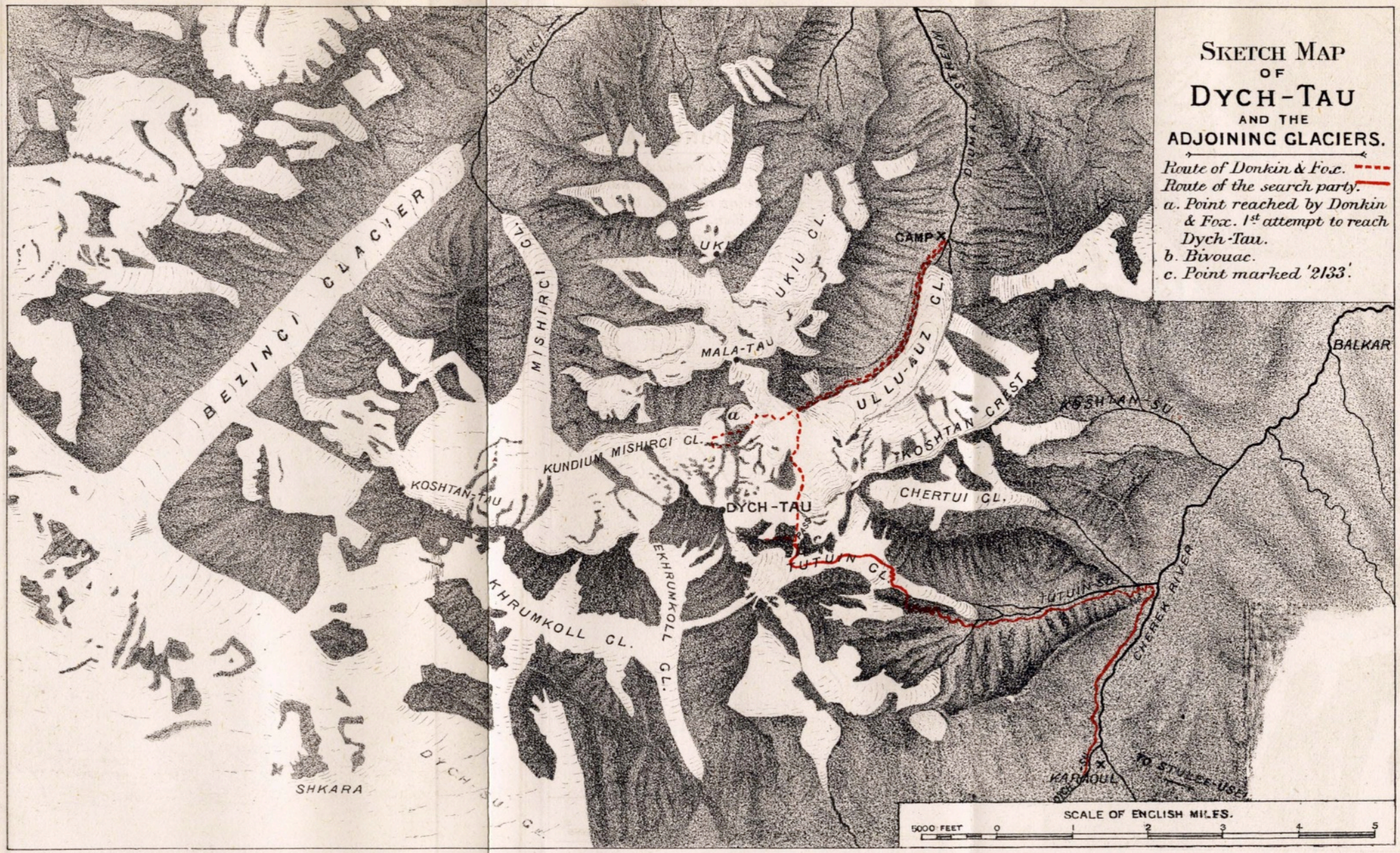

Fredk Dangerfield Lith. London 1944.5

courtesy and suavity of manner. In him high intellectual gifts were united with a remarkable gentleness. 'Mitis sapientia' might have been taken as his motto. He seemed never hurried, never ruffled, incapable of bitterness, and still more incapable of anything base. When men of his nature die, not only friends but many others also are the losers, because an influence for good is taken away from the world.

T. G. Bonney.

The History of the Search Expedition to the Caucasus.

By CLINTON DENT.

(Read before the Alpine Club, Tuesday, February 4.)

