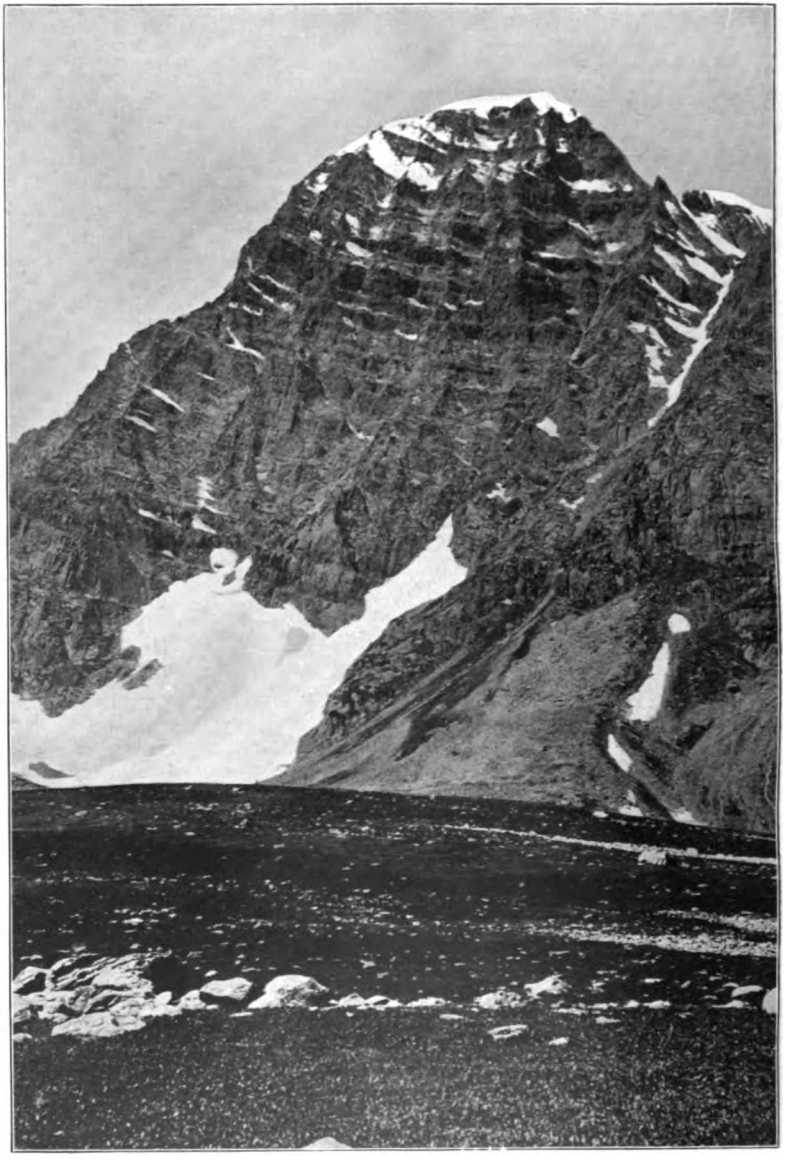
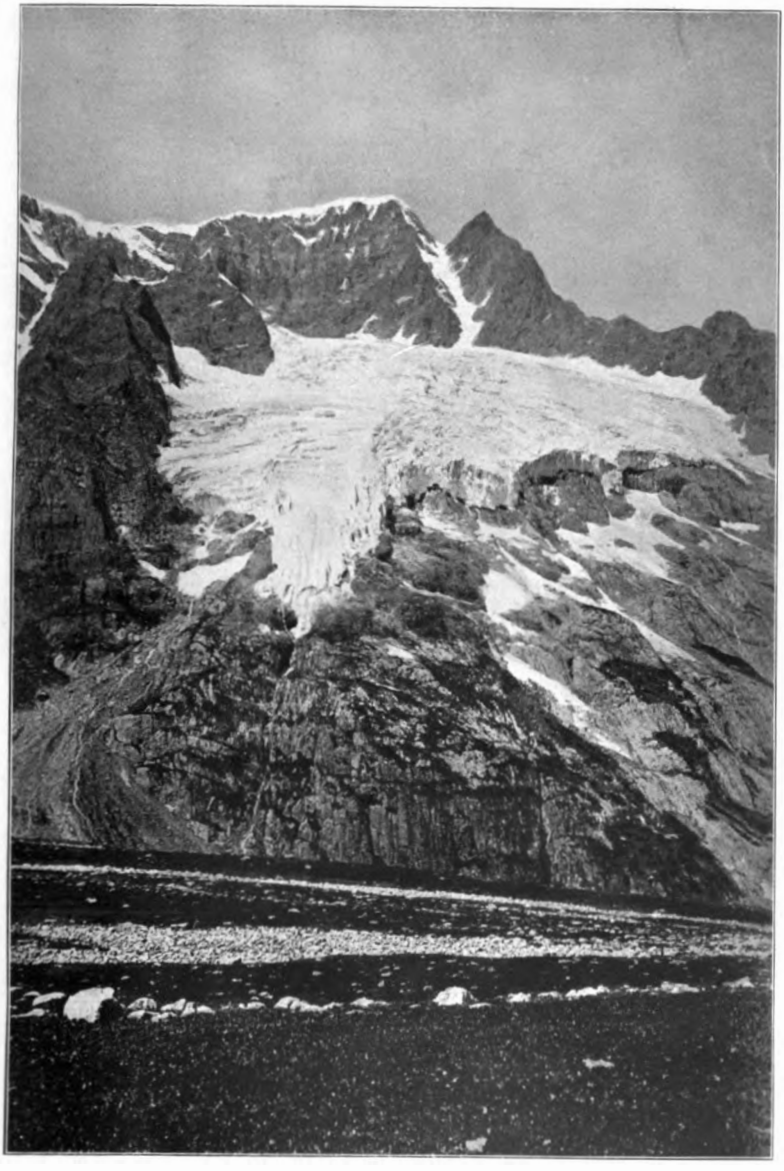


A. L. Mumm, photo. *Swan Electric Engraving Co., Ltd.*

THE EAST FACE OF HARAMUKH.



