

"Let's give up, Baby—it's all no use—*Baby*, I can't hold out any more. Oh, my little, little girl, I want you every minute now."

One wave of the wide bitter sea went over her soul, and she gasped and clung to him till the waters ebbed, and left it naked and shuddering.

Then the second came up, and she lifted herself out of his arms and on to the breast of it.

"Wilf," she said, and caught his hands and put him away from her, "don't be a coward now. You are stronger to-day—the doctor thought so. Wilf, think of me a little—fight hard, W-Wilf-f."

A tide of colour swept into his cheeks.

"I will, Meg—I am—*God!* how I am," he crushed her hands between his own. "Leave you alone—please God, I won't!"

A shiver ran through her, then she stood up straight and seized her shawl from the bed-foot.

"One hour, Wilf, and to-morrow we can have the cheque and get things—one hour, Wilf. Oh, fight, my darling! One hour, and I shall be here holding you again; and to-morrow those great doctors; and you will

get well again, and eat chops, W-Wilf, and four servings of pudding, like you did before."

She laughed hysterically and turned to the door.

"Meg," he said, in an agony of longing.

She glanced back, but would not look at him.

"One hour—what, Wilf?"

He closed his hands tightly.

"One half of your dress is unbuttoned, dear," he said; and she did it up anyway as she went down the stairs, and through the passage into the street.

And it was all no use: all the fighting, all the choking prayers, all the beating of hands.

The great third wave rolled up before the hour had gone, and everything went down before its black irresistible waters.

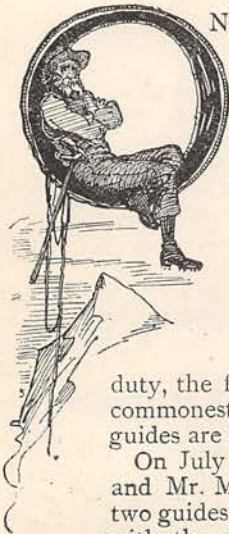
When she got to the door again she knew the wave had broken, and she struggled through the wild horrible surf to the bed beyond.

And it lay deep down, where the waters were very still, and where she could never reach it to straighten its cover, or smooth its tossed pillow, or creep into its warmth and whiteness any more.



## PEOPLE WHO FACE DEATH: ALPINE GUIDES.

BY A. E. BONSER, AUTHOR OF "NORTHWARD HO!" "LIFEBOAT MEN," ETC. ETC.



NE of the most celebrated guides was Michel Auguste Croz, a native of the Village du Tour, in the Valley of Chamounix. It has been said of him that "he was only happy when upwards of ten thousand feet high."

The following are a few out of innumerable instances in which he faced death in the discharge of duty, the first given being one of the commonest and greatest risks to which guides are exposed.

On July 10th, 1864, Mr. Whymper and Mr. Moore, accompanied by the two guides Almer and Croz, left Zinal with the object of reaching Zermatt by the Moming Pass.

After proceeding a considerable distance, two routes offered themselves, and—it would

seem, contrary to the suggestions of the guides—the shorter but more dangerous one was chosen. This way led across a long slope of ice built up from the *debris* of a glacier that had fallen from above. Further huge masses and pinnacles of ice were ready to topple over, and might do so at any moment, and as there was not the slightest protection against them, the peril was extreme. Their only chance of safety lay in hurrying forward.

Croz began, therefore, to cut steps as fast as he possibly could, but for twenty minutes each member of the party





expected that the next moment might be his last.

When they were safely across, Croz acknowledged that it was the most dangerous place he had ever crossed, and that no consideration whatever would tempt him to cross it again. As if to emphasise his words, as the party were resting from their exertions, one of the largest pinnacles of ice, at least a couple of hundred feet high, without the slightest warning, heeled over, and fell bodily upon the very track they had just traversed, and "a broad sheet of smooth glassy ice showed the resistless force with which it had fallen," and the narrowness of their escape.

The descent of the other side of the pass was actually undertaken in a dense mist, and involved a succession of perils which few guides would have had the courage or the skill to face. But Croz took it easily, as part of the day's work.

Fancy crossing a narrow edge of ice with an unfathomable abyss on either hand, by placing your feet in notches cut large enough just to admit the heel only, balancing yourself the while like a tight-rope dancer, with the knowledge that a false step was certain death!

Fancy coming to a solid wall of ice on one side of a big crevasse, which must be crossed, for there could be no turning back—a chasm felt rather than seen in the bluish mist that floated, phantom-like, around, now creeping from point to point, now suddenly opening to disclose fearful fleeting visions of profundities unknown!

Even here Croz was equal to the emergency, and, held up by the others, cut a pathway for hands and feet with his trusty axe.

"Have a care, dear sirs: slip not!" The warning was scarcely necessary, and the party, one by one, crept cautiously along, holding on by "the skin of their teeth," until the chasm narrowed, and they could drop across.