In the following narrative I have endeavoured to abstain from forcing on readers of the 'Alpine Journal' the views generally held, to the best of my knowledge, by the members of the search party, and I have sought as far as possible to state simply the facts, leaving those interested to draw their own conclusions. With the aid of the accompanying map (for the materials for which our warmest thanks are again due to the topographical department in Tiflis, and especially to General Shdanoff and Messrs. Djukoff and Bogdanoff) and outline sketches (p. 37, *infra*) many points of topography, hitherto obscure to those unacquainted with the district, can now be made clear.

Some recapitulation is necessary in order to set forth the nature and conditions of the problem we had set ourselves to work out.* On August 27, 1888, as learned from Fox's diary, the party having made their way up by the Ullu-auz Glacier, attempted the ascent of Dych-tau by the north ridge. They reached a point (shown on the map) on the ridge separating the west basin of the Ullu-auz Glacier from the Kundium Mishirgi snow fields. A tower of rock barred the way upwards. Following Streich's advice, they descended a few hundred feet on the Mishirgi side and then attempted to climb by a rock-rib back to the ridge. I may quote from the diary:—'We left the col at 9.10. The descent took a long time and there was much step-cutting. We then tried the rib and found the rocks, as we expected, quite smooth. We cut up between them and forced our way up slowly, the fresh snow making everything most difficult, but at 11.40

* *Alpine Journal*, vol. xiv. pp. 94, 432, 438.

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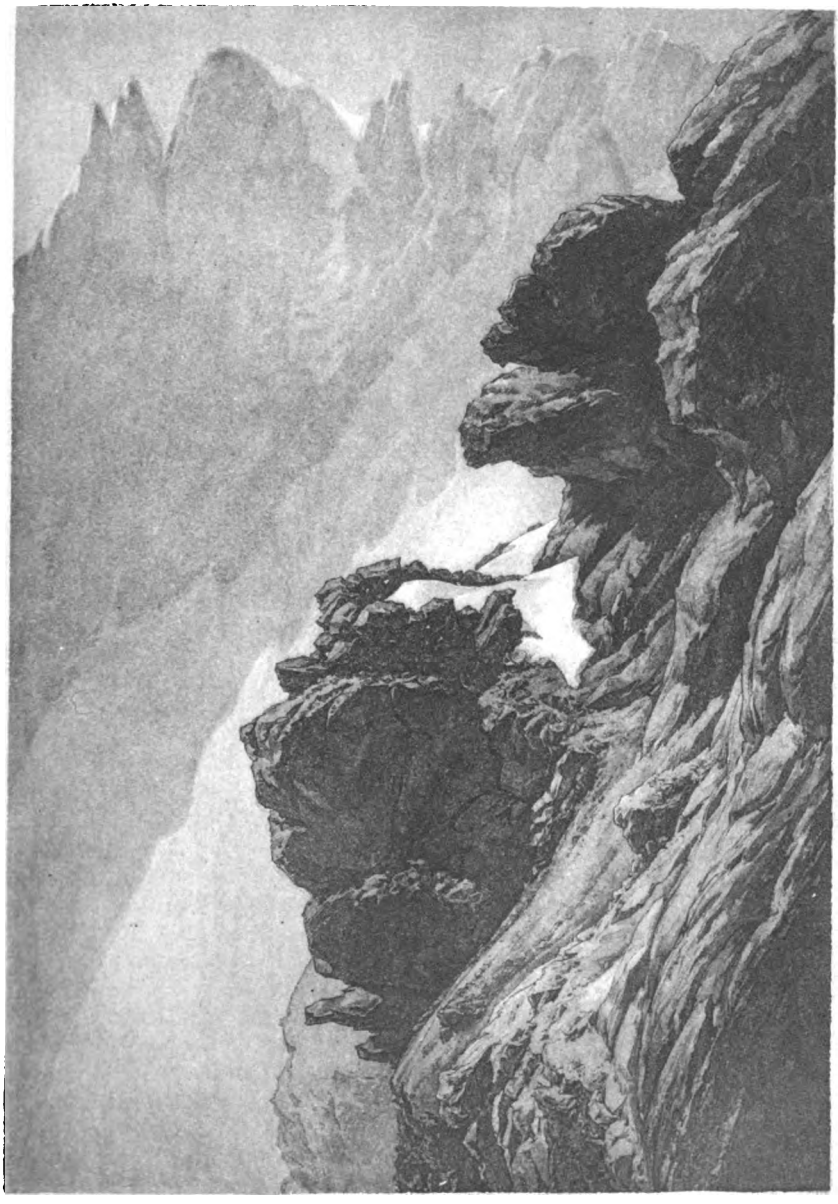

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had made little progress, and as it was obvious we had not time to make our peak that day (the arête alone would take at least four hours), and as clouds were gathering, we reluctantly ordered a return.'