A. L. Mumm, photo. *Swan Electric Engraving Co., Ltd.*

THE EAST FACE OF HARAMUKH.

THE

ALPINE JOURNAL.

AUGUST 1908.

(No. 181.)

In and about Kashmir.

By A. L. MUMM.

ON July 31, as has been already recorded,* Major Bruce and I parted from Longstaff at Pana, leaving him with two Gurkhas to complete his topographical researches round the Western and Southern bases of the Trisul massif, and proceeded to Almora. We proposed to devote the rest of the time at our disposal to a short visit to Kashmir and the mountains of Khagan, but our stay at Almora was protracted by unforeseen circumstances, and it was not till August 22 that we started from Rawul Pindi for Kashmir. Moritz Inderbinen came with us, and three Gurkhas; the Brocherels, much to our regret, were obliged to go straight home.

Imagine the Italian Alps to be bent round so as to enclose an oval piece of the plain of Lombardy about 80 miles long by 20 miles broad, with a general north-west and south-easterly direction, and you get a fair rough idea of what the vale of Kashmir is like. It is drained by the river Jhelum, which leaves the vale at Baramula and flows westward through the mountains for nearly 80 miles, then turns south, and plunges down through a tremendous defile to the plains. Driving up from Rawul Pindi, one crosses the hill of Mari, and descends into the Jhelum valley, about 20 miles below the southern bend, at Kohala, where the famous road commences which has been so graphically described by Mr. E. F. Knight in his fascinating book 'Where Three Empires Meet.' At that time the journey from Baramula onward was completed by boat, but the road now runs all the way to Srinagar.

The tradition of furious driving has been faithfully

* *Ante*, p. 25.

preserved, and the whole distance of 196 miles from Rawul Pindi is sometimes covered in two days when the road is clear; we accomplished it easily in three, our progress being a good deal hampered by processions of bullock carts, heavily laden with apples and walnuts, and much too large for the roadway, of which we must have passed some hundreds.

Close to the southward turn the Jhelum is joined from the north, within a distance of five or six miles, by two considerable tributaries—the Kunhar or Nainsook, which flows through the valley of Khagan, and the Kishanganga, a river which plays a very important part in the orography of Kashmir. They are separated by an attractive mountain-chain which does not seem to have any recognised designation, and which I shall refer to as the Khagan range. It is Bruce's own particular preserve, and I believe that no one except him and some of his Gurkhas has explored that portion of it which rises above the snow line. I reckoned myself very fortunate in having before me the prospect of visiting it in his company.

'One way,' says Mr. F. Drew, 'of looking at the mountains that make the oval barrier of Kashmir, is to consider them as divided into a northern and a southern part by the Sind river that flows from near the Dras Pass [now more commonly known as the Zoji La] into the vale, and the Jhelum river as it flows out from Baramula to Muzufarabad [where it is joined by the Kishanganga]. The line of these two is roughly east and west; it divides the vale and its mountain ring into somewhat unequal parts, of which the southern is the greater.'

The northern part 'extends for over 100 miles from east to west. . . . On its south side lie successively the Sind valley, the northern part of the vale, and the Jhelum valley; on its north side is the Kishanganga valley in its whole length.' *

I have adopted this way of looking at it because it is extremely convenient for the purposes of this paper. We went out along the imaginary dividing line for most of its length, and, in returning, were sometimes inside, sometimes outside, but never very far from the northern half of the mountain ring as above described.

Our first object was the ascent of Haramukh, a huge isolated mountain, whose snowy crest is visible from Srinagar

* *Jummoo and Kashmir Territories*, p. 199.

towering nearly 12,000 feet above the Happy Valley, and though of no great height as Himalayan summits go, overtopping by thousands of feet everything in its immediate neighbourhood.

The history of Haramukh has been briefly told in the 'Journal'* by Dr. E. F. Neve, who, after several visits, finally reached the highest summit with G. Millais in 1899. Whether he or anyone else has repeated the expedition since, I do not know; however, our natural wish, as a first ascent was not open to us, was to discover a new route and, if possible, to make a traverse of the mountain. A visit to Kashmir and Khagan had formed no part of our original plans, and consequently we were not provided with maps, and knew very little about the geography of Haramukh. Fortunately, during our short stay at Srinagar, we met Dr. Neve and his brother, who supplied Bruce with a rough but serviceable sketch map and much useful information.

Haramukh does not form part of any main watershed: it is an outlier, situated between two nearly parallel valleys, the Erin *nala* and the Wangat *nala*, which descend to the vale of Kashmir in a south-westerly direction. The former, the more northerly of the two, runs right down to the great Wular lake; the latter joins the larger Sind valley, a short distance before it debouches into the plain. They are connected by a fairly good track running round the mountain on the north-east and north, and leading over two low passes.

