

Studer, G. Panorama vom Mattwald oder Simmelhorn im Wallis. Nach der Natur gezeichnet den 16. Juli 1840.

(Presented by Mrs. Wm. Mathews.)

The following is an analysis under subjects of the more important recent items in the above;—

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| Africa; see Moore.   | Huts; see C. A. F., C. A. I. Milan, D. u. Oe. Berlin.    |
| Altai; see Demidoff, Sapojnikof.   | Italian Alps; see Brusoni.                               |
| America, North; see Deckert, Russell, Steele.                                    | Mont Blanc; see C. A. I. Boll., S. A. C. Jahrb., Vallot. |
| Andes; see Burckhardt, Conway, Gallois, Soc. Geog. La Paz.                       | New Zealand; see Loughnan.                               |
| Eastern Alps; see C. A. F. Ann., Hungarian Club Jahrb., Karlseisfeld, Schwaiger. | Norway; see Klingenberg, Martens, Norske Turistf.        |
| Himalayas; see Bose, Bourbel, O'Connor, Ronaldshay, Workman.                     | Pyrenees; see Beraldi, Joanne.                           |
| Historical; see Oberziner, S. A. C. Jahrb.                                       | Speleology; see Baker, Font y Sague.                     |
|  | Sport; see Demidoff.                                     |
|  | Switzerland; see Coolidge.                               |

#### ALPINE ACCIDENTS IN 1901.

ANOTHER Alpine season has passed, a season which a well known mountaineer recently described to us as, 'taking it as a whole in point of weather, one of the most unsettled and variable of recent years.' Accidents might, therefore, be expected—accidents, that is, which might properly be so described. We have not made for ourselves nor seen in any Alpine publication a full list of the season's accidents, nor a statement of the number of deaths which have again to be deplored, whether in sub-Alpine districts or amongst the great peaks; but we know that the roll of victims is a long one. We hoped when we proceeded to inquire into the most important so called accidents that we should be able to discern an improvement upon past years in the way of observance of common-sense precautions—of precautions, that is to say, recognised by all who can claim to speak with authority on the subject. But what do we actually find?

We find in 'Alpina' for August 15, p. 105, that on July 17 Jakob Müller, aged 19, was killed on the Piz Grialetsch; he was climbing *alone*. In the 'Revue Alpine' of August 1901, pp. 248-9, we read that Charles Festuz, a young man of Vevey, arrived at the Rambert Cabane on the evening of July 18 to make the ascent of the Petit Muveran. He left the Cabane *alone at 9 o'clock at night*, and reached the summit at 10 (according to a note which he left there). In descending he lost his way, and 'dans l'obscurité tomba dans le vide.' He fell 800 mètres. Nothing can exceed the simple pathos of the story in the 'Revue Alpine': 'Ce malheureux était accompagné par sa fiancée, qu'il laissa à la cabane pour aller accomplir son triste exploit.'

We ourselves this summer met a porter who was crossing the Col du Géant *alone*. Will it be believed that inquiries elicited

from a credible informant the statement that *this same man, in crossing the same col alone last year, fell into a crevasse, was rescued with difficulty, was laid up for some time, and had to pay a sum which must have been to him serious for his conveyance to his home?* The quick-witted Greek said *παθήματα μαθήματα*, but it would appear that amongst a large number of those who venture on mountain expeditions the lessons of experience, however dearly purchased, go for nothing.

With reference to the accident on the Aiguille du Tacul we read in the 'Revue Alpine' of September 1901, p. 286, that on August 11 *fourteen* members of one of the small Genevan clubs, 'Gyms Montagnards,' started for the Tacul with *one* guide. It was pointed out to them that the excursion required care and prudence, owing to the frequent falls of stones, which render the mountain dangerous, though technically it is an easy ascent. But, expostulations notwithstanding, the party set out; they reached the summit in safety, but on the descent, whilst they were putting on the rope to cross a snow couloir, there was a clap of thunder followed by a crash. A huge stone struck M. Auguste Porchet on the chest and carried him away. All haste was made to his assistance, but though he was still breathing when found he soon expired in the arms of his friends. Here too there is a pathos in the story which almost disarms further criticism. M. Porchet was only thirty-one and leaves a widow and a young child.

The accident on the Matterhorn which was reported in our last number \* was apparently due to a very grave error of judgment. That so large a party—there were five travellers, of whom two were ladies—should have been accompanied by only one guide and one porter may seem hardly discreet, but we accept Mr. Mallam's assurance when he says of the expedition for which they started, the Tête du Lion, 'This is a four-hours' climb, and one that they were quite capable of and properly equipped for.' (The accident happened on July 23, and they had been staying at Breuil since the beginning of July.) But that they should change their plans *en route*, and ascend to the Matterhorn hut, instead of the Tête du Lion, an expedition 'for which none of them had experience enough, and for which too they were hopelessly underguided' (we quote from Mr. Mallam's letter), was surely a very grave error of judgment indeed. The guide may have been to blame for not absolutely refusing to agree to the change of plans, but it is easy to understand how difficult he must have found the position, and how strong the inducement to follow the imprudent course must have been.

