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(page 363)

The Kingchinjunga Expedition.

CHARGES AND COUNTER-CHARGES.

In reply to the charges made by Mr. Crowley against his companions in the expedition, M. A. C. Rigo de Righi, one of the latter, sends the *Statesman* a long letter, the contents of which are, in substance, as follows:—

M. de Righi declares that what decided him to leave the expedition was a statement by Mr. Crowley in a letter which he wrote to the Doctor blaming him for failing to send up provisions; this underserved reprimand, and "the firm conviction that although Mr. Crowley is a daring Alpinist he lacked the first accomplishments of a leader—yon may be a good climber but a bad general." This opinion was apparently shared by the Doctor who accompanied M. de Righi in going up with a view to deposing Mr. Crowley in a general Durbar from his leadership. As to the specific charge of failure to send up provisions, the writer states that although there were plenty at the camp when he arrived with his coolies, the Doctor had no men willing to carry them up even with the promise of eight annas per head. He asks "as the road was in Mr. Crowley's estimation so perfectly easy, why did he not, instead of remaining at Camp V and starving, come down with his authority (the ice axe) and persuade his coolies to bring them up?"

THE AVALANCHE INCIDENT.

The most serious part of this reply, perhaps, is the passage referring to the avalanche accident. M. de Righi confines himself to the opinions expressed by the Doctor and by M. Raymond as Alpinists of experience:—"The road was badly chosen. They on the day that this was done strongly objected to it, firstly, because it led over a steep slope abutting a precipice and to the quantity of soft snow which would easily avalanche if many passed along it. This is proved without a doubt since as many as three avalanches took place on the route, two falling

by themselves and one caused by the four men slipping which latter carried us away. As to his wish to emphasise the trivial size of the avalanche he did not take the trouble at the time of the accident to come and try if it was at all possible to render any assistance. He admits he knew that four men were under the snow, and this being *a very small avalanche*, we surely could have got them out with his assistance if he had only come. But why trouble? They got there against my advice: let them stop! Truly, a noble position for a leader to adopt with companions in imminent danger.

THE LIE DIRECT.

Omitting a great many other points, for want of space, we reproduce the conclusion of M. de Righi's reply:—

Not content with all the charges he brought against me during the expedition, he further charges me with, because I upheld Nanyar in his just demand of the two pice per man commission as sardar, which was promised him by Mr. Crowley before leaving if he got the coolies to come for Rs. 20 per month and himself came for Rs. 30, having a share of this commission also that on everything that was brought on the road I speculated a commission, and that I was well-known in Darjeeling for doing so, I told him it was a lie and a liar who said it. To this he answered that an officer friend of his had told him so. This I told him an English officer, I could not believe, could be capable of making such a charge and wish to hide his name. This when I demanded it was refused. This comes from what, I suppose, would be considered a "gentleman", having been educated at the Cambridge University, and who, I believe, styles himself My Lord Boleskine. In his opinion I am not quite a gentleman: if so, and gentlemen are of his stamp, I am glad I am not one.

This rather long explanation is written in answer to Mr. Crowley's letter to the *Pioneer* of the 20th instant, his interview with the *Darjeeling Chronicle* of the 16th ultimo, and as I think I have refuted his charges against the Doctor and myself and do not wish to enter into any controversy with him, and shall decline to further discuss the subject with him. My two Swiss companions sign this letter to prove I have their assent as regards where I have mentioned their names.

Le soussigné reconnaît l'exactitude des faits allégués ci-dessus et qui me concernent personnellement.

DR. T. JACOB GUILLARMOD.

Je certifie l'exactitude des passages de cette lettre ou mon nom se trouve cité.

CH. REYMOND.