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EXPEDITIONS IN THE BRENTA GROUP. By E. T. COMPTON.

**D**OLOMITE crags towering dimly like the ghosts of Ossian's heroes among the night clouds gathering over a shadowy valley, in whose mysterious depths a still lake reflects the outlines of its giant walls. Such is the scene that greets the traveller who has left the valley of the Adige at Mezzolombardo or Lavis, and crossed the heights of Fai, and now emerges from the darkening woods of Andalo.

Almost startling in the gathering darkness is the sudden apparition far below of the feeble lights of Molveno, of which almost all that I knew, when thus approaching it at the end of June 1882, was that Mr. Ball had years before declared it to be 'a place shamefully neglected by tourists, but which, if it were in Switzerland, would without fail be frequented by travellers throughout the summer.'

I was on my way to Pinzolo, and, though prepared to find picturesque scenery on the two days' march by the Bocca di Brenta, these spectral glimpses of crag and gorge, together with promises of finer weather, combined to determine me to devote an extra day to this side of the pass; and accordingly mine host of the extremely unpretending 'Albergo della Cima Tosa' was asked to send for one of the brothers Nicolussi, the best guides of the place.

It was settled that we should go the next afternoon to the new Rifugio, near the Bocca, and the following morning ascend the Cima Tosa and continue our march to Pinzolo.

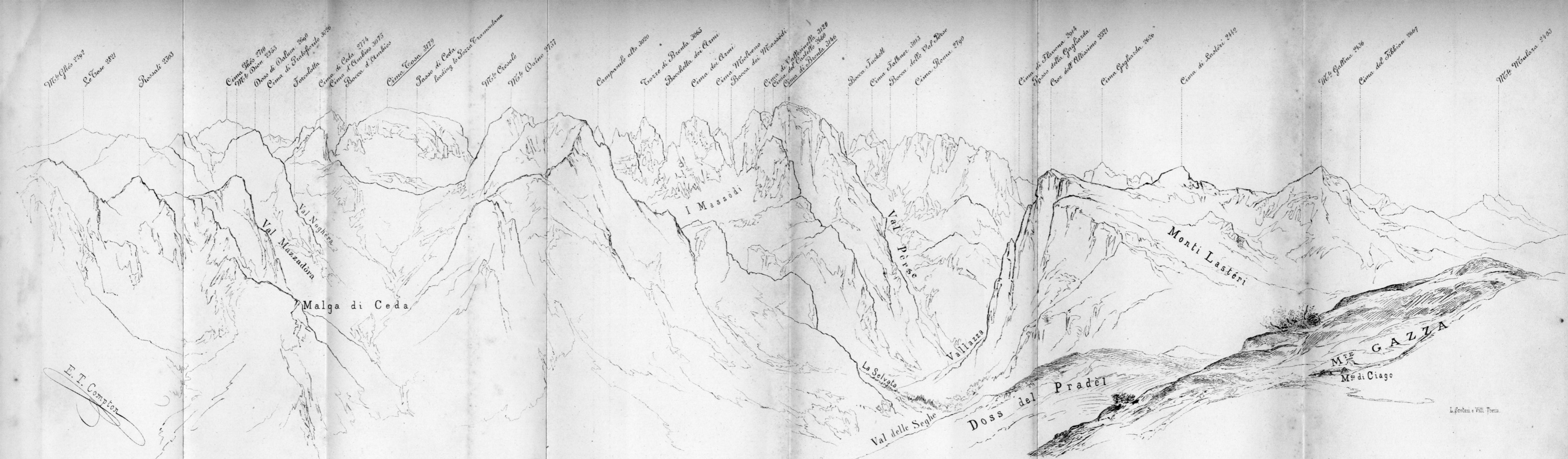
The morrow was a splendid summer day, and a bathe in the marvellously lustrous waters of the lake was followed by a ramble on its further shore in sloping meadows, whose 'gran variazion' de' freschi mai' recall the well-watered fields of Dante's 'Purgatorio,' but lacked the fair Matilda, 'iscegliendo fior da fiore,' who should have interpreted the mysteries of the

cloud-veiled world of crested crags that still enchained my fancy as they towered above the deep chasm of the Valle delle Seghe behind the little brown village.

