

climbing is not to be measured by his years (he was only 20 when he died), but by his personality. He was a true sportsman, honourable, generous, chivalrous, perhaps too modest. He was always ready to help those less expert than himself, and when he undertook the trouble and responsibility of acting as guide on climbing expeditions—no small matter in a region where professional guides are practically unprocurable—he was cautious and considerate. At the University of Ljubljana he had already shown exceptional gifts. Had he lived, his name as a mountain lover and naturalist would certainly have extended beyond the borders of his own country.

F. S. COPELAND.

NEW EXPEDITIONS.

Le Dauphiné.

BARRE DES ECRINS (4100 m. = 13,448 ft.¹) DIRECT FROM THE GLACIER NOIR. July 31, 1926. MM. R. Toumayeff and J. Vernet.

The first party to make the ascent from this side was Dr. Paul Güssfeldt with Alexander Burgener on June 18, 1881. Making use of the slopes of the little secondary glacier des Barres they gained the snowy plateau to the E. at the foot of the Barre Noire and inaugurated the passage of the Brèche des Ecrins.² This is not the place to praise the qualities and the beauties of their route, which has fallen into oblivion. Relatively easy, it is, all the same, on a higher plane than the regulation 'great classic,' like the Meije, but it presents certain dangers from stonefall. It was repeated on July 15, 1926, by MM. Jean Costé, Roubène Toumayeff, and Jean Vernet.

On August 9, 1893, M. A. Reynier, with Maximin Gaspard and Joseph Turc, from the same starting place as Dr. Güssfeldt, attempted to climb diagonally the S.E. face of the Ecrins direct to the summit.³ He had been misled by an appearance which misleads everybody. Up to 3600 m. everything went marvellously, but his caravan was then under the necessity of forcing a passage to the E. arête, describing

¹ This is the altitude given in M. Helbronner's *Description Géométrique des Alpes françaises*.

² Full particulars of Dr. Güssfeldt's passage with Alexander Burgener of the Brèche des Ecrins will be found in his book *In den Hochalpen* (1892), p. 209.

³ Details of M. Reynier's ascent are given in *A.J.* 17, 136-7, where it is stated that the whole of the route can be followed on Signor Cav. Sella's photograph No. 522 from the Pelvoux and No. 507 from the Pic Coolidge. There is a paper on the expedition in *S.T.D.* 1893, pp. 91 and 105-24, by M. Reynier himself.

'great oscillations round about the vertical' [*décrivant de grandes oscillations autour de la verticale*] along a face extremely abrupt. They gained the E. arête at point 3932 m. Reynier's route was repeated on August 11, 1924, by MM. Georges and Jean Vernet. The following are the details :

From the end of the rimaye of the Glacier des Barres (approx. 3000 m.) climb a first escarpment either by a vire to the right (overhang) or by a gully on the left (slab), according to the chance of stonefall. The first alternative was adopted on the attempt by MM. G. and J. Vernet on July 21, 1923, by a route between Reynier's and Güssfeldt's. This attempt failed. Ascend to the summit of a vast inclined terrace bearing W. (approx. 3550 m.). Having passed the rimaye at 7.15 and utilized the gully above mentioned, the caravan of 1924 made a short halt (8.55-9.10). Then climb on the right a ravine 30 m. high, very steep, making use particularly of the slab of the left bank. Maximin Gaspard managed to emerge from this ravine by following its overhanging Thalweg or bottom, which seems to be an extraordinary *tour de force*. It is probably preferable, as did the second caravan, to climb out on the right up a face rather smooth, vertical and rotten. Then in a few brief minutes the summit of a little snow crest, very short, forming a shoulder, is gained. From this point the climb, already very fine, becomes quite aerial. One climbs to the N.E. a uniform vire inclined at 45°, which ends in a vertical chimney and comes out near a scanty platform ; one climbs a little slab and follows a second vire or cornice forming two vertical fissures and projections, none too solid. From the extremity of this cornice (11.25-11.55) one resumes a N.E. direction ; one climbs a high and very dizzy slab by following an alignment of detached rocky leaves, at one point overhanging. The holds, far apart and very scanty in the upper part, are of doubtful solidity. One arrives on the edge of a *vallonement* or couloir with an E. direction as you look down. One ascends the slope to the point where it becomes vertical at the foot of a big tower with a light-coloured cravat, well seen from the Glacier Blanc as well as from the Glacier Noir, and situated at about the height of the Couloir Whympfer. One emerges on the arête more to the E. on the right (13.20) by a chimney. All the times indicated are those of the 1924 expedition. The top was reached at 14.15. There was no verglas on the rocks at the level of the big tower.

On July 31, 1926, R. Toumayeff and J. Vernet succeeded in ascending direct to the summit from the Glacier Noir. They left the glacier at the point where the rimaye of the couloir des Avalanches meets the rocky flank of the Ecrins (approx. 2700 m.) (5.10). They climbed a little wall and gained up moderate, partially snow-covered slopes, the height of 3000 m. at the foot of the upper precipice (6.50-7.30). They gained another 200 m. in height by effecting a turning movement by the W. on the ledges of gullies, of terraces covered with snow, and by a vire, without meeting any obstacles.

Having cut a few steps at the extreme base (8.15), they climbed the lower part of a great couloir by its left bank, bearing N.E. over *roches moutonnées* offering several steep bits and much exposed to stone fall. Halt at end 9.0-9.10. By means of a névé, in which



THE S. FACE OF LES ECRINS.

a-a Route Reynier.

b-b The two variations for the passage of the first escarpment on the Reynier and Güssfeldt routes.

c-c Direct route Vernet-Toumayeff.

The - - - parts are those visible.

The . . . parts are those hidden.

they cut steps, they penetrated the low part of the middle (*moyenne*) gorge of the Grand Couloir, of which the extraordinary escarpment, barred by smooth, overhanging rocks, appears impassable. They bore immediately to E. towards the arête which bounds the gorge. There were 20 m. of verglas-covered slabs followed by several little gulleys, very steep, with rare and often vanishing holds. This climb, with no resting places, led on to the arête at the level of a little narrow terrace (10.25-10.40). The arête is then followed. It offers first a pitch, pretty smooth and rotten, then a bit extremely steep,

about 100 m. high formed by two walls, red coloured, very sharp, and superposed. The obstacle is surmounted by a very giddy climb by descending little oscillations and attacking, successively, three little vertical slabs, separated by fissures and short traverses, and a gully with one or two overhanging bits. Below the third slab is a narrow platform, where one can rest (12.10–12.30). One thus reaches the point where the arête merges into the vertical rock wall (13.25, the leader's sack and the axes had been hauled up on the red arête). One climbs, once more in a N.E. direction, a pretty rock *écharpe* of considerable inclination. Then having arrived at about 3800 m. at the level of a vast snow-covered balcony (14.30–14.50) the climbers descended a little on its E. side, which they traversed, cutting steps, and climbed, always to the N.E., a rocky edifice offering some cracks, to a second snow-covered balcony (15.35). One bears still a little to the E. One climbs a new escarpment, rather shorter but steeper, of which the notable passages are a little open chimney with flat bottom, and an overhanging crack (16.30–16.50). Up a slab less steep but rendered dangerous by tired fingers, the climbers arrived on a third snow path (*ligne*). They steered now definitely N.W. for the summit. At the end of the snow path (*ligne*) they had to turn the head of a deep, vertical ravine; then followed a diverting narrow crack of 15 m., climbed on the outside, and a very short traverse on a horizontal fracture or crack in the vertical head of the ravine. At 4000 m. one gains at its base the *vallonement terminal*, situated to the E. of the summit, by which the climb is completed without trouble at 18.15. The climbers had time to reach the level part of the Glacier Blanc by 19.30, when the storm, which had threatened for some hours, broke out.

