

corresponding to the valleys : N., steep rock and ice, Albigna ; S.W., snow and rock, Qualivo ; S.E., rock, Zocca. And three arêtes : W., short, easy rock, rising from the Colle Masino ; S., rock, dividing the Qualivo and Zocca glens ; E., a jagged rock ridge, with many pinnacles and gaps, rising from the Bochetta di Zocca.

(f) BOCHETTA DI ZOCCA (C.A.I. 'Guida') (not mentioned by Strutt) (3050 m. ? 'Guida' = 9908 ft.)* A well-marked gap, accessible from both sides, and leading from the Albigna Glacier to the Western arm of the Zocca Valley. N., steep snow and rock ; S., steep rock.

(6) MONTE DI ZOCCA (Strutt), CIMA DI ZOCCA (C.A.I. 'Guida') (3174 m. Lurani = 10,414 ft.). This beautiful mountain is too well known to need any description here.

(g) ZOCCA PASS (2776 m. I. Map = 9108 ft.). The highway from the Zocca Valley to the Albigna Glacier, and indeed between the Val Tellina and the Val Bregaglia.

IN MEMORIAM.

PHILIP CHARLES GOSSET.

ON March 24, 1911, died in his country house at Wabern, near Berne, after a long illness, this old mountaineer, aged 73 years and a few days. On his father's side Philip C. Gosset was English, or, to speak more exactly, a Jerseyman ; on the side of his mother, who was a Bernese lady, he belonged to Switzerland. Only a few years before his death, in 1907, when, by his second marriage, he had a son and heir, he naturalised himself as a citizen of Berne, the town where he had passed nearly his whole life. He entered the Alpine Club as early as 1859, and his name figures in the very first list of members. A copy of the reprint of this scarce document was presented to Gosset by the late Mr. Edward Whymper, when he, with the writer of this notice, went to London for the winter dinner of the Club in December 1904. As Gosset had near relations in England—his sister was married there—he visited them there pretty often, and on such occasions made friends with some of the elder members of the Club. But to the younger generation, I fear, he was almost unknown. To the 'Alpine Journal' he contributed a few articles ; first, the narrative of the fatal accident on the Haut-de-Cry, Canton Valais, † when on February 28, 1864, a party of two tourists and four guides started an avalanche, in which the guide Bennen and the engineer Boissonet were killed, while Gosset and three guides escaped. This very instructive and well-written narrative was reprinted by Mr. Whymper as Appendix A in his

* This height is obviously a mistake. 2800 m. = 9187 ft. would probably be not far out.

† See vol. i. pp. 288-94.

'Scrambles.' Afterwards Gosset sent in an account of the inundations in Switzerland in 1868 * and an article on 'A Hut on the Jungfrau.' † In connexion with this last suggestion he collected funds for a shelter that he proposed to build on the very top of the Jungfrau, and indeed a wooden hut was constructed in Berne at his cost and transported to the Hotel Eggishorn in 1887, where it remained for some time. But the scheme was not carried through, and at last the funds were, by consent of Gosset and the other subscribers, used for the building of another hut in the neighbourhood of the Jungfrau.

Gosset began climbing in 1856, when he was only 16 years old, ascending the Altels. In 1859 he made, with Edmund v. Fellenberg and Hans v. Hallwyl and two guides, two determined attempts to ascend the then unclimbed Weisse Frau; both times, on August 29 and September 1 respectively, snow storms prevented them from reaching their goal. He was more fortunate in 1861 and 1862, when he climbed the Wetterhorn (from Berne and back in 42 hours), the Klein Doldenhorn (first ascent) and the Cime de l'Est of the Dent du Midi (first ascent by a tourist). In 1863 he wrote the English edition of his friends', Dr. Abraham Roth and E. v. Fellenberg's, 'The Doldenhorn and Weisse Frau.' The reviewer in the 'Alpine Journal,' ‡ who 'had not had an opportunity of comparing the English edition with the German one, published simultaneously, § judging from internal evidence only, could not help believing that there must be considerable differences between them.' He continues: 'It seems almost impossible to imagine that such vigorous, idiomatic English is a mere translation; but, however this may be, it is wonderful indeed to find a foreigner writing English which the best writers among us need not be ashamed to own. But the most valuable features of this charming little book are the excellent map of a little-known region, and the beautiful chromolithographs from M. von Fellenberg's drawings, which will give the inexperienced a better idea of the mysteries of the upper ice-world than any illustrations ever before published.' Now, although there are no 'considerable differences' between the two editions, the English text is from beginning to end the work of Gosset, and it is only because he declined it that his name did not appear on the title-page. So also concerning the map and illustrations. The former was drawn, on the survey of the Federal Engineer, Stengel (d. 1857), by Gosset himself, who added the colours for the relief map, and the illustrations were, with a very few exceptions, all drawn and painted by the same. This state of things is clearly shown by the originals that are still preserved in his valuable library.