We left Srinagar in two native house-boats, or *doongas*, and in the mists of next morning we might have fancied ourselves on the Norfolk Broads. Gradually the mountains were unveiled and, amid scenes of ever-increasing beauty, the voyage came to an end at the mouth of the Sind valley.

We camped on August 30 close to the Wangat ruins,† above which the valley branches right and left. Ascending by a very steep path, we came suddenly round a corner facing up the left-hand branch, and had our first view of the eastern face of Haramukh, a dark monotonous rock-wall, with one huge shelf over which sprawled a considerable glacier. The next day was devoted to photography, and a careful examination of possible routes, and the camp was moved up to the banks of the Gungabal lake, which skirts

* Vol. xx. p. 122.

† A full description of them will be found in Conway's *Climbing and Exploration in the Karakorum Himalayas*, vol. ii. p. 688.

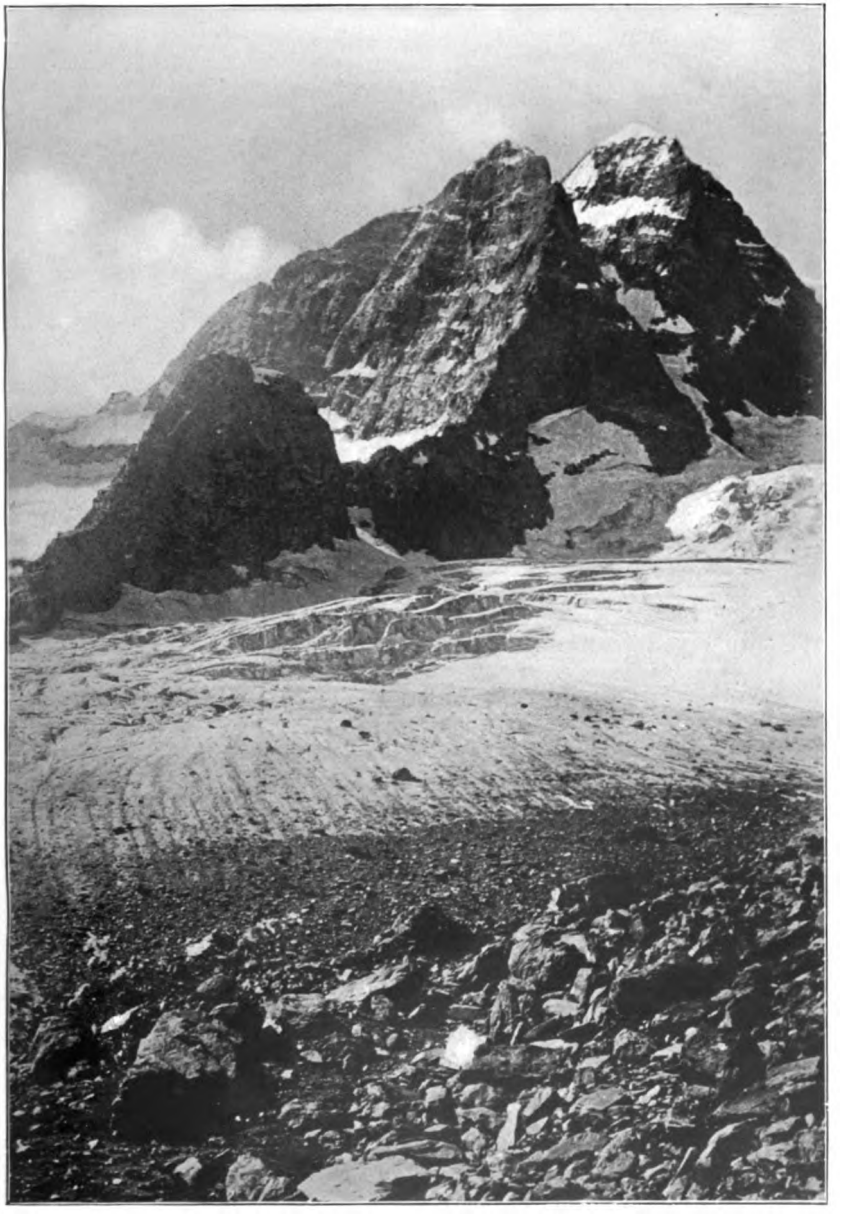
the base of Haramukh up to the head of this branch of the Wangat valley.

Dr. Neve had said that we should find the east face rather a hard nut to crack, and suggested that a much likelier route would be provided by a glacier on the other side of the northern end of the mountain, the final icefall of which, dropping steeply to the shore of the upper end of the lake, was visible from the camp. The east face is certainly the 'wrong side' of Haramukh, in the sense that it offers the most difficult and doubtful route, and the best climbing: whether that is equivalent to saying that it is the most attractive route depends on one's point of view at the moment. We wanted to make sure of the peak, and could not afford to spend much time on it; accordingly, the camp being now in a commanding position with respect to the east face, we determined to have a look at the route indicated by Dr. Neve before coming to a final decision.

On Monday, September 2, we started with two of the Gurkhas, Parl Sing and Jeman Sing, walked briskly along the lake, and arrived, in an hour, at the far end of it. Another hour's steady going up steep grass slopes along the left side of the glacier brought us to a point above the icefall, from which we could see right up the glacier to the snowy cirque at its head, and the route now looked so promising that Jeman Sing was forthwith sent back with instructions to return to the same place with a sufficiency of tents and provisions and pitch a camp there.