[Literally translated from a memorandum prepared by M. Jean Vernet obtained at the kind instance of M. Jacques Lagarde.]

It is understood that this superb expedition is the crown of seven previous attempts by the two brothers Vernet, who reside at Nice. To succeed where Alexander Burgener and Maximin Gaspard, at the zenith of their great powers, failed, is a tribute to the patience and ability of these young climbers. One of their merits is that they realized that, by the other two routes, the strata force the climber always in the direction of the E. arête. Their line minimises this tendency. The ascent is evidently very severe.—J. P. F.

Mont Blanc Group.

AIGUILLE D'ARGENTIÈRE (3907 m. = 12,819 ft.), BY THE N. FACE AND N.W. ARÊTE. August 2, 1926. MM. J. Lagarde and H. de Ségogne.

From Lognan the party crossed the Col du Chardonnet and attained the foot of the N. face at about 3100 m. They began the

ascent about 4 A.M. towards the centre of the said face. It was in doubtful condition—bare ice covered in places with quantities of lightly adhering powdery snow. They climbed at first straight up, but on meeting great icy streaks, kept to the right, W., and climbed a steep rock rib which brought them to a shoulder on the N.W. arête at a height of about 3700 m. (3½ hours from the base). Thence the ordinary route was followed to the top (¾ hour).

JACQUES LAGARDE.

(From *L'Annuaire du G.H.M.*)

AIGUILLE DU PLAN (3673 m. = 12,051 ft.), BY THE N. FACE. (Second ascent with variation.) July 24–25, 1926. MM. J. Lagarde and H. de Ségogne.

Party left Plan de l'Aiguille at 1.30 A.M. on July 24. They mounted very slowly towards the little Blaitière hanging glacier, which was reached by a ledge on its right bank. The extreme ice fall of this glacier was bad this year and gave great trouble, compelling a frontal attack. It took about 3 hours from the ledge to the rimaye which separates the hanging glacier from the lower slopes of the Col du Caïman. Here they abandoned the 1924 route, and, to attain the Brèche du Caïman, took a route more to the left (E.), separated from the former route by the N.E. buttress of the Caïman; this route is distinctly more difficult than the other.¹ Having crossed the rimaye, the party, despite crampons, was obliged to cut steps in bare ice. Then followed iced rocks and broken slabs which were climbed towards the Col du Caïman. Next came a difficult and exposed traverse to the right which led the party to the left bank of a remarkable ice couloir about 100 ft. wide. With his feet resting on the narrow end of a gradually narrowing rocky platform, the leader, after squeezing himself round a little rocky spur and attaining, by a kind of upward spring, a good handhold, secured himself.

As the banks of the couloir were formed of impassable slabs, it was necessary to take to the bed of the couloir itself, formed of black ice, down which flowed a thin stream of water. The angle was appalling,² access to the couloir being nearly vertical, and particularly exposed. The couloir was climbed for some 80 m. and then traversed after 5 hours' uninterrupted cutting. At last, in another ½ hour, a very moderate bivouac place was attained on the crest of the Caïman's N.E. buttress (7.30 P.M.). A threatening thunderstorm did not, fortunately, quite materialize, and, starting again at 5.15 A.M. the next morning, the party mounted straight up towards the Brèche du Caïman amidst ever-recurring snow flurries. After attaining the said Brèche (3½ hours), the party followed the

¹ *A.J.* 36, 394–7, with sketch of route.

² M. Charles Vallot fixes the angle at 64°. M. Lagarde considers it one of the worst places in his experience.

1924 route, traversed the N. face, attained in 4 hours the foot of the Aiguille du Plan's summit monolith, and reached the summit itself at 1 P.M.

JACQUES LAGARDE.

(From *L'Annuaire du G.H.M.*)

AIG. DU DIABLE MÉDIANE No. 3. (4097 m. Vallot = 13,438 ft.). July 23, 1926. MM. E. R. Blanchet and J. Chaubert, with Armand Charlet and Jean Devouassoud.

From the Col du Diable turn the two Aig. du Diable inférieures and descend (3 short rappels) into the great S. couloir to 40 to 50 m. below the gap (4007 Vallot), at which it ends, then climb up it in 2 hours. The couloir is very dangerous (iced and rotten rock) and extremely steep. A gendarme is planted in the gap.

A chimney about 60 m. high seams the face, dominating the gap of the Aig. Médiane. Climb the first few easy steps of the chimney, then at about 20 m. traverse to the right to a little shoulder of the arête bounding the face to the right. In a very difficult crack climb the almost vertical arête to a second minute shoulder. By a vine and good vertical rocks of the N. face gain a third shoulder. Traverse to left, and with an enormous stride cross the top of the chimney. Climb easily to the left-hand tunnel (there are two parallel) to pass over on to the opposite side of the aiguille, the summit of which is gained in a few minutes (2 hours from the gap to the top). Descend same way with a rappel of 28 m.

'Without offering passages as difficult as l'Isolée, the Médiane is more tiring on account of the accumulation of difficulties. It is infinitely more difficult than the Drus and the most dangerous of the five Aigs. du Diable.'

Both the present climbers have now ascended all the five aiguilles.

Times: Géant inn, 1 A.M.; Gap, 8.15; summit, 11.15; Monteners, 9.30 P.M.

The first ascents were as follows:

No. 1, L'ISOLÉE (4114 m.), by M. Blanchet with Armand Charlet and Antoine Ravelin in 1925.¹

No. 2, POINTE CARMEN in 1923 by MM. J. de Lépiney, Chevalier and Bregeault.

No. 3 as described above.

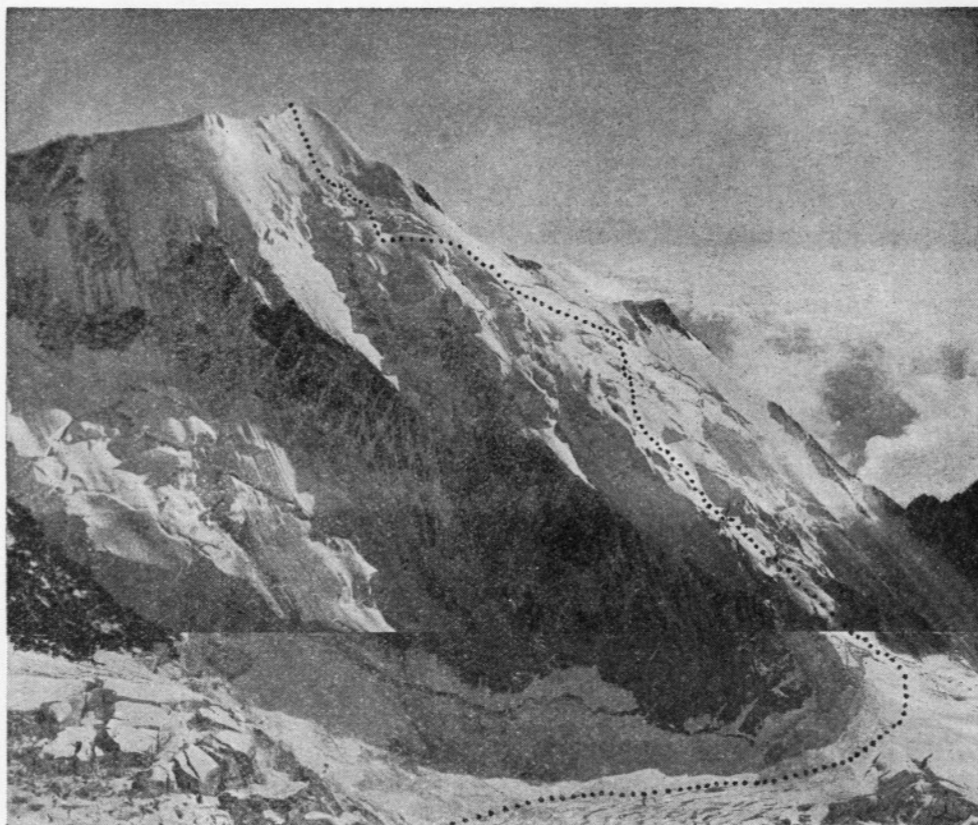
Nos. 4 and 5, POINTE CHAUBERT and L'ANONYME (? 4074 m. and 4064 m.), by M. J. Chaubert with the same guides as No. 1, in 1925.