* See *Alpine Journal*, vol. iv. p. 177.

† *Ibid.* vol. xii. p. 171.

‡ Vol. i. p. 207.

§ *Doldenhorn and Weisse Frau*. Zum ersten Mal erstiegen und geschildert von Abraham Roth und Edmund von Fellenberg. Coblenz, 1863.



Dr. Thomas, photo.

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AUGUSTE BLANC.

Gosset continued climbing, partly for the sake of his profession—he served as a Federal Surveyor from 1867 till 1880—partly for his own pleasure, till 1896, when he closed his rôle as an active mountaineer with the Rosenhorn. All Gosset's climbs—I mention, besides those already named, the Lecki pass and Leckihorn (1870), Piz Valrhein, Fanellapass and Kirchalplücke (1871), Galenstock and Jungfrau (1884), Finsteraarhorn (1889), Jungfrau (1888), Eigersattel (1889, a storm preventing him from reaching the summit of the Eiger), Wildhorn, Rohrbachstein, etc.—were confined to Switzerland. Switzerland also profited most from the standard work of Gosset's life, the survey and measurement of the Rhone glacier.* This delicate and difficult task occupied his summer months for seven consecutive years, 1874–80, and gave him great trouble, with some risk to his health. But the final result was quite satisfying, and the knowledge of the glacier phenomena was greatly advanced by Gosset's ingenious method of measurement and the exactness of his observations. For that work every mountaineer ought to be thankful to Gosset's memory. He also did good work by studying and measuring an ice cave in Switzerland that had attracted the attention of the Bishop of Bristol. And now that he has gone from us, after a long and honourable life, one may well extend what is said about his companions, Dr. A. Roth and E. v. Fellenberg, in the 'Alpine Journal,' † by stating that Ph. C. Gosset was an uncommonly good mixture of an 'accomplished Swiss and English gentleman.'

DR. H. DÜBI.

AUGUSTE BLANC. ‡

IN the accident on Mont Dolent this summer there has perished at the age of 32 one of the really great guides of the Alps. Auguste Blanc was among the supreme few in his calling and in the prime of his supremacy. His courage and well-justified confidence in his powers had a certain splendour about them and with an undercurrent of gentleness gave great charm to his character and made his sudden death all the more piteous.

He was not merely a bold and agile climber but one of the finest mountaineers. Owing to his familiarity with the mountains at every season of the year there were few who had so thorough a knowledge of snowcraft. He knew to a nicety the exact state of a couloir and just when it would be safely practicable. His mastery of ice, rock and snow was extraordinary. For instance in the case of snow couloirs where the slope was too steep for a direct glissade to be safe, he would descend sliding in zigzags as if on ski, but swinging round sharply at each turning without appreciable loss of speed. His balance was so good that in glissading he seemed

* See *Alpine Journal*, vol. ix. pp. 431, 500.

† Vol. i. p. 207.

