S. peak, in the direction in which we took them, though the couloir with the window, and the crack that beat us all except Collier—for it took the two Furrers, piled like Pelion on Ossa, to reach the first hand-hold, and the rest were hauled up to it—and a certain loose boulder, which wobbled as one of the party put his foot on it, causing a very rapid strategic movement to right and left on the part of two others standing vertically underneath it—though these incidents stand out from the rest, and, assisted by sundry snap-shots, lend a peculiar interest to that portion of the expedition, I own to a certain feeling that the E. face of the south peak was otherwise rather dull, and came a trifle flat after the best of the climbing had been tasted and the views enjoyed, on the first and highest peak. It would doubtless be better to take it the other way, as has been done in the two or three recorded ascents of the S. ridge; but being uncertain in what state we should find the rocks after all the rain of Thursday and Friday, we wished if possible to reach the best peak, and to try the other if the conditions seemed favourable.

It has been said that few mountains in Switzerland afford so good rock-climbing as the Arolla peaks. If an illustration of this statement can be found in this commonplace narrative of very ordinary work, done in a week of very uncertain weather in August last, and if thereby the improved attractions of the valley are advertised for the benefit of those who know them not, I trust the Editor may find therein some compensation for having invited this contribution to the pages of the 'Journal.'

The Tour d'Arpisson.

By THE EDITOR.

IF it be true that the man who makes two blades of grass grow where one grew before deserves well of his country, it would certainly seem that he who finds at an Alpine centre a second unrivalled view-point where one was previously known deserves well of all mountain lovers. The Pointe du Pousset is well known, or at any rate the guide books assume that it is, to all visitors to Cogne. Its great features are the view of the Grivola across the Trajo Glacier, and of Cogne at the spectator's feet. As to the view of the Grivola, I am inclined to think that, though undoubtedly striking, the great peak from this side shows little of that beauty for which, when seen from the north, it is so deservedly famous.



Tempest Anderson, photo. *Swan Electric Engraving Co.*

THE TOUR D'ARPISSON

From above the Chalets.

In 1896 I started to climb the Tour d'Arpisson, which received its name, though it cannot be said to overhang them, from its nearness to the Arpisson chalets, a spot* long known for the beauty of its outlook, but, thanks to the snowstorm, which in that deplorable season daily offered itself when the climber asked for sunshine, failed to effect more than the passage of the Col de Pila. We did actually see the peak for a minute or two once or twice, and it remained in my recollection as a very desirable climb for a short day. This summer, with my friend Dr. Tempest Anderson, and the Guides François and Sylvain Pession, I again visited Cogne, and, though the weather was anything but settled, a fine morning did at last reward us after several dark days of nothingness, when the only thing to be done was to 'arrange,' so did Pession phrase it, the vagrant cur, or to chase from one's room the harmful, unnecessary cat, or to study arboriculture in the shape of the genealogy in the dining room, and count how many names have the suggestive words attached to them, 'Soldier of Napoleon, never came back.' We therefore started for the Arpisson chalets. Soon after passing them we divided the party. Anderson took Sylvain and devoted himself to photography, whereof one excellent result may be seen in the illustration to this paper, whilst Pession and I attacked the Tour d'Arpisson. The weather on this occasion was exceptionally brilliant. We saw very clearly our last year's route to the Col de Pila, and by implication a probable way to the summit of our peak, but decided for the sake of novelty to climb to a notch in the ridge which runs from the Tour d'Arpisson to the Pointe de Garin. As is explained elsewhere (p. 527), the point 3,252 of the Italian map does not stand in the position of the Tour d'Arpisson, but is nearer to the Pointe de Garin; it may be called Punta Fiorito, from the huts below it. The Tour d'Arpisson lies about halfway between the Punta Fiorito and the point marked 3,033 on the Italian map. The notch some distance to the north below that from which we made our ascent, if worthy of the dignity of a name, might be called Colle Fiorito.

* Mr. Tuckett, in *Peaks, Passes, and Glaciers*, Second Series, vol. ii. p. 268, says :—'Their situation is exquisite. Standing on the brow of an extremely precipitous descent, the little village of Epinel in the Val de Cogne is seen at a vast depth, surrounded by rich meadows and much ploughed land; while immediately in front the mass of the Grivola towers up majestically, presenting an appearance which in beauty and grandeur reminded me strongly of the Jungfrau as seen from Mürren, and comparing by no means disadvantageously with the Queen of the Oberland.'