AIG. DE BIONNASSAY (4066 m. = 13,341 ft.). Direct ascent by the N. face. July 18, 1926. Mr. R. W. Lloyd, with Josef and Adolf Pollinger.

Left Tête Rousse 2.50. By 8.25 the party gained, without any halt, the top of a sérac directly under the summit. From this point

¹ See *A.J.* 37, 361-2, with illustration.

the final face seemed almost perpendicular, easing off slightly towards the top. They estimated that $\frac{1}{2}$ hr. would see them on the summit. Snow was, however, very bad and powdery, so that big deep steps had to be cut. Towards the end the powdery snow became



thinner and steps had to be cut in the underlying ice. The summit was reached at 10.10 (nett time, 7.20).

The line, marked by Josef Pollinger, will be seen in the picture, and full details will be given by Mr. Lloyd in his paper at the December meeting.

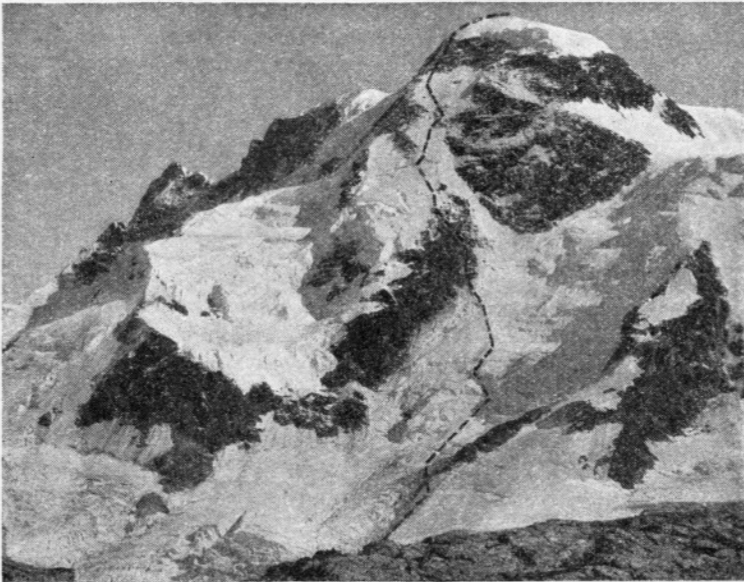
The ascent was repeated one month later by Mr. E. G. Oliver, with Adolf and Alfred Aufdenblatten, when the Tricot arête was gained very high up and followed for about 10 minutes to the summit.

Pennines.

BREITHORN (4071 m. = 13,353 ft.) DIRECT BY THE N.W. FACE. August 1, 1926. Herren F. Bachschmidt, F. Rigele, and W. Welzenbach (President A.A.K., Munich).

Height of face from Lower Théodule glacier, 1200 m.; time, 7 to 9 hrs.; according to condition very, to extremely, difficult.¹

In the lower half of the N.W. face is a steep crevassed glacier bounded on either side by well-defined rocky ridges. The upper face is a slabby wall crowned by hanging séracs. The ascent is made up the glacier mentioned and then over the left upper end of the N. boundary-ridge. From this point steep ice faces and a final rock wall lead to the top.



FROM GANDEGG.

From Gandegg cross lower Théodule glacier to the foot of the face, then mount steep ice for about 300 m. in the line for the summit. Bear left to gain rocks of right proper bank of a steep ice

¹ The route followed on September 3, 1919, by Herr D. v. Bethmann-Hollweg with Oskar and Ottmar Supersaxo 'from W. & N.' would seem, according to *S.A.C. Jahrbuch* 54, not to be identical with the route now described, as it apparently turns the actual N.W. face by a swing to the left to gain the summit eventually from the N.

couloir. These rocks are climbed with difficulty to their extremity. Then follow moderately steep névé and ice slopes to a bergschrund, crossed with difficulty, and then gain the upper icefields and make for the rocks emerging about the middle. After ascending these the upper ice slope is crossed, bearing to the left to the foot of the final stepped rock wall, which is ascended without particular difficulty to the top.

POINTE DE ZINAL (3806 m. = 12,487 ft.), BY THE N. FACE. August 3, 1926. M. E. R. Blanchet, with Caspar Mooser.

This face, which is some 1800 ft. high, is composed of ice, all except its last 220 ft., which consists of a very steep rock wall. Good snow and crampons enabled its ascent to be made, which in a dry year would be a very formidable undertaking.

From 6.50 to 8.50 A.M. there was a zone of séracs, ice walls, crevasses, and a 50-ft.-high ice chimney; then a broadish ledge of ice some 80 ft. long brought them above this torn and very steep terrain. There followed very easy and gentle slopes (whence the Col Durand or Col de Zinal could be reached easily). At 9.30 the slope steepens to a rimaye, close under the final rocks. Passage from the ice to the rocks very difficult (10.0). The rock wall is dangerously loose and was much glazed in addition. Summit attained at 11.0.

BRUNNEGGHORN (3846 m. = 12,619 ft.), BY THE W. FACE. July 27, 1926. M. E. R. Blanchet, with Caspar Mooser.

This face, the base of which was attained from the Brunneggjoeh, is about 800 ft. high. It is much less steep than the N.E. face, which was climbed with much difficulty by the same party in 1925.¹

Perfect snow enabled the face to be climbed without step-cutting in 1 h. The descent by the same route was effected in 35 m. Crampons *de rigueur*! This face should never give trouble save at end of season in dry years.

BREITHORN (4171 m. = 13,685 ft.), BY THE W. FACE. August 16, 1926. M. E. R. Blanchet, with Caspar Mooser.

This face is opposite the Klein Matterhorn and dominates the plateau, 3688 m., S. map.

Leaving the Rifelberg at 4.30 A.M., the party, taking the 'Prothero' route of the 'Klein Matterhorn Pass,'² frequently impossible, arrived without any trouble on this wide plateau, 9.35, and started at 10.0 the attack of the face.

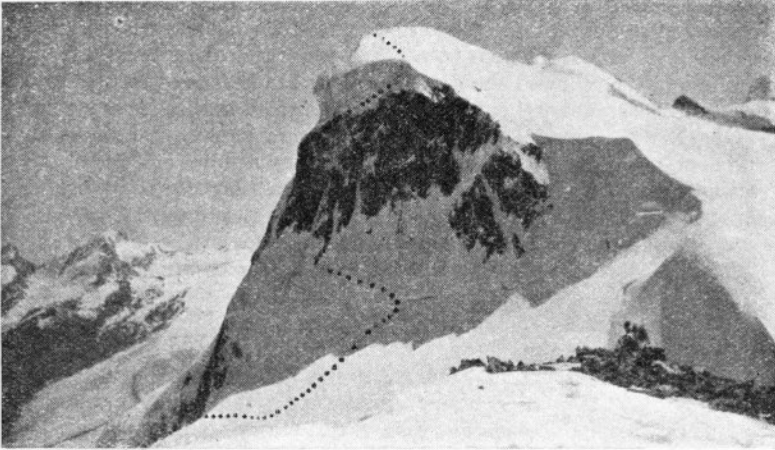
This face is composed of three sections:

(a) A bare ice slope with often a gaping rimaye; 1½ h. of step-cutting necessary to attain, by bearing a little to the left, N., a rocky rib some 130 ft. long, barely emerging from the ice and very easily climbed to:

¹ *A.J.* 37, 370.