‡ A list of the climbs of Auguste Blanc is to be found in the September number of the *Revue Alpine* for 1911.

equally strong whether with or without an axe. He was at his best when climbing in districts that were unknown to him. There his judgment and acumen in choosing a route had free scope. As a leader he instantly came to a decision and freely took responsibility. In difficulty or danger his strong character revealed itself and came at once to the front. He had climbed as leader in most of the principal groups of the Alps from Dauphiné to Tirol and in the Dolomites had led in some of the most difficult and intricate ascents without any local assistance. Indeed he only seemed at his happiest when contending with difficulties that called forth all his skill, endurance and daring. Nor was he rash. The most cautious amateur felt confident when Auguste was leading. His care and the impression of absolute efficiency which he conveyed banished all thought of failure or disaster. As in the case of Michel Croz it seemed impossible that he should ever fall. But the mountains choose their victims blindly and no one can escape if he be chosen. The fatal fall was such as could not have been foreseen and was caused by a loose boulder of enormous size which was balanced precariously almost on the crest of the ridge. The boulder appeared quite safe, but, as Auguste passed beneath, it was dislodged either by a touch or by the yielding of supporting rocks below.

He fell at the moment of success, the summit was close in sight, the difficulties had all been overcome and another of his many successful climbs seemed about to be completed. He can hardly have had time to feel the bitterness of disaster; owing to the nature of the ground death came with merciful swiftness. The ridge up which he had led his party had only once been climbed previously.

Although it is very doubtful whether the strongest rope could have saved him, it is possible that his own devotion may have contributed to his death. Three days before his last climb he had together with his employer and porter undergone great danger and hardship in an heroic attempt to find the victim of the disaster on the N.E. face of the Aiguille du Plan. By a superb effort he succeeded in recovering the body, and in extricating his party from a situation of desperate danger and difficulty. But the rope used for lowering the body was already old and had been frayed by the prolonged friction against the rocks. Further by an almost incredible mischance there were no new ropes in stock at Chamonix. Thus it came about that the old rope was taken.

The loss to his friends and to mountaineering is irreparable. With his friends there remains and will remain the strong impression of his vivid gallant life, for his character as a man matched his powers as a guide. A certain fastidiousness which showed itself in his manner and in his neat yet striking appearance was a deep quality of his nature and of a part with his high standard of conduct and scorn of meanness. And from beneath the reserve of a proud

nature there would well up occasionally a flood of irrepressible fun. Yet how depressed he could be at times by too prolonged a succession of easy days! Unless from time to time he had something worthy of himself to accomplish he was liable to become frankly bored. I remember his gentle sarcasm when, oppressed by the relentless bad weather of 1910, I took refuge in the Maritime Alps with his brother in search of the smaller easier climbs to be found there. Such climbs were not for him, and after taking a short spell of hunting in his own mountains he preferred to return to arduous though uncongenial work in Paris.

Everything he did was done with zest. During his last chamois hunting trip he must have performed prodigies. Letters appeared in the papers complaining that all the chamois in the country were being destroyed, and that too by one man.

Sometimes when I think of him my dominant memory is of a whole series of the hardest climbs carried out so skilfully and with so little apparent effort that one scarcely realised what formidable undertakings many of them were. His climbing seemed to come naturally, as if effortless. The only anxiety he ever showed was for his employer's safety and comfort. And that anxiety was constant. All his energy, the product of his indomitable spirit and splendid physique, was ever at his employer's disposal. Moreover he was a man of rigid integrity.

A fact may be cited as showing the esteem in which he was held. When bearers were required for the task of carrying the body over the Col d'Iseran to its last resting place at Bonneval-sur-Arc, practically all the able-bodied villagers volunteered at once. However, only sixteen of the strongest were chosen and these carried the coffin from the hillside above Val d'Isère to Bonneval in relays of eight at a time without pause in six hours. Such a task in most countries would scarcely be thought possible. It was only made so by the goodwill and solidarity of Auguste's own people of Bonneval. Though known very intimately to few, he was much beloved and respected. In the fitting words of his brother 'c'était un homme fier et juste.'

C. F. M.

THE ALPINE CLUB LIBRARY.

The following additions have been made to the Library since July.

Club Publications.

A Budapesti Egyetemi Turista Egyesület. Turistaság és alpinizmus. 1. évfolyam 1910-11. Budapest, 1911

9½ x 6½: pp. viii, 370: ill.

This is issued by the University Climbing Club, Budapest.

This contains (in Hungarian):—

Marcell Jankovics, Montblanc.

Gy. Komarnicki, Ascent of the highest peak of the Hohe Tatra.