But I must not detain the reader with further descriptions of this charming vale, nor of the hot but romantic ascent through the Valle delle Seghe to the crag-encircled Pian della Selvata, but will courteously invite him to share a frugal meal at an early hour in front of the commodious Rifugio della Cima Tosa, and join us in our ascent of the peak from which our dwelling *pro tem.* takes its name. But whilst Matteo, careful soul, is setting the house in order, let me endeavour, for the benefit of those to whom this little-visited corner of Tyrol is unknown, to define a little our present whereabouts.

The Cima Tosa, as yet out of sight to the west, is the highest point and one of the foci of the Brenta group of the Trentine Alps; a small, well-defined *massif*, wedged in as it were between the two crooked valleys of the Noce and the Sarca. One of the feeders of the former bounds our group on the north-west, rising on the saddle of Campiglio and flowing in a north-easterly direction; it joins the main stream in the Val di Sole opposite Malé. The Noce here flows in nearly the same direction, and continues to do so till it passes the northern foot of the Brenta group and turns southward to Cles, and then still more to the south, receiving the stream from Val Flavona, which drains the northern flanks of the group, and finally the Rivo Sporeggio forming its eastern boundary: the long ridge of the Gazza between this last stream and the valley of the Adige can hardly be included, either orographically or geologically, in our group, the order of superposition being reversed. The southward continuation of the Sporeggio valley leads over the depression in which Andalo lies, and brings us to the Lake of Molveno, and so down to the Sarca below the villages of Banale. The Sarca, again, having one of its sources not far from Campiglio, in the Lago di Nambino, forms the western and southern boundary of the group and divides the Dolomite from the more lofty crystalline *massif* of the Adamello-Presanella. The independent group thus defined describes roughly a long-drawn X, measuring from Cles, in the N.E., to Tione, in the S.W., about thirty English miles, and from Campiglio to Molveno about twelve miles across. A considerable part of the south-western limit of the X does not, it is true, belong to the Dolomite, which is bounded in that direction by the high valleys of Agola and Algone.

Whilst on the north and north-east the two principal spurs gradually sink in pine-clad slopes to the Nonsberg, Monte



Mte Ghis 2792  
Le Tose 2881

Passate 2703

Cima Ghis 2710  
Mte Dion 2353  
Osso di Dalun 2690  
Cima di Scabirato 3026  
Forcolata

Cima di Ceda 2774  
Cima d'Ambio 3075  
Bocca d'Ambio

Cima Toosa 3179  
Passo di Ceda  
Passo la Sassa Fremondana

Mte Crevole

Mte Oatino 2757

Campanile alto 3020

Torre di Brenta 3065  
Bocchetta dei Armi

Cima dei Armi

Cima Malseno  
Bocca dei Massodi

Cima di Vaffinella 3120  
Cima del Castello 2660  
Cima di Brenta 3146

Bocca Tuckett

Cima Falhner 3013

Bocca delle Val Tose  
Cima Roma 2790

Cima di Flossona 2914  
Passo della Gagliarda  
Croz dell'Alissimo 2821

Cima Gagliarda 2626

Cima di Sastini 2442

Mte Gallina 2436

Cima del Tibbon 2667

Mte Moulara 2493

Val Mazzadòra  
Val Noghèra

Malga di Ceda

I Massodi

Val Perse

Monti Lastèri

La Selvata

Vallizza

Val delle Seghe

Doss del Pradel

MTE GAZZA  
Mte di Ciago

E. T. Compton

THE BRENTA GROUP FROM MTE GAZZA .

L. Scotani e Vitt. Trento

Vallandro and the Castello dei Camozzi in the south rise with their bare cliffs boldly out of the chestnuts and vines of Giudicaria.