² *Alpes Valaisannes*, III. 9.

(b) A rock wall some 800 ft. high of increasing steepness. A twisted, very steep rib seams the wall from top to bottom, this rib being the continuation of the aforementioned one climbed after leaving the ice. The wall is climbed by alternately utilising the easiest parts of the rib and its adjoining couloirs. The rocks, at first rough, soon become increasingly smooth and very steep. Although frequently glazed, they are very firm. A chimney overhanging



[Photo Blanchet.]

W. FACE OF BREITHORN FROM KL. MATTERHORN.

close to the top was, however, dangerous from rotten rocks. The sacks had to be sent up on the rope. At 2.5 P.M. the party reached :

(c) An overhanging ice slope crowning the wall. Follow its base towards the right under dangerous icicles. Step and handhold cutting very laborious. Towards the S. end the ice wall is less high, and here the party turned straight up a short slope of at least 70° , followed by a gentler tongue of ice, covered with snow in a very dangerous condition, whence they attained a little snow corniche, 3.55. This was easily and quickly cut through, and the final plateau reached at 4.0, and the summit, by the ordinary route, at 4.12 P.M.

This route is threatened by ice-fall and is very dangerous. It is far harder than that of the N. face, climbed 3 days later with Mooser so as to compare the two routes.

The times up the N. face were :

Zermatt (by Gorner Grat Railway), dep. 7.55.

Rothenboden, dep. 9.00.

Summit, arr. 18.45.

Zermatt, viâ Gandegg, arr. 24.00.

E. R. BLANCHET.



Phot. Wehrli-Kilchberg

N. FACE OF JUNGFRAU
from a balloon.

PIGNE D'AROLLA (3801 m. = 12,471 ft.) BY THE UPPER ZIGIORENOVE GLACIER. August 13, 1926. This route, a small part of which is new, joins the ordinary route by the Pas de Chèvres and the Seilon glacier at the Col de Zigiorenove (Col de Chesière Neuve in the 1923 edition of the 'Guide des Alpes Valaisannes,' I. See map, p. 234.)

The direct ascent of the Zigiorenove icefall may be possible; it is certainly too dangerous to be attempted. It has been turned by the lower Zinareffian rocks, but these are difficult and there must be danger of stones falling. The upper part of the glacier, whence easy slopes lead in half an hour to the Col, was reached by our party in $4\frac{1}{2}$ hours. We followed the usual route for the N. face of the Pigne to the top of the snowy shoulder 3356 m., viz. the lower Torgnon glacier under the Loitecondoi, then up a steep snow couloir and the N.E. ridge or face of the shoulder. From there we cut down and across the lower part of the N.W. face of the Pigne, crossing the bergschrund about 200 ft. below the top of the shoulder. Almost everywhere there was a layer of good, hard snow on the steep ice of the face, so the 400 odd steps we had to cut took only about an hour and a quarter.

Glancing back on our route, it looked as if we might have found a way over steep snow through some ice cliffs to the level glacier immediately below point 3356 m., losing more height but possibly gaining some time. The 5 hours' actual going to the Col de Zigiorenove is not slow time. This might be a useful variation for a party who found the upper part of the route up the N. face in too dangerous a condition.

R. L. G. IRVING.
H. A. HAWORTH.
G. S. P. HEYWOOD.

ZINAREFFIAN ROCKS, N.W. SUMMIT (3307 m. = 10,847 ft.) FROM THE COL DE ZINAREFFIAN. August 17, 1926.

A small affair, but there is no mention of its ascent in the 'Guide des Alpes Valaisannes,' I. 246. It is a face rather than a defined ridge that rises from the Col. We followed very near the skyline seen from the lower part of the Pas de Chèvres path. For an experienced party there is nothing difficult that cannot be turned. Those of our party who were not lazy were inexperienced, and we took 3 hours from the Col to the N.W. summit. A thunderstorm easily dissuaded us from continuing along the crest to the further summits. The Seilon glacier may be reached without difficulty from several points on the main crest.

R. L. G. IRVING.
H. A. HAWORTH.
G. S. P. HEYWOOD.
R. L. HURST.
R. BELOE.

Bernese Oberland.

JUNGFRAU (4166 m. = 13,669 ft.), FROM WENGERNALP. Sept. 12, 1926. MM. H. Lauper, A.A.C., Berne and Zurich, and P. v. Schumacher, A.A.C., Berne.

[Strictly speaking, this is the first *direct* ascent of the N. face.]

On September 11 P. v. Schumacher and I gained, in about 3 h. from Wengernalp, a sleeping-place (1 on marked illustration) just below the glacier at the N.E. foot of the Silberhorn at a little less than 2000 m. (slightly W. of 2004, Siegfried).

We broke camp at 2.50 A.M. next day, got on the glacier in a few minutes, and ascended it in a S.W. direction. At 4.0 we mounted a first rocky step (2), and at 5.0 a second step, which gave access to the névé that leads below the rocks of the Silberhorn over to the middle part of the Giessen glacier. We crossed this névé in an oblique direction and reached the end of a huge icicle which hangs down from the western bank of the Giessen glacier. At 5.35 A.M. we got around its sharp pointed end over on its N. side by easy rocks. Turning back W., we cut steps up to the crest of this icicle. Over its ridge, its steepness compelling us now and then to cut a step in spite of our crampons, we gained at 6.17 A.M. the Giessen glacier.

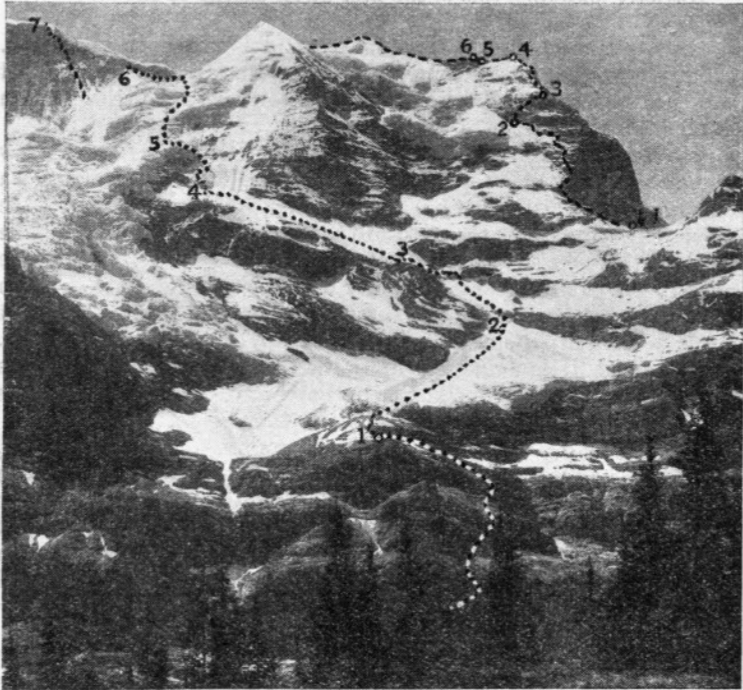
Leaving at 6.30 A.M. after breakfast, we aimed at what seemed, from our standpoint, to be the saddle between Gross and Klein Silberhorn. The snow was in perfect condition. In spite of some impressive séracs and huge crevasses, we managed to advance without either much step-cutting or any considerable deviation from a straight course. Finally, we traversed over to the left, and gained the Klein Silberhorn at 8.30 A.M. (6), the top of which hardly emerges out of the glacier plateau beyond.

As we were in no hurry, it was not until 9.30 A.M. that we started again. We crossed the ordinary Guggi route at right angles, and soon gained the foot of the well-defined rocky spur which, slightly W. of the Wengern-Jungfrau (4060, Siegfried), disappears in the ice of the Hochfirn. At first our way led us easily up a sort of natural staircase. Gradually the ridge became steeper and more exposed. Two characteristic red towers afforded two or three pitches of really delicate climbing on account of their steepness and of the snow, which made handholds slippery and cold. The view over on Mönch and Eiger, and on the gendarmes of the N.E. arête of the Jungfrau close at hand on the left, and of the séracs of the Hochfirn on the right, was very fine, as was also the view back over Silberhorn, far below already, and into the green trough of the Lauterbrunnen valley.

