

The Matterhorn [continued]

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SWISS ARTISTS AT THE VICTORIA AND ALBERT MUSEUM.

It was good to be reminded by a recent *Swiss Observer* of Swiss landmarks in London and Swiss treasures in her museums. Perhaps some of us will now find a little time to wend our way to the Victoria and Albert Museum where, among the permanent exhibits, there is many a thing that will give us a patriotic thrill.

But of especial interest just now is a temporary exhibition of paintings by continental artists of the 19th century, other than French, in which the Swiss are particularly well represented. Both those who are familiar with our Swiss collections and those who are not will find a visit worth their while, for the former will be pleased to discover works that have never before been shown to the public of to-day, and the latter interested to see pictures by artists who mean, or have meant, much to their people at home.

Calame is there with two pictures, both of them characteristic, the Lake of Lucerne near Brunnen, and a Study from Nature in the Rhone Valley. Diday, once so much praised and then so much neglected, is represented by a Study from Nature at Bex, and Joseph Hornung, whose historical paintings many of us used to know so well, has two pleasant little pictures. Albert and Leonard Lugardon are both there, also Humbert.

THE MATTERHORN.

By JOHN. BARTROPP, Author of *Barbarian*.
(*Chambers's Journal*).

(Continued).

At Zermatt the party found the Reverend Charles Hudson, one of the most noted English mountaineers of the day, with the famous Chamoni (French) guide, Michel Croz, intent upon the same purpose. It was agreed that it would be best to combine forces and to include a son of old Taugwalder as porter. Unfortunately, Hudson also took with him a young man named Hadow, aged nineteen, who had done a little mountaineering in the Alps but no serious rock-climbing of the kind likely to be met with on the upper crags of the mountain. It was a grave error of judgment on Hudson's part, and led directly to the loss of more than half the party. Whympier made some question about Hadow's inclusion, but was overruled. On 13th July the party of seven, four amateurs and three guides, left Zermatt and bivouacked a little way up the Swiss ridge of the Matterhorn, at about 11,000 feet. To quote Whympier, 'Long after dusk the cliffs above echoed with our laughter and with the songs of the guides, for we were happy that night in camp, and feared no evil.'

The party found the greater part of the ascent unexpectedly easy. They were all experienced and determined mountaineers with the exception of young Hadow, to whom the smooth steep rocks above the Shoulder proved very difficult. It seems a great pity that he was not left, with young Taugwalder to keep him company, at the Shoulder, while the rest went on. Shortly after 1 p.m. the summit was reached and the great victory was won at last. It was clear that Carrel and the Italians had not been before them, and indeed they were sighted by the Englishmen, well down on the Italian ridge. On seeing the elated party on the summit, they ceased their efforts and returned disconsolate to Breuil. 'The old legends,' they proclaimed, 'are true. There are spirits on top of the Matterhorn. We saw them ourselves — they hurled stones at us!'

V.

One cannot help sympathising with Carrel in his dismay, and even Whympier could write, 'Still, I would that the leader of that party (Carrel) could have stood with us at that moment, for our victorious shouts conveyed to him the disappointment of a lifetime. He was the man of all those who attempted the ascent who most deserved to be first upon its summit. It was the aim of his life to make the ascent from the side of Italy, for the honour of his native valley.'

After an hour spent on the summit, Croz fixed his blouse as a flag upon a pole carried up for the purpose, and the victorious climbers roped up and turned to descend. The order of the party on the descent is significant, as it had much to do with the tragedy that was to follow so shortly after, and with the storm of conjecture and controversy which arose from it, and which to this day has never quite died down.

It is difficult to decide where Hadow should have been placed on the rope. On the steep 'Roof' of the Matterhorn a novice was a potential danger anywhere. Probably the best solution would have been to have descended in two parties, led by Whympier and Hudson respectively, with old Peter Taugwalder and Michel Croz holding the positions of chief responsibility in rear. As a matter of fact, the descent was begun in somewhat haphazard fashion. Croz led,

as well as some others who, though not Swiss born, were intimately connected with the country by their work.

Bocion is honoured by the presence of no fewer than seven of his works. They will fill with joy the hearts of all those who love the Leman. Perhaps the most interesting, however, of all these Swiss artists is Barthelemy Menn, pupil of Ingres, friend of Theodore Rousseau, Corot and Delacroix, and beloved master of the generation of young painters that came after him. Three of his works are shown, all of them interesting and attractive by that charm which we associate with all his painting.

J.H.M.

TRANSMISSIONS POUR LES SUISSES A L'ETRANGER.

La Société Suisse de Radiodiffusion a institué depuis septembre, des émissions régulières, destinées aux Suisses résidant à l'étranger. Ces transmissions ont lieu chaque premier lundi du mois en soirée et sont répétées, ensuite, à minuit. La diffusion est effectuée par les trois émetteurs suisses, les stations des "Amateurs suisses d'ondes courtes" et l'émetteur genevois de la Société des Nations à Prangins. L'émission de minuit est dirigée vers l'Amérique du nord

followed in order on the rope by Hadow, Hudson, Douglas, and old Peter Taugwalder. Whympier and young Peter started down together a few minutes later, and roped themselves on behind old Taugwalder just as the difficult part of the descent was beginning. Suddenly, Hadow slipped from his foothold and knocked Michel Croz over. In a few seconds they had crashed down the northern precipice, dragging with them Hudson and Douglas. The remaining three men braced themselves as well as they could against the shock. The rope broke between Douglas and old Peter. Thus Whympier and the two Zermatt guides alone survived to tell the tale. According to the Englishman, the two Taugwalders were completely unnerved by the catastrophe, and moved downwards so slowly that they were benighted high up on the mountain. They completed the descent safely and returned to Zermatt next day.