The 'Rivista Mensile C.A.I.' for August 1901, pp. 302-3, gives a narrative of the accident on the Piz Roseg on August 6, in which Professor Joseph Gugelloni lost his life. The accident took place at a height of about 3,450 m. Signor Gugelloni's companion, Signor Mario Roselli, and the guide Bonomi had surmounted a

\* *Alpine Journal*, vol. xx. p. 490.

short 'canalino' without difficulty, when Dr. Gugelloni, who was following them *unroped*, fell and was killed. The accident is a particularly sad one, as Dr. Gugelloni, who was only twenty-five years of age, was a devoted lover of the mountains, and had made many expeditions in the Monte Disgrazia district, including the first ascent of the Disgrazia itself from the Passo di Cornarossa by the difficult S. ridge. While we heartily sympathise with our Italian colleagues in the loss of so devoted a mountain lover we must point out once again the danger of even a momentary imprudence—such an imprudence as it is so easy to commit in a moment of excitement. It is pleasant to read that the conduct of the guides (those of two other parties gave every assistance in their power) was deserving of all praise. The 'Rivista' mentions the guide Schenatti as particularly deserving of commendation. We learn from the 'Rivista C. A. I.' for October 1901, pp. 390-1, that on August 28 an accident, very similar to that on the Piz Roseg, happened on the Pizzo Cervandone, by which Signor Camillo Pavesi lost his life. He was at the time of the accident climbing *unroped*. The 'Rivista' makes some remarks on the use of the rope with which we desire to express our entire concurrence—remarks called forth by this accident and that on the Piz Roseg, to which we have already alluded.

We read in the 'Mitt. D. Ö. A. V.' October 15, p. 239, that on October 6 the well known climber Otto Melzer and Ignaz Spöttl, in attempting the E. face of the Jägerkarispitz, lost their lives. Bad weather is supposed to have been the cause of the accident.

The accident near the Roththal Sattel on July 8, by which Herr Naef-Escher and the porter Minning lost their lives, would seem to have been an accident properly so called. We read in the 'Revue Alpine' for October 1901, p. 314, that the caravan had arrived 'près de la crevasse du Roththal' (they had started from the Concordia Hut for the Jungfrau), 'lorsqu'ils furent engloutis sous une avalanche partie des hauteurs.' We are glad to learn that the guide Zraggen, the leader of the party, and the two Baumanns, who were in front of them with an English party, behaved exceedingly well.

We regret to have, at the last minute, to record an accident on the Wetterhorn, where Fritz Boss was killed when chamois-hunting.

The much regretted death of Archdeacon Pelham Burn, on the Croda da Lago, was not, as at first reported, an accident, but was due to heart failure.

We are thankful that no member of our Club has been lost owing to an accident during the past season, but how much more thankful should we have been if the accident roll had been confined to such misfortunes as could truthfully be described as accidental!

Would we fain wash our hands of Alpine accidents? It cannot be done. Those who claim to lead the way in climbing, of whatever nationality they may be, must do all in their power not only to pursue their noble sport with the prudence which it so obviously calls for, and so set a good example; they must also endeavour to

make those who are ambitious of following them understand fully the dangers of their engrossing pursuit.

Non ignara mali miseris succurrere disco,

said the Carthaginian queen. Let us all who have experience, possibly dearly bought, help the ignorant, the soon to be wretched if they do not learn wisdom, by insisting again and again on the imperative duty of observing the recognised rules of the pastime to which we owe so much.

## NEW EXPEDITIONS IN 1901.

### *Tarentaise District.*

GRANDE CASSE.—DESCENT BY THE JAGGED EAST ARÊTE CONNECTING THE MOUNTAIN WITH THE GRANDE MOTTE.\*—On Friday, July 19, Messrs. A. M. Bartleet and H. J. Mothersill, with the guides Adolf and Josef Schaller and Maximin Gaspard, climbed the Grande Casse by the ordinary route from the Vanoise Club hut, reaching the summit at 7 A.M. Without delay they began the descent of the E. arête. At 7.30 they were forced off the arête and compelled to traverse to the S. for about  $\frac{1}{2}$  hr. At 8 A.M. they regained the arête, but at 8.40 they were again obliged to traverse to the S., this time for  $\frac{1}{4}$  hr. Soon after 9 A.M. they had to traverse to the S. for twenty minutes or so, but they then found themselves once more on the arête, and at 9.30 were on a snow-covered, flat-topped prominence, or hump, that is very noticeable from the valley of the Leisse. At the east end of this hump the leading guide went on alone, with 60 ft. or 70 ft. of rope, to prospect, but it was about  $\frac{1}{4}$  hr. before he could find a way. Then the second man went down to him provided with a piton. He found the leader stationed on the top of a small gendarme that is also very noticeable from the valley, just to the E. of the flat-topped hump. The rock of this gendarme was so rotten that the guide had to spend a considerable time in tearing slabs from the top of it before he could find anything solid enough to hold the piton. The party then proceeded slowly downwards, descending the gendarme with the help of about 60 ft. or 70 ft. of spare rope doubled. This rope was left behind hanging from the piton. The party was soon compelled to traverse to the S. for so long that it seemed as if the arête had been altogether abandoned, but it was regained at 12 o'clock. Progress was then made until about 3.15 P.M., the party being sometimes on the arête, and sometimes traversing for a little to the S. It may be here mentioned that at no time between about 9 A.M. and 3.15 P.M. could the party have got off the mountain either to the N. or S., owing to precipitous cliffs that barred the descent. The climbers then

\* This ridge was ascended in 1900 (see *Rivista Mensile*, 1900, p. 390) by S. A. Ferrari with the guides E. Sibille and P. Damé.