

this mountain to the Raush and North Thompson rivers. The actual crest of the pass between their headwaters is not seen. Not far below the pass are shown the meadows through which the diminutive Raush river winds (Fig. 2); then there is a sharp descent of at least a thousand feet, the valley becoming V-shaped; here the river is visible in only four places, two being sheer waterfalls. When the river reappears to the right of the snow and rock shoulder of Thompson it has been swelled greatly by drainage of the glaciers seen in Fig. 1, by others below the line of vision, and by the big northern glacier of Thompson which Mr. Carpe assumed to be the source of the North Thompson as already quoted. The Raush river is thus shown as being a stream of considerable proportions flowing N.E. before reaching its actual junction with its supposed headwater stream from the glacier between 'Mt. Hostility' (whose westerly spur shows in the right of Fig. 2) and Mt. Sir John Abbot ('Kiwa'). Mt. Sir John Thompson obviously drains solely to the McLennan and Raush rivers.

While it might not be unreasonable to conclude from the summit of Mt. Sir Wilfred Laurier that Mt. Sir John Thompson formed the source of the North Thompson river, we did not find the view as convincing as we had been led to believe from the account of our predecessors on the peak. Despite its superior height, Mt. Sir Wilfred as a viewpoint leaves a good deal to the imagination so far as concerns the headwaters of the North Thompson and Raush rivers.

W. A. DON MUNDAY.

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## ACCIDENTS IN 1929.

THE last season has been described as one in which 'no new ascents have been recorded' and as 'a summer remarkably free from accidents': other authoritative newspapers report it as one of the most disastrous on record. We fear that the latter description is the true one. Up to September 20, in all over 100 persons are reported to have lost their lives in what can be described strictly as 'Alpine' accidents. Excluding the Eastern Alps, which as usual head the melancholy roll, the majority have occurred on well-known peaks, and French mountaineers have again suffered severely. Again we are forced to repeat that the greater number of these accidents could have been avoided with a little care and foresight. Recklessness and want of experience seem to have reached their zenith in 1929.

No members of the Club, we rejoice to say, have lost their lives. Several are, however, largely indebted to Providence.

One of the most pitiable of accidents is that which occurred on La Meije to two young mountaineers, survivors of the drama of the Petit Dru of August 1928 ('A.J.' 40, 420-3), and on whose gallantry we had the privilege to comment. MM. Choisy and Clot were attempting

—it has been impossible to obtain details—to reach the summit from the N. by the great ice couloir leading up to the Brèche Zsigmondy.<sup>1</sup> Clot slipped and pulled off the leader, both falling down the precipitous couloir till Choisy's body, arrested by the bergschrund, stopped the fall. Choisy was killed on the spot and Clot severely injured. The latter, with all his former intrepidity, could not be deterred from accompanying the guided search party which successfully brought down the corpse. M. Choisy, who was only 25, might have become a great mountaineer, and his loss is deplored deeply in French mountaineering circles.

The accident appears to have been due to the extremely icy conditions universal this summer. We also must add that it arose from the dreadful modern habit of not cutting steps and relying, it seems, solely on the use of crampons.

Fatal accidents have occurred on the following mountains among others: Les Écrins, La Meije (3), Grandes Rousses, Mt. Aiguille, Mt. Emilius,<sup>2</sup> Mont Blanc (3), Aiguille des Grands Montets, Col de l'Étala, Petits Charmoz, Grépon,<sup>3</sup> Dent Blanche, Matterhorn (2), Monte Rosa (Dufourspitze), Doldenhorn, Jungfrau (3), Wetterhorn, Düssistock, Glärnisch, Kurfürsten, Piz Bernina, Cacciabella Pass,<sup>4</sup> etc.

There appear to have been a remarkable number of accidents from stone-fall and several from lightning, the former caused, obviously, by a second warm summer in succession following a very scanty spring snow-fall with heavy rain in early June. We have never seen mountains so denuded of snow, nor so much ice on the glaciers. Late June had all the appearance of mid-September.

