are called Wild Elsigen, and have seldom, if ever, been visited by strangers. Sheep used formerly to be taken there to pasture, but so many came to an untimely end by falling over the precipice into the Gasterenthal, that a few goats are now the only animals driven up there in summer.

In 1879 I had taken a careful look with the telescope at this side of the Balmhorn from the summit of the Gross Doldenhorn, and thinking the ascent feasible from the Gasterenthal, I promised to employ Johann Ogi of Frutigen and Gilgian Ogi (Sohn) of Kandersteg for the expedition, should I ever attempt it. They told me that Wild Elsigen was easily reached, and that we could find a good 'Ueberhang' under which to bivouac. Accordingly, after having torn myself away from the dissipation and luxury of Mürren, I crossed the Schilthorn to Frutigen, and after waiting at Kandersteg several days for fine weather, on September 1 I started with the two above-named guides and with old Fritz Ogi as porter. The latter was out of employment, and consequently glad to come as porter; but had I not previously engaged the others I should certainly have taken him as leading guide.

While proceeding up the Gasterenthal, we were met by a herdsman, who inquired where we were going, and on Fritz telling him that Wild Elsigen was our destination for the night, and the summit of the Balmhorn for the morrow, he shook his head and remarked, '*That* we all know to be an impossibility, but the reason of your going to Wild Elsigen is obvious. To-day is the 1st of September and the chamois hunting is open; you have heard of that chamois with a broken leg, who has been seen there for some weeks past, and you are going to try and catch him. Well! I wish you good luck and "glückliche Reise."'

After about half an hour's walk up the left bank of the Kander, we commenced to ascend the rocks on the south side of the Gasterenthal. From below it seems almost impossible

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that there should be a way up this great wall of rock, and indeed I very much doubt whether the way would be found without local knowledge. A faint track leads up from the valley through heather and rhododendrons for some little distance, and then for a short way farther a sort of path has been built up by woodcutters, by means of felled trees fixed into the rocks; this soon ends, and then a real climb follows, sometimes up good rocks with firm hand and foot hold, and sometimes over smooth ones with scarcely any hold at all. From the time the path comes to an end till the top of the precipice is reached, one looks down into the Gastereuthal, where a slip would soon send one, with few, if any, bumps or stoppages on the way; on the smooth rocks one wishes to be possessed of the feet of flies, and sailors would say that it was a case of holding on with one's eyelids. For the first time in my mountaineering experience did I see a guide discard his boots and prefer his stockings to climb in; this Fritz did on these smooth rocks, as he was rather heavily laden, and said he felt more secure without his boots than with them. I insisted on being roped, but I have since doubted whether it would have been of any use in case of a slip, though it undoubtedly gave more confidence. This part of the ascent may be compared with the way to the Gleckstein from the upper Grindelwald glacier, though the steps cut in the rock on that well-known path have no counterpart here and the route to Wild Elsigen is steeper.

Four hours and a half from the 'Bear' at Kandersteg brought us to Wild Elsigen, and we took up our quarters in the 'Ueberhang,' situated under a huge mass of almost perpendicular rock on the left bank of the Wild Elsigen glacier. This spot proved to be the night quarters of the dozen or more goats which had been taken up to the pasture, and the indignation of these animals at being turned out into the cold showed itself by the frequent attacks they made during the night to regain their bed, and by their utter disregard both for stones and execrations. The goats are not brought up from the valley by the way we came, but round from the Lötsch Pass side, from which there is a much easier route to Wild Elsigen, but of course from Kandersteg this way would be a considerable *détour*. The elevation of our sleeping place was only about 6,000 feet; consequently there was plenty of firewood at hand, and also rhododendrons with which to make a softer bed than the bare ground affords.

The weather was lovely and warm, so that with the exception of the goat nuisance a comfortable night was passed, and at daylight (4.30) the following day we started for our peak,

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leaving Fritz to return by the Lötsch Pass route. He subsequently chose an elevated position, from which he watched our upward movements for a long time, and finally reported at Kandersteg that our success was certain. Crossing below the glacier, over avalanche *débris* and moraine, we took to the large moraine on the right bank of the glacier and followed it almost to the base of the rocky cliff, round which the glacier flows into the basin of Wild Elsigen.

The ascent to the upper snow-fields by the glacier was pronounced impracticable by all, owing to its maze of crevasses and huge séracs; so, keeping to the left, we made for a small *glacier remanié* lying at the base of the rocks between the Wild Elsigen glacier and the northern arête of the Balmhorn. Up these rocks we determined to try and force our way, and we soon found a snow couloir, now frozen hard, leading up from the small glacier. This couloir was unpleasantly furrowed down its centre by avalanche tracks, and had the snow been in a soft condition it would have been folly to ascend by this route. The rope was now put on, Johann leading, then Gilgian, and myself last, and this was our order throughout the entire day. After cutting our way up the couloir for some distance, we took to the rocks on its left edge, and finding a convenient spot, we halted for half an hour for breakfast at 6.46. Whilst engaged in this pleasant yet necessary repast, we saw an immense ice-avalanche tear down from the Altels on to the Wild Elsigen glacier and continue its course to below our sleeping place.