The four who were left took to the ice, went on for an hour, and then put on crampons at the foot of the second icefall. These were practically a novelty to all the party, and we could not possibly have had a better occasion for making acquaintance with them. The slopes were mostly of hard ice, just a little too steep to walk on in ordinary foot-gear without step-cutting, and it was a very pleasing experience to find oneself marching up them with perfect comfort and ease. The crevasses were magnificent and on a large scale, but presented no difficulties, and the only feature of this portion of the ascent which calls for any remark was an ugly-looking bit of glacier at the top of the cliffs on our left, just where the crevasses came to an end, and the plateau of névé commenced which forms the source of the glacier. We kept a wary eye on it, but nothing came down.

We were now in a position to grasp more clearly the structure of the mountain. In front of us a snowy ridge descended in a north-westerly direction from the main mass,



A. L. Mumm, photo *Swan Electric Engraving Co., Ltd.*

HARAMUKH FROM THE NORTH.

and, curving round to the north, was continued in an irregular series of cliffs and small rock-peaks, which formed the western boundary of the glacier; sinking still lower, the ridge closed the valley at the head of the Gungabal lake, and connected the outlying Haramukh massif with the watershed between the basins of the Sind and Kishanganga rivers.

The plateau, rising gently, brought us to a snowy col at the point where the ridge turns to the north. We conjectured, quite correctly, that at this point or near it we must join Dr. Neve's route, and hoped to be able to form some idea of the way by which he had come, but everything on the other side was shrouded in dense mist, and it was impossible to do so. A convenient snow-terrace provided easy going for some distance further, and then only a short scramble remained between us and a snowy dome on the main ridge which clearly overtopped everything to the north of it. For a few minutes we believed that we had the top 'in our pocket,' but when the dome was reached another dome loomed through the clouds beyond it, which very palpably looked down on us. We had, in fact, reached the 'middle dome' ascended by Dr. Neve in 1897, and between us and the highest peak yawned the deep gap which he did not cross till two years later. Half filled by rolling mists it looked quite formidable. It was now past two o'clock; we were desperately hungry; and one of us, at any rate, was tired. There was no chance of a view, so at three it was decided to return and complete the ascent another day.

We had just crossed the plateau, and rounded the first of the big crevasses, when the overhanging glacier had a shot at us; it was just too late, and one or two big lumps that would have reached us disappeared harmlessly into the depths of the crevasse. Had they come a minute sooner we should have had to make a bolt for it, but there would have been time. Soon afterwards the tents came in sight, and we were back before five.

On the 4th, after a wholly inexcusable and wholly pleasant day of idleness, we started at 7.40; going steadily, and at a good pace, I reached the middle dome at eleven with Inderbinen and Parl Sing; Bruce and the other two Gurkhas had left the ridge lower down to try a direct traverse to the gap. We got down to the gap in half an hour, by rocks which, though steep and rotten, turned out to be quite easy, and strolled in another half-hour up the broad snow arête that led to the summit.

Bruce's division were let in for a difficult descent, which

landed them some way below the gap, and we were nearly an hour on the top before they joined us. The way over the middle dome is certainly the best and shortest.

'The scene was too grand for words to describe. One looked right over the top of the great Pir Panjal range, which lies to the south of the valley of Kashmir, and the higher peaks of which rival and even surpass Mont Blanc in height. Looking around one saw, standing out like giants, the still unclimbed mountains — Kolahoi, with its Matterhorn-like peak; Nun Kun; to the north, Gwasherbrum and Masherbrum; and above all, sixty miles away, the grand range culminating in Nanga Parbat.'

So Dr. Neve ends the story of his first ascent: of this unsurpassable panorama we saw nothing. Looking back dispassionately on our whole journey, I think we had at least average good luck in this respect; to have wholly missed the view from Haramukh was the one supreme unforgettable disappointment.

But Haramukh is far too fine a mountain to be dismissed as a mere *belvedere*. It is the giant of the northern mountain-ring, which elsewhere scarcely reaches the snow-line. The ice scenery is of a high order, and the ascent, though easy, is well worth making for its own sake. And there is the east face climb waiting for the next comer. The point to make for is the gap, and I should not be surprised if the last few hundred feet turned out to be decidedly interesting. A party who succeeded in reaching the summit from this side could fairly reckon on regaining a camp at the bottom of the Gungabal lake by our route in four or five hours. We got back to the middle dome in three quarters of an hour, the leading trio going slowly up the rocks for fear of sending stones down. On the rest of the descent we went very fast over the now familiar ground, and reached the camp by the glacier in an hour and twenty-five minutes.

Unfortunately, the remarkable isolated position of Haramukh, to which its interest is largely due, is also the cause of its being neglected. The tour of the mountain from Srinagar to the Wular lake occupies eight or ten days. Mountaineering parties coming from distant lands, and intent on more distant and bigger game, will rarely pause to devote so much time to it. Even Bruce had never before found time for a visit, and its exploration so far has been left altogether to residents in Srinagar.

September 5.—We took a short cut across the Gungabal ridge just behind the camp, skirted the curious little Sirbal

lake, and then crossing a second low col, dropped down by a very steep descent to a charming *maidan* at the very head of the Erin *nala*. This day was our last chance of seeing something of the western flanks of Haramukh, and once more we were disappointed.