No further idea of attempting the ascent from this side seems to have been entertained. It may be mentioned that this north ridge is feasible enough, but the best access to it is probably from the Kundium Mishirgi Glacier. If attacked from this side the rock tower could be avoided altogether, as the ridge can be struck higher up. The expedition would probably be extremely long, and in cold or windy weather a very serious undertaking.

On August 28, 1888, Fox wrote in his diary, 'Weather permitting, we hope to start again to-morrow very early and take three or four days' provisions. Make the Doumala-Dych-su * Pass first day and camp near its head. Climb Dych-tau if possible from the south side the next and descend to the Dych-su Glacier. Thence to Karaoul.'

The party did not actually start till August 30 from their camp at the end of the Ullu-auz Glacier,* and they then proceeded in the direction of Dych-tau. Their tracks were afterwards seen by Mr. Phillipps-Wolley† and M. Djukoff on the moraine on the left bank of the glacier, by the side of the lower icefall. These tracks may have been made either on August 27 or 30. A detailed story had found its way into a Vladikafkaz newspaper to the effect that a search party of Bezingi men had found tracks of English nailed boots on the snow slopes on the east side of the Ullu-auz Glacier. The tracks had been followed up, so the report ran, to the top of the pass, i.e. to some point on the crest between the Ullu-auz glen and the Cherek valley, and had then been lost on the loose rocks on the Balkar side. There can be no difficulty in crossing the northern and lower part of this (the Koshtan crest), at more than one point, and descending to Balkar, and it was hardly conceivable that any accident could have happened in such a place. Yet the account was rather puzzling, for it seemed circumstantial enough. We decided, however, that the clue was not of sufficient importance to divert us from our intention of searching first for a bivouac on the south side, though it might be worth while to elucidate the matter subsequently if we failed to find any traces. I shall have occasion to refer again to this account.

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* The Doumala and Ullu-auz Glaciers are identical.

† *Alpine Journal*, No. 102, p. 102.

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In 1888 our knowledge of the glacier topography on the south side of Dych-tau was very slight, and the name Dych-su was applied generally to all the glaciers comprised in the great snow cirque, bounded by Dych-tau, Mishirgi-tau, Shkara and Koruldu, whose streams form the head waters of the Cherek river. We did not learn till last year how far it might be possible, having crossed the east ridge of Dych-tau, to make a way back to the Mishirgi Glacier or across subsidiary ridges to the snow fields of the Dych-su proper.

We saw no reason to doubt that Donkin and Fox had endeavoured to carry out the intention expressed in the entry of August 28 in the diary. It was evident in considering the general plan to be adopted in the search that one of two lines might be taken. One course was to follow Donkin and Fox's route up the Ullu-auz Glacier to the pass. In favour of this plan was the fact that the party might have been overwhelmed by the avalanche the traces of which were seen by Mr. Phillipps-Wolley.* We could not, however, bring ourselves to believe that the accident was due to this cause. The pass is simple enough from the Ullu-auz side, and it seemed highly improbable that they had failed to cross it and bivouac, as they intended, high up on the south side.

The other course consisted in approaching the Ullu-auz Pass from the south, thus meeting the line taken by Donkin and Fox. From the Stulee-vsek ('vsek' = pass), as can be judged by a photograph taken by M. de Déchy, a fine view is obtained of the south and east aspects of Dych-tau, and this view could hardly fail to be of value.† It was accordingly decided to make for Karaoul by way of the Stulee-vsek. Our chief hope was that we should find a bivouac, and that we should be able to infer from this the probable movements of the party, and also the directions in which any further search that might be necessary should be prosecuted. The search might involve arduous work, and it was prudent to get into fair condition before undertaking the main object of our expedition. We devoted, therefore, about ten days to the journey from Vladikafkaz—our meeting-place—to the Cherek valley.

If the search on the south proved abortive we proposed to proceed to the Ullu-auz glen, subsequently exploring the Mishirgi Glacier and the west side of Dych-tau.

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* *Alpine Journal*, No. 102, p. 102.

† The aspect of Dych-tau from the Stulee-vsek is much the same as that from the hill N.E. of Karaoul. See sketch, *infra*, p. 37.

