

the Charmoz and Grépon is a mistake. Each is far too fine to be confused with the other, and each offers separately as much pure rock work as can be properly enjoyed in one day by any one but a solitary lunatic. If, as may often be the case, even with all proper scenic and digestive allowances of time, a light party finds it has an afternoon in hand after traversing one or other of the two, the ascent of the Blaitière, taken as a sequel, will give a greater contrast in climbing, with the charm of a new aspect and a distinct character.

It would be a mistake to suppose that either of the days described implies an overcrowding of effort or time. A light party, in fair weather, climbing with the almost automatic precision that mutual confidence and sympathy create, moves nearly with the speed of a single individual over easy rocks; and even among the Aiguilles the passages of really difficult rock where more time must be taken bear a very small proportion to the work of the day. It is equally mistaken to assume that continuous movement at a pace adjusted to the difficulty of the rocks does anything but heighten the appreciation of external appeals. Dawdling is delightful in its place, but dawdling on a peak like the Grépon, implying a constant relaxing and rebracing of muscle and mind, makes only for fatigue. Rest when taken should be real rest, in chunks, and not too frequent, for the machinery has to be restarted, and retuned gradually, each time.

The longer the hours of daylight that can be spent on the heights, and the larger the variety of climbing, of views distant and near, and of sensation that can rationally be experienced in these hours, the greater the passing pleasure and the after profit.

TRAVERSE OF THE DÔME DE LA SACHE AND MONT POURRI.

By W. N. LING.

COMPARATIVELY little has appeared in the 'Journal' about this fine mountain, and an account of a traverse made in August 1907 may therefore not be without interest. Mont Pourri stands up grandly amongst the mountains south of Mont Blanc, and its massive bulk can be seen from many a top, but for some reason or other it does not seem to exercise the attraction which other peaks do on the mountain-eering brotherhood.

It was one of the mountains which my friend Harold Raeburn and I had put on our list in our wanderings from the Meije to Mont Blanc, and, if it had not already been

there, the sight of its long ridge and its culminating pyramid soaring up in the light of the afternoon sun as we descended from the Col d'Iseran to the charming hamlet of Val d'Isère would certainly have aroused the desire to attempt it.

The second highest peak in the Western or French Graians, it consists of a ridge some eight kilometres in length between the Val de Peisey and the Val d'Isère, which drain the waters from the splendid chain of glaciers flanking the ridge.

From the Col de la Sache it rises to the snowy Dôme de la Sache, and runs on over various dips and ascents to the Brèche Puiseux, whence the rock arête springs abruptly upwards for about 1,000 ft. to the highest point, Mont Pourri itself. The ridge continues to Mont Thuria, where the direct line is broken, and turns westward to the Aiguille du St. Esprit on to the Col du Mont Pourri, and the ridge may be held to terminate in the Aiguille Rouge to the north.

On the eastern side, divided by ribs and ridges of rock, run the Glaciers de l'Inverneau, de la Martine, de la Savine, the South and North Glaciers, de la Gurra, and de Thuria, while on the western side are the Glaciers des Platières, du Petre, du Carroz, and des Roches.

The Dôme de la Sache was first ascended in 1861 by Messrs. W. Mathews and Jacomb, with Jean Baptiste and Michel Croz, but the ridge between this point and Mont Pourri itself was not traversed until nineteen years later, in 1880, when M. E. Rochat, with the guides J. Blanc and Victor Mangard, succeeded in joining the two summits.

The first ascent of the Pourri itself was made by the indomitable Michel Croz alone in 1861, and in the following year Messrs. Mathews and Bonney, accompanied by J. B. and Michel Croz, made the second ascent.

Their route lay from the Chalets Entre-deux-Nants—by the Col du Mont Pourri, the Col des Roches, and the shoulder. In 1874 Mr. Coolidge and Miss Brevoort made the first ascent of the Mont Thuria. In 1878 Mr. Horace Walker ascended the mountains by the Glacier du Col, the Col de Thuria, and the northern arête.

Various other routes and variations were made, and in 1880, as mentioned above, the first complete traverse of the ridge was made by M. E. Rochat, with J. Blanc and Victor Mangard.