At about 3900 m. there was an awkward step; the rocks were covered with ice, like a frozen waterfall. Easy rocks followed, and ahead of us we could see the snow of the Hochfirn quite near. A narrow gully, which widened like a funnel as we ascended, brought us

on to the Hochfirn just W. of the Wengern-Jungfrau (7). Fifteen minutes later we reached the crevasse directly under the cairn on top of Jungfrau.

A nasty, cold wind made a halt more advisable here than on the very top. The weather became worse and worse, and when, after



N. FACE OF JUNGFAU.

..... Lauper-v. Schumacher route. - - - Gertsch-Fuchs route.

twenty minutes, we attacked the summit rocks and reached at 2 P.M. the top of Jungfrau, it was quite obvious that a storm was brewing. We had accordingly to abandon our plan of descending to the Rottal, so at once began the descent towards the Jungfraujoeh, which, from the Rottalsattel on, was made in fog, rain, and snow.

This route from the Wengernalp, so far as we know, has not been made before, except possibly for the last 400 to 500 m. over the rocky spur from Silberhorn to the Hochfirn. We have heard of some such rumours, though we know of no recorded ascent.

We were favoured with the best conditions possible, the times being :

Left bivouac (ca. 2000 m.), 2.50 A.M.
 Giessen glacier, 6.17 to 6.30 A.M.
 Kl. Silberhorn (3550 m.), 8.30 to 9.30 A.M.
 Hochfirn (4000 m.), 1.20 P.M.
 Halt under summit rocks, 1.35 to 1.55 P.M.
 Top of Jungfrau (4166 m.), 2 P.M.
 Jungfrauojoch, 3.35 P.M.

H. LAUPER, A.A.C.B., A.A.C.Z.

[It is quite as hard nowadays to trace out a new route as to do it. There is no man better qualified to do both than Dr. Lauper. He is to be congratulated on this great expedition, planned by him three years ago, which has been looking us all in the face so long. It is the first *direct* ascent of the N. face, as the Guggi route simply traverses the N. face from E. to W. and only turns N. at the Silberlücke after being crossed at right angles by this new route. The way up to the bivouac from the wild Trümletental is alone interesting. It starts from the Biglenalp (Siegfried), crosses the Bandlauri and Giessenlauri, on the immediate W. side of which the bivouac was made at about 2000 m. Dr. Lauper points out that Dr. Dübi with Fritz Fuchs in 1880 *descended* by this route from the gap between the Rotbrett and the Rotbretthorn after ascending the latter. It is wild country (cf. Coolidge, 'Climbers' Guide to Bernese Oberland—Gemmi to Mönchjoch,' p. 113). The party which made in August, from the Rotbrettsattel, the first more or less direct ascent of the Rotbrettgrat, made use of a somewhat different route to their bivouac on the Sattel as mentioned elsewhere. It would be an easy day from Wengernalp to take this route to the Sattel and descend on the W. side—by the Katzenwegli. if you like, *ibid.* 113—to Stechelberg. I know no way of studying so easily and effectively the magnificent N. and W. faces of Jungfrau and Silberhorn.—J. P. F.]

ROTBRETTGRAT (lower part of N. arête of Jungfrau). August 23, 1926. Herren Ernst and Eduard Gertsch, with Fritz Fuchs, all of Wengen. The party bivouacked close to the Rotbrettsattel (1), reached from the Wengernalp by the route indicated in the note at foot.

The first great pitch of the arête they turned by moderately steep, very smooth, tile-like, wet slabs, which but for crampons would have been difficult. After an hour they came on ice too thin to cut steps in. About 10 they reached a steep névé-field. Twice they made fruitless attempts to get on to the arête. There was nothing left but to cut across to a couloir bedded in the rocks. Fuchs was cutting for full three hours. At 13 they entered the couloir (2) which was narrow and steep, but offered a certain way to the arête. At first it was hard black ice, but in the upper half good compact snow which allowed rapid progress. In an hour they gained the arête and welcomed the sun and a halt, the first for

9 hours. A stone-man was built and a red handkerchief left. Unfortunately the rocks were rotten, not one reliable. They had never seen a ridge so shattered by lightning and weather. They kept right on the arête except at one point, where for 20 min. they cut up steep névé, regaining the arête at the shoulder [die Schulter] (4) at 15.45, where they halted 15 min., carried away by the impressive view.

The next bit of arête was easy, until at 16.30 they reached the foot of the great step in the arête which the Fellenberg-Mathews party, led by Melchior Anderegg, ascending from the Strählplatten side, failed to force. The step is 10 metres high, overhanging and not climbable direct. Fritz suggested naming it the Drei-Esels-Grat. They tried standing on each other's shoulders, driving in pitons and throwing a line over to haul up the rope—all to no purpose. On the N. side was a very impossible, terribly steep, very long and hard slope of névé.¹ So only one way out remained—to the S. Fuchs pointed to a rocky ledge which descends a little, at first nice and wide, but soon gets precariously narrow. One of them in stocking feet, well secured by the rope, tried the ledge. The rope, however, was too short, and had to be renounced. But it went, and climbing the other side [Auf der andern Seite hinauf] he soon stood on the top of the step. Letting down a line, the rope and sacks were hauled up, and the others followed on the rope. It was 19 o'clock, but the rest of the road was no longer unknown, the weather is fine—no wind—'What more do you want?' At the worst a bivouac in the Silberlücke, but that won't matter!

They continued along the arête, often astride, but the rock was good and sound. In the fading light they cut across the snow summit to the right of Silberhorn, and as they approached the latter the moon rose. They reached the Silberlücke at 23, the moon lighting up summit on summit, ridge on ridge. They made tea in the lücke, waiting for the moon to rise higher. At 0.30 they started again, reached the top of Jungfrau at 3, and the hotel on the Joch at 5.

¹ [This was the side on which on Sept. 24, 1887, Ambros Supersaxo, leader of Sir Seymour King's party, did actually turn the step. Sir Seymour wrote in *A.J.*: 'As it was quite hopeless anywhere on the side by which we had ascended, he roped himself, and insisted on being let down the northern face of the mountain. With great skill he managed to work himself along the face for the full length of the rope, and the first 100 feet being exhausted, a second of eighty feet was tied to it, and this again paid out to its utmost length; still he could find no way up to the ridge. He thereupon demanded that the rope should be let go, and he pulled it in, slung it on his back, and proceeded. For half an hour we neither saw nor heard anything of him. Suddenly we heard a shout from above, and the next minute he was peering over the point where we had been stuck.']

[Attention should be paid to this interesting ascent as it forms a new link in an ascent of the Jungfrau from the N. The Rotbrett itself is the great triangular rock face of the lower picture, 'A.J.' 31, opp. 216. The Rotbrettgrat is the left-hand edge of this face. This face is also shown in the upper picture, and its left-hand edge is the left skyline. The face is numbered 1 in the picture opp. 217. The Rotbrettjoch is at the extreme left bottom of the lower picture opp. 216, and its other side at 1 in the sketch accompanying this note. The new bit starts at the foot of the Rotbrettgrat and goes over the top of the Rotbrett as far as the junction of route 2-3 of picture opp. 217 with the main arête. This is the point reached in 1863 by the Fellenberg-Mathews party, and next in 1887 by Sir Seymour King's party. The first party stopped here through inability to overcome a vertical step. The second turned this step by a traverse on the N. side and continued to the summit of Jungfrau, their contribution to the route being the bit from the foot of the step as far as or nearly to the Silberlücke, where the older Guggi route comes in.