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The weather, which on the whole had been extremely favourable for the first few days of our journey, broke down on the day we crossed the Stulee-vsek, and we saw very imperfectly the view from which we expected to gain valuable information. Nevertheless the walk was very beautiful and interesting. Apart from the distant view the graceful peak of Pasmak-Chonch, which resembles the Eiger from some points of view, rises on the watershed south-east of the pass and forms a very conspicuous object. Looking down the valley towards Karaoul, a low range cuts off the view of the Dych-su. The thin white line of the Agashtan Glacier, with its lateral overflow of ice—a phenomenon of tolerably common occurrence in the Caucasus—forms a prominent landmark. We were able to get the horses over the pass, but not without much difficulty, owing to soft snow, and near the top all the luggage had to be carried. Probably our leading native did not choose the best route and might have avoided the snow more skilfully. The weather improved as we made our way down the long valley of the Upper Cherek, passing by the bed of a dried-up lake, which must have been once of good size. Numerous iron springs stain the ground bright red in places, and herds of cattle now find good pasture on the wide level. This spot may some day become the site of a health resort, and is well adapted for such a purpose. In the evening we crossed the Cherek by a rather unstable bridge, which was swept away altogether a few days later, and in the fork between this stream and the Dych-su ('su' = 'stream') we saw, to our delight, the white tents of a Russian survey officer, M. Bogdanoff. The baggage horses were, as usual, far behind, and we were glad indeed to accept his hospitality, expressed in the liquid form of tea, made only as a Russian can make it, whatever the conditions under which he finds himself. As an example of the prices for which horses may be hired by judicious bargaining, I may mention that we took seven from Sadon to Karaoul, and paid seventeen roubles—about thirty-four shillings—per horse for the whole journey for six days. Our party was eight in number, exclusive of the natives.

The first stage of our journey had thus been most successfully carried out, and we were now face to face with the central object of the expedition. The best line of access to the south side of the pass by which Donkin and Fox had, we felt assured, crossed from the Doumala glen was not quite clear, and M. Bogdanoff's survey was still too incom-

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plete to be of much help in the upper snow regions we had to explore. It was tolerably evident, however, that by following the glen of the Tutuin stream ('tutuin'='smoke'), the first torrent of any importance joining the Cherek below Karaoul, we should be led in the right direction. We arranged, after a day of rest, to proceed up this glen early on July 28 and camp high up. We sent a special messenger to Col. Veeruboff, the governor of the Naltchik district, requesting that stores of bread, &c., might be sent up, and asking also for a cossack. The latter had been promised and the man we had brought from Allagyr had left us on reaching the limits of his own district. The stores arrived in due course, but the cossack, for some unexplained reason, was never provided.

Unfortunately, the next day Kaufmann, Woolley's second guide, was found to be too ill to start. The constant wettings from rain and the fording of streams, added to the effects of unaccustomed diet, had combined to bring on a mild attack of dysentery, a complaint to which travellers in these regions are rather liable. Seeing that the success of high expeditions depends so materially on the health of the guides taken, travellers in the Caucasus will do well to watch their men very closely and insist in the most peremptory way on their observing ordinary precautions. A Swiss guide, for instance, if left to himself will allow his clothes to be soaked with rain before he will put on a mackintosh, and finds apparently more satisfaction in complaining of the hardships than in taking the simplest measures to mitigate them. It would be hard to find a more terrible incubus or a more depressing companion than a sick guide.

A further delay of twenty-four hours was necessitated, and we arranged to leave at 1 A.M. the next morning, intending to profit by the fine weather and push on as far as possible. Freshfield and Powell spent the day in ascending a hill north-east of the camp, whence a good view might be expected of the south side of Dych-tau, while Woolley made for the Tutuin glen. The Tutuin-su a short distance up the glen is joined by a stream flowing from the Ghertui Glacier. This glacier, which becomes visible soon after entering the glen, descends from the south-east slopes of the Koshtan crest. The Tutuin glacier is not visible until the open plateau far up the glen is reached. Woolley was not unnaturally deceived, and followed the northern or Ghertui stream until he was satisfied that the way up that glacier was practicable. It is highly probable that we should have

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fallen into the same error had not Freshfield, after long and patient waiting, been able to make out the topography of the two glaciers, and especially the relation of the Tutuin to the Ullu-auz Pass. The lower part of the Tutuin Glacier plunges down a deep gorge in a narrow broken-up stream of ice. By this only could access be gained to the upper snow-fields, though it was evident that some difficulty might be experienced in making a way through the complicated ice-fall.