The way was mainly over moraine and patches of snow, the last part being decidedly steep and very exasperating, as the rocks had been planed down, and gave very little hold for foot or hand, though the work could not be called difficult. We had not put on the rope, and I must own that several times I was glad to catch hold of Pession's proffered axe to haul myself up by, though how he managed to stand firm with twelve stone tugging at him is a still-unsolved problem. When we had once reached the arête a complete and welcome change ensued in the character of the climb. The ridge was struck at the top of the broad couloir with a small patch of snow in it nearly half way up, shown in the illustration. We put on the rope and began a very pleasant rock-scramble. The Tour d'Arpisson consists of a number of towers; perhaps, I should rather say, pinnacles. I fortify myself here with the evidence of my friend, Mr. Compton, and pronounce the number to be seven. We climbed them all, as it was difficult to decide which was the highest. We reached the most westerly in thirty-five minutes without hurry from the notch, and then came to the conclusion that one of the others over which we had crossed was really the highest. We now sat down to eat our lunch and take in the prospect, which amazed both of us as well by its extent as by its brilliance. It supplied one more example of the fact that a little mountain frequently rewards one with a great view. The Tour d'Arpisson cannot for the distant panorama compete with the Pointe de Garin, of which Mr. Compton elsewhere speaks so enthusiastically, but for the Cogne view it is probably better, and certainly takes considerably less time to reach. The great peaks enjoyed the advantage of a fresh vesture of snow, and glistened in extraordinary magnificence. The Grand Combin especially surpassed himself. We saw all the chain of Mont Blanc to perfection; even the usually dark-featured Aiguille du Glacier had donned a white garment. Such a view of the Cogne peaks as next met our eyes I do not think I have ever seen; beginning with the grim Nomenon's perfectly snowless tower, we saw everything right round to the Tour de Grauson, close by us. I will not say more about these kings of Cogne except that, to my mind, our view of the Grivola was far finer than that from the Pointe du Pousset. As we ascended from the Arpisson chalets the summit had seemed to rise higher and higher into the blue sky, and the matchless curve of the north ridge had continued to increase in glory. Pession was enthusiastic. 'This is far better than the Pousset; I wish M. Anderson were here to photograph the panorama.' Beautiful as Cogne looks from

the Pousset, it is, I think, no less beautiful from the Tour d'Arpisson, while from the latter peak the eye sweeps the whole of the Valnontey, from the emerald of the Cogne meadows and the rich dark green of the forest, to the snows of the Col de Grandcrou. A good part of the Valeille was also visible, and the whole of the Val de Grauson, monotonous rather than beautiful, lay revealed, with its ruler the Tersiva, and its glacier at its head.

Doubtless, earlier in the season, when the pastures have not lost their fresh green, this valley would be more impressive. There were two curious little glaciers on the Pene Blanche, to the right of the valley as we looked at it. The shining stream of the Valnontey was specially attractive as we lay in the sunshine beneath the 'cærulean pampas of the heavens,' as the latest poet has it. One thing only is needed to make this peak the favourite view-point for all visitors to Cogne, and that is a more desirable route to the summit. This Mr. Compton has found. The way we followed, as I have said, was not pleasant, though, of course, to climbers it presents no difficulty. The part immediately under the notch was stigmatised by Pession as 'Quel sale endroit,' and the lower part of the wide couloir, before we got to the wearisome bit, might at times be dangerous from stones. Anderson tells me that he saw several big blocks fall in part across our track sometime after we had passed. (We were in shade when on the part referred to.) Pession thought that the ascent from the Col de Pila would be decidedly easier than our route, an opinion in which I entirely concur. As to the descent on the Grauson side, the way we followed in 1896 from the Col de Pila was decidedly preferable to the route we took this year, as Mr. Compton's 'times' convincingly prove.

After nearly two hours' enjoyment on our tower, on which, though, as I mentioned before, it is not actually the highest, we built a little cairn, we descended in a slanting direction towards the S.E., keeping the Tersiva straight in front of us. 'You go first,' said Pession, 'and choose the route.' This injunction I had no difficulty in carrying out. The slopes were steep but easy, and we seemed to descend very quickly. Some time after we had taken off the rope, Pession, who had gone on ahead, discovered that we were cut off from the valley, and so we had to make a long traverse to the left. One couloir which we had to cross was distinctly unpleasant, and I was glad of the help of the rope, to which we temporarily had recourse, to get across it. A considerable portion of the skin of my fingers was left behind there, and

even Pession contributed a little from his stalwart arm. Eventually, as we kept still to the left, Pession scented out a badly marked little track, and we got down to the last cliffs above the Grauson torrent. Edelweiss was fairly plentiful in this part. The upper slopes had been clothed with the grass from which wild hay is made, and were very unpleasant to walk upon. For my own part I prefer ice. After crossing several little streams the track became rather more distinct, and we at last reached the Grauson path just after it crosses the main torrent by a bridge. All the slopes on this side of the Arpisson are unwooded—only in one or two little hollows close to the main torrent did we find a few small pines.

When we had reached the proper path we hurried on, and about 20 min. above the bridge, near Moline, found Anderson and Sylvain, who had made a traverse from the Arpisson chalets by way of Gimilian, and spoke enthusiastically of the views which they had enjoyed.

It will be plain, I think, from what has been said that if the route to the Col de Pila from the Arpisson chalets is followed and the ascent of the Tour d'Arpisson completed from that pass, and Mr. Compton's route followed for the return to Cogne, the Tour d'Arpisson is destined to become the peak most resorted to by visitors to Cogne who wish to study in the most enjoyable way Cogne, its mountains, especially its Grivola, its valleys, and its mighty and not very far distant neighbours, from the Combin to the Trelatête. The Tour d'Arpisson has also another advantage over the Pointe du Pousset, in that you may go up by one valley and return by another. Such is the almost latest left of all Cogne's peaks.

Aconcagua and Mount St. Elias.

WE are very sorry to announce that in consequence of the illness of Mr. A. E. FitzGerald and of Mr. S. Vines, who are both still in Chili, the account of the Expedition to the Chilian Andes, which resulted in the splendid conquest of Aconcagua and Tupungata, is necessarily deferred to a later number. With regard to Mount St. Elias we learn from the 'Geographical Journal' for October that after thirty-eight days of hard travelling H.R.H. the Duke of the Abruzzi and his party began the ascent on July 30. On that day a height of 12,000 feet was reached. The summit was attained on July 31 without serious difficulty, though the less trained members of the party felt the rarity of the air. The height of the mountain