Down the densely wooded Erin *nala* through typical Kashmiri scenery, luxuriant vegetation, pretty prosperous-looking villages half-buried in trees, sparkling streams and bright-green meadows, we emerged on the 7th into the dust and glare of the open plain at Bandipore, a short mile from the Wular lake, where the *doongas* were waiting for us. Haramukh has an unfair advantage over all other mountains in that the natural sequel to an ascent of it is a spell of idling in a *doonga*. As, next day, we dawdled across the lake to Alsoo, I thought that for once in my mountaineering life I was touching the heights of perfect achievement—I was having the ideal off-day. But no; there were two drawbacks. Weeds forbade a swim, and all that was possible in the way of a bathe was to dangle in the water, hanging on cautiously to the edge of the vessel. This was ignominious, but worse was to come. At Alsoo countless myriads of mosquitoes compelled us to a gobbled dinner, hurried packing, and a flight shorewards through a hundred yards of sludge to comparative safety at the top of a neighbouring knoll.

Leaving Alsoo and the Wular lake, we made a fresh start: twenty-five stalwart Kashmiri porters had been engaged to come with us right through to Abbottabad, our ultimate bourne; and a goodly store of all sorts of supplies had been sent by water from Srinagar. Before leaving the subject of supplies, I must mention that Dina, most capable of cooks, who had accompanied us throughout the Garhwal campaign, and earned the Distinguished Service Order many times over, had gone on long before to Abbottabad, with instructions to meet us with a fresh relay of stores in the Safa Mula valley, on the far side of the Khagan range.

Just to the north of the Wular lake, a spur sweeps down into the vale from its mountain ring and incloses the lovely valley of the Lolab. Camping on the neck, on a delightful greensward girdled with pine woods, I wandered forth in the early morning with Inderbinen and a camera, hoping for a long shot at Haramukh. Haramukh was coyly veiled in haze, but away to the north, through the trees, we spied some snowy peaks hitherto unseen, and moved a little to get an unimpeded look at them; then as our eyes travelled on from one to the other, they were suddenly arrested by a white monster, which

dwarfed the other summits into puny insignificance; and so, by the merest chance, I obtained my one and only view of Nanga Parbat.

It is an event in a lifetime merely to have gazed on that superb and stupendous mountain, but I have no other excuse for dwelling on the next few days, pleasant as they were. We went down the Lolab, skirted the north-east corner of the vale, and on September 13 crossed over into the basin of the Kishanganga. A lovely wooded glen led down to the river, which we crossed at a place called Kairen.

We were not yet, however, in touch with the Khagan range—a tributary glen running for a long distance nearly parallel with the main Kishanganga valley intervened; the upper level of this glen, a considerable pasture ground, is known as Tod Galli, and is reached from the Kishanganga by the Babun Pass ('Baboon Pass' and 'Toad Gulley,' so one inevitably sees these names in the mind's eye).

From the vale of Kashmir to Tod Galli is three good days' walking. There are probably many other sub-alpine routes in this wonderful region of equal variety and interest, but I can strongly recommend this one. The splendid forests of the pass leading out of the vale constitute the principal feature of the first day; on the second, the exquisite valley scenery of the Kishanganga about and above the Kairen bridge. From the Babun Pass itself the view to the east is panoramic; we gazed across an endless sea of wooded ranges, above which rose Haramukh, a massive island of rock. This was our last clear sight of it, and we realised once more, with a pang of regret, its unrivalled position as a view point. On the west, now close at hand, were some of the numerous Rajee Bojee peaks, which are situated in the southern half of the snowy portion of the Khagan range and have been the principal scene of Bruce's activities; right in front of us was one which Harkir climbed alone in 1896.*

A steep descent, which recalled bits of the Rishi valley in Garhwal, landed us on September 15 in Tod Galli, at the lower end of an extensive *maidan*.

One could see up the valley for perhaps three or four miles, then it turned sharply to the left, and was lost to view behind a sturdy rock peak. As we were going up the other side, two days later, an attractive-looking glacier pass came into view, just opposite the corner, which must lead back into the Kishanganga basin, and invites further investi-

* *Alpine Journal*, vol. xx. pp. 306–310.

gation. Bruce knew nothing of this upper region of the valley and doubted whether anyone had ever visited it.

Eleven years before, he and his party, having descended into Tod Galli on the occasion of Harkir's solitary ascent, returned 'over a couple of passes and an elevated snow-field which took them down into the Narang valley of Khagan,' and this route he proposed to follow once more. It would bring us into the neighbourhood of Shikara, and Mali, the giant of the chain. We hoped to make the ascent of these two peaks, and then to work our way in and out of the lateral valleys on the north side of the chain by a series of sub-alpine passes.

On September 17 we walked to the upper end of the *maidan*, crossed the river, not without difficulty, near some herdsmen's huts—the highest human habitations—and then, ascending steeply for 1¼ hrs., entered a long hanging valley.

There we met a herd of buffaloes, though the valley floor was covered with snow very nearly to its mouth. On one of the first snow slopes was collected a thick crowd of vultures—a strange spectacle; in a few minutes the explanation of it came into view in the shape of a dead buffalo. This was altogether too much for the Gurkhas, who picked up half a dozen stones apiece and raced off to the assault, while we sat down and, substituting cold mutton for buffalo, proceeded to do pretty much what the vultures had been doing. It was funny to see them now, hopping up the snow with wings outspread, but, ungainly as their movements were, they kept out of range of their assailants with absolute ease.