The information thus obtained was obviously of the highest value. We knew previously the situation of the pass we had to make for. We had now learned also the most direct line of access to it. Everything promised well save that Kaufmann was obviously unfit to join in the expedition, and we turned in early in a very hopeful spirit. But a curious complication now arose. At 11 P.M. a native came to our tent, saying that M. Bogdanoff had received a letter for us. Powell went off to see what it was, and returned in a few minutes with a pencil note from Baron T. Ungern-Sternberg, dated a few hours previously. The note set forth that the Baron had that day crossed the 'Ullu-auz Pass;' that on the summit he had found three stone-men; that the descent had proved very difficult and had occupied eight hours; that his guide, Hofer, had found the imprint of an ice axe ('Eispickel-Abdruck') on the moraine; that he was camping out in the Cherek valley close to the glen by which he had descended (name not given), and intended to push on to Balkar in the morning. We were the more surprised at receiving the letter in that we had been led to believe that Baron Ungern-Sternberg was at the moment in the Elbruz district, where, we understood, he had some work to carry out.

At the first moment it seemed as if all we had journeyed so far to accomplish had been already done. It was possible enough to infer from the note that the Baron had crossed the pass Freshfield had seen and had descended by the Tutuin icefall. If so his camp could not be far distant. On the other hand, we found it hard to believe that he had succeeded in making his way down the icefall with a single guide and accompanied by natives, who are not proficient in ice-craft. Still, as all was uncertain, it was agreed that Freshfield should ride down early to the mouth of the Tutuin glen and endeavour to ascertain what the Baron had really done. The plan of starting at 1 A.M. was accordingly abandoned, and a native, the son of a Balkar chief, was sent down at once with instructions to delay the Baron's departure.

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Freshfield rode forth early next morning, but when we arrived in due course at the opening of the Tutuin glen we learned that he had been unable to discover the Baron. The party was thereupon divided. Powell and Freshfield rode off down the valley towards Balkar at their best pace, and Woolley and I with the guides and baggage made our way upwards to the division of the streams, agreeing to wait till midday. About noon Freshfield and Powell rejoined us. They had found the Baron 1½ hour's ride down the valley, and had been able to make out from him pretty clearly the route that he had taken from the Ullu-auz Glacier. It appeared that he had descended by the Koshtan-su glen,* and it was clear therefore that he had not crossed *our* Ullu-auz Pass. Still the Baron was confident that the stone-men he had found were the work of Donkin and Fox. He had, he believed, followed the line of the tracks which the Bezingi men were alleged to have discovered 11 months previously. I may finish this part of my story at once. Probably the Baron crossed the Koshtan crest by a pass known to the native hunters, which can be identified in one of Signor Sella's photographs, and either descended by the side of a branch of the Koshtan-su or even farther north. His pass, therefore, is about 5 miles N.E. of the pass crossed by Donkin and Fox. The stone-men were built for surveying purposes, as we afterwards learned from M. Djukoff. The tracks, as far as Powell could ascertain by close questioning, existed only in the imagination of the Starshin of Bezingi, and were wholly legendary. I have only one object in mentioning this episode, to which I have already devoted more time than it deserves. The idea that the disappearance of the party was due to violence at the hands of the natives was tolerably widespread; it is certain, at least, that it was believed in by more than one person holding official position in Russia. The results of Baron Ungern-Sternberg's expedition seemed to point in the same direction. It is necessary, therefore, to point out the flimsy nature of the evidence.

An intensely hot day made our progress up the steep ascent of the left or southern branch of the Tutuin glen slow. As often occurs in the Caucasus, the upper part of the glen widens out into a broad level plateau, which would well deserve to be called the Valley of Beautiful Flowers.

* A letter recently received from Baron Ungern-Sternberg confirms this account of his expedition.

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The blue ice-stream of the Tutuin Glacier sweeps down in front, and the great mass of Dych-tau towering up behind completes the most superb mountain-picture imaginable. The Tutuin Glacier is clearly advancing, and the extremity has ploughed up the soil recently for a considerable distance. Our camp for the night was formed at a height of 9,300 feet, under a vertical rock on the right bank of the glacier and a little above its end. A low wall of stones showed that the place had been used as a 'kosh' by the herdsmen, but the enclosure was full of high weeds. We took one native up as far as this bivouac.