They ascended the Dôme de la Sache, and followed the ridge over the top of the Pourri, descending by the Mont Thuria.

In 1884 Mr. Coolidge followed M. Rochat's route over the

Dôme de la Sache in bad weather, and at the time believed that he had reached the summit of the Pourri, but a later expedition with Mr. Gardiner in 1891 established the fact that the point he reached was the summit of the ridge south of the Brèche Puiseux, higher than the Dôme, but not so high as Mont Pourri.

Seen in clear weather it is impossible to miss the steep rock arête leading to Mont Pourri, which is quite the most striking feature of the traverse, and this fact Mr. Coolidge confirmed in a short note in the *Oesterreichische Alpenzeitung* of 1891.

To come now to our expedition in 1907, the first difficulty which confronted us was the distance from suitable night quarters.

The inn at Tignes is singularly unattractive, and the comfortable little Hôtel Moris at Val d'Isère is too far off to serve as a base of operations. On the occasion of our ascent, therefore, we resolved to go up into the Sachette glen and either bivouac or use one of the chalets for night quarters. To help us to carry the loads we engaged a porter, Pierre Rond. Although his name might lead one to expect a 'rolling stone,' he was by no means backward in endeavouring to extract 'moss' in the shape of coin of the realm when we came to pay him off.

He also misled us very much as to the height at which we should find the chalets, and altogether we should have done just as well without him.

We took the afternoon diligence from Val d'Isère to Tignes, and leaving there at 3 o'clock we followed a pleasant path by the side of the stream up into the Sachette glen, and mounted to the chalets in 1½ hr. from Tignes. We were disappointed to find that the height was only 6,850 ft., as we had hoped to have shortened our next day's journey by starting much higher.

One of the chalets was tenanted—very much tenanted—by a shepherd and his family, who most hospitably offered us their beds, but we decided that we should be more comfortable in the empty one. One of the girls had a tame marmot, which she kept in a sack; its antics were very amusing. They insisted on bringing us a mattress, which we could not well refuse, and as we had unfortunately omitted to bring with us that little tin with the perforated lid, without which, as the advertisement says, no one should travel, our slumbers were not undisturbed. We cooked our evening meal *al fresco*, and turned in about eight, the weather being propitious. We were up again soon after midnight, and after a frugal break-

fast started at 1.30, bidding farewell to our porter without regret. The weather was fine, and we had the pale light of the moon and the stars to guide us on our way.

In a guideless party which has no previous practical knowledge of the route to be followed, there is always a pleasurable undercurrent of excitement and uncertainty as to whether success is to crown the venture, which relieves the monotony experienced in trudging after guides in the dark hours before the dawn; the senses and mind are all braced to attention and observation of the route.

The first half-hour was easy going on a track which led up towards the Col. After following this for some distance, we turned northwards up screes and snow towards the rocks of the south face of the Dôme. We mounted a spur running down from this, and at 4.30, at a height of 9,900 ft., we called a halt of twenty minutes for breakfast.

We then scrambled up easy rocks and snow to the main ridge, about 200 yards west of the summit, being treated to the sight of a Brocken spectre here. There was a cornice here, so we put on the rope and ascended by the snowy crest to the summit of the Dôme de la Sache (6.45, 11,848 ft.). It had been misty for some time, and the wind was now cold, and reminded us of many an early spring day on the Highland Bens. We did not despise the extra warmth which a Shetland sweater gives. There was no temptation to stay, as we could see nothing, so verifying the direction by the compass, we commenced without delay to follow the ridge towards Mont Pourri. This ridge consisted of rocks and snow, the junction of the glaciers which clothed the sides of the mountain, and presented no difficulty. In a hollow on the ridge lay a beautiful little frozen tarn.

As we went over rock towers and snowy domes, the mist gradually thinned and the weather improved, till finally the sun burst through and rolled away the mist as if by magic, disclosing a wonderful view. The north face of the Grande Casse was most impressive. Before us rose into the air the tremendous rock tower which leads to the summit, while to the right and left of us the graceful curving lines of the glaciers gleamed in the morning radiance.

We ascended a dome of snow, then dipped to the Brèche Puiseux, 11,350 feet, from the northern end of which commences the tremendously steep rock arête, which leaps to the summit nearly 1,000 feet above. It is not surprising that some parties have turned back on seeing this, for its appearance is certainly appalling.

