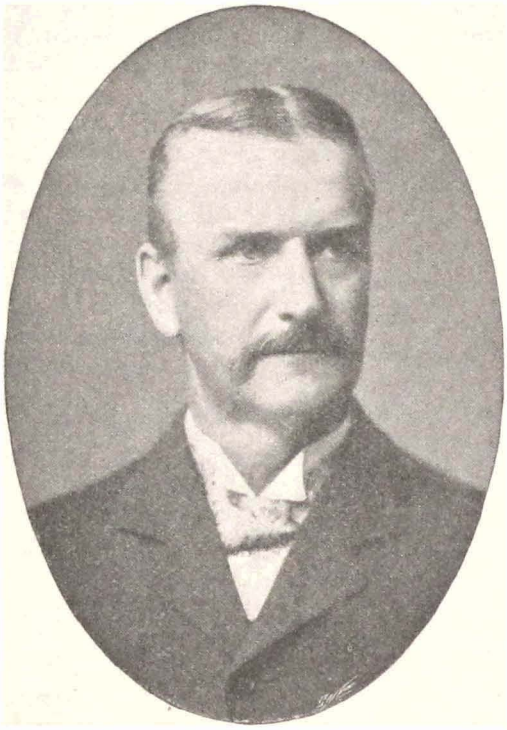
Our Climbs in the Himalayas.

By Dr. and Mrs. Bullock Workman.

We are enabled, by arrangement with Mr. Fisher Unwin, to place before our readers a description of the important climbs made by Dr. and Mrs. Bullock Workman, the well-known explorers and mountaineers, among the peaks and passes of Ladakh, Nubra, Suru, and Baltistan. The narrative is illustrated mainly with photographs taken by themselves. The complete record of these climbs was recently published by Mr. Fisher Unwin under the title, "In the Ice-World of Himalaya."



DR. BULLOCK WORKMAN, M.A., M.D., F.R.G.S., ETC.
From a Photo. by Maull & Fox.

MOUNTAINEERING in the Himalayas is very different from mountaineering in Switzerland or the Tyrol. In the Himalayas there are no villages and hotels within a few hours of the summits; no shelter-huts, and no corps of guides. The mountaineer must go fully provided with mountaineering and camping outfit into the savage and trackless wastes. He must brave fatigue, wet, cold, wind, and snow on peaks whose bases rest on buttresses higher than the summit of Mont Blanc. Worst of all, he must wrestle with the half barbarous coolies, on whom he has to rely for transport. The mountain flanks too are constantly scored by avalanches of snow and rock, which thunder down at all hours of the day. Immense landslips are frequent, filling the valleys and damming back the water from the melting snows. Later, this bursts the unstable barrier thus formed, and tears downwards with terrific force, a living mass of water, mud, and rocks, carrying all before it, and spreading destruction and ruin in its path.

We laboured under a great disadvantage in our Himalayan travel in not knowing enough Hindustani to talk freely with the head men of the different tribes.

Srinagar is the starting-point for a number of interesting routes in the Himalayas, and we arrived there early in May, 1898, with the intention of visiting Ladakh and Nubra. Our Kashmiri *khansamah*, or cook, exhibited a number of *chits*, which gave him credit for a greater degree of efficiency than he ever displayed in *our* service. We cut his perquisites and commissions on purchases down from some 500 per cent. to 100 per cent., and with this he was well satisfied.

MRS. FANNY BULLOCK WORKMAN, M.R.A.S., F.R.S.G.S., ETC., WHO NOW HOLDS THE WORLD'S RECORD AS A LADY MOUNTAINEER.
From a Photo. by Maull & Fox.

We reached Leh on the 27th of June, in time for the religious festival or miracle play, which was to take place at the Buddhist monastery of Himmis, twenty-five miles away. We secured as interpreter a well-known character, whom we will call Mr. Paul, a sly and cunning Madrasi who had settled in this remote spot and married a Ladakhi lass. He always dressed in European style, and his wife was richly clad in native costume, her *perrac*, or head-dress, falling below the waist behind, and being richly studded with turquoise.

Mr. Paul, like many Madrasis, was a Christian, and a source of great anxiety to the self-sacrificing Moravian missionaries of Leh. His reputation went far towards minimizing the slender harvest their patient endeavours had succeeded in gathering. However, when on the march, Mr. Paul was an ornament to the party—mounted on an active Nubra pony, with white Ellwood topee, tweed riding-coat, knickerbockers and gaiters, and English boots with pointed toes.

At noon on the 4th of July we left Leh to cross the Kardong Pass. We were able to procure only a few riding yaks, and we encamped for the night at a spot four hours above Leh. At this point we mounted yaks for the first time. The gait of the yak is easy, but he is very sure-footed. Often in passing boggy and treacherous places our yaks would examine footprints and walk round the bad places, choosing in every case a firm foothold. On steep mountain-sides we have seen yaks go in safety over places without a semblance of a path, and where even experienced mountaineers would proceed with caution. It was interesting to note that, above 15,000ft., the yaks seemed to suffer quite as much from exertion and altitude as their human attendants.

