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It was not until 1905 that a direct attempt was made to climb Kanchenjunga, by a party consisting of three Swiss—Dr. Jacot-Guillarmod, M. Raymond, Lieutenant Pache—and an Italian hotelkeeper from Darjeeling named De Righi, who put themselves under the leadership of Mr. Aleister Crowley. The expedition attacked the great curtain of icy slopes which falls from the base of the cliffs of the south-west face of Kanchenjunga. They succeeded in establishing a camp at 20, 343 ft., and some of them climbed 1000 ft. higher.

On the afternoon of September 1 Dr. Guillarmod, Lieutenant Pache, and De Righi, with three natives, started to descend the glacier to the lower camp, leaving Crowley and Raymond at the higher. Crowley states that he warned them of the danger that they were incurring in descending so late in the day with a large party. While traversing a snow-slope the two coolies, who were in the middle, slipped, dragging with them Pache and the third coolie, who were behind, and the doctor and De Righi, who were in front. The doctor and De Righi escaped with a severe shaking, but their four companions were buried in the avalanche of snow brought down by the fall. Thus ended the first attempt on Kanchenjunga.