On July 29 a start was made at 4.30 A.M. We took with us provisions for the day only, expecting to return to our kosh at night. The ascent is by the rocks on the right bank of the glacier for an hour or so, and then over slopes of avalanche snow. After a little discussion a line was selected across the icefall, and we were fortunately able to follow it, with but little difficulty and scarcely a check, to the left side of the glacier. Later in the year it might be found very difficult, if not altogether impossible, to force a way through this broken-up glacier. If such were the case a way could be made by the Ghertui Glacier, by crossing the ridge that separates it from the north-east extremity of the Tutuin snow fields. On surmounting the Tutuin icefall this alternative route soon becomes apparent. We should very possibly have been deceived had it not been for the information gained on the hill above Karaoul. The mistake would only have been found out on the top of the pass between the Tutuin and Ghertui Glaciers, and a day would have been lost. It must be remembered that the trough of the glacier is narrow, while the rocky walls bounding it are high and steep, and that the view consequently is very limited. On reaching the undulating snow-fields above the icefall we were well at the east end of the glacier, and the buttress of rock descending from the point marked 2,133 (=14,931 ft.) cut off all view of the pass. An agreeable surprise met our eyes as we rested awhile. The day was well advanced, and it is only on rare occasions in the Central Caucasus that the valleys and sky are free from cloud at such an hour. But not a vestige of mist was to be seen. The conditions were not merely of good omen, but were also in the highest degree fortunate, for the object of our search seemed very minute in the presence of such gigantic surroundings. The air was clear and soft, and the snow in perfect order for walking. We worked our way due west, and gradually as we turned

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the buttress of rock a steep and broad ice gully came into view, leading up to the pass. This consisted of a broad snow-topped depression, from 1,500 to 1,800 ft. above the snow-field. On the right or east of the pass the ridge ran sharply up to the pinnacle already mentioned, while on the left the ridge, broken up on its crest by great towers of rock, stretched away to the summit of Dych-tau, the peak of which from our point of view was not visible. A careful inspection of the rocks with the telescope revealed nothing. A possible place for a bivouac might have been found at any point on the rocks below the pass, but no particularly likely spot was evident. It was conceivable too, of course, that the travellers had discovered a more suitable place on the Ullu-auz side close to the summit of the pass. In any case our plan of action was clear, and we set forth without delay to ascend the wall. Two long ribs of rock lying on the right of the ice gully offered the best means of access. Both looked feasible, but it was only after a moment's hesitation that the left-hand one was selected, as it seemed more broken, was broader, and ran up higher. If the right-hand rib had been chosen, we might conceivably have missed the object of our search altogether. We made our way up the rocks without any great difficulty. Half-melted masses of snow constantly hissed down the ice gully as we ascended, and the great chasm that extends along the base of the cliff was choked for the most part with avalanche snow. The rocks were steep, but so broken as to offer good hand- and foot-hold. Still the mind was sufficiently occupied in attending to the details of climbing to prevent the thoughts from wandering. Insensibly we began to think little save of the view that would be revealed from the top of the pass. From time to time an opportunity would be found of gazing to the right or left, but progress was tolerably continuous. Maurer, who was leading, looked upwards now and again as he worked out the best line of ascent, but the rocks were so steep that he could only see a very few feet. Just about midday, as he stopped for a moment to look upwards, I saw his expression suddenly change. 'Herr Gott!' he gasped out, 'der Schlafplatz!' I think I shall never forget the thrill the words sent through me. We sprang up, scrambling over the few feet that still intervened, and in a moment were grouped on a little ledge just outside the bivouac. There was little enough to be seen at the first glance save a low horse-shoe shaped wall of stones, measuring some six feet by eight and carefully built against an overhanging

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rock. The enclosure was full of drifted snow, raised up into a hump at the back, where it covered a large Rücksack. On a ledge, formed by one of the stones, a little tin snow-spectacle box caught the eye as it reflected the rays of the sun. For a few moments all was excitement as the presence of one object after another was revealed. 'See here,' cried Maurer as he scooped away the snow with his hands, 'the sleeping-bags!' 'And here a Rücksack,' said another. 'Look, they made a fire there,' called out a third, 'and here is the cooking kettle and the revolver.' Then came somewhat of a reaction, and for a few minutes we could but gaze silently at the place that told so clear a tale and endeavour to realise to the full the evidence that had come upon us with such overwhelming suddenness.

The character of the place has been reproduced for us by Mr. Willink's skill with surprising accuracy, the drawing being founded on a sketch made on the spot by Capt. Powell. Before long we made up our minds as to the course to be taken. The space in the enclosure was so confined that only two, or at most three, could work at digging out the objects buried. It was necessary to see all that could be seen from the top of the pass, some twenty-five minutes above us, and accordingly Freshfield, Woolley, and Jossi went on while we fell to clearing the snow and ice out of the enclosure. The sleeping-bags were, we found, neatly arranged beneath two spread-out mackintosh coats. Underneath, and firmly frozen in, lay a bundle containing maps, drawings chiefly of the Dych-tau district, and other small articles. The papers were perfectly uninjured, and were of great interest, for on several were indicated possible routes up Dych-tau by the northern ridge, showing that this ascent was much in the minds of the travellers. With the exception of some bread, which had become mouldy, the provisions in the Rücksack were undamaged. Some tea in a little bag was perfectly dry and good, a fact which speaks well for the waterproof qualities of the Willesden canvas of which the Rücksack was made. Digging out the frozen-in articles proved a tedious business, and the party returned from the summit of the pass before we had finished. They reported that they had found a small stone-man, but no cards or records. The descent from the top down to the Ullu-auz Glacier seemed perfectly simple. From the pass the whole of the Ullu-auz side of the eastern ridge of Dych-tau could be seen. This ridge is of immense length, and along the first part of its actual crest it was impossible to go. The