The position is set out in detail in an article 'The Rottal Face of the Jungfrau,' in 'A.J.' 31, 210-17. The route-marked sketch, marked by the brothers Gertsch themselves at the instance of my good friend Dr. Lauper, the eminent member of the Acad. A.C. Berne and Zurich, shows the route followed. It will be seen that they were forced off the arête and only joined it at 3. This was, no doubt, in a measure due to conditions. Viewed in face from the Rotbrettjoch, on the immediate N. side of the Sattel of that name, the lower step looks hopeless. I understand the two brothers Gertsch, who reside at Wengen, with their guide-companion Fritz Fuchs, a good man and the son of a famous guide, intend to repeat the expedition either ascending or descending, and they will then doubtless make sure whether the actual arête can be followed more closely.

It is eminently satisfactory that a first-class expedition like this, which has been discussed for quite a time, and indeed tried, should have fallen to these active and able young men who live at its foot. They had waited for three years to ensure (1) good conditions from the Sattel to where they could gain the arête, (2) absolutely certain weather, (3) full moon. I had once to show¹ how small a share in the conquest of their own mountains and passes in the early days fell to the men of the Lauterbrunnen valley. Their descendants are making good!

Their approach to the Rotbrettjoch from the Wengernalp is of much interest and differs from Dr. Lauper's, whose objective did not extend so far. Dr. Lauper has been good enough to let me see Mr. Edward Gertsch's letter to him.

Dr. Lauper's route follows the upper band or ledge and only

¹ *A.J.* 30, 315.

crosses the Bandlauri and Giessenlauri, on the bank of which he camped. They followed the lower band or ledge and crossed the Bandlauri² and Giessenlauri, considerably lower as the further W. Lammlauri cannot be crossed at the level of the upper terrace.

The Lauper route is doubtless shorter, but the Gertsch route is more interesting.

After crossing the Lammlauri they traversed over steep grass slopes and rocks to the 'roten Balm,' a natural shelter formerly used by chamois hunters, but now only two or three times in summer by the garde-chasse. There is said to have been a faintly marked path years ago, but now the terrain is very worn and smooth. From here they ascended about 100 m. to the left, and then crossed to the right to the Mönchslamm, another great gully, in which they ascended for a further 1½ hrs. As it is very steep they gained height rapidly. The rock is smooth but very sound. Once they were threatened by stones displaced by chamois above and were glad to quit the gully. Mounting further up rocks and steep grass, they traversed to the left to a fine large grass plateau. Water invited a 2 hrs. rest, while the cowbells on the Mettlenalp could be quite well heard. They soon after gained a not very steep avalanche bank up which they again won height, involving once quite a decent bit of climbing. They took 10 hrs., including halts, to the Rotbrettsattel,³ but estimated that 5 hrs. would suffice for Lauper's route.

From the Sattel they reckon with good snow they ought to attain in 5 hrs. the couloir by which the arête is gained. The slope is steep and faces N. and will probably always give trouble. The couloir is always a good access to the arête, say in 1 hr., unless the upper part is iced. The arête itself needs care, as it is shattered and exposed, and takes 1½ hrs. from the lower to the upper shoulder. The foot of the big step is gained in ½ hr., and is turned *on the S. side*, not on the N. side as Ambros Supersaxo, leader of the King party, did.⁴ I am much pleased to hear that the old-fashioned bottle deposited in 1863,⁵ a sacred relic, was religiously respected. From the big step to the Silberlücke takes 4 hrs. The arête for about ½ to ¾ hr. is very sharp, but the rock is good; then comes firn and a steep ascent to the false Silberhorn, or so-called Golden Horn, as at certain seasons the sun lights it up like gold. From the Silberlücke to top of Jungfrau reckon 2 hrs., or altogether from Rotbrettsattel bivouac in good conditions about 14 hrs. For

² All shown on Siegfried 'Finsteraarhorngebiet.' Lauri denotes the gorge through which a glacier avalanches.

³ *A.J.* 36, 84-5.

⁴ Mr. Gertsch thinks that possibly when Supersaxo turned the big step the névé field may have reached higher against the rock face, thus shortening the necessary stretch to attain decent holds on the rock face.

⁵ *A.J.* 31, 215.

the descent, which has already been done from the summit to the big step,⁶ 8 to 10 hrs. is estimated, but much depends on the condition of the couloir or slope when one quits the arête.

It might be argued that crossing all these avalanche shoots might be dangerous, but Dr. Lauper points out that the passages are very short, and the noise of an avalanche would give plenty of notice to take cover. Johann Lauener when hunting is supposed to have been killed by an avalanche in the Giessenlauri.⁷ Possibly the glacier was more advanced and dangerous in those days. These N. slopes, below the ice region, are still the haunt of numbers of severely preserved chamois, and Dr. Lauper reports their regular paths and trails on the shelves. It has been known for a man to be sent up there to drive the chamois over from the W. face to the N. face, so as to sell a look at them through the glass to the visitors to the Wengernalp. Shades of Tartarin!⁸

J. P. F.

[I am indebted for this vivid account (translated) of a very gallant adventure to my friends Dr. Lauper and Mr. Othmar Gurtner, one of the higher officials of the Jungfrau Railway. It clears up an old and interesting problem.

The marked photograph will help to elucidate the route.—J. P. F.]

Bernina (W. Wing) Group.

CIMA DI ROSSO (3371 m. = 11,060 ft.) FROM THE N. August 13, 1926. Professors Dr. K. Gruber and Dr. A. Grünwald, A. S-Club, Munich.

This is a variation on the upper portion of the Klucker-Rey-Rydzewsky route described in Rütter's 'Bündner-Alpen,' p. 12, route d. After crossing the bergschrund at the foot of the final wall, the present party left Klucker's route up the steep N.W. ice face, and bore to the left to gain the N. arête, which they followed over ice and rock direct to the summit. The angle of the ice was at times considerable. Time from Forno hut, 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ hrs.

MONTE ZOCCA W. PEAK (3179 m. = 10,427 ft.) BY THE N. ARÊTE. August 19, 1926. The same party.

This is again a variation towards the top of Klucker's route of 1891 described in Rütter's book, pp. 76 and 79, route a. Instead of gaining the gap between the main and W. summits, the present party, at the foot of the last slope, bore to the right and gained the upper

⁶ *A.J.* 31, 214.

⁷ *A.J.* 30, 286, note 15, and 36, 85.

⁸ This supplementary note was written before I had received the account of the expedition printed above it. However, it can stand.

bit of the N. arête at a snow saddle. The rocky arête leading to the summit is easy but rotten. Time from Albigna hut, 5½ hrs.

PIZ BADILE (3311 m. = 10,863 ft.) BY THE N. ARÊTE. July 18, 1926. MM. F. L'Orsa and A. Roch.

Particulars of the first ascent by this route will be found in 'A.J.' 37, 141 *seq.*, and in 'Die Alpen,' 1925, 6 *seq.*

These two young Swiss climbers have now made the ascent by a route which appears to be a variation of the Risch-Zürcher route. It is described fully, with an illustration, in 'Die Alpen,' 1926, 377 *seq.*, and the following is an abstract (fairly close translation): They left the Sciora hut at 3.30 A.M. A rotten couloir led to the N. arête below the first slabby step in the arête rather lower than Risch's *Einstieg* as the short snow slope leading to it seemed not quite safe, and, indeed, next day, the upper half was seen to have peeled off (see *illust.*, 'Die Alpen,' 1925, 7).