At Changlung the upper road through the Sasser Pass to Yarkand, in Central Asia, leaves the Nubra Valley and passes through a grand Himalayan region. From it none of the four chief giants are visible, but mountains of the respectable height of 21,000ft. to 25,000ft. lie all around, and present a complexity of form, outline, colour, *taut*, precipice, glacier, and moraine; with deserts, rivers, valleys, and yawning chasms.

Our baggage was carried by three yaks and a dozen ponies—most of the latter half-starved, wretched-looking beasts. The drivers were none too attentive; and so, left to themselves, the ponies were constantly throwing their loads, jamming them one into another, or smashing them against the rocks.

From Changlung, over the Sasser Pass, and down to Sasser—a three days' journey—the path is strewn with many fresh carcasses and the bleaching skeletons of many thousands of ponies fallen by the way. These afford plenty of occupation to the vultures, so that anyone desiring to investigate the anatomy of a pony could not do better than camp for a few weeks in this equine graveyard. In some places these skeletons covered the ground in groups of from twenty to fifty, as might be seen after a severe battle. We saw no human skeletons, but an Englishman who had been over the route told us he had seen two.

THIS IS HOW THE BAGGAGE WAS CARRIED ON YAKS ON THE KARDONG ROUTE.
From a Photo. by Dr. B. Workman.

Crossing the Purkutse Pass, 14,000ft., we had a glorious view of Noon Koon, 23,540ft., and

thence descended to Suru. While we were waiting for the coolies the *lambardar*, or head man, very thoughtfully brought us a brass drinking vessel full of milk and a cabbage with which to satisfy the cravings of our appetites.

In our experience the difficulties of mountaineering reached their acme in Sikkim, whose mountains have remained a *terra incognita* only to be gazed at from afar. Among the causes which contribute to discourage investigation are the expense of the trip and the reputed disinclination of the Government to grant the necessary passes and assistance to persons desirous of visiting the heights bordering on the forbidden lands of Nepal and Tibet. We reached Darjeeling in the middle of September, 1898, with the Swiss guide, Rudolf Taugwalder, of Zermatt, and an outfit ordered in London. The Deputy-Commissioner summoned his subordinate, the magistrate, and handed over our case to him. Now, the magistrate had had no experience of such matters, but he ordered his *babu* to call in for consultation two *sirdars* who were loafing about the Darjeeling streets. They had never been within miles of the places we were inquiring about, and when asked a question the principal sirdar would place one hand over his heart and raise the other aloft, turning up his eyes with a pathetic expression, as if to say, "What you wish to do is beyond the range of human possibility." Then the Political officer said a good deal about the difficulties of the route; of the density of the rhododendron forests beyond the Giucha La; of the obstructions caused by rivers; and of steep and slippery paths which would make the proposed route almost impassable to a woman. Having assured him that we were accustomed to such difficulties and would take all risks, it was arranged that a sirdar and forty-five coolies should be equipped at our expense —each with cap, jersey, woollen trousers, gloves, socks, putties, boots, thick woollen blanket, and snow-glasses. They were to be provisioned for eight weeks, with 2lb. of rice per coolie per day; besides tea, salt, butter, chillies, and rum in liberal quantities. They were also to have mutton when the snow was reached, and four large tents to protect them from the weather. Fifteen more coolies were to be paid and provisioned to carry supplies for the forty-five.

It was immediately noised abroad in the bazaar that a large expedition was afoot. Stories of fabulous wealth floated through its dusty mazes, and its merchants were excited to fever heat. By the 5th of October, however, all arrangements were completed. The magistrate assisted us to secure the services, at two rupees a day, of a native cook, who never showed the least knowledge of cooking, and never succeeded in boiling an egg or in warming tinned meats. He could never even start a fire with any certainty.

On arrival at Chia Banjan the Sikkim sirdar was awaiting us with sixty or more coolies—how many we never knew, as some were always straggling behind, and others were reported as having bolted. As to the rest, judging from their appearance, it would have been difficult to match them in any gaol in India.

That day was spent in dividing out rations and clothing. Nine sheep were purchased by the sirdar at double the usual price, and at daylight on the 11th of October we were ready for the start. We camped that night in a thistle-covered field five miles from our starting-point. Although the weather was warm, the greater part of the coolies had donned their thick clothing, including woollen gloves. Thus the boots and socks which we furnished them as protection against snow and cold were being worn out when they were not in the least needed.

Towards evening the sirdar informed us through the interpreter that the coolies would not go on unless, in addition to their already varied diet, curry should be supplied them. How curry was to be obtained in this wilderness he did not explain. After a time he said that if they could have an ox at Jongri they would go on. They acted throughout as though they were on a junketing excursion.