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northern cliffs were of the most forbidding nature, being, indeed, a series of ice slopes of great steepness. On the southern side also the wall was of very formidable appearance. Yet it was evident that by one or other of these routes the party had proceeded eleven months previously. The situation and contents of the bivouac showed that plainly enough. Everything was in readiness for spending another night in the same place, and all articles were arranged as for a late return. There was no fire-wood, but several self-cooking soup tins were among the stores. They had not descended to the Tutuin snow-fields to try the route adopted by Mr. Woolley last year in ascending Dych-tau, for they would have carried down their luggage if any such idea had occurred to them. It was clearly by the Tutuin Glacier that the descent had to be made to Karaoul. The head of the Tutuin Glacier is closed in by an exceedingly steep wall, and the only possible escape in that direction lay up an ice-trough which would have demanded five hours at least of step-cutting. The route, if feasible, would land the traveller on the eastern branch of the Khrumkoll, not on the Kundium Mishirgi Glacier. The descent, therefore, to the Dych-su Glacier was by no means a simple business. North-east of the point marked 2,331 the ridge sinks, and no expedition offered in that direction. The field was thus much narrowed. It seemed absolutely certain that the party had started for an attempt on Dych-tau, from which they never returned. They would have naturally aimed at reaching the eastern snow ridge, visible as they looked up the Ullu-auz Glacier,* having already failed on the northern crest. To reach the eastern snow-ridge it was absolutely necessary to make a way across the rock-face either on the north or south side. Neither looked promising, but the south seemed to be the easier of the two. The outline sketches give an idea of the main features and enable the reader, to some extent, to judge for himself. An additional item of evidence was the fact that no appliances for high mountaineering, such as rope or axes, were found in the bivouac. The party had undoubtedly started in light marching order. To sum up, therefore, it is most probable that the accident occurred on the south side of the cliffs forming the eastern ridge of Dych-tau. The party must have been roped at the moment, and it is very reasonable to suppose that they were engaged in traversing one of the many ice- and snow-covered

* See *Alpine Journal*, vol. xiv., illustration facing p. 10.

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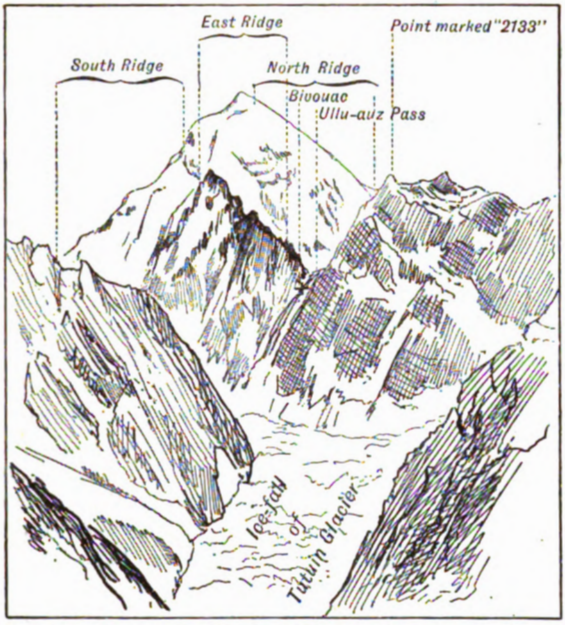
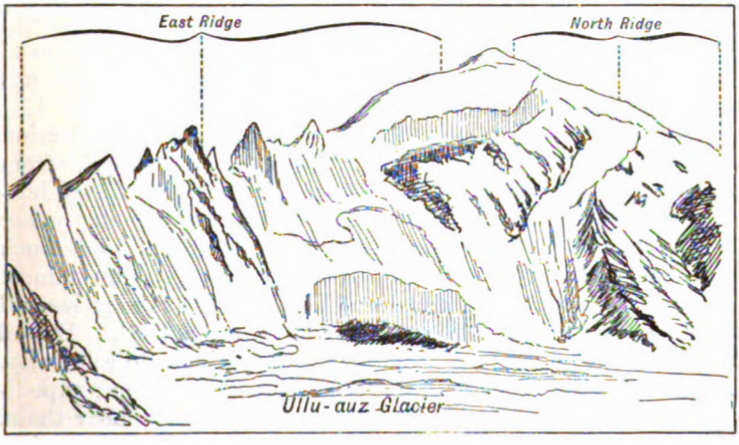
slopes that exist on this side. What the exact nature of the accident was matters little; but it may be remembered that the snow on such slopes and ledges often binds very lightly,



DYCH-TAU AND THE TUTUIN GLACIER, FROM S.E.