#### *The Accident on the Dent Blanche.*

On September 2, 1929, we—Franziskus Taugwalder (guide) leading, Alfred Aufdenblatten (guide) as third man, with the writer in the centre—were ascending the slab wall below and S.W. of the 'Grand Gendarme' when a party, climbing ahead of and beyond us and nearing the ridge above, dislodged a large rock (about 1 metre by  $\frac{1}{2}$  metre—3-4 cwt.) which came bounding down the face of the rock wall. It hit our leading man, Franziskus Taugwalder, at the side of the back and threw him into space, small stones or splinters struck the writer (second man). The pull on the rope by Taugwalder jerked me into space. On landing I was able

<sup>1</sup> *Climbers' Guide*, 1905, pp. 62-3.

<sup>2</sup> This accident, in which three Italians lost their lives, occurred on the extremely steep N. face, only once successfully attempted, we believe. *R.M.* xlvi, pp. 270-2.

<sup>3</sup> Press accounts describe the victims as falling *into* the 'Mummy' crevasse.

<sup>4</sup> The W. slope of these very easy passes is, at times, extremely dangerous from falling stones—as on this occasion.

to secure a hold on a rock for a few seconds, thereby affording the third man, Aufdenblatten, time to jump down to a rock which offered a solid belay, and of securing the rope just in time to prevent the continued fall of Taugwalder from pulling me down farther and dislodging himself. It was a superb effort on Aufdenblatten's part, magnificently carried out in a flash.

Our leading man, Franziskus Taugwalder, must have been killed instantaneously when struck by the rock, for he uttered no sound. He fell about 90 ft. and the writer about 48 ft.

As soon as the news reached Zermatt a large number of guides and skiers immediately came to the rescue, and reached the foot of the Wandfluh in record time, whither other guides on the Dent Blanche (Joseph Georges, Franz Imboden, Alexander Graven, Anton Julen and Oskar Julen) had, with great difficulty, helped the writer.

RICHARD KAY.

Mr. Kay sends further details: 'I ought to add that had the rock come down *straight* as it did at first, it would have missed us entirely, but it suddenly changed its course and dashed right at us . . . the other party were about 40 m. above us and half of that to the side [*i.e.* about 65 ft. ; thus the fatal accident may be described as an Act of God—*Editor* 'A.J.']. . . There were really four miracles: (1) The rock might just as well have hit all three of us; (2) Taugwalder reached the end of his length of rope whilst still in the air—in a flash—had the same happened to me, all three would have been lost, for Aufdenblatten *then* had no hold of any sort, but I came down on the wall with a bit of rope to spare and thus there was no pull on Aufdenblatten; (3) my working hard for a grip on anything . . . until pulled off by poor Taugwalder continuing his dreadful fall, enabled Aufdenblatten to take stock and carry out his wonderful saving act; (4) had the rope been the least bit longer my head would have crashed against the rocks, as my body did, in the final fall. Nothing could have saved poor Taugwalder.

'As regards the fall, the rope was 29–30 m. long; Taugwalder was 3–4 m. above me and there were 10 m. of rope between us with 13 m. between myself and Aufdenblatten, the latter's jump down was about 3 m. I am making a good recovery . . . but the 10 hours between the accident and my arrival at the foot of the Wandfluh will not be forgotten easily, almost entirely crippled as I was. Had it not been for the devoted help of those five men I have mentioned, at first Georges and Imboden, and the last five hours, Alexander Graven, the Julens plus Georges again, I could never have got off the mountain. The reserve parties' transport work on the glacier and down the morain was also beyond praise: . . . The death of Franziskus Taugwalder<sup>5</sup> is particularly distressing, for we had climbed together for ten years and been good friends. . . .'

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<sup>5</sup> Great-nephew of 'young' Peter Taugwalder of 1865 Matterhorn fame.

*The Accident on the Matterhorn.*

ON August 15 last, the well-known mountaineer, ski-tourist and aeronaut, Victor de Beauclair of Fribourg, ascended the Matterhorn with the two Fräulein Scheiss and the guide Hans Kohler, junior. The latter had one of the young ladies on his rope, de Beauclair the other. A few minutes below the old Matterhorn hut, Beauclair, being last of the party, climbed out of a chimney and around a big rock to which he was clinging. The said rock gave way and he fell, together with his lady companion, some 150-200 m. The late Franziskus Taugwalder with a tourist were just behind them when the disaster occurred. The bodies were brought down next morning.

