

think, without exaggeration conclude, that this route up the Dent Blanche will always be a long and difficult one, though it is *just* possible a better and easier line of attack might be found. In bad weather, or with ice on the rocks, it would be madness to attempt it, but in good weather such as we experienced, there is no reason why the expedition should not be repeated. Much time would be saved by sleeping out at the foot of the arête.

Of the behaviour of our guides I cannot speak too highly. Almer is so well known as not to need much eulogy on my part. Being next to him on the rope, I had abundant opportunity of watching and admiring his fertility of resource under all circumstances, and the ability with which he overcame all difficulties, which made me painfully conscious of the immeasurable difference there is between professional and amateur climbing.

Pollinger is not, perhaps, so well known. He led throughout the whole of the 19½ hours of the expedition without faltering; nor had we at any time to retrace our steps. He showed himself, as I have always thought him to be, one of the finest rock climbers in Switzerland, and is, in addition, one of the simplest and most true-hearted men in his profession that I know, combining the fearlessness of a good guide with the simplicity and honesty of a child. It says a great deal for them both, that they were quite as eager as ourselves to make the expedition. The whole credit of the climb rests entirely with them and I consider that it is only owing to their exceptional abilities that success crowned our efforts.

THE FIRST ASCENT OF THE EIGER.

[As no account of this expedition has ever been published, the following letter will be read with great interest, and is a valuable document for the purposes of Alpine history. We are much obliged to Mr. R. M. Barrington for communicating it to the 'Alpine Journal.']

To the Editor of the 'Alpine Journal.'

Sir,—My brother has just sent me the following letter about the first ascent of the Eiger, in 1858. As he never thought of publishing anything relating to it, no detailed account of his ascent has been kept. The facts may interest some readers of your journal, as the Eiger is such a well-known peak. The name of Harrington has been erroneously given in every notice of the ascent I have seen. Perhaps you will excuse me sending you a copy of my brother's letter instead of a more elaborate and descriptive account. Yours sincerely,

RICHARD M. BARRINGTON.

P.S. My brother says he took to the rocks immediately, and did not go over any snow in the earlier part of his ascent. In 1876 I ascended the Eiger with Peter Bohren, and he pointed out a rock sticking up out of the precipice, and separated from it by a chasm about three yards wide. Bohren told me that my brother leaped out on this rock, and was the only man who ever did it. I have asked my brother if such was the case, and he says he remembers the rock very well, but cannot be certain whether he leaped on to it or not. This rock is in the line of ascent now generally followed, but I am not aware that anyone has since ascended the Eiger by taking to the steep rocks at once instead of beginning on the snow slope.

R. M. B.

'My dear D——,—You will bear with me for not writing a description of my ascent of the Eiger. I have been looking over my papers, without success, for an account I wrote shortly after; but the facts are these:—

'On Thursday, August 5, 1858, I left Grindelwald about 4 o'clock p.m. and walked up the glacier to a small hut, in which we spent the night. It was occupied by a goat-keeper. I was eaten up with fleas. Next morning I started with my two guides, Almer and Bohren, and a French gentleman, and crossed the Strahlegg to the Grimsel, where we arrived on Friday evening, the 6th.

'On the 7th I started with the same two guides, and walked to the Rhone valley and up to the Eggischhorn Hotel. On Sunday, the 8th, I slept at the hotel, and in the evening started with Almer and Bohren, and two men to carry provisions. Had about 4½ hours' walk to the Faulberg, and slept in a small cave. Started early Monday, and got to the top of the Jungfrau, and walked to Grindelwald, when I put up at the Bär-Hof. Here I met some Alpine men whose footsteps I had tracked down the glacier. Talking about climbing, I said to them I did not think much of the work I had done, and was answered, "Try the Eiger or the Matterhorn." "All right," I said. Slept with a beefsteak on my face. In the evening of the next day, the 10th, I made a bargain with the same guides for the Eiger, and walked up to the hotel on the Wengern Alp, stopping to play cards for an hour on the way, and found it quite full at 12 o'clock at night. Threw myself on a sofa, and started at 3.30 a.m. on Aug. 11 for the Eiger. We took a flag from the hotel. When we came to the point where one descends into a small hollow I looked well with my glass over the face of the Eiger next us, and made up my mind to try the rocks in front instead of going up the other side, which had been tried twice before unsuccessfully. Almer and Bohren said it was no use, and declined to come the way I wished. "All right," I said; "you may stay; I will try." So off I went for about 300 or 400 yards over some smooth rocks to the part which was almost perpendicular. I then shouted and waved the flag for them to come on, and after five minutes they followed and came up to me. They said it was impossible; I said, "I will try." So, with the rope coiled over my shoulders, I scrambled up, sticking like a cat to the rocks, which cut my fingers, and at last got up say fifty to sixty feet. I then lowered the rope, and the guides followed with its

assistance. We then had to mark our way with chalk and small bits of stone, fearing we might not be able to find it on our return. We went up very close to the edge, looking down on Grindelwald, sometimes throwing over large stones to hear them crash down beneath the clouds. We got to the top—the two guides kindly gave me the place of first man up—at 12 o'clock, stayed about ten minutes, fearing the weather, and came down in four hours, avoiding the very steep place, as, looking down from above, we found out a *couloir*, down which we came, and just saved ourselves by a few seconds from an avalanche.

'I was met at the bottom by about thirty visitors, and we went up to the hôtel. They doubted if we had been on the top until the telescope disclosed the flag there. The hotel proprietor had a large gun fired off, and I seemed for the evening to be a "lion."

'Thus ended my first and only visit to Switzerland. Not having money enough with me to try the Matterhorn, I went home. Nothing could exceed the kindness of Almer and Bohren. I am sorry to hear the latter has passed away. Both were splendid mountaineers, and had I not been as fit as my old horse "Sir Robert Peel" when I won the "Irish Grand National" with him, I would not have seen half the course. I may add that when leaving Grindelwald for the Eiger I was surprised to see the families of the guides in a state of distraction at their departure for the ascent, and two elderly ladies came out and abused me for taking them to risk their lives. Your affectionate brother,

CHARLES BARRINGTON.'

NEW EXPEDITIONS (*continued*).

Pennine Alps.

THE AIGUILLE ROUGE OF AROLLA BY THE EASTERN FACE (3,650 mètres = 11,976 feet). *September 9.*—Messrs. Reginald Hughes and D. W. Stable with Franz and Adolf Andermatten reached the highest aiguille by a new route. The wilderness of *débris* which separates the Aiguilles Rouges Glacier from the Glacier des Ignes was reached by the ordinary cow-path from Arolla. A central ridge of moraine matter curving away in a south-westerly direction was then followed, until it comes to an abrupt termination at a spot where the glacier is at its narrowest, and where the head of the aiguille shows due north-west of the spectator. The glacier was then crossed directly to the base of the peak, where four little bays of snow run upwards to the cliff. Of these the two to the right abut against an eastern tongue or *grat* descending almost at right angles to the main chain; the third gives on a flat buttress which fits irregularly on to the central mass; while the fourth bay, that immediately in front, lies at the foot of a little precipice slightly to the left of the true peak. Walking across the first and second of these bays, the party reached some easy rocks which led to the top of the third, whence they climbed up high enough to cross to the top of the little precipice above the fourth snow bay, and gained a *couloir* running some way into the heart