The next day our valiant hirelings managed to cover another five or six miles, and having reached an altitude of 14,800ft., they dumped our baggage down on the wet grass and betook themselves to a shelter lower down. Next morning we broke camp in two inches of snow, and marched in a heavy snowstorm 1,000ft. lower to where four shepherds' huts stood. We reached these about noon, wet to the skin, the snow having turned to rain. Here, on the sloping surface, soaked and oozing with water, we set up our tent in the rain, the coolies bringing wood and water for themselves, but nothing for us. And we had, in four days, accomplished twenty miles!

As we were powerless against what looked like systematic opposition we started for Darjeeling on the morning of the 17th. The coolies now moved, with alacrity and ease, twelve to fifteen miles a day. At Darjeeling we laid the case before the Political officer, but got no redress.

On three of the mornings after leaving Chia Banjan the views were something not to be

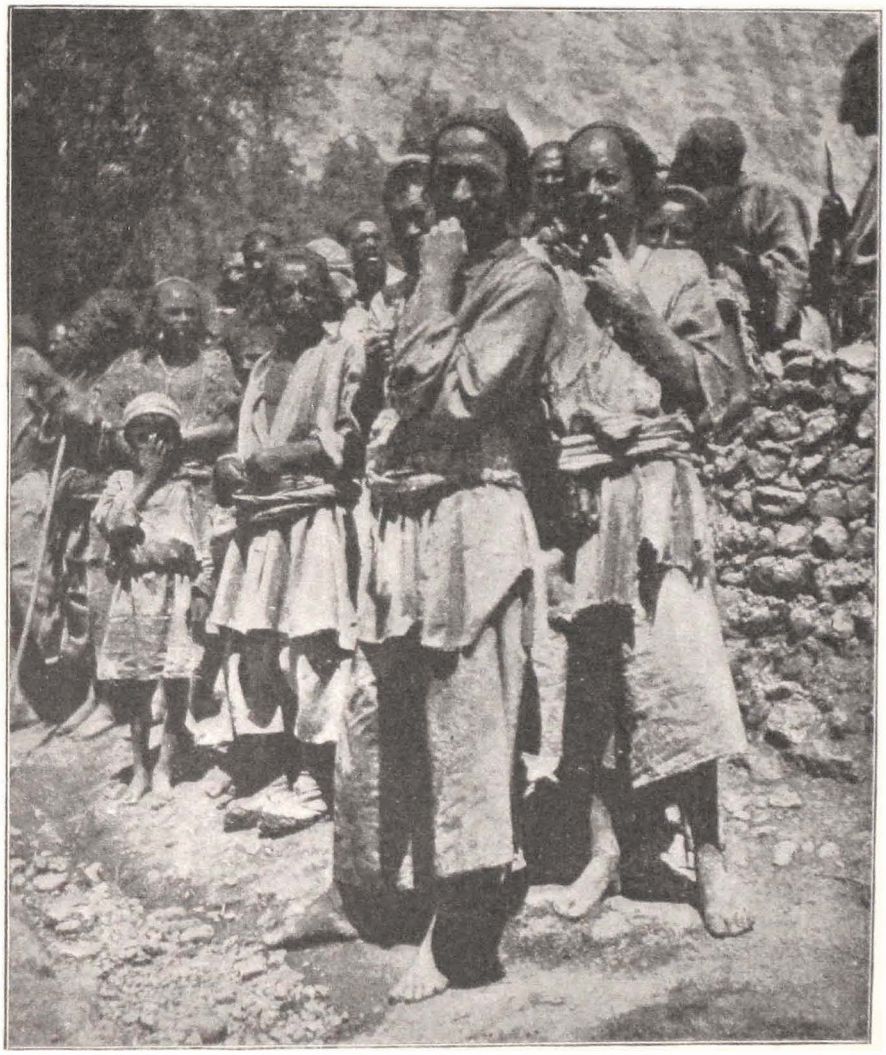
forgotten. To the west, far within Nepal, Everest, with its giant sisters, rose straight and creamy from a lapis lazuli plinth of hill and cloud. As the rising sun gilded the chain, and its rays fell in a golden shower on the plinth, the towering white god of snow seemed to float upward from a billowy world of mauve vapour. To the north, over Sikkim, stood forth with chalky whiteness the wonderful ramps of Jannu, Kabru, and Kinchinjanga; while to the east, the eye, sweeping over the border of Tibet, lighted upon the fair cone of sacred Tchumulari. Thus in a glance were included the three great peaks of Nepal, Sikkim, and Tibet.

On returning from a cycling tour in Java we reached Srinagar on the 22nd of June, 1899, and immediately went to work to complete preparations for a three months' expedition to the northern regions of Baltistan. Our party consisted of the writers: the famous guide, Mattia Zurbriggen, of Macugnaga; and four camp servants. On the 1st of July we stepped aboard the *doongas* for Bandipura. Towards which ever great mountain range one is headed, the first two or three marches out of Srinagar can generally be covered by boat. The choice is between two evils—the discomfort of thirty-six or more hours on a doonga, or of several hot and dusty marches in the "Happy Valley" to the foothills. From the doonga there is no retreat until the journey's end. One can at least stand erect, however, which is more than can be said of the sampan of Indo-China and Siam. It would be quite possible to exist quite comfortably in a doonga for a day or two did the *hangi* or boatman adhere to his agreement.