The loftiest and most rugged masses of dolomite are congregated about the centre of the chain on either side of the Bocca di Brenta. The group on the south-west side of this gap culminates in the Cima Tosa (3,179 mètres = 10,427 feet); that on the north in a double summit of slightly less elevation, the names of which are matter of dispute even amongst the natives of the district. This circumstance, and other interesting questions connected with these mountains, led to my returning to them a month later with Signor de Falkner, of the Italian Club, who has for several years taken especial interest in the district, and was one of a committee of the Trentine Society appointed for the express purpose of putting the nomenclature of the Brenta Alps on a sounder footing than has hitherto been done. How far they have succeeded may be open to query; indeed, one of their number confesses to me in a recent letter that he does not consider their decisions as final, though they have been published in the form of a circular from which the guides are not to differ under pain of heavy displeasure.

But for the present let us return to the refuge at the Bocca and our ascent of the Tosa. This was effected by the usual route in three and a quarter hours. Passing under the southern face of the Brenta bassa, on bands of débris, we skirt a deep snow-filled hollow sloping to the brink of the strange barren depression called Pozza tramontana, once no doubt the bed of a deep glacial tarn, whose waters have leaked away, leaving only a shallow swampy pool in early summer and a patch of verdure in the arid hollow later in the season. The névé is then crossed at easy slopes until, under the peak itself, now gilded by the rising sun, we come to a band of cliff, a chimney in which affords the only excitement in the climb, except such as is derived from the spectacle of countless pinnacles and turrets of dolomite sinking as we rise, like a transformation scene, and revealing in the luminous background a rugged line of Noric, Fassa, and Venetian Alps.

At the summit three parts of the panorama were still unclouded; but though the distant view, comprising the Disgrazia, Ortler, part of the Stubai, and the whole Tauern and Venetian ranges, is one of no mean pretensions, the galaxy of slender campaniles and not less defiant fortresses close below us form the main attraction, heightened by the

fact that a large proportion of them are 'ancora vergine,' as Matteo repeatedly informed me.

The crest of the Tosa (3,179 mètres) falls away precipitously on the W. and S.W. in fluted crags that seem to overhang the deep gorge between us and a long sharp ridge, which culminates and joins the main chain in the bold peak of the Cima d'Ambies, seen just above the head of the said gorge, in which lies bedded the Vedretta dei Camozzi. Beyond the Cima d'Ambies the main chain takes a S.W. direction and terminates in the Cima di Vallon (2,930 mètres), conspicuous from San Stefano and other points round Pinzolo. Another long ridge of rather less mean elevation leaves the main chain on this side of the Bocca d'Ambies and stretches S.E. towards the lower end of the Lake of Molveno; whilst the backbone of the group, after bearing eastwards as far as the Bocca di Brenta and sending off a spur in the same direction, turns sharp to the north and presents itself in its most rugged aspect in the C. Brenta Alta and the Fulmini di Brenta, rising again in the Cima di Brenta to 3,150 mètres, where it throws out a lofty spur on the west, crowned by the Cima di Vallesinella. The central spine runs on due north, rising beyond a deep gap, Bocca Tuckett, into a mass of broken peaks, from which branches the important spur encircling the Flavona alp, and forming the northern wall of Valle Persé. Then sinking to the broad depression of the Grosté pass (2,480), and again attaining bulk and altitude in the two Mondifrás, the Sasso Alto (2,929), and other peaks.

All these ramifications, especially those towards north and east, are extremely rugged, and intersected after the fashion of dolomites by deep clefts and irregular hollows, which render the comprehension of their bizarre arrangement a matter of difficulty even from such an elevation as the summit of the Tosa.

One of the grandest objects is the Crozzon, a jagged spur of the Tosa itself, stretching northwards into Val Brenta, and looking in its rapid foreshortening as if it would afford an exciting route for the descent; but Matteo assured me that a possible 'cammino' had yet to be found. I did not think at that time that it was reserved for us to discover such a route in the opposite direction. Still more bewitching in her maiden majesty is the cloven cone of the Torre di Brenta, visible over the shoulder of the Campanile alto.