Proceeding again, sometimes by the rocks and sometimes by steep snow, we found no difficulties till we reached a frozen snow-slope descending from a wall of rock, which, from below, had appeared likely to be our chief obstacle during the ascent. We cut steps up this slope and skirted the base of the rock wall in the direction of the northern arête of the mountain for some little way, seeking a means of ascending it. The two guides had turned a sharp corner, and I was about to follow, when, resting my hand on a large piece of rock, I found it about to give way; how I escaped being smashed to pieces by it I do not know, but I believe that I arrested its immediate fall by pressing my shoulder against it with all my might, and by making a frantic spring towards the corner. The piece of rock thundered down the slope, and by the time it had reached our breakfasting place had started a very considerable avalanche. A fragment had caught my wrist and raised a bump there which did not disappear for many weeks. Once round this corner, we found a most convenient *cheminée*, narrow

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enough to admit of sidling up it with back and feet, which landed us on another steep snow-slope, on which the snow was very soft. Above this we reached some very rotten rocks, which took a good deal of time and care to ascend, but they were not of any great height, and when once fairly over them, we saw that our difficulties were at an end. From this point a snow ridge led up to the summit, and, the snow being in first-rate condition, we pushed on and reached our destination at 1.20 P.M. The climb had been a long one, considering the height of the peak, and the fact that we had only halted for 40 mins. on the way; many steps had to be cut, as the lower part of the mountain was frozen quite hard, and much time was spent in finding the best route up, so that, should anyone follow in our steps, the time taken will doubtless be much less. Had the snow not been in good order, the risk from avalanches at the commencement of the ascent might have been great, but I think by keeping nearer to the northern arête this danger might be avoided.

A pleasant half-hour spent on the well-known summit, and then a race down to Kandersteg by the usual route, concluded our day's work, 3 hrs. 40 mins. sufficing to bring us back to the Bear Inn, which we reached at 5.40 P.M.

Before leaving the Balmhorn, I may mention that in 1874, accompanied by Peter Lauener of Lauterbrunnen and Jaggi of An der Lenk, I crossed the mountain from Schwarenbach to Ried in the Lötschthal. Returning from the summit for a short distance along the ridge by which we had ascended, we cut away a piece of the cornice and descended by the rocks to the Fluh glacier, a little way below the highest part of the pass, on the Leukerbad side. We found the rocks very difficult, and it was only after much time spent in finding a way down the lower rocks that we succeeded in reaching the glacier. The absence of much snow or ice, as it was late in the season, may perhaps account for our success in forcing a route which Messrs. T. Brooksbank and Beard were unable to repeat the following summer.*

There are many pleasant excursions to be made around Kandersteg, and I am astonished that this spot should not be more visited by mountaineers in consequence. Among others, the ascent of the Doldenhörner has been much talked of as difficult and dangerous; I think it a laborious 'grind,' but fail completely in finding the danger. Dr. Moseley and myself found the arête leading from the Gross Doldenhorn to the

* 'Alpine Journal,' vol. vii. p. 441.

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Klein Doldenhorn very unpleasant, owing to the rocks composing it, but otherwise found few difficulties.

I have spent much time in the Kander valley, so that I have very pleasant reminiscences of it, and from joining the natives in their dancing, shooting, &c., I have got to be well known there. The horror of cold water among the inhabitants is as great as elsewhere away from home, and a curious instance of the same once came under my notice. I was once exploring the Schwarzbach, the stream that descends from the Gemmi into the Gasterenthal, and in one place I found it issuing from a narrow gorge apparently closed at the top. It was a warm day and a bathe did not seem amiss, so taking off my clothes, and armed with my ice-axe, I proceeded to wade up the stream, and soon disappeared from Gilgian Ogi, who I left in charge of my effects. After a certain amount of scrambling and wading I reached a large opening in the interior of the mountain, into which the stream fell from above in a lovely waterfall, which caused me to linger for some time in admiration. On returning to the mouth of the gorge I found Ogi preparing to return to Kandersteg with my belongings, having given me up for lost, his notion of cold water being that immersion in it meant certain death. A few days later the 'Thuner Tagblatt' contained a paragraph stating that an Englishman, weary of life, had attempted to destroy himself in the Schwarzbach, but had failed in the attempt.

In spite of this local hatred of cold water, however, I am glad to say that good and refreshing tubs are to be found at the Bear at Kandersteg, where the landlord, Herr Egger, takes great pains to make mountaineers and other visitors comfortable.

An Ascent of the Jungfrau from the Wengern Alp without Guides. By Charles Pilkington. (Read before the Alpine Club, January 31, 1882.)

TOWARDS the end of last July our party, consisting of two ladies, Gardiner, my brother Lawrence, and myself, arrived at the Hôtel de l'Ours at Grindelwald, where we received the warmest of welcomes from our old friends, the brothers Boss. Our intention was to go on to the Wengern Alp, and from there cross the Bernese chain to the Aletsch Glacier, if possible, by going over the Jungfrau.

The weather was unsettled, and a quantity of fresh snow was on the peaks, as three of us had found out to our cost whilst crossing the Wetterhorn the day before. Snow fell

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