They soon reached the spot where Risch-Zürcher gained the arête and where the rope of the Italian film expedition still is. L'Orsa now donned *Kletterschuhe*, while Roch retained his nailed boots all day. The shoes and both axes were packed in one sack and taken along. Up to a height of 3000 m. their route is to be found easily. It means: remain on the arête and do not be forced off in any circumstances on to the N.W. or N.E. face. At first the advance is easy. Then follow slabs and the holds get small. You then reach a well-marked place, viz. a 30 m. long slab bounded by a little overhang. Holds are hardly present, but the roughness of the rock offers sufficient hold to the *Kletterschuhe*. The overhang is small, but its upper edge without hold. The leader has to advance another 30 m. to gain a place where he can secure his companion. He moves on the N.E. side of the arête, never more than 2 or 3 m. from the crest. The scanty holds are found parallel [Fallinie des Grats] to the arête.

The security spot is a roomy step on the arête, which swings upward rather steeper. The first 40 m. are rotten, then the rock gets better again, and the arête still steeper. One observes a kind of *Karrenbildung*.¹ Little gulleys run parallel to the arête and offer somewhat doubtful hold. One gains by an exposed climb a crack between the arête and a broken-off block (good security place). Back up on to the arête again, and so reach the foot of a steep gendarme (ca. 3000 m.). This is turned by a steep upward traverse on the W. side. The arête now changes its character completely. It offers exacting gully climbing and overhangs, but one is no longer so much exposed. After a few rope-lengths the arête is regained, but one is forced out afresh on to the W. face. After a further 100 m. the arête is regained at a gap. From here a ledge leads about

¹ Professor Garwood is good enough to inform us that this means "a mode of formation of cirques."

10 m. out on to the *N.E.* face to the foot of a chimney which leads once more without difficulty to the arête. This chimney is not visible from the gap.

The next part of the arête resembles its commencement. It is slabby, with poor holds. The lichen which covers the rocks in thick layers is unpleasant, and plays havoc with the finger-tips.

Nearing the *W.* summit the arête gets steeper. They got there at 12.30 noon, 9 hours from the hut, of which 7 hours were spent in climbing the arête.

They descended by the ordinary way, and got to the Badile hut at 4.30 P.M.

'There is no danger from stones. Pitons are absolutely unnecessary. Good security places every 20 to 40 m. (at one place 60 m.)'

Eastern Alps.

GROSSGLOCKNER (3798 m. = 12,458 ft.) BY THE *N.* FACE. Sept. 19, 1926. Herren W. Welzenbach (President A.A.K., Munich) and



Karl Wien. Height of wall from Innerglocknerkar 650 m. Time from Bergschrund 8 hrs. The *N.* face is bounded on the left by the *N.E.*, improperly termed *N.*, arête and on the right by the *N.W.*

arête. The lower two-thirds of the face consist of a broad ice couloir about 52° at the Bergschrund and gradually steepening until it joins the *ca.* 70° smooth final rock wall.

Time in the ice couloir (danger of stones), $4\frac{1}{2}$ hrs. from Bergschrund; height about 450 m. to foot of final rocks.

The ascent is made up the ice couloir tolerably straight for the summit and then up a rib on the W. side of the usually iced final wall.

Then follow the rib for about two rope lengths, until it ends in smooth, impassable slabs. Rope down diagonally to left into the ice couloir on E. of rib. Follow its flank over ice and slabs for 25 metres until you can regain the rib above the pitch. The steep rib is then climbed direct until it eases a bit to *névé* steps. This leads to slabby rock climbed diagonally to left to a narrow ice couloir, the continuation of the ice couloir lately used. On the other side of the narrow couloir keep to left, and so gain the N.W. arête about 40 metres below the summit, gained thence in a few minutes. 'Ö.A.Z.' Oct. 1926. The illustration was kindly marked by Mr. Welzenbach.

The same party made on Sept. 1, 1926, the first ascent of the **Glockerin** (3425 m. = 11,234 ft.) from the Mooserboden in the Kaprunthal by the N.W. face. Height from Glockerinkees, 1000



to 1200 m. Time, 8 hrs. 'A very hard mixed rock and ice climb. The mightiest face in the Group.' The picture marked by Mr. Welzenbach shows the line of ascent. Details will be found in 'Ö.A.Z.' Oct. 1926.

The same party made on Sept. 3, 1926, the first ascent of the **Eiskögele** (3439 m. = 11,280 ft.) by the N. face. Height from level Ödwinkelkees, 840 m., or from last Schrund 550 m. Time, 7 hrs.



'Exceedingly difficult.' The picture marked by Mr. Welzenbach shows the line of ascent. Details will be found in 'Ö.A.Z.', Oct. 1926. 'Rotten rock, steep slabs, glassy ice and scant means of securing require a perfectly reliable climber.'

Maluti Mountains, South Africa.

THE Maluti Mountain Ridge, extending N.W. from the Drakensberg at Mt. aux Sources, in forming the dividing line between the Orange Free State (O.F.S.) and Basutoland, preserves the characteristics of the main Drakensberg range, which runs S.E. from Mt. aux Sources. Thus, whilst the ridge rises quite gradually from the Basutoland side in grassy slopes, on the other hand it falls away very steeply in a wall to the O.F.S., corresponding to the steep Natal face of the Drakensberg.

The main difference between the steep face of the Malutis and that of the Drakensberg is, that in the former the precipices are on the whole on a much smaller scale, and afford more possibilities of ascent than in the latter. The fact that the main Maluti summits in the region covered by the following expeditions had been ascended by surveyors from the Basutoland side, but had apparently escaped the attention of mountaineers on the O.F.S. side, furnished a reason for making the following expeditions.

PEAK BETWEEN POINTS 9704 AND 9930 (Colonial Survey, O.F.S., Witzieshoek¹).²

This seems to be the point at which the ridge running in a direction slightly W. of S. from the former peak suddenly changes direction to S.E.

Messrs. H. H. Pilcher, W. Hagen, G. A. Van Oordt, F. A. Knight, and Dr. O. K. Williamson, having crossed the Goodoo Pass from the National Park Hotel to the cave of the Namahadi Police Outpost, where they passed the night, left the cave at 7 A.M. on July 20, 1923, crossed the Elands River, ascended steep grass slopes leading up to a subsidiary grassy ridge which ascends approximately in a S.W. direction. They ascended this ridge, and traversed on the W. side of it below a rocky wall, and climbed back to the ridge itself close to the point where it abuts upon the face of a peak of the Maluti ridge. (This is apparently the point marked 9930 on the map.) They traversed along steep grassy slopes immediately beneath the wall of this peak, rounding the head of the valley, of which the subsidiary ridge forms the right-hand boundary, and ascended to the head of the subsidiary ridge which forms the left-hand boundary of the valley immediately below a striking detached rocky wall. Still keeping close under the mountain wall the next valley to the W. was reached (hereabouts there were steep rocks below), and beyond the peak a narrow couloir of snow crossed, and soon afterwards a gully reached, the ascent of which took the party to the main Maluti ridge, and a minute or so up the very easy slopes of the Basutoland plateau led them to a point on the ridge at 11.20 A.M., where a cairn was erected (this is the next peak N.W. of the one below which the party had traversed). At 11.45 A.M. the four last-mentioned members of the party proceeded along the ridge, which here runs approximately N. and S., and ascended the next two peaks, the first of which exhibited a small cornice, and both of which were crowned by cairns. The most N. one reached by an easy rock scramble at 12.50 P.M. seems to be the point having the height 9704 on the above-mentioned map. Leaving this peak at 1 P.M., the way back was effected by the same route, and the cave reached about 4.45 P.M. Total halts during ascent to and descent from the ridge, 25 min. There was some rock and grass scrambling in the course of the traverse of the steep Free State slopes, the upper portions of which were covered with fresh snow, and there were several inches of snow on the Basutoland plateau.

¹ Africa, Sheet $\frac{\text{South H-35}}{\text{E-IV}}$, scale 1 in. = 2 miles, obtainable from Stanford's. 3/.

² The expedition recorded below is described in a paper by G. A. Van Oordt, 'The Maluti Mountains: Basutoland.' (The Annual of the Mountain Club of S. Africa, 1924.)

