

## ALPINE ACCIDENTS IN 1909.

ON August 21 the Herren **Robert Güdel** and **Georg Lehner** ascended the **Matterhorn** with the guide **Alfred Burgener**. As they were a slow party and the conditions were bad, they took nine hours from the Hut to the summit. On the descent, near the **Moseley Platte**, **Güdel** fell about 20 feet and sustained a compound fracture of the leg just above the ankle. This was about 5 P.M. A descending party, consisting of a young Italian climber with the guide **Felix Julen**, son, and the porter **Heinrich Julen**, passed soon afterwards and, after doing what they could to render **Herr Güdel** comfortable, left him their provisions and took his companion, **Herr Lehner**, down with them. At about 8 P.M., by which time the weather had changed for the worse, an English party passed in charge of the two guides, **Georges of Haudères**. As these guides were not sufficiently acquainted with the mountain to find their way readily in bad weather, they arranged with **Herr Güdel** to let **Burgener** accompany them as far as the upper Swiss hut, from which point he was to return with one of them.

The two men returned to **Herr Güdel** about 11 P.M., a violent snowstorm having meantime come on, and they all passed a miserable night.

In the morning they managed to get **Herr Güdel**, who showed throughout the most splendid fortitude and self-sacrifice, down to the old hut, which they reached at about 11 A.M., finding there the same English party and a relief column of eight guides, six of whom safely carried the injured man to **Zermatt**.

**Herr Güdel** was subsequently removed to his home at **Lucerne**, but, after a painful illness of two months, he succumbed to the effects of his injury and of the exposure.

Some blame has been attached to both the other parties who passed the injured man, but it must be remembered that in bad weather, with night fast coming on, the duty of a guide is to his own traveller, whose safety he is not entitled to jeopardise. The **Julens** and the **Georges** seem to have done all they could, and the one **Georges** who returned with **Burgener** to **Herr Güdel** more than repaid any assistance rendered to his party by the valuable help he gave in getting the injured man next morning to the hut.

Had **Herr Güdel's** party not been undermanned, and had **Alfred Burgener**, who is a capable guide, been seconded by even a decent porter, the accident would probably not have happened, but in any case the two could doubtless have got their traveller down to the hut the night of the accident, and a valuable life might have been preserved. It cannot be too earnestly impressed on every traveller that unless these great mountains are approached with proper equipment and proper support we shall continue to have to record these deplorable and quite avoidable accidents.

Some very acute strictures, by an anonymous writer, on this

unfortunate accident appeared in an able review of the mountaineering season published in the *Times* of November 30.

On October 17 the Herren **Fostner** and **Steinböck**, of Munich, attempted to repeat the ascent of the **Totenkirchl** by its **W. face**.\* This ascent of this **W. face** is described by Herr F. Nieberl, whose judgment in such matters may be considered authoritative, as quite unjustifiable.

The party had reached a considerable height when they discovered a fixed rope. This had been left by the guide, Schietzold, when descending by this route with a tourist a few days previously. Forstner climbed up by this rope hoping to avoid the most dangerous part of the climb, a slabby face, which had been forced by the first party with enormous difficulty. Just before reaching the top his strength gave out, and after striking the rocks once he fell some 600 feet clear, his body being found at the foot of the wall near the **Kopftörlsteig**. The rope between the two men was belayed, but appears to have broken already above the belay.

On October 24 the Herren **Anton Larisch** and **Anton Grigar** attempted the ascent of the **N. face of the Hochtör**. The weather was fine, but the rocks were so very cold that another party turned back in consequence. The same night a heavy fall of snow occurred which lasted through the next day. The party was spoken about midday, but nothing more was seen of them until after much search, rendered difficult by bad weather and the heavy fall of snow, their bodies were found on a terrace of the face, Larisch's being nearly buried in snow.

Both men are described as competent climbers, and they appear to have overcome the principal difficulties of the climb, and to have fallen when close to the top. The ascent is a difficult one, requiring under ordinary conditions eight hours.

## ALPINE ACCIDENTS IN 1910.

On January 16, 1910, two young students, **Walter Spohr** and **Ernst Kosslau**, went up to the **Clariden Hut** above Linthal. They crossed the **Clariden Pass**—a ski tour which is often undertaken—and reached the **Hüfi Hut**, at the head of the **Maderaner Thal**, on the 18th. As nothing was heard of them, a search party went up to the **Hüfi Hut** and there found a diary written by the missing men, from which it appeared that they had tried to descend the valley on the 19th, but were driven back after two hours' terrible struggle through deep snow, being unable to find the way. On the 21st they had made an attempt to return to Linthal, but had again been driven back. The diary ends on the 22nd with an intimation of their intention to make another attempt to get back to the **Clariden Hut**. It is very much to be feared that they perished in the attempt.

\* For a note of the only previous ascent see *Ö. A.-Z.*, 1909, p. 173.