De Beauclair was 54 years of age at the time of his death. As a mountaineer he had to his credit a great many peaks, especially in the Bernese, Uri and Valais ranges, accomplished without guides, as also several first ascents and new routes, especially in the Uri mountains (part of the Uri *Climbers' Guide* is due to him). Before climbing the Matterhorn, he had accomplished last summer the Eiger by the *Mittellegigrat*, Fiescherhorn, Finsteraarhorn, Tschingelochtighorn and Riffelhorn from the glacier. He had once also with his close friend, the late Doctor Robert von Wyss, made a bold attempt on the great western wall of the Schreckhorn, bivouacking after having attained a great height. He was always very careful: in fact, he had insisted on awaiting in the Solvay hut the finish of a thunderstorm before completing the further descent of the Matterhorn.

As an aeronaut, he was, in 1908, the first pilot to cross the Alps from N. to S.; he also flew over the Eastern Alps to Triest, Pola, and over the Adriatic to Pisa, and also, in three days, from Glarus to the Gulf of Genoa, etc.

His first crossing in winter from the Grimsel over the glaciers to Brigue on ski, in 1899, with the Paulcke party, will not be forgotten and caused at the time a considerable sensation.

P. M.

*The Accident on the Doldenhorn.*

MM. AUGUSTE MOTTET and Oscar Buser, both members of the A.A.C., Berne, and the S.A.C., were killed on the 'Gallet' arête of the Doldenhorn, *i.e.* on the N.W. rib leading to the N.E. arête of the mountain, on July 21 last.

Auguste Mottet had been for many years one of the leading Swiss guideless mountaineers and ski tourists. Captain Farrar refers to him in 'A.J.' 31, 214. While the leader, most probably Mottet, was climbing at a late hour the highest rocks of the said N.W. arête, his companion must have fallen from the ice steps below him, while both men were concealed from view by fog or cloud. Both were killed.

This route had been first accomplished by Monsieur Julien Gallet, our Honorary Member, with Abraham Mueller, senior, and J. Kalbermatten, in 1899,<sup>6</sup> and has been followed several times since, although steep and not devoid of serious difficulties. A brother of Buser, an aviator, first perceived the bodies from above, flying down as low as 30 m. above the snow. They had fallen about 1000 ft.

Auguste Mottet was for a number of years a partner in the sporting firm of Th. Bjoernstad & Co., Berne. He had climbed without guides most of the great Alpine peaks, usually by their more difficult routes and many of them in winter on ski. With his close friend Gysi (killed last year when they were climbing together on the Rottalhorn),<sup>7</sup> he had made a very daring attempt on the S. face of the Gspaltenhorn, traversing eventually over on to the Tschingelspitze. Other new ascents of his are the Tschingelfluh (point 2826 m.), the Gstelliburg (Engelhörner), the first descent from the Silberhorn over the Rotbrettgrat (Sir Seymour King's route), first traverse of the whole 'Mittelgruppe' (Engelhörner),<sup>8</sup> first entire ascent of E. arête of the Breithorn from the Schmadrijoche, Spillgarten (S. arête, N. face and W. arête), Teufelsjoch from the Ochsental, S. descent of the Klein Simmelstock, etc.; the descent of part of Blümlisalp-Morgenhorn E. arête, and then down the S. face to the Kanderfirn. He was a small, sturdy man of about 47 years of age, very enterprising and of great powers of resistance and determination. In the face of all kinds of difficulties he never lost his optimism, invariably retaining that gay disposition of mind which procured him so many good friends. Although not a very fast climber, he bore a high reputation among mountaineers. A captain in the Swiss army, he led some years ago the whole International Ski Congress, some fifty men, in very foggy weather from the Jungfraujoche to the Concordia over the Lötschenlücke in the most masterly manner. Two years ago, in winter, while unroped on the Lange Glacier, he fell into a crevasse some 50 ft. deep. He was suspended on a block of ice, and, never daunted, contrived to climb up three-quarters of the wall by himself, making holes with his ski sticks, before a rescue party arrived. R.I.P. P. M.

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## REVIEWS.

*Sur les crêtes du Mont Blanc.* By Jacques and Tom de Lépiney. 7½ by 5½. Pp. vii + 178. Illustrated. Dardel, Chambéry. 1929.

'MONT BLANC yet again.' Any work by the MM. de Lépiney, who have done so much towards modern mountaineering in France, is

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<sup>6</sup> 'Dans l'Alpe ignorée,' pp. 155-63.

<sup>7</sup> *A.J.* 40, 424-5.

<sup>8</sup> Two of his excellent photographs appear in this volume.