Thus they proceeded for hours—not minutes—having neither the time nor the opportunity for rest or refreshment, for to be overtaken by the night was to be overtaken by destruction! Try to picture the situation, and you will get some idea of what it is to face death among the high Alps.

On the 17th of June, 1864, Mr. Whymper, accompanied by the guides Almer, Biener, and Croz, climbed that most difficult mountain, the Dent Blanche.

They began the descent in a furious hurricane, and in pitiless cold that frosted the hair and congealed the breath in icicles on beard and moustache. Gloves were useless, for they were slippery with ice, but to cling to the ice-



"WITH THE KNOWLEDGE THAT A FALSE STEP WAS CERTAIN DEATH."

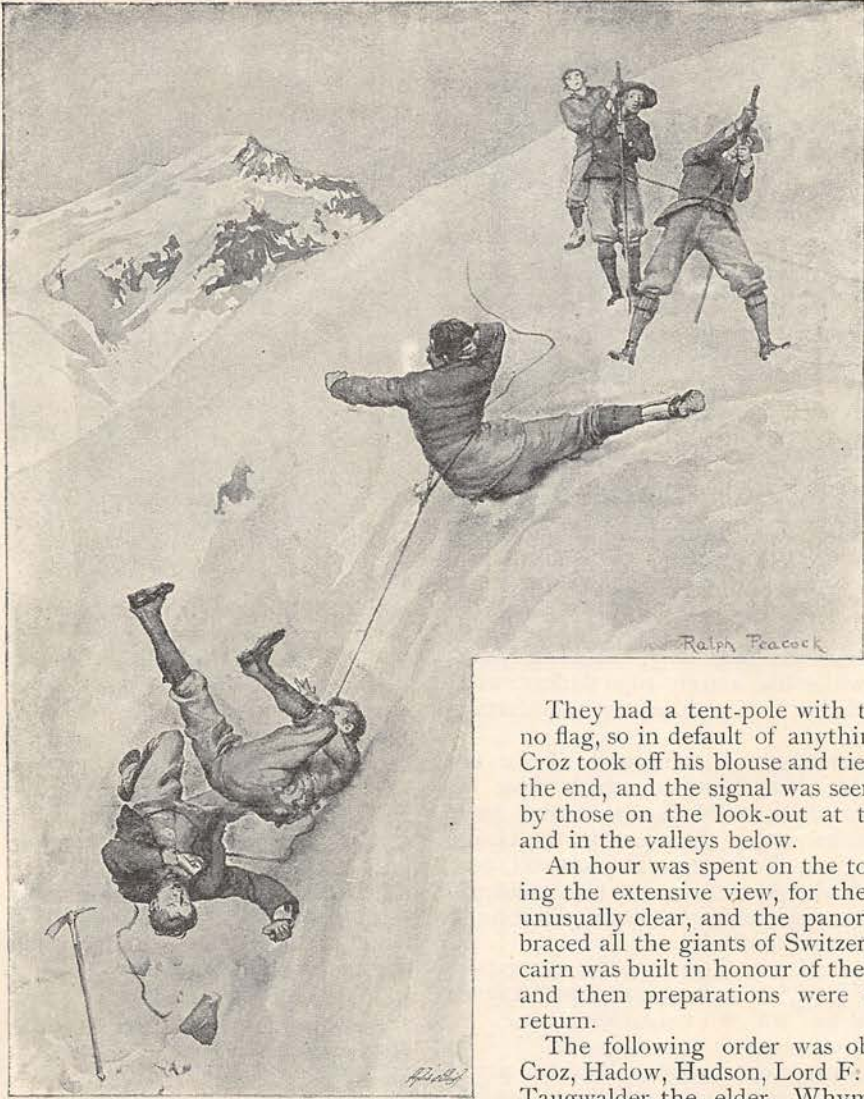
bound rocks with the naked hand was like holding red-hot iron, and dragged the skin from the fingers, so that the perilous track was marked by a red stain; and yet *to stop was to be frozen to death!*

After fearful risks, at last they got down safely, but in such an exhausted state that the wonder was any of them were left alive to tell the tale.

Of all the attempts to scale the Matterhorn we have no exact knowledge; but between 1858 and the end of June, 1865, fourteen expeditions are recorded, half that number being undertaken by Mr. Whymper, two by Professor Tyndall. In the second attempt of the professor, under the leadership of J. J. Bennen, the foot of the final peak was reached at an elevation of 13,970 feet. The mountain seemed to be unconquerable.