We pitched our first camp at Tragbal, on a knoll overlooking the silver sheet of Woolar Lake. Now, the mosquito here is an insect of noble proportions and gigantic voice. He attacks one with persistent virulence from sunrise to sunset; and unlike his *confrère* of the tropics, this valiant denizen of the Deosai leaves his victim to rest at night, and is in full possession of both breathing and buzzing apparatus on an elevated plateau of 13,000ft. to 14,000ft.

At length we were in Baltistan. The lean but fairly staunch ponies supplied by our good friend of the Gilgit Commissariat had finished their work without much damage. The only endurable camping-ground at Skardu being occupied, the choice for us fell between a ploughed field partially shaded by a trio of sickly apricots and a small, treeless grass-plot, where even a double fly-tent was powerless against the blazing July sun.

After a short march we reached pastoral, straggling Shigar, watered by mountain rivulets and famous for fruit. After we had pitched our humble tents on the polo ground a message was brought that the Rajah would favour us with a visit after dinner. He came—a gentle,



A STUDY IN EXPRESSIONS—MEN OF ASKOLE WATCHING THE PHOTOGRAPHING OF THEIR FELLOW-VILLAGERS. *From a Photo. by* [Dr. *F. Workman*

refined individual; and with a courtesy perfectly in keeping with the spirit of native opinion as to the position of women in India, he handed the sahib a sweet-smelling nosegay of welcome, favouring the mem-sahib with a mere dignified bow. He offered to get up a polo gymkhana for us, but the hills were "a-callin'," and we started for Askole next day. At Askor Nullah village the Shigar coolies were exchanged for a lot of loud-mouthed Baltis, who were to take our kit over the pass.

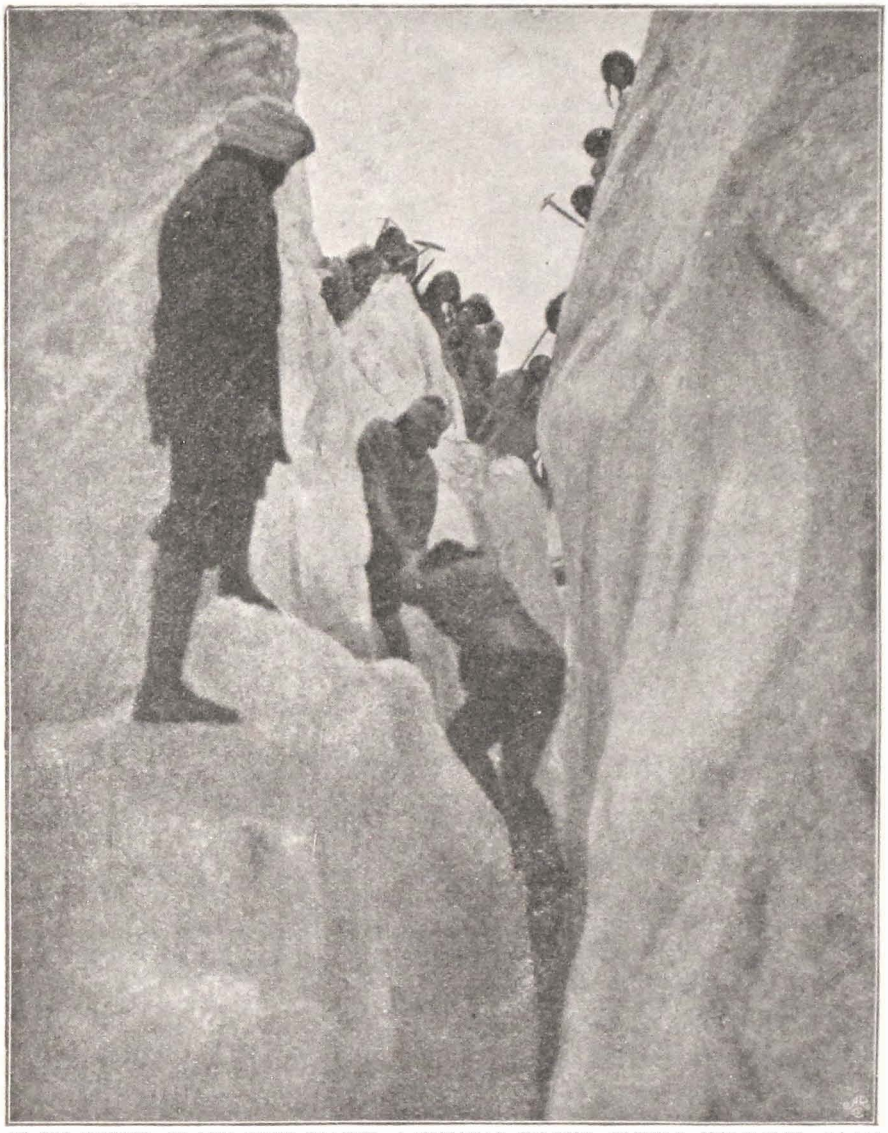
At 15,000ft. several of them broke down with mountain sickness, and at 15,800ft. we were obliged to bivouac on a narrow, wind-swept ledge of the arête, which rose between two deep nullahs with precipitous walls, down which rock avalanches were thundering at all hours of the night. To this mountain-music were added the groans of the air-sick coolies. Elated at the prospect of 8,000ft. of descent, however, they forgot their sickness, and presently glissaded with tents and packs down the long snow valleys in the most hilarious manner. After eleven hours of hard marching we reached, at sunset, the rope bridge which spans the river before Askole. Accustomed to contend with the roughest of paths, the Askole people are good mountaineers, but they are great cowards, and have an aversion to ice, preferring a difficult and tiresome route over moraine. They rather resemble Polish Jews in dress and appearance.