The accident, almost the first to befall a party of recognised English mountaineers in the Alps, caused a great stir in Alpine circles, and an outcry in some quarters against mountaineering in general, mainly on the part of the uninitiated and ignorant. The theory that Taugwalder had cut the rope between him and the men in front was raised and was never entirely disposed of, even amongst the men of his own valley. Though Whympier was able categorically to refute this suggestion in his book *Scrambles amongst the Alps*, there remained the fact that Taugwalder had placed a thinner and weaker rope between himself and the man immediately in front of him than was used for the rest of the party. This may have been due either to intention or inadvertence, but which of the two will never be known for certain. In any case, the supervision of the arrangements for the descent appears to have been carried out very casually, the result probably of the divided control of the party between Whympier and Hudson. There is little doubt that either would have made the ascent and descent perfectly safely, as have many very much weaker parties since then.

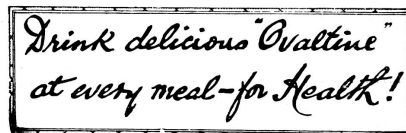
On 16th July 1865, two days after the first ascent and the disaster to Whympier's party, Jean-Antoine Carrel, accompanied by another Italian guide, attained the summit by a brilliant effort of cragsmanship by way of the Italian ridge and a very difficult traverse round the final peak, callek Carrel's Corridor, now seldom attempted. His safe ascent and return gave the impression that the Italian side was easier and less dangerous than the other, but, as time went on, the comparative shortness of the expedition from Zermatt and its greater facility of access gradually brought about a change of opinion, with the result that a great many more ascents came to be made up the Swiss ridge than on the Italian side.

For two years following the first ascent its tragic sequel the mountain was left severely alone. Professor Tyndall was the first to traverse the peak, up one side and down the other, in 1868. Very soon a hut was built by the Zermatt guides, Peter Knubel and J.-M. Lochmatter, on the Swiss face, and later the Italians put one up at the foot of the Great Tower on their own side. Then gradually ropes began to be fixed upon the most difficult places. To begin with, these were lengths of climbing-rope attached to rocks and cut off and left by the early parties to give extra security on their descent. Such were the first ropes on the steep 'Roof' of the mountain above the Swiss Shoulder, and also 'Jordan's Ladder,' and other ropes down the precipitous parts of the Italian ridge. These artificial aids undoubtedly

sur une onde de m. 21.07 et vers les Indes hollandaises sur m. 20.99. Tous les studios suisses participent à ces programmes qui présentent sous formes variées et très vives, les traditions et possibilités culturelles et folkloristiques des divers cantons de la Confédération suisse.

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make the ascent possible to some parties who would never otherwise get up and down, and they are a great safeguard in cases of sudden change of weather, when the mountain can in a few moments become very dangerous. They should also serve to give the modern mountaineer an enhanced respect for the enterprise and skill of such men as Whympier, Hudson, and Carrel, who vanquished the mountain in its natural state and battled successfully against its unconquered prestige.

VI.

As time went on, the number of ascents of the peak grew greater every year, until there came a time when each fine summer day brought a number of parties to the summit. Under the influence of greater knowledge and the fixed ropes, the ascent of the once dreaded *Cervin* became a comparatively commonplace achievement. As Mummery once put it (speaking of another mountain, the Grépon), the 'most difficult peak in the Alps' became 'an easy day for a lady.' Incidentally, the first ascent by a woman was in 1871, when Miss Lucy Walker, of a great mountaineering family, went to the top. Amongst the early guides who made frequent ascents of the mountain were J.-A. Carrel, J.-B. Rich, and J. J. Maquignaz on the Italian side, and Peter Knubel and J.-M. Lochmatter on the Swiss side. The first ascent without guides was made in 1876 by three English members of the Alpine Club, Messrs. Cawood, Colgrove, and Cust.

With the popularisation of the expedition, accidents began to happen. The great mountain, safe for expert climbers in good weather, can be a veritable death-trap to the novice or the under-equipped in a sudden change of weather. In the first twenty or thirty years fatal accidents were happily few, and consequently became notorious. Such, for instance, were the deaths of the guides Brantschen and Seiler in 1879 and 1893, the death from exhaustion of the great Jean-Antoine Carrel himself on the Italian side in 1890, the fatal fall of the American Moseley, who attempted to vault unroped over a slab near the Swiss Shoulder in 1879, and the tragic expedition of the two inexperienced tourists, Borchhardt and Davies, in 1886, resulting in Borchhardt's being frozen to death on the East face.

But the rapidly increasing number of climbers and tourists making the ascent from the 'nineties onwards, the huge scale of the mountain, its liability to sudden storms, and the deceptive looseness of the rocks on the Swiss side, all combined to take a regular toll of lives. Rarely a year passes but one party at least comes to grief upon it. The ascent of the mountain, either by the Swiss or the Italian ridge, or a complete traverse, up one and down the other, is not difficult to a competent, well led and equipped party in fine weather when the peak is in good condition, i.e. has had several days in which to recover from snow or hail, which coat the slopes with treacherous ice.

To the unfit or inexperienced the Matterhorn remains a risky undertaking, and all the fixed cords and refuge-huts in the world will fail to make it safe for such. And it is perhaps right that it should be so. For the ordinary traveller the Matterhorn is a sight worth going to the world's end to gaze upon and wonder at. For the experienced climber its many routes and ridges offer a wonderful ground upon which to exercise his art in surroundings steeped in classic history and tradition.

The End.