

Colonel Gilbert Henderson. Twelve guides escorted them, under the leadership of Marie Coutet ; namely, Julien Devoissous, David and Joseph Folliguet, the two brothers Pierre and Mathieu Balmat, Pierre Carrier, Auguste Teiraz, David Coutet, Jacques Coutet, and Pierre Favret.

Having started from Chamounix at six A.M., it was four P.M. when they arrived at the *Grands Mulets*. It is here that travellers always halt to pass the night. A part of this rock is shaped like the letter L ; a ladder and some poles covered with canvas were arranged against it so as to form a sort of triangle, in whose interior Dr. Hamel and his companions spent the night, lying upon straw. But in the evening the weather grew stormy, and the rain began to fall. The atmosphere was heavily charged with electricity, and the balls of the electrometer danced so rapidly to and fro as to excite alarm.* Throughout the night the thunder never ceased to peal.

All the following day the rain continued, and the snow, which at first only fell upon Mont Blanc, began to approach the region where our travellers had encamped. The bad weather lasted through the second night, which was spent, like the preceding, under the miserable shelter of the tent.

The commonest prudence should have dictated to the travellers an immediate return to Chamounix. The guides, having consulted together at daybreak, were unanimously of this opinion ; but when they intimated their decision to Dr. Hamel, he formally rejected it. It was then determined that three guides, Jacques Coutet, Joseph Folliguet, and Pierre Favret, should go to Chamounix for a supply of provisions, which were now running short.

It had been settled that they should rest quietly in their encampment until fair weather returned ; but at eight A.M., on the sky brightening, Dr. Hamel decided he would immediately set out.

* [The Electrometer is an instrument designed to give evidence of the presence of electrical excitement, and, also, to measure its force. It consists of a conducting rod, of brass or boxwood, to which a graduated semicircle is attached. In the centre of the latter a straw, carrying a pith-ball at its outer end, rotates on a pivot. When the ball is charged with electricity, the height to which it rises is necessarily shown on the graduated semicircle. The Electroscope is now used for a somewhat similar purpose.]