The Biafo and Baltoro glaciers, for exploring which Askole is the starting-point, are said to be the two largest outside the Arctic regions. Our plan was to follow up the Biafo some thirty-five miles to its origin at the Hispar Pass and then return to Askole. The head man of the seven Askole villages took three days to collect and equip coolies. We started on the 16th of July with fifty-five men, in charge of Lambardar Kinchin, a shivering, cringing fellow not possessed of the pluck and persistence necessary to lead his compatriots. Of the fifty-five coolies under his orders he said he could only control the actions of seven, who came from his own village. His *chit* of recommendation bore Sir W. Martin Conway's signature, and had doubtless changed hands more than once. Zurbriggen is certain he was not with the Conway party.

For the first six or eight hours' march the surface of the glacier was much broken, consisting of immense truncated séracs, separated

STEP-CUTTING IN THE BIAFO SÉRACS—"HOURS WERE SPENT CUTTING STEPS UP AND DOWN THE GREAT HONEYCOMBED PINNACLES."
From a Photo. by Dr. B. Workman.

from one another by deep hollows. We encamped at 11,775ft. For miles above this place the séracs became larger, higher, and more pointed. The crevasses were longer and wider, and with few bridges from bank to bank. Our second day might be called a day lost in the séracs. We attacked a reach of huge séracs which projected like a gigantic white tongue among the dark-coloured ones forming the sides. Here hours were spent cutting steps up and down and around the great honeycombed pinnacles, which projected 50ft. or 60ft. above our trail, to say nothing about the depths to which they descended below it. With much loss of time we succeeded in getting the coolies through the séracs, until we came to two tall ones separated by a deep crevasse, between which, on the side of one of them, Zurbriggen had to cut a gallery some 30ft. long, which took him more than half an hour to complete. Meanwhile we sat cooling off on a beautiful blue sérac. Some of the older coolies, who were destined to become irritating spokesmen, began to protest and babble about returning. Their complaints, however, were answered with considerable asperity by us and by Zurbriggen, who was doing all the work. Owing to the projection of the ice-walls the coolies could not easily follow whilst loaded, so it was necessary to bring their loads through the passage first. To do this Kinchin and our bearer stationed themselves in the gallery and handed the different packs—some of which weighed over sixty pounds—to Zurbriggen, who stood at the most dangerous point, with one leg often astride the crevasse and his foot braced against the opposite sérac. He would then pass the packs on to two camp servants stationed on the shelf below. Finally the two sheep came, and one, owing to some inadvertence, fell into a crevasse and disappeared. Fortunately it lodged unhurt on a projecting shelf, and Zurbriggen was lowered to its rescue. After this we came to a crevasse which could not be jumped and apparently had no bridges, so, as the weather was becoming thick and the day was on the wane, it was decided to return to camp for the night. It was amusing to see with what ease and agility the coolies returned unaided, in two hours, over a track which had taken seven hours to cut through in coming out.



AN ICE GALLERY ON THE BIAFO GLACIER—LAMBARDAR KINCHIN DRAWING ZURBRIGGEN OUT OF THE CREVASSE AFTER THE RESCUE OF THE SHEEP. *From a Photo. by* [*Dr. B. Workman.*

All the camping-places on the Biafo, as far as Ogre Camp, are good, and, as regards scenery, leave nothing to be desired. The crevassed windings of the glacier trend ever onward until they merge into the white pall of Snow Lake, where the bordering heights spread out and join hands in a peerless *cirque* of weird, ice-covered towers.