On July 13th, 1865, the undaunted Whymper determined to try again. He was accompanied by the Rev. Charles Hudson, who was considered the best amateur mountaineer of his time, Lord Frederick Douglas, an experienced climber, and Mr. Hadow, absolutely without any experience of Alpine climbing. The guides were three in number:





"THEY SPED SWIFTLY DOWNWARDS, BOUNDING FROM CRAG TO CRAG" (p. 55)

Michel Croz and the Taugwalders — father and son.

The party advanced leisurely from the Zermatt side, and at noon pitched their tent at an altitude of about 12,000 feet. On the 14th they started as soon as the light permitted, and met with no difficulty until they came to that part of the peak which seems to lean over towards Zermatt. Here they turned northwards, Croz leading. After an hour and a half of hard climbing, during which time Hadow had to be constantly helped, they reached snow, the actual summit was before them, and they were soon on the top.

They had a tent-pole with them, but no flag, so in default of anything better, Croz took off his blouse and tied that to the end, and the signal was seen at once by those on the look-out at the Riffel and in the valleys below.

An hour was spent on the top admiring the extensive view, for the day was unusually clear, and the panorama embraced all the giants of Switzerland. A cairn was built in honour of the occasion, and then preparations were made to return.

The following order was observed—Croz, Hadow, Hudson, Lord F. Douglas, Taugwalder the elder, Whymper, and last, Taugwalder the younger.

All were roped together when they came to the awkward bit, which sloped at an angle of about 40°. Croz here laid aside his trusty axe, the better to help Mr. Hadow by placing his legs into their right positions and his feet in the proper steps.

Suddenly, without a moment's warning, Mr. Hadow slipped, and turning on his back, struck Croz a violent blow, knocking him completely head over heels; Hudson was immediately dragged from his place, and Lord Frederick followed him. The remaining three stood firm, and the shock came upon them as on one man; but the rope could not stand the severe strain, and broke between Lord Frederick and the elder Taugwalder,



For a brief moment the four unfortunate men were seen by their horrified companions as they sped swiftly downwards, bounding from crag to crag, until they disappeared into the awful abyss!

The three who remained were so paralysed with terror that for a full half hour they dared not move an inch; eventually, however, they reached Zermatt in safety—the sole survivors of the expedition.

Jean Antoine Carrel was another splendid guide.

He was the first to make the ascent of the Matterhorn from the Italian side, but he, too, fell a victim to the terrible mountain.

In the month of August, 1890, he conducted a party up the Matterhorn, and they reached the hut on the south side at the close of a cloudless day. During the night, however, a fearful hurricane arose, which raged without intermission for six-and-thirty hours. The lightning was blinding and incessant, and seemed to wrap them in flame; the thunder burst over their heads like salvoes of artillery, and the uproar was echoed from the surrounding heights; the hail deluged them, the bitter cold seemed to freeze the marrow in their bones, whilst the raging wind threatened every moment to destroy their frail shelter. All the party were more or less frost-bitten, and, their provisions having given out, starvation stared them in the face.

As a forlorn hope, their intrepid guide proposed that they should try to descend. Accordingly they started, he leading the way, and working with almost superhuman strength, whilst his resolute spirit encouraged the fainthearted, and cheered the desponding. Marvellous to relate, after literally battling for every inch of ground during fourteen hours of incessant labour, Carrel brought them to a place of comparative safety.

But the mental and physical strain proved too great, and, his duty ended, the brave man sat down and immediately expired!

One of the most famous of the Oberland guides was John Joseph

Bennen. During the greater portion of his career, he was in the employ of Wellig, the landlord of the inn on the *Ægisshorn*, and was hired out by him to tourists. His services were always in great request, and he saved at different times several lives by his capacity and courage.

A well-known mountaineer has spoken of him as "the bravest guide the Valais ever had or ever will have." And Professor Tyndall wrote of him: "As a mountaineer Bennen had no superior, and he added to his strength, courage, and skill, the qualities of a natural gentleman."

On the 28th February, 1864, Mr. Gosset and Monsieur Boissonet, with J. J. Bennen, drove from Sion to the village of Ardon to make the ascent of the *Haut-de-Cry*, a mountain 9698 feet high. At Ardon they were met by three guides, Nance, Rebot, and Bevard, and without loss of time the men set out, following the right bank of the *Lyserne*, and making for the woods.

It was a lovely night: the sky was cloudless, and the multitude of stars shone large, and bright, and near. A full moon shed its soft radiance on the valley; dappled the track through the sombre pine forests with weird shadows, and streaming over the mountains toned down the sharp edges of peak and pinnacle, wrapping each ghostly form in mysterious light.

The party had not proceeded far when they came upon soft snow; it was not a good sign, and there were forebodings that, after all, the attempt might have to be given up.



"AFTER LITERALLY BATTLING FOR EVERY INCH OF GROUND."



However, soon after, hard snow was struck, and clear of the pines that had considerably impeded their movements, they rose more quickly, and at seven o'clock reached a chalet and sat down to rest.

