

the one who so carefully organised, equipped, and led the expedition, who had to bear all the anxiety, who endured greater hardships than us all in making those careful observations at high altitudes so necessary for accurate work, how very deeply I regret that he is not in my place this evening. Had it been possible for Mr. FitzGerald to achieve that which his former brilliant record seemed to guarantee, or for me to have borrowed his eyes and experience, had I been only endowed with a portion of the spirit of Mr. Whymper or Sir Martin Conway, then you would have heard to-night, in place of the bald statement of facts I have given you, a brilliant and able disquisition on high mountain climbing.

THE WRONG SIDE OF SOME DOLOMITES.

By J. S. PHILLIMORE.

(Read before the Alpine Club, April 4, 1899.)

IT is one of the pleasures of making plans before the summer that you climb in forecast peaks which you will never realise, while you often achieve in the event what your forecast never included. Raynor and I accomplished our usual training walk from the Brenner line to Cortina, and proceeded to meet our guides by appointment at Sexten, without dreaming that our first expedition would be the Einserkofel. It is a mountain there are few to see and very few to climb. You pass it on the way down from the Zinnen hut to Sexten, showing a very handsome and unpromising face, of remarkable length if you consider the insignificant stature of the whole. Overnight on August 5 we were still doubtful what to do next morning; but had settled to attempt the Dreischuster from Innerfeld (which is said to be a fine rock-climb), when we were staggered by the news, volunteered by a local guide, Schwanzhofer, that he had two Herren bound the same way, and that two more, nominally guideless, were by agreement to follow closely in their tracks. Dolomites are not suited for parties of nine, but our misgivings so far produced only a resolve to give them a long start. They left at 4, we at 5, in the morning; but so little did we like the prospect that we readily fell in with Michel Innerkofler's idea of trying the Dreischuster from the Schusterplatte side. But we had not walked $\frac{1}{2}$ hr. up the valley before discontent became open mutiny. Was there no climb involving less than a 4-hrs.' grind over

scree and other nefarious introductory matters? Then Toni Dimai suggested the Einserkofel. Now, the N. face of the Einserkofel had been tried by an Englishman whose name we failed to identify for certain, with a Swiss guide and Sepp Innerkofler, about a week before: they had turned back after 9 hrs.' very stiff work. Whether it was really an impromptu idea on Toni's part or not I cannot guess; but if with Sepp's brother (and a very loyal brother) as second he could succeed where Sepp had failed, there would at least be evidence towards deciding the disputed primacy among Dolomite guides. We consented. The pretty face of a rock mountain is irresistible, though the fascination may not take you at the moment of seeing. So the Einser had it, and, after wasting much time and investing a little in observation, we left our boots and axes at the foot and took the rocks at 7.35. The ledge where the former assailants had been stopped was plain to view, about halfway up—a line of attack so desperate that we could not imagine why Sepp had thought it even worth trying. We aimed further eastwards, and entered (not from the bottom, but by climbing over its shoulder) the W. branch of the great unmistakable Y-shaped gully. This accommodated us for 6 hrs.; at a loose estimate it may be 1,200 ft. to 1,500 ft. long: the memory and the imagination are, perhaps, at least as good witnesses as an aneroid and an American mission doctor in these cases. It proved as picturesque as it was difficult—very large in the lower part, so that you are almost always on one or other wall; very hard, because not only the elevation is steep, but the stone very smooth, and in places wet; and a dramatic and impressive setting to climb in. Neither in point of length nor of difficulty can the Schmitt Kamin or the Catinaccio chimney match it. It is more comparable to the upper part of the great gully which divides the Pala di S. Martino from the Cima Immink. You get your views well framed, and you cannot miss your way in a chimney. It contains four great obstacles—the first passed at 9 A.M., the last at 1.20; the third is the worst, being double. The unusual depth of the chimney forms caves under these obstacles, running back quite 30 ft. One might avoid the very exposed and difficult climb out and round the block by tunnelling up into the next step, if it were not for the risk of more coming away out of the roof than you bargained for. Toni confessed afterwards that he would not have faced No. 3 at all unless because of the great risk and labour of a descent over the others. By 1.30 we

