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NEW EXPEDITIONS IN 1914 AND 1904.

Mont Blanc Group

MONT BLANC DU TACUL (4249 m.=13,941 ft.) BY S.E. ARÊTE.—August 24, 1914. Barone Luigi de Riseis, with Henri and Adolphe Rey.—From the Rifugio Torino cross the Col des Flambeaux and bear E. up the branch of the Géant Glacier contained between the S.E. ridges of the Mt. Maudit and the M. B. du Tacul to the foot of the great snow couloir which, descending nearly from the summit, seams the S. face of the latter peak. (Cf. Kurz, 1914 edition, p. 225, and more particularly Ferrari, 'Nella Catena del Monte Bianco,' 187 seq.)

Then bear to the right by loose and easy rocks and reach the little arête which starts from the N. Aiguille du Diable. Follow this for about half an hour, then, after crossing a small couloir (falling stones), climb the rocks on its left side until you reach a narrow ledge at the foot of the N. Aig. du Diable (cairn). Follow the left side of the couloir for a few minutes more, then bear to the right in order to ascend its centre in a parallel direction. Climb the steep and difficult rocks which form the head of the couloir by standing on each other's shoulders, and reach the main S.E. arête of the M. B. du Tacul on the N. Col du Diable (about 7 hrs. from the Col du Géant).

Climb two of the gendarmes on the ridge and turn the third on the eastern face. Regain the rocky arête and follow it until it becomes a narrow snowy crest leading to the foot of the final pyramid, whence loose and difficult rocks enable one to gain the southern and subsequently the northern summit (11½ hrs.) from the Col.

TIME.

Started from Col du Géant		4.30 A.M.
Reached Great Couloir		6.0 "
„ ledge (cairn)		9.30 "
Started from cairn		9.50 "
Reached S.E. arête		12.0 NOON
Halt until		12.50 P.M.
Reached S. Peak		3.30 "
„ N. „		4.0 "
„ Col du Midi (descent)		5.10 "
„ Col du Géant		7.30 "
From Col du Géant to summit 11½ hrs., including halts.		

[The great S. couloir of the M. B. du Tacul is shown in the illustration, 'Ferrari,' p. 195. The main S.E. arête, on which several previous attempts had failed, is shown in 'Ferrari,' between 202 and 203, 'Panorama N.E. from the summit of M. Blanc,' the arête having been gained from this side on the now successful expedition. Its other side is shewn in 'Ferrari,' p. 193 and 194. Cf. also an interesting note in 'Mont Blanc Führer,' par. 205, particularly as to the Col and Aig. du Diable.]

[It may be as well to record here that the second ascent of the great S. face of the M. B. du Tacul mentioned in 'Ferrari' 249 was by no means a repetition of the first (see trace of route in 'Ferrari' 210), which followed mainly the right or W. bank of the great couloir and finally emerged on the S.W. arête some distance from the summit. The second party (August 17, 1904; J. P. Farrar with Daniel Maquignaz and Ernest Simond), in view of the obvious danger of stones in the couloir, bore from its foot at first away to the right, and then N.W. under the rocks of the flank of the main S.E. arête, until in ¾ hour from the foot of the couloir, by a very difficult iced chimney, they gained a short arête (30 minutes) high up on the E. bank of the great couloir, when they took to the rocks on the right. Following this bank, rocks, and some snow-slopes, in perfect safety, the great couloir was only entered at its very narrow apex, where about 30 ft. of almost vertical snow led to the main arête, immediately to the left of the lower summit, which was gained in just under 4 hours from the foot of the couloir (including 12 minutes halts). The higher summit was easily reached in 9 minutes more.

The general line of ascent is at a converging angle to the main S.E. arête.

. The ascent is quite an interesting one, and is an alternative route up M. Blanc for those who already know the ordinary Midi route, which crosses the flanks of the M. Blanc du Tacul and M. Maudit at some way below their summits.]

LA TOUR RONDE (3792 m. = 12,441 ft.). DESCENT BY THE S. FACE. Marchesina Emanuela Spinola, Barone Luigi de Riseis and E. G. Oliver, with Henri and Adolphe Rey and a porter.—August 19, 1914.—We left the Rifugio Torino at 7 A.M. and reached the top of the Tour Ronde by the Col des Flambeaux and S.E. arête at 10.30. We found very bad snow and frequent avalanches in the steep couloir by which one gains the arête, and had to keep on and close to the rocks on the true left of the couloir. We left the summit at 11.30, keeping for a few minutes along the west arête towards the Col de la Tour Ronde. We then descended the S. face, at first by a steep rib of rocks alternating with snow, for about an hour. On reaching the bottom of the rocks we descended directly the steep snow-face to the Brenva Glacier (rather over half an hour from the bottom of the rocks).

The snow, which had been exceedingly bad on the other side, was here in excellent condition. In a dry season the face would probably be all ice, and a descent by this route impracticable.

We reached Courmayeur by the Brenva Glacier at 5 P.M.

VARIOUS EXPEDITIONS IN 1914.

Mont Blanc Group.

THE BRÉVENT (BY THE CHAMONIX FACE).—This climb is not uncommonly recommended at Chamonix nowadays to those who want a scramble either for an off-day or when the weather has made the mountains in the Mont Blanc range impossible. The route lies up a gully for a good three-quarters of an hour; a traverse to the left is then made and a chimney followed to the top. The rock is everywhere rotten, and the danger from falling stones considerable. In addition, in more than one place several large boulders have become very loose in the gully above mentioned. Joseph Ravel, who made the first ascent by this route in 1906, and with whom I did it this season, told me that the route formerly lay over the boulders, which were perfectly safe. Now, however, it is necessary to take the greatest care not to touch them, owing to their dangerously loose condition. On the way down by the ordinary path it is easy to turn aside for a few steps and obtain a view of the top of the gully (which is not climbed but left where