What wonder that under such temptations the intention of going on to Pinzolo gave way to the determination to devote the remainder of the day to an attack on the Torre, though to all

appearance it was more likely to end in homage at her feet than in the conquest of the haughty fair? Descending quickly, and taking a meal and short rest at the hut, we started to inspect the side of the peak nearest to us; i.e. that overlooking the Massódi. After rounding the eastern buttress of the Cima Brenta Alta we had to wait some minutes in a wild hollow, at this season still filled with snow and surrounded on three sides by the fantastic crags of the Fulmini, till some drifting mist had floated away and we could identify and examine our foe. As soon as it was free we agreed that an attempt on that side was not likely to prove successful, but a steepish couloir on the right, leading to a deep gap, seemed likely to enable us to gain a terrace that might again admit by one of the dark chinks above it to the upper cluster of pinnacles, one of which we supposed must be the top.

On reaching the summit of this couloir we were disappointed in this, and were also both surprised to find on the other side a glacier embedded in a bay much wider than, and of quite different form from, anything shown on the Austrian map.\*

The northern face of our mountain, as it rose in an almost unbroken wall out of this glacier, looked hardly less forbidding than the other. The first 200 feet seemed a sheer precipice, showing no weak point whatever, and surmounted by a series of ledges set at a sharp angle alternating with walls of a very unpromising appearance. Matteo did not seem very keen about proceeding until I suggested that I, as a married man and father of a family, should be a safe companion, and one not ashamed to turn back when advance became fool-hardy. On closer inspection we discovered a cleft running up the face of the first 'salto,' filled here and there with ice. Up this we made our onset, and succeeded without difficulty in scaling the wall and crossing the next steep band of snow and shingle; but on the face of rock that followed, though the rock was firm and gave fair foot and hand hold for some way, we at last got ourselves into one of those situations in which it becomes the painful duty of a party of two to beat a retreat, and for a moment it seemed as if we must give up the ascent altogether; but after Nicolussi had freed himself from the knapsack, which he lowered to me, he managed—how I know not, for he seemed to stick like a fly to the face directly above my head—to work round to the right into what seemed a continuation of

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\* Herr Santner, of Bozen, gives a correct notice of this glacier in the 'Mittheilungen des Deutschen und Oesterr. Alpenvereins,' March 1882.

our original 'cammino,' and I was able to execute the same manœuvre on a lower ledge. Mist and scuds of snow added to our difficulties and made it needful to place signal stones on each available prominence. After nearly four hours of this sort of thing we were greeted by a cutting breeze, announcing the vicinity of a crest—we hoped the final arête—and so it proved; but, on reaching the ridge, a perpendicular drop at our feet and an awkward-looking pinnacle on our left seemed to bar approach to the summit. Fortunately a convenient horizontal crevice, into which an axe could be thrust to form a step, enabled us to turn this last obstacle, and, passing round or over one or two more turrets resembling half-ruined chimney-stacks, Matteo threaded the way to the topmost crest of shattered blocks, which afforded just space for both of us to stand.

The threatening clouds on all sides prevented more than a hasty glance round and a few minutes' frantic efforts to erect a cairn.

Had I then entertained the idea of attempting to improve upon the Generalstabskarte, as far as the immediate neighbourhood of the Bocca is concerned, I should have taken more particular note of what was visible from a point so well placed for surveying the crooked line of crags which extends from the Cima Tosa to the Cima di Brenta. All that I did observe was that we appeared to be higher than any other point between those summits (my aneroid gave 3,065 mètres), and that this part of the chain is much more bent towards the east than appears from either the Generalstabskarte or that lately published by the Società degli Alpinisti Tridentini. The latter corrects the nomenclature in the main, but strangely retains the misrepresentation of the direction and ramification of the chain, making several of the minor valleys quite unrecognisable, as we had ample opportunity of observing during our descent.

A short time after this climb a conversation with Signor A. de Falkner, who, as usual, was staying at Campiglio in *villeggiatura*, led to an arrangement between us to spend a few days in exploring and mapping in amateur fashion the most misrepresented part of the group.