In the solid ice of the glacier, where no

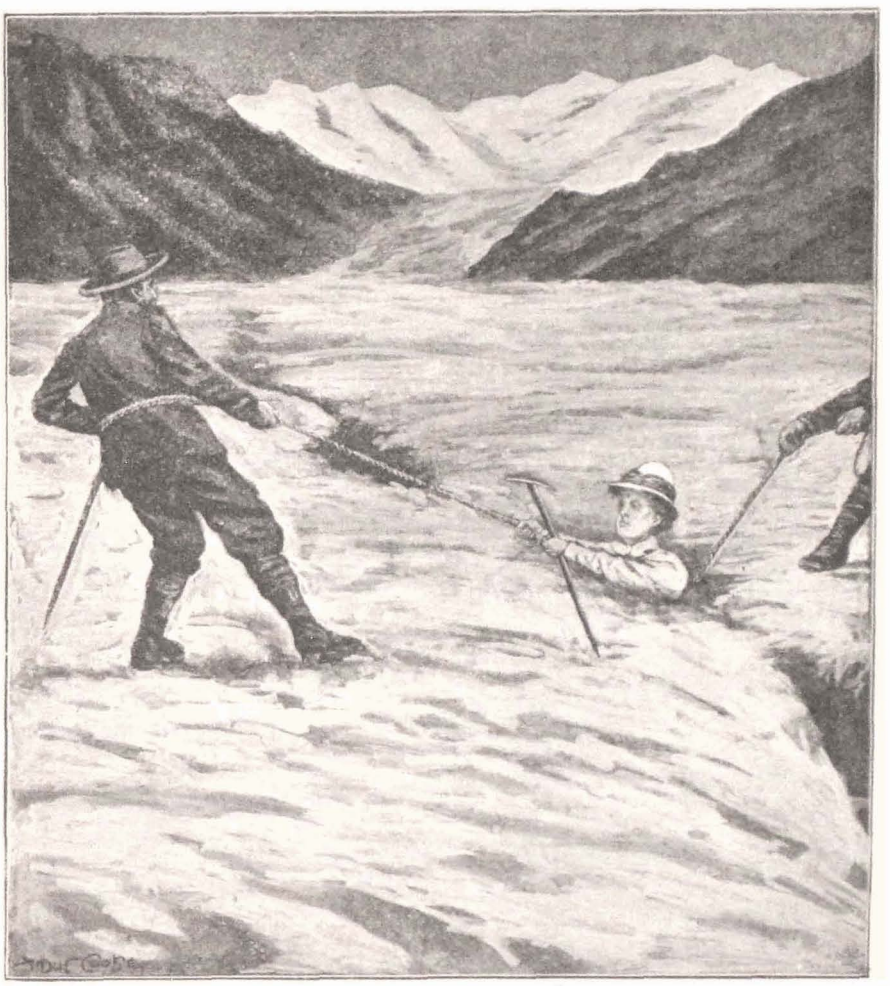
SOME OF THE TROUBLESOME COOLIES MOUNTING AN ICE-HILL OF THE BIAFO.
From a Photo. by Dr. B. Workman.

traces of crevasses appear, irregular apertures occur leading down to unknown depths. Into one of these, of a diameter not much greater than a man's head, a pebble was dropped, and was heard to resound for several seconds until lost in the depths.

Ogre Camp is situated on the southern spur of the Biafo Mountains, whose needles pierce the blue 9,000ft. or more above the glacier, and at least 23,000ft. above the sea. The camp was so named by Sir Martin Conway. It consists of a small, grass-covered projection from a rock slant, overhanging the glacier by about 200ft., with three terraces, on each of which there is room for a moderate-sized tent. On the middle terrace a rock cairn, built by Sir Martin Conway's party, stands intact. This spot, at 14,650ft., commands the glacier in three directions. Here we passed three nights and two days, detained by the weather.

SIR MARTIN CONWAY'S CAIRN AT OGRE CAMP (14,650FT.)—HERE THE EXPLORERS PASSED THREE NIGHTS AND TWO DAYS.
From a Photo. by Dr. B. Workman.

About six hours above Ogre Camp the Biafo opens into Snow Lake, a huge basin of ice and snow, unique, we believe, in the Himalayas. The diameter is apparently from four to six miles. This is encircled by unexplored, unnamed ice-peaks, varying in height from 20,000ft. to probably 25,000ft. At the entrance of Snow Lake we roped, as it was necessary to move with caution. With all due care we were constantly in snow and crevasses to above the knees, and one of the party will not soon forget the sensation she felt on disappearing up to her shoulders in a crevasse. Zurbriggen said: "Pull on the rope and push back with the feet." Finally, by strenuous efforts on her part and hauling on that of the guide she came out again. This form of exercise continued until half-past four, when we began the ascent of an ice-slant, where each step had to be cut. This took some time at a height of over 16,000ft., after the tumbling gymnastics of the afternoon. Finally we pitched our tents on the ice-shelf by the light of the sinking sun in the most glorious ice-world possible to imagine. As the sun flung its last flames of fire on the towering ice-pinnacles, and the purple fangs of what might be called the Himalayan aurora shot upwards from the dull horizon to the blue zenith; and as the twilight silence of the Arctic regions fell on the snow-land, one felt, not only the overwhelming beauty, but also the intangibility of a scene that seemed in no way of this world.