The angle is extremely steep, and the situation most sensational, but on the edge of the arête the rock is firm and good and offers capital holds.

We mounted carefully and steadily, and found no excessive difficulties, as is proved by the fact that, though burdened with heavy sacks, we stood on the summit in an hour and forty minutes from the time of leaving the col. The summit is marked by a cairn, and from it, in whatever direction the eye may roam, is unrolled a picture which we shall never forget.

In undisputed sovereignty the monarch, Mont Blanc, presents its beautifully fluted southern face. Far off gleam the snows of Monte Viso, and the shapely peaks of Dauphiné, while near at hand rise the Grande Casse and the Motte, and from many a glacier and ridge of ice the sparkling splendour of the morning sun is reflected. It was warm and pleasant on the summit, and we could have sat long, but time was flying and we had yet to find our way down, and on an unknown route one never knows what difficulties there may be, so with a sigh we shouldered our sacks once more and resumed our march. The snow was in good order, and we followed the ridge without difficulty. Where this joins the ridge separating the Northern Glacier de la Gurra from the Glacier de Thuria we turned off and followed this latter ridge over rocks and soft snow to a depression on the ridge at the head of two couloirs. From here, turning to the left, we descended by some very slabby slaty rocks which required the greatest care, and gave us the most difficult climbing of the expedition. Loose scree on the slabs made the going very disagreeable. However, lower down we found a patch of old snow which let us down on to the easier glacier. We followed this down a long way till the ice gave place to stones, then crossing the moraine, we descended to a charming little grassy glen where a clear running stream obviously indicated tea. It was a delightful spot, and we soon had the cooking apparatus at work, the difficulties were all behind us, and for an hour we gave ourselves up to pure enjoyment, basking in the sun. Then once more we started back for the valley, and descended by sheep tracks the steep grassy slopes, leading to La Gurra.

We joined the road a short distance below the village, and from this point had a most exquisite view of Mont Blanc framed in the opening of the valley, the colours softened by the westering sun to the most delicate shades.

We followed the road up the pleasant Val d'Isère to the



S. Spencer, Photo.

THE MONT POURRI, FROM THE GRANDE CASSE.

Swan Electric Engraving Co., Ltd

village of Les Brevières, in the homely inn of which we spent the night.

This expedition can be thoroughly recommended, for though in good weather there are no special technical difficulties, the climbing throughout is interesting and full of variety, and the scenery, both near and far, cannot be adequately expressed in words.

THE GLETSCHERHORN.

By H. C. BOWEN.

THE Gletscherhorn, lying due S. of the Jungfrau, between the Kranzberg and the Ebnefluh, has never been a popular mountain, though it is hard to say why. From its summit, the Jungfrau presents a majestic appearance, but it certainly does completely shut out that magic view over northern Switzerland which the more fashionable Oberland peaks possess, and the outlook is almost equally confined in other directions. But after all we do not climb a great mountain merely to get a good view, and the Gletscherhorn is a mountain of sufficiently imposing height, being only a few mètres short of the mystic *viertausend*, it is within easy reach of the Concordia Inn, and it affords at any rate three lines of ascent which are all interesting, and give varied climbing. The summit consists of two peaks, the E. and W. summits, of almost equal height. There is no indication that the mountain has ever been traversed until last summer, and moreover volume i. of the Oberland section of the 'Climbers' Guides' (1902) speaks of the 'deep and hitherto untraversed gap' between the two summits. Of the three routes by which hitherto the mountain has been climbed, one is the ascent of the W. summit by its W. or rather N.W. arête, leading up from the Gletscherjoch, the depression between it and the Ebnefluh; the other two are climbs of the E. summit, the first by the S.E. arête made by Mr. C. E. Freeman and myself in 1893, the second by M. and Mme. J. Gallet in 1897 by the N. arête from the Lauithor, between the peak and the Roththorn.

The mountain was first ascended as early as 1867 by Mr. Hornby with Christian Lauener. They slept at the Faulberg hut, some little distance below the present Concordia Inn, walked up nearly to the Gletscherjoch, and then turned right-handed towards the N.W. arête, cutting up 'a very steep