were clear, at a point commanding a view of the ledge where Sepp's party turned back. We looked across the valley at the Dreischuster, just opposite, and almost regretted the 4 hrs.' screes; 6 hrs.' gymnastics in a chimney with an uncertain conclusion is stern measure for the first climb of a season. However we were past the point which had looked most doubtful as we hastily planned out a line from below. Our present halt may be recognised as a red spot marked with a deep black centre; it looks over practically clean precipices to the right (W.). We knew the direction of the peak pretty well, and made so lucky a line that we emerged off the face within 5 min. of the actual top at 4.48. The last 3 hrs. had been pretty work—not extremely difficult, but extremely steep; the place recalls one of the newly invented climbs in Val Canali at S. Martino, the Torre Giubileo. The climb thus is a true traverse; we never saw a finer performance on Dimai's part than his leading. The ordinary descent towards the Zwölfer is quite free from difficulty; it is described in Wolf von Glanvell and overrated in the 'Hochtourist.' However it was too late to dream of circumnavigating to our boots, and we convinced ourselves of what no one, perhaps, ever doubted—that there is nothing to be said in favour of klettershoes for walking over screes, rough paths, or steep grass. However we did reach Bad Moos at 9.15, where the first news we heard was that the two guideless climbers in the Dreischuster party had been killed. This is no place to dwell upon the painful detail of that accident, but it may be observed that it seems difficult to acquit the guide of the blame of having made himself at least in part responsible for four people on a first-rate climb where he did not (the result showed it) know the way.

Our guides were very anxious we should do the Dreischuster two days later, 'to show we were not afraid'; but, presumably because we were, we preferred a change of venue, and went back to Cortina.

We spent some days waiting for the fresh snow to melt before attempting the Antelao, meantime doing the Popena by the S. arête, which needs no further remark, and a climb on the Pomagagnon, which is pretty, as giving *en route* the best of all views of Cortina, and contains one passage of inordinate difficulty. On the 16th the Antelao seemed ripe, and we moved to S. Vito. (We were reinforced by the experience of Pompanin, who had taken part in some of Dr. Sinigaglia's explorations of the S. face.) Rain deterred us from a bivouac, and this gave us a heavy walk next

morning before getting to work. Francesco Verzi acted as porter; any one who wants a young guide with his name to make will not be disappointed in him: he promises great capacities. The Editor was so charitable of space for New Expeditions in the November number of the 'Journal' that I need not repeat details. The climb falls into two divisions—the Lower Wall, topped by the Pian del Lenzuolo, and the stage from there to the summit. The first is increasingly, but nowhere excessively, difficult. We were five on the rope for good part of it. It faces nearly due W. (we never saw the sun), and carries you to a height above 8,200 ft. As for the character of the rock, Michel, whose reflections are dry, was heard to observe to himself after some hours of it, '*Merkwürdig plattig*,' which expresses all. The whole of the second part we climbed in fairly thick cloud, which makes description now as difficult as orientation then. One cannot take in the enormous size of the Antelao till fairly involved in that wilderness on the S. side. As it was, our direction was right; only, on arriving at a top (12 hrs. from S. Vito), we were surprised to find our shouts re-echoed off an opposing wall of greater height. Had not the cloud obligingly lifted, on that false top we must have pernoctated. The cloud lifting revealed a stupendous prospect. We faced a semicircle of rock, dropping in black water-lined precipice to our right and left. Opposite there advanced from the wall a snow slope, which narrowing to a rock rib finally ran out into a small isthmus, not 6 ft. wide at the top, connecting the whole with our central point. It might be the bridge between two circles of the Inferno. From the abysses on the left came the sound of falling water and falling stones (this, I believe, was Sinigaglia's line); to the right it seemed equally inaccessible; apparently our false top was a necessary stage in the only way. The descent to the little isthmus is for rottenness unsurpassed even by the N. face of the Pelmo. Tons of stone went down before one could even attempt a careful crawl over the still crumbling residue. Usage does wonders for Dolomite climbs, and it is possible that a few more visits may reduce the passage to a merely normal degree of insecurity. So far it is the danger of the climb. I have no account of the experiences of the party which repeated the ascent in September. But we took $1\frac{1}{4}$ hr. to descend a short couple of hundred feet. Up the rib, over the snow field, along the narrow crest, guided by the summit now visible, we went in 1 hr. 40 min. The evening clearance of cloud on our peak revealed every point in the district looking

murky and tempestuous, and showed us we had been very lucky to escape a storm. We regained S. Vito at dark in just under $2\frac{1}{2}$ hrs. from the top. The local guide, Giuseppe Pordon, who had scoffed at the idea of the Antelao being feasible by the Cadore face, did not appear that evening; no doubt politeness kept him from giving expression to his unaltered disbelief.