DYCH-TAU AND THE UPPER (SOUTHERN) SNOW BASIN OF THE ULLU-AUZ GLACIER, FROM THE ULLU-AUZ PASS.

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and that there are no mountains, perhaps, where these places are more numerous or more treacherous than in the Caucasus. It was possibly one of those rare instances in which the rope was a source of danger and not of security to the party as a whole. Yet the rule is clear, and it amounts to this: if a place is too dangerous to cross with a party roped, lest the slip of one drag down all, then it is too dangerous to cross at all. So steep are the cliffs that a fall must have meant instantaneous death. As an example, a torn sleeping-bag which was thrown over the bivouac wall fell to the very bottom of the slope, and we saw it just above the Bergschrund as we descended. It was necessary to take down some of the articles discovered, for we might otherwise have found difficulty in convincing the natives of the success of the expedition, and this was an important point. The height of the pass is 14,350 feet, and of the bivouac about 14,000 feet. We left the bivouac at 3.30 P.M., the day being still perfectly cloudless. The icefall offered some little difficulty, one or two of the bridges by which we had crossed in the morning having broken down. Still we were able to keep to almost the same line as that adopted in ascending. We reached our kosh at 7.30 P.M., and the following morning made Karaoul at 10.15 A.M. Late in the year it would be wise for any party making the pass to take it from the Karaoul side.

No one familiar with the Caucasus would be willing to believe that any native could have reached the bivouac. The people are still very timorous on ice and are wholly incapable of facing an icefall, much less of making any way through one. No native could have been got to the place even if in the train of competent mountaineers; alone he would not have set foot on the glacier at all.

A day or two later we made our way down to the collection of villages known as Balkar, a good 3½ hours' walk from Karaoul. The place is not well spoken of, but we were hospitably received and entertained. In this, as in many other villages subsequently, the story of our search excited much interest. On every occasion the proceedings were almost exactly identical. As usual in the Caucasus the natives all crowded into our apartment soon after arrival. Powell would then select some Russian-speaking man in authority, and announce through him that the results of our expedition would be made known to all who cared to hear them. The whole story was then told, and admirably Powell used to narrate it, winding up by pointing out how the people of the

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district were now exonerated from any suspicion that may have lain on them. Such suspicion, he used to add, had never been entertained by any English people. The account was always listened to in breathless silence. At the conclusion it was repeated by the chief to the natives in their own language. Then the Rücksack was brought in and the articles found shown. These were always instantly accepted as absolute proof, the rusty revolver especially exciting attention. Expressions of sorrow and brief interjections were always heard on all sides. Then the chief spoke to some such effect as follows: 'We are indeed rejoiced that you have found these traces. It relieves our people from an irksome and unjust suspicion. It is well that Englishmen came to our country for this search, for we believe that no others could have accomplished what you have done. We are all very grateful to you. Englishmen are always most welcome in our country. We are glad to receive them. Our houses are theirs, and the best we can do shall always be done for your countrymen.' In several places—at Chegem, for instance—words were added to this effect: 'We remember well Donkin and Fox; they were brave and good men, and we loved them. It is very sad to us to think that they are lost.'

From Balkar we despatched to Naltchik a special messenger, bearing a formal report of the results of the search, which he was charged to deliver to Prince Dondoukoff-Korsakoff, the Governor-General of the Caucasus. In this letter we laid especial stress on the fact that no shadow of suspicion could possibly attach to any native. The letter was duly published in the Russian newspapers, and, as we were glad to learn, had the desired effect.

It was usual, in the old days, in Alpine papers to reserve to the end praise of the guides of the expedition. Such praise was honestly deserved by Kaspar Maurer, by Andreas Fischer, and by Christian Jossi, and may not be withheld. But something more than mere guiding is wanted in the Caucasus, especially in such an expedition as we had in hand. This we had in our party. It were difficult to overrate the immense value of Freshfield's geographical insight, of Powell's extensive and accurate knowledge of the Russian language, and of Hermann Woolley's unselfish aid.

I have endeavoured to set forth a straightforward story in the simplest language, and with this account I desire to close for good one of the saddest chapters in the history of mountaineering and the annals of the Alpine Club.

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