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TOWARDS KANCHENJUNGA
By Douglas Side

I see no reason why an expedition to the Himalayas, under the auspices of the Alpine Club, should not succeed, even if the attempt were made to scale Kanchenjunga; altitude 28,156 ft. These are not adventurous words used by our President in Committee, but those used in a Paper read before this club on June 6, 1882. It is also stated there that, 'One of its northern spurs, at any rate, seems to present no insurmountable obstacles.' We shall refer to Paul Bauer's achievements on this spur later.

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The first attempt to climb Kanchenjunga was made by a Swiss party from the Yalung Glacier in 1905, and ended in disaster. The party was under the leadership of Aleister Crowley and included Dr. J. Jacot-Guillarmod, C.A. Reymond, Lieut. A.A. Pache, and an Italian A. de Righi. The expedition reached the Yalung Valley via the Singalila ridge and Chumbab La and established a camp at 20,300 ft. in about the same place as the 1954 Reconnaissance Expedition. They climbed a further 1,000 ft., but while descending during the afternoon of September 1, a party was caught by an avalanche and Lieut. Pache and three natives were killed. The story of the expedition is told by Dr. Jacot-Guillarmod in *Jarbuch des S.A.C.* and elsewhere, and those further interested may see pictures of six camps in an article entitled 'Au Kangchinjunga' in *L'Echo des Alpes*;¹ the scene of two accidents in the *Jahrbuch*, and a 'Panorama of the Yalung Glacier' in the *Beilagen zem Jahrbuch*.²

The story of the behavior of Crowley need not be enlarged upon here, except to say that he refused to assist with the rescue operations. A biography of Crowley, published in 1951, justifies its unusual title, *The Great Beast*.

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1. No. 8 (1914) pp. 390-406.
2. Vol. 41 (1906); *Sphere*, Nov. 18, 1905.