PEAK (probably that marked 10295 ft. on above map). First ascent from O.F.S. side.

This is the Peak which is prominent in views from near the National Park Hotel, Mt. aux Sources, and is often designated 'The Pope's Nose.' Seen from the 1926 Camp of the Natal Mountain Club (which seems to be near Pt. 6114 on above-mentioned map), it appears to have two summits, the right-hand one being evidently the higher. Both these summits fall away in vertical rock walls on the O.F.S. side, the right-hand wall being perhaps about 700 ft. in height, the left one about half that elevation. These precipices diminish in height towards the middle of the wall connecting the two summits so that they nearly disappear, in which region the wall appears to be easily accessible.

On July 12, 1926, Mr. R. G. Kingdon and Dr. O. K. Williamson, having left the camp at 7.10 A.M., ascended towards the peak in a S.W. direction. They reached a well-defined grassy ridge which, as seen from the camp, rises towards the cliffs of the lower peak, tending towards the right. This ridge was left at a point where it becomes rocky; the party traversed to the right and ascended a rocky wall interspersed with grass perhaps 20 or 30 ft. in height. Easy slopes led to the vulnerable point between the two summits. An easy scramble here led to the main Maluti ridge at 10.55 A.M. Turning to the right the gentle Basutoland slopes then led them to the top at 11.11 A.M., where a small cairn was found. Leaving at 12.5 the descent was made to the well-marked gap between the mountain and the next one to the S.E. Thence they descended by an easy gully, marked by a Kaffir track, between magnificent precipices, and so reached the grassy ridge used for the ascent, and camped at about 3.30 P.M. Total halts during ascent and descent, 1 hr. It was subsequently seen that the only real climbing during the ascent could have been avoided by a traverse further to the right.

PEAK ON MALUTI RIDGE NEXT TO S.E. OF 'POPE'S NOSE.' (Probably point marked 9925 on above map.) First ascent from Orange Free State side.

This shapely peak is by far the most attractive object to mountaineers in the view from the 1926 Camp of the Natal Mountain Club.

On July 16, 1926, Dr. O. K. Williamson, alone, having left camp at the discreditable hour of 9.20 A.M., ascended a grassy ridge (as seen from the camp to the left of the ridge used in the ascent of the 'Pope's Nose'). At the foot of a rocky tower rising from the ridge he descended to the gully on the true left of that ridge. A rock chimney, 6-8 ft. high, followed by a few short and easy rock pitches, brought the climber to a point where further ascent in the same direction is barred by the precipitous wall of the peak. It was here necessary to turn sharply to the right nearly at a right angle, just above the rocky tower on the ridge, and to continue the ascent by a

grassy gully at a moderately steep angle, the gully, except in its upper portion, somewhat resembling that used in the ascent of Mont aux Sources from the 'Sentinel Cave.' The upper part of the gully steepened, and terminated in a chimney of rock and grass about 30 ft. high, crowned by a chockstone, and bounded to right and left by precipitous walls. This brought the climber at 1.5 P.M. on to the ridge of the peak on the main Maluti crest, probably at the point on the map marked 9863, the ascent from the foot of the lowest rock chimney having occupied 1½ hrs.

After erecting a small cairn, the climber turned to the left up the easy Basutoland slopes, and reached the summit at 1.30 P.M. Here a cairn, evidently erected by surveyors, was found; it contained no records. The peak was obviously higher than all the neighbouring Maluti summits, including the 'Pope's Nose,' probably about 10,400 ft. in height. Leaving the top at 2.15 P.M., the gentle Basutoland slopes, which reach right up to the jagged crest of the ridge, were followed to the well-defined gap between the peak and the 'Pope's Nose,' reached at 3.15 P.M., and from here the same route as that taken on the descent from that peak was followed, camp being again reached at about 4.45 P.M. Total halts during ascent, 15 min., during descent, 5 min. The actual route taken had been planned on a previous reconnoitring expedition, and much time thereby saved. The chimney at which the main Maluti ridge was reached, which strikes that ridge just to the right of a rock needle, is at the point where in following the ridge from the gap between the peak and the 'Pope's Nose' it abruptly changes direction from approximately S.E. to E. The rock wall to the true right of the gully of ascent (probably here some 1500 ft. in height) is even steeper than the one on the left. The rock scenery, both during the ascent and also that seen from the summit ridge, was magnificent.

On July 19 the second ascent by this route was effected by Dr. and Mrs. O. K. Williamson, Miss W. E. Beale, and Miss R. C. Hodges. Camp was left at 7 A.M., and regained at about 5.30 P.M., the same line of descent being followed as on the 16th. The climbers were troubled on the descent by a very strong and cold wind.

POINT ON MALUTI RIDGE NEXT BUT ONE TO E. OF PEAK ASCENDED ON JULY 16, 1926.

On July 21, 1926, Mr. R. G. Kingdon, Miss B. M. Evans, and Dr. O. K. Williamson left the Natal Mountain Club Camp (see above) at 7 A.M., crossed the grassy ridge which runs approximately in a N.E. direction from the peak which was ascended by the last-mentioned on July 16, then traversed over several subsidiary grassy gullies and ridges and the slopes below that peak. They then crossed the well-marked gully which descends from the main Maluti ridge between the above-mentioned peak and the next one to the E. A short ascent on the E. side of the gully brought them to a grassy ledge at the foot of the vertical rock wall (here perhaps 50 to 100 ft. high) leading to

the main ridge. Along this they turned to the left. A chimney in the first gap in the wall which they reached (counting from the above-mentioned gully) defeated them, the second gap was discarded owing to its evil appearance, but the third led them without difficulty (a variety of easy chimneys) to the main ridge at 11 A.M., and turning to the left a few minutes brought the party to the flattened top, where a small cairn was erected. An intensely cold wind precluded a longer halt than ten minutes. The way down was made by a variation from the morning route, camp being regained at 2.5 P.M. Total halts during ascent and descent, 50 min. The point ascended, although rising perhaps only 50 ft. from the gap, is well defined, and dome-shaped, as seen from the camp. It would appear to be about 10,000 ft. high.

VARIOUS EXPEDITIONS.

Mont Blanc Group.

COL DU TOUR NOIR (3541 m. = 11,618 ft.). August 2, 1926 (third passage). Mr. E. G. Oliver with Adolf and Alfred Aufdenblatten. We left the Saleinaz Hut at 5.30 A.M., two hours later than we intended, and proceeding up the Saleinaz Glacier reached the foot of the steep wall leading to the Col at 7.30, finding the glacier much less crevassed than in 1925. After a halt of about three-quarters of an hour we crossed the Bergschrund, without undue difficulty, just to the right of the largest mass of rocks which emerge from the steep ice wall leading to the Col. Traversing to the left, we got on to these rocks, and climbed to the top of them. Thence proceeding straight up very steep slopes of snow and ice, and using a few projecting rocks where possible, we reached the Col at 1 P.M. After an hour's halt we descended by the Glacier des Améthystes, and, finding the snow in good condition, reached Lognan at 3.45.

The conditions were, undoubtedly, favourable. We took $4\frac{3}{4}$ hrs. to climb the wall on the Swiss side, against $6\frac{1}{2}$ hrs. taken by each of the two previous parties. We found some hard ice, especially near the top, but much less than we expected.

It will be remembered that the first passage of this Col was made by the Rev. H. B. George and Mr. H. J. S. Macdonald, with Christian Almer and Melchior Anderegg, on July 22, 1863, but in the opposite direction, and by mistake for the Col d'Argentière, the party being deceived by the then existing maps into going up the Glacier des Améthystes instead of the Glacier du Tour Noir.

The descent of the steep wall on the Swiss side has been considered one of the most remarkable of Almer's many wonderful ice achievements. The adventures of the party are graphically described by