The rest of the glen was indescribably dreary and desolate. At the head rose an uninteresting mountain, in very bad repair, which bowled down biggish stones with remarkable regularity at intervals of five or ten minutes. I took a violent dislike to this peak, and was shocked when Bruce pronounced it to be Shikara. The way lay to the right of it, up interminable hard gritty slopes just not too steep to walk on, than which I know nothing more boring and more tiring. The caravan straggled over these disgracefully, and at 3.30, among the very last of the coolies, I arrived at the col fagged and cross, and, as usual, very hungry.

In his all too brief account of the visit to Khagan in 1896 Bruce has described an amusing incident in the passage of the first of his two cols. They found on reaching the top of the pass on the Khagan side a steep slope of hard frozen

snow for about 50 ft., and then another 50 ft. still steeper and harder, and foresaw trouble with the coolies.

'However,' he says, 'we hit upon a very good plan, which answered admirably; we stretched our only rope from the top down the first steep slope, cutting large steps right up to the edge of the ice-slope. At the edge we cut an immense step—the men had not been allowed to look over all this time and so were in ignorance of what was before them. One Gurkha was stationed on the top with the rope, one at the big step, and myself and Karbir hardened our hearts and glissaded, sitting, on to the snow slope below. On the word being given a coolie was passed down with his load and made to sit on the big step; a violent push did the rest, and we did the fielding at the bottom.'

But when I joined Bruce on the col I was met by the announcement, 'Je me suis trompé,' so I had a look round. We were in a well-defined rocky gap, between a ridge running down from Shikara and a spur belonging to another rock peak on the right which had only recently come into view. It was a beautiful col, but it was certainly not the scene of the coolies' involuntary sitting glissade. Icy slopes fell away in front of us with startling abruptness for some hundreds of feet to a small glacier below, embraced by a rib projecting from Shikara—if, indeed, it was Shikara, for its title to that name had been considerably shaken. In the centre, below the middle of the gap, the slope soon turned into actual glacier, and was quite impassable; but Inderbinen and the Gurkhas had already been busy for some time at the side hugging the rocks of the right-hand peak and cutting steps of the soup-plate order. Fifty or sixty feet below the col there was a conveniently shaped stone tightly frozen in; all the rope we possessed, probably 150 to 200 feet, was got out and fastened to the stone, over which Jeman Sing squatted, while Inderbinen took up a position by the bergschrund—which, luckily, was not a big one—at the bottom of the steepest bit, and took charge of the other end.

It was decidedly the most awkward place that we took coolies over, not so dangerous as the traverse into the Rishi valley, but very much more difficult. The Kashmiris, with a single exception, faced it with admirable pluck, and went down steadily and well. One of them only remained tearful and shivering at the top. Bruce took off a scarf he was wearing, knotted it loosely round the man's waist, and holding one end in his hand bade the waverer go forward,

for all would be well. It was a remarkable illustration of the value of 'moral support.' He started off at once quite cheerful and confident, and all were safe at the bottom a few minutes later.

The topographical situation—which became perfectly clear in the course of the next morning—was as follows:—The Batta Kundi *nala*, in which we now were, runs up from the main Khagan valley in a south-westerly direction, and we had entered it at right angles to its course. It ends in the elevated snow-field crossed by Bruce in 1896, from which a glacier descends just far enough to join the one below our pass. The first of Bruce's two cols was on the other side of the pseudo Shikara, and the true Shikara rose between the two at the very head of the valley. The second col led into the Safa Mula *nala*, where Dina was to meet us. We had seen it from our own pass, but it was past five o'clock by the time we had completed our descent—far too late to think of crossing it—and we camped just below the two glaciers.

The 1896 route is the shorter and easier in every respect, but we were quite satisfied to have stumbled upon a new and amusing little pass. We ought also to have had a fine view of the south-eastern face of Mali, but fully half of the mountain was wrapped in dense clouds. I should say, from a very imperfect inspection, that the ascent of it from that side, if possible at all, would be an immensely long and arduous business.

The day ended with a violent snowstorm. I cannot in the least recollect whether there was any fuel within reach—that hardly seems possible—or whether we had brought some along as a precautionary measure; I only know that Kar Sing, a servant of Bruce's who had taken Dina's place, rose sublimely to the occasion and escorted me under an immense umbrella to Bruce's tent, where we were regaled on a princely dinner of pea soup and a great many fried eggs.

September 18.—The morning was cloudless, but so intensely cold that, contrary to all precedent, we breakfasted indoors, and then loitered awhile so as to start in the sun.

It was about 1½ hr.'s actual walking to the second col; but we took things very easily, photographing and studying the arête which descended towards us from Shikara and up which lay the obvious route to the summit.