They were in full view of the Diablerets, and, by-and-by, as they gazed, a faint flush touched its four peaks, the rosy tint deepened and spread; gradually the shadows of night were chased away, and the rising sun warned the men to continue their ascent if they would make the most of the new-born day.

The Haut-de-Cry has four arêtes or crests, and the plan was to go up between the two running east and north-east to the foot of the peak, and then mount it by the arête running north-east.

It was slow walking over the snow, as each step was a foot deep, but soon after ten o'clock the base of the peak was reached. Here Bennen—like a careful general—inspected the position, and decided to take the eastern arête, which would save a couple of hours as compared with the other. To gain it, a steep snowfield had to be crossed. Not liking the look of it, Bennen asked the local guides if avalanches ever came down there. On their replying that the party were perfectly safe, they went on, and in the following order: Bevard, Nance, Bennen, Gosset, Boissonet and Ribot.

Three-quarters of the distance had been traversed, when the two leading men sank up to their waists; and as the depth of snow prevented their extricating themselves, they went on, forcing a way with their bodies. Bennen looked anxious, and said that he was afraid of their starting an avalanche; but, just then, hard snow was struck, and they concluded that the soft snow was only accidental, and that all was right.

However, a few steps only had been taken when a deep, cutting sound was heard; a tiny crack showed itself, and the snowfield split in two just above them!

Silence ensued—a silence the more profound from the enormous height. Eight thousand feet below faint wreaths of blue smoke rose from the chalets of Ardon, where the villagers were busily engaged about their household duties.

Far off, the summits of Diablerets stood out clear and distinct in the rarefied atmosphere; everywhere the sun's rays flooded the beautiful world with light.

Around lay the pure white snow, and



“ THEN, WITH A HORRID HISS AND ROAR, THE SNOW SWEEPED ONWARD.”

yonder the peak they had come to climb—now within easy access—rose into the ethereal blue. Everything breathed only peace and repose.

But the men stood awestruck and motionless, until the oppressive silence was broken by Bennen, who said slowly and solemnly—

“ We are lost ! ”

He turned, and stretched out his arms towards the valley, and at the same instant, with a gentle, gliding movement, the immense snowfield slid bodily! The motion rapidly increased; there was a cracking, a rending asunder. Then, with a horrid hiss and roar, the snow swept onward, engulfing the six men, who were absolutely powerless to help themselves.

Like the crest of a huge billow the head of the avalanche advanced, pressed on by the snow behind, until it reached the brow of the nearest precipice, down which it thundered, waking a thousand echoes among the neighbouring crags.

From some unexplained cause, the rear-most snow paused on the fatal brink; but, when its progress was arrested, *only one man was visible!*

It was Ribot. Near him was Nance, partially buried, whom he soon freed, and the two helped out Bevard, who was erect, but covered up to the head.

At first no trace was discoverable of their



unfortunate companions, but, at length, they thought they heard a feeble cry! It was repeated; and, guided by the sound, they saw a hand protruding above the snow. On digging they managed to extricate Mr. Gosset from what had otherwise proved his grave, for he was buried far below the surface, and completely frozen in.

Then coming upon a foot, they partially uncovered the body of Monsieur Boissonet, but ceased their labour on finding that he was

dead. As to Bennen, he was never seen again.

And the blue smoke still curled upwards from the châteaux of Ardon, and the sun still flooded the beautiful landscape with light—all things breathed peace and repose; only the peak of the Haut-de-Cry looked down upon a polished wall of ice, where lately a snow-field had rested, and its summit now will never be attained by the "bravest guide the Valais ever had or ever will have."



## THE MAKING OF FLANNEL TAPESTRY.

BY JOSEPHA CRANE.

**F**LANNEL tapestry is a new embroidery, which I am sure will possess a charm for many workers who like what is easily and speedily executed.

This work is absolutely dissimilar to the old Berlin wool-work, remembered by so many as being the fashionable embroidery some years ago.

The foundation of this work is very coarse rough flannel, of a most beautiful cream colour. I must tell you, in confidence, that it really is only common house-flannel—the same precisely as your housemaid uses when she scrubs the floors. The designs, however, and manner of working have a character of their own, and the table-cover, etc., in this article I obtained from Mrs. Brackett, 150, The Parade, Leamington Spa, who makes this work a very great *spécialité*.

Those who live in London, and who are anxious to see the work for themselves, can do so at the Studio Tea Rooms, 185, New Bond Street, where, as at Leamington, work finished, begun, designed, and all materials for doing it, can be had.

As very large articles, such as portières, bed-spreads, table-covers, piano backs, etc., look well in this work, Mrs. Brackett—who has found that as the ordinary household flannel is too narrow for these

purposes—has had some flannel like it made in wider widths. Besides the articles already



TABLE-COVER.