MRS. WORKMAN FALLS INTO A CREVASSE AT SNOW LAKE—"BY STRENUOUS EFFORTS ON HER PART AND HAULING ON THAT OF THE GUIDE SHE CAME OUT AGAIN."

By six o'clock on the 29th of July we were off to the Hispar Pass—a river of pure white driven snow, bounded by chains of lofty, nameless snow-mountains.

Our return to Askole was honoured by the presence of the seven head men and their families, who received the caravan standing on the mud hut-tops, clothed in their best rags and adorned with their most striking jewellery. And so ended a hard but very interesting trip of eighteen days among Himalaya's grand and silent snowfields.

On the 5th of August we again left Askole for the Skoro La Range, with thirty fresh coolies, under the leadership of Lambardar Kinchin, who had his battered umbrella under his arm as usual. As we headed for the ice the coolies again began to clamour, and finally threw down their loads. In vain we told them they would have rock shelter on the farther side; their fear of the ice was so great that they would not go upon it. We therefore decided to encamp where we were, on the edge of the glacier. There, on a moraine ledge, barely safe from falling boulders, we made them build up rock terraces for our tents. Our tent-ledge was as a tiny footstool to the great white, sérac-studded ice-falls that streamed in glittering masses from the bases of two great snow-kings. We were in a vast basin of ice and rock, surmounted by snowy peaks, where the silence was broken only by the music of the ice-streams and the roar of the avalanche.

OUR CAIRN ON THE ROCK LEDGE (ABOUT 30FT. WIDE) NEAR THE SUMMIT OF THE SIEGFRIEDHORN—18,600FT.
From a Photo. by Dr. B. Workman.

On the morning of the 7th of August, accompanied by two of the more valiant coolies as porters, we started across the glacier. An ordinary Swiss guide would have been puzzled by, and doubtless have lost some hours finding his way through, the labyrinth of séracs and crevasses that confronted us. Not so Zurbriggen, however. He led us in and out, over and around them, as if a path existed, and in less than three hours we were taking a light breakfast on a sloping snow plateau. Above the snow-slopes of the main peak we had to pick our way for an hour, when the final snow arêtes began. Our porters, who had been complaining of their heads, and asking to return during the last thousand feet, threw down their loads and went to sleep on the rocks. We were five and a half hours from camp to summit, which we placed at 18,600ft. The view was very beautiful, particularly towards the north and east, where Masherbrun was clearly seen raising its great white ramparts heavenward, and beyond, ridge upon ridge of the wonderful heights of Korakoram and Hunza. We named the mountain the Siegfriedhorn. With the assistance of the porters a strong cairn was built on the rock summit, which is a ledge 20ft. or 30ft. wide crowning the ragged, shaly wall which falls away into a perpendicular precipice into the Skoro Nullah several

ON THE DESOLATE SUMMIT OF THE SIEGFRIEDHORN, WHERE A RECORD WAS LEFT IN A GLASS JAR.
From a Photo. by Dr. B. Workman.

thousand feet below. In this cairn we left our cards, inclosed in a glass jar, bearing our names, the height of the mountain, and a record of the ascent.

As to our coolies, we were soon face to face with a crisis similar to the one that had wrecked a costly expedition in Sikkim. Therefore, without more waste of words, the sahib began to bombard the crowd vigorously with small stones, which lay plentifully at hand. This had the effect of compelling them to resume their loads, and the train slowly continued its upward march.

The morning of August 11th saw us off on a steep, crevassed ice-slopes overhanging a basin a thousand feet below to hear Zurbriggen calling to the stupid fellows to move with care and keep the rope taut between them, adding that if one mis-step were made we should all perish. And yet in a most critical place they sat down to take the snow out of their boots!

We felt the cold quite severely for the first three hours, after which the sun reached us. There was no rock work. The ascent from our camp to the summit was over a succession of ice and snow slopes. We reached the summit, 19,450ft., at ten o'clock four hours from camp.

A MOMENT OF GREAT TRIUMPH—THE PARTY REACH THE SUMMIT OF THE GIANT PEAK WHICH BEARS THEIR NAME —MOUNT BULLOCK WORKMAN, 19,450FT. *From a Photo. by*] [*D. W. Freshfield.*

pioneer ascent of Mount Bullock Workman. A short, steep stretch of moraine and glacier brought us to a bold, crevassed ice-slope, which we ascended in zig-zags, cutting steps for about an hour. We were roped from the beginning of the slope, and had the same two coolies with us as porters, for they were willing for the extra compensation they received to run the risk of a second ascent. They had now become fairly expert in placing their hobnail-booted feet in the cut steps, but they had to be constantly watched and admonished not to crowd one upon another. It was not pleasant on the