I pass over the walks and climbs of the next ten days, to come to the Langkofel. The N. way up the Langkofel, to judge from the splendid look of the mountain towards St. Ulrich, ought to be a magnificent rock-climb. If ever an expedition promised great things, judged from below, it is that in which, thanks to an accident, we were forestalled by a day in 1896; and if ever a climb belied its promise it is Herr Wildt's climb of the Langkofel from the N. We left the hut at 5.10, coasted the grassy roots of the N.W. spur for $\frac{3}{4}$ hr., then struck up the first broad snow couloir. Following this for 20 min. you rope and take to the slabs on the right. Easy going for an hour along the W. rib of the couloir brings you to a point where it narrows, clear of snow (in August), to a big chimney, blocked and watery. Crossing it and climbing up the left edge of it you regain the snow above, considerably steeper. About an hour higher there was an awkward iced bit over a buried block. Some couple of hundred feet above this you leave the couloir and climb out to the left over easy broken stuff on to a big *Grat*, which forms the partition between the two great N.W. couloirs. Into the second of these we now descended; and a very ugly place. Two shoots of black ice, so hard that the frequent blocks which descend from the precipices at their heads hardly scar them, pitched at a desperate gradient, unite just above the point where we hastily crossed the line of fire on a dozen cut steps. Then follows the only first-class technical difficulty of the expedition, the east rib of the second couloir; our line was a wet, glazed, smooth crack, nearly vertical—an hour's stiff work. This is probably a slight variation on the first ascent route, but not apparently different in quality. Thence over a second *Grat*, still aiming about E.; a second descent (rather troublesome from rotten rock), including an awkward iced chimney, and you gain the third big couloir, the iced part of which could be avoided by following moderate rocks on the left edge; and from the steep snow at the head of it you emerge at a little *Scharte*. From here a short hour's work over easy rock, in a direction about S. or S.S.W., up slabs, and lastly along the crest: 8 hours from the hut to the

top; formal halts, 36 minutes. Descent to the Hut, 3 hours—expedited by rain.

I believe this was the second ascent by this route, and in any case no English account has yet appeared. One cannot wholly condemn a climb which from grandeur of scale alone is worth having done; but let no one imagine that the expedition is a big rock-climb, for the greater part is ice and snow couloir, with at most an hour's first-rate rock work. It is tempting to believe that there is a way from the head of the great rib between couloirs 1 and 2; but we could not see one. Meantime the expedition is a splendid fraud.

These are but the *disjecta membra* of the summer's campaign of 1898. The Antelao concluded a series of wrong-side climbs of some of the major peaks in the Dolomites; the Einserkofel was an accident, almost a mistake; and the Langkofel only a humble following after a luckier rival. There are good things left (it would be unwise to name them) which may just as well fall to English hands and feet. I think no member of this Club who spent a week or two, say, at S. Martino, or at a place more comfortable than any S. Martino inn, the Dresdener Hut in Val Canali, would regret his time.

IN MEMORIAM.

OWEN GLYNNE JONES.

ONCE again, after the lapse of seventeen years, the Dent Blanche has been the scene of a great disaster. The tragedy of August 28, the details of which are still fresh in all our minds, has deprived the Club of one who, in his own way, was amongst the most distinguished of the younger generation. O. G. Jones may not have been a great mountaineer—that honoured title is scarcely to be won at his early age, and he would, I am sure, have been the last to claim it for himself; but he stood, beyond a doubt, in the first rank of English rock-climbers. His knowledge of the Alps was wide and varied. For the last ten or twelve years he had spent the greater part of a schoolmaster's summer holidays among them. Once at least (in 1897) he was at Grindelwald in January, when he climbed the Schreckhorn,* and once he had a long experience on the Dent Blanche in spring.†

Thanks to his physique and unusual powers of endurance he was able to compress a great deal of work into each season. He had climbed most of the great peaks at Chamonix, Grindelwald, Zermatt, Saas Fee, and similar places. It was only quite recently that he had turned his thoughts to a more ambitious programme. Last

* *Alpine Journal*, vol. xviii. p. 409; also vol. xix. p. 91.

† *Ibid.* vol. xvi. p. 401.