The scenery had somewhat disappointed me on the previous day, but now I changed my mind about it entirely, and was inclined to class it with the view of the head of the Zinal valley from the Mountet hut, though the scale of

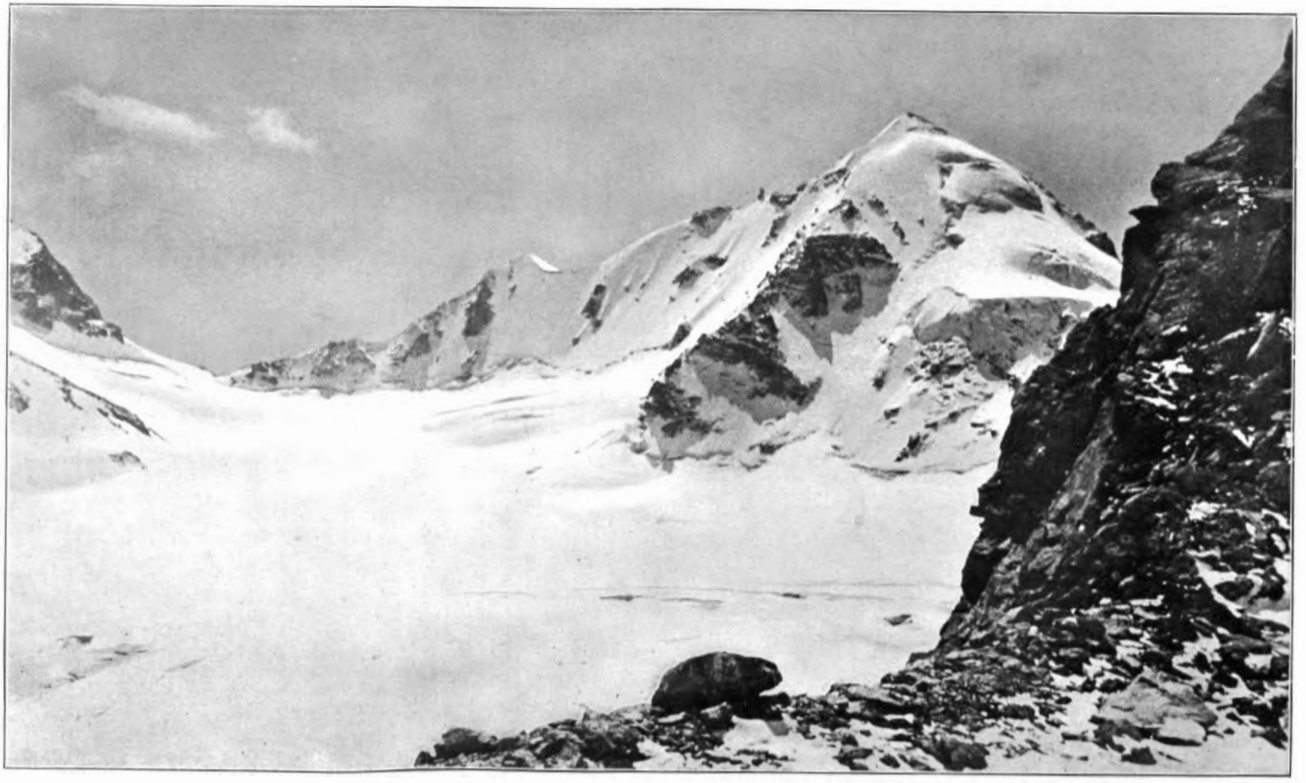
heights and distances is considerably smaller, and Mali, the only peak worthy to be pitted against the Dent Blanche, unfortunately does not come into the picture. The false Shikara was transformed into a massive and stately cone; the peak on the other side of yesterday's pass showed an unexpectedly fine array of dark towers and spires, buttressed by bold rock ribs, which held between them deep gulleys of snow, and broken by a broad rent which looked obtrusively like a pass, considerably higher than ours, and leading, possibly, back into the head of the glen above Tod Galli. Above all, we were fascinated by the graceful symmetry of Shikara, a dazzling white pyramid rising from the centre of the broad expanse of spotless snow.

Inderbinen was eager to stop where we were, and attack Shikara on the following day, but Bruce, before anything was attempted, wished to get his letters and to make sure of Dina. We were some days overdue, and he started the distressing theory that Dina had got tired of waiting, and gone back, and began to hold forth, with aggravating cheerfulness, on the merits of the Dak Bungalow at Narang. It was like inviting some one who had been anticipating a night at Randa to wax enthusiastic over an hotel at Brieg.

An hour after leaving the col we were down at the base of Mali, which soared up 5,000 or 6,000 ft. above us, but too steeply to give much impression of height, or to allow of any satisfactory judgment being formed as to the proper way up. There was a *maidan*, with a few tenantless huts and a stray horse or two; but no other signs of life, so we trudged on for two hours more, passing a small lake and scarcely descending at all, nearly to the mouth of the valley which ends with a long steep drop to the level of the Kunhar river.

Here, if anywhere, we might expect to find Dina, and here, to my great relief, we did find him, abundantly supplied with all necessaries and a good many luxuries, amongst them several ducks and a goose. The ducks fulfilled their destiny in due time, but the goose wandered off somewhere that night, on an exploring expedition, and was never seen again.

We had proposed to devote ourselves, in the first instance, to Mali, but a tremendous storm upset all plans and calculations. Fresh snow was lying within 300 feet of the camp next morning, and Mali was literally smothered in it. For a day or two nothing could be done, and a general break-up of the weather seemed not unlikely; it was decided to try and make sure of Shikara if possible. The whole camp



A. L. Mumm, photo. *Swan Electric Engraving Co., Ltd.*

SHIKARA.

THE ASCENT WAS MADE BY THE ARETE IN THE CENTRE

was moved up to the foot of Mali on the 20th, and the ominous fact was noted that the whole of that side of the mountain remained entirely sunless till half-past ten. On the 21st we returned with a light kit to pass No. 2, and camped there.