Except for some headache and loss of breath on sudden exertion we suffered in no way from the altitude. One should move slowly and steadily throughout, avoiding spurts. We named the peak Mount Bullock Workman, and left our cards, with the name given and a record of the ascent, in a glass jar in the snow at the highest point. The summit of the mountain consisted of a long crest of driven snow, so narrow that not more than two persons could comfortably stand abreast on it. On the west the slope ran sharply down some 2,000ft. to a glacier. We had not expected to find the view

so grand, or so uninterruptedly beautiful, as it proved to be. To the north the great castellated rock-peaks of the Biafo and Hispar lined themselves against the pure cerulean background, and the peerless Nanga Parbat of cloud renown illumined the western horizon with golden beauty, her towering summits rising to meet the deep blue of a cloudless sky. Among other details of the glorious view were nine known and named summits.

We were, later on, selecting a place to pitch the tents, on the left bank of the Askor torrent, when our attention was attracted by a peculiar rumble above. Far up the gorge, and just below the glacier, appeared a dark, serpentine object, coming towards us, with a high, crested front. There was barely time for the coolies to snatch up their loads, which fortunately had not been opened, and carry them 50yds. up the incline, when it was upon us—a dark, slate-coloured mass, 60ft. wide and 20ft. or 30ft. high, consisting of mud and stones of every size, some of them many tons in weight, which were rolled over one another as if they were pebbles. A moment more, and the lofty front of the avalanche shot by with irresistible force and a crashing, demoniacal roar. The rock-packed banks of the river crumbled into the rushing torrent, and large boulders toppled into and joined the mad procession. Rock masses, 10ft. or 15ft. in diameter, lying in its course were swept away and seen no more.

On our return to the Shigar Valley we decided if possible to climb Koser Gunge, a grand mountain of over 20,000ft. Not knowing how long we might be detained on the mountain, a sheep had been ordered, and the lambardar brought it late on the evening before our departure; for village chiefs prefer to exhibit their live stock at dusk or by the faint light of the young moon. It was a lively-looking sheep, but on the following morning, after walking a few steps, it absolutely refused to stir. No amount of coaxing, beating, dragging, or punching with an alpenstock was of any avail, and we were compelled to hire a coolie to carry it on his shoulders to the first encampment. For the first 1,200ft. above the camp we had to do some almost perpendicular rock work, and then escalade a steep arête leading to the horizontal one. Now we were crawling along a narrow ledge with great abysses beneath, and again climbing through a slippery chimney and back to the ridge, where perhaps a formidable rock presented itself. But Zurbriggen always inspires confidence, and when one sees him coolly attack a dizzy, untested gallery one follows without question.

The snow grew deeper as we ascended, and soon reached well over the tops of our mountain boots. Suddenly a strong gust of wind, accompanied by sleet, blew off the mem-sahib's treasured Ellwood topee, although fastened with elastic, and down it bounded over the slant of the great arête, and across lower snowfields, where it disappeared towards a huge crevasse nearly 1,000ft. below. It bore on its front a specially-made Touring Club de France badge, which had travelled in many lands of Europe, Africa, and Asia, but was doomed to succumb to the elements on Koser Gunge.

By noon we had reached 20,000ft. Every step was now in snow to our knees, and beneath the snow there was solid ice. Every step had to be dug or trodden out by Zurbriggen, and the waiting for this in the wind and snow was more than bitter. The lifting of our feet from one knee-deep step to another was accomplished with panting. We could not stop to get our food from the tiffin basket, and even the chocolate and kola biscuit we had in our pockets were scarcely procurable with half-frozen fingers.

The mem-sahib screamed to Zurbriggen that she must change her gloves, as she could no longer feel her ice-axe. We halted, and he rubbed her hands vigorously and pounded her feet, which were almost destitute of sensation. In place of her fur gloves he tied on lined rubber mittens, which, whilst icy cold at first, restored the circulation after a time.

We found the snow portion of Koser Gunge to be not simply one peak, but a tremendous scheme of endless ridges, slopes, arêtes, and domes. On this dangerous incline, where the wind was whirling snow in clouds over us, the endurance of a Kashmiri found its end, and the sickened second porter sat down, turning his back to the roped procession. There came a tug at the rope, and, looking up, we saw Zurbriggen with two-inch icicles on his beard, waving his hands and vociferating loudly. It seemed hours, and was actually some minutes, before that coolie was released, and we saw him crawl downwards, shambling in the deep tracks, and bearing our extra coats and food—in the wrong direction.

We reached our goal at three o'clock—21,000ft. We had the satisfaction of being the first to conquer Koser Gunge, noblest of Shigar peaks. We were out thirteen hours from the start to the return to camp. By the ascent of the Siegfriedhorn, Mount Bullock Workman, and Koser Gunge three successive world's mountaineering records for women—viz., 18,600ft., 19,450ft., and 21,000ft.—were established.