The weather looked very doubtful, and snow fell during the night, but the morning of September 22 broke fine, though the cold, till the sun reached the col at about seven o'clock, was stinging, At 7.30 Bruce, Inderbinen and I, with Parl Sing and Jeman Sing, started for Shikara. We got down to the edge of the snow plateau in six or seven minutes, put on the rope, and walked briskly across to the foot of the peak, which was reached at 8.45. The small bergschrund gave no trouble, and we were sitting on the rocks at the foot of the arête before nine. By now the sun was fairly powerful, and we were hot and perspiring, but still I was a little surprised to see Inderbinen deposit his gloves, scarf, and second waistcoat under a stone before we started again.

After that it was a matter of continuously steep straightforward climbing for about three hours; Inderbinen led in good style, but there was not much choice of route; we encountered big bits of slabby rock every now and then that were not exactly easy, but no serious check occurred. Being five on one rope, we went slowly, and the whole ascent would have been simpler and quicker but for the large quantity of fresh snow. The only part there was ever any doubt about was the snowy bit at the top of the arête, which was narrow and extremely steep. There was no question of the possibility of getting up it, but I should not have cared to trust everybody's judgment as to what it would be like coming down. However, Inderbinen showed unwavering confidence on this point, and, keen as he was on leading a party on a successful first ascent, he was not the man to let his ardour run away with him.

A pretty little terrace of snow led round to the summit at 12.40. I think Bruce was the only member of the party who had previously taken part in the ascent of a virgin peak, and we all enjoyed a comfortable feeling of elation. The Gurkhas were frankly delighted, and eager to be photographed on the top.

Shikara is almost certainly the second peak in the Kagan chain, and rises in the very centre of it, but I cannot conscientiously say that the view, as a whole, was very remarkable. The crowd of Rajee Bojee peaks stretched

southward in unimpressive confusion; clouds had rolled up in the north, and Nanga Parbat was invisible. The one imposing object in the panorama was the dark mass of Mali. Seen from this elevation it rose above its ridge majestically, square and solid as a Norman keep, crowned by a lesser rock tower which formed the summit. There is plenty of good climbing in the rest of the range, but all on a moderate scale: Mali alone, though only a little over 17,000 ft. in height, is undeniably a giant, and whoever succeeds in conquering it will have won a big mountaineering prize.

It was here that we finally determined to abandon the attempt to secure it ourselves. For after the first half-hour of the ascent of the arête we had all suffered acutely from the cold: it had come as a complete surprise to everybody, especially to Inderbinen. We were already thoroughly warm; the time was ten o'clock to twelve; the sun had shone brightly throughout, and only the gentlest of breezes had blown occasionally; but it was just about as much as one could stand.

To make an assault on Mali would mean a start with the temperature below zero, and no chance of getting into the sun for many hours, while it was certain that some of the climbing would be difficult and slow. None of us had any stomach for such a fight: Inderbinen pronounced with great decision that no hands could hold out at it for half an hour, and no one was inclined to contradict him.

We consoled ourselves with the reflection that time was slipping by, and what was left at our disposal would have only sufficed for a single attempt; and that, probably, at least two would be required before a way to the summit was found; but, setting that consideration aside altogether, I have no doubt that we decided rightly, and that for this particular expedition we were a full month too late.

The descent required care, but the snow, as Inderbinen had predicted, behaved well. We were off the arête by 4.15, and at half-past five regained the little camp on the col, where we spent another night.

On the 24th we started to work our way in and out over the spurs running down towards the Kunhar river. It was not alpine, but I doubt if I have ever accomplished as much ascending and descending in the same time as I did during the next week. On September 30 we enjoyed a remarkable panoramic view from the summit of Makra, a big hill, very conspicuous from the Jhelum valley road, with which the mountainous part of the chain comes to an end. Beyond

Makra it narrows down to a single ridge, so sharp in places that there is barely room for a path, and one looks down simultaneously on the waters of the Kunhar, the Jhelum, and the Kishanganga. Our circuit was completed. On October 2 we dropped down to the Kunhar at Gari Habibulla, 14 miles from Domel on the road from Rawul Pindi, through which we had driven just six weeks before: the following evening we were in Abbottabad.

Through the Dinaric Alps.

By DOUGLAS W. FRESHFIELD.

IN the geography books of our childhood we were told of a chain of mountains called the Dinaric Alps. This range—the waterparting between the Adriatic and the Black Sea, between the strong leisurely rivers that dawdle to the Danube and the thin torrents that, when they do not lose themselves underground, race down towards the coast—is in reality only the outer ridge of the complicated hill system which extends over great part of the Balkan Peninsula. Neither in position nor in the character of its scenery can it be called Alpine in the stricter sense of that word. It boasts no eternal snows or glaciers. No guide-book to the Alps has ever included it in its pages. Indeed, until the last few years the traveller found no guide-book at all for this region. In 1898 Hartleben issued the third edition of a volume, well supplied with illustrations, which gives a considerable amount of information as to the main routes.* He has now (1907) supplemented it by a more handy and practical guide.† I propose to use the latter as a peg on which to hang some reminiscences of the short tour through Bosnia and Herzegovina which I made last autumn. It is only thirty years ago that these two provinces were, after a fierce conflict, rescued from Turkish rule and the disorder inseparable from it and came under the government of a civilised State. They had the good fortune to have for their first administrator a statesman of liberal views and rare energy and taste—Baron von Kallay.

Under his rule the long limestone gorges were for the first time pierced by bold high roads and railways. His paternal care went further. In his desire to bring the country within

* *Reiserouten in Bosnien und der Hercegovina.*

† *Illustrierter Führer durch Bosnien und die Hercegovina.*