The accompanying sketch map is the result of this and two later sojourns in the group. It was constructed upon six sets of angles, taking the positions of two prime stations—viz. the hut in Val Brenta alta and the summit of the Cima di Brenta—to be correctly laid down upon the Austrian map. The heights given of points upon our routes are the result of observations, in several cases repeated, with three aneroids,

whose readings nowhere seriously differed. The mean of these was afterwards corrected for weather changes by comparison with the records of the Observatory at Trent, for which I am indebted to the kindness of Signor A. Apollonio, one of the leading members of the Trentine Society.\*

The 19th of July found Signor de Falkner and myself at the Malga di Brenta alta, prepared for an attack upon the Crozzon,† the wonderfully precipitous spur of the Tosa mentioned above.

The afternoon was spent in sketching and reconnoitring, and the night less agreeably in the small hut in company with our two guides, the padrone of the alp and his two small boys, one calf, one sow with her litter, and sundry fowls, to say nothing of innumerable smaller domestic animals whose presence was even less desirable.

At half-past two we started in bright starlight by the rough, steep track leading to the Vedretta and Bocca dei Camozzi. Our guides were Antonio Dallagiacomà (*vulgo* Lusion) of Caderzone, and my former companion, Matteo Nicolussi. The latter, who had met us on our way from Campiglio, told us that he had reached the summit of the Crozzon with an Austrian tourist (Herr A. Baumann), two days before, from the Cima Tosa. This was rather a damper; but, after all, a direct ascent from the Vedretta dei Camozzi is quite another affair. It was, therefore, with no little anxiety that we scanned, at daybreak, the western cliffs from the middle of the glacier at their foot.

We had hitherto hoped to be able to reach a shingly ledge, which appears from Val Brenta to run far along the west face at about 200 feet above the foot of the glacier; but we now saw that, even if that could be done, it would most likely be fruitless, as the ledge ends before reaching the first 'chimney'

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\* Much more complete and accurate measurements, made this year from outlying summits on four sides of the group, have verified positions thus ascertained, and also a large number of heights taken by aneroid. I may here observe that the map only pretends to any degree of completeness in the region within a radius of five kilomètres of the Bocca di Brenta.

† The Trentine Commission have adopted the name *Crozzon* for this spur, as that best known to tourists and also in use by the people of Molveno. I should prefer *Castello*, as it is called at Pinzolo. The name *Crozzon* seems more appropriately to belong to the great wall that extends from Cima d'Ambies almost the whole length of Val Brenta. The Spezialkarte has *Cima Castello* for the former crag.

that affords any chance of scaling the almost perpendicular wall of perhaps 1,200 feet above.

Nicolussi was sure that he had looked down a practicable channel from above, but he could not now identify the notch from whence he had thought it possible to descend. We finally fixed on the third chimney, counting from the north, and forsook the glacier just above a low tongue of shingled rock that juts out some way into it. Keeping rather to the left, over steep but easy rocks, we struck our chimney where it was choked with snow, and went well for some way until the snow gave place to ice. The rest of the narrow chasm, into which the sun probably never shines, or not till evening, appeared to be of the same nature, and, being set at an average angle of  $48^{\circ}$  to  $50^{\circ}$ , with much steeper bits here and there, became rather formidable in its long vista, ending apparently near the crest between the Crozzon and Tosa. Once or twice a narrow shelf in the smooth wall on our left tempted us to try that way of escape, but we knew that if we could crawl out of the chasm it would only be to find ourselves on the sheer face of the cliff, with no chance of working upwards; so there was nothing for it but to persevere with what cheer we might in the vault-like atmosphere, with showers of ice filling our collars and sleeves from Dallagiacoma's vigorous blows. Under these circumstances it was rather a trial of patience when a puff of air took D.'s hat off and hurled it down the chasm out of sight. We would rather have pushed on and handed round one of the remaining headpieces for contributions to replace the lost *cappelluccio*, but Matteo, who was last, unroped of his own accord, and in much less time than it had taken us to ascend he returned triumphant. Sunlight was now visible on the rocks over our heads, and almost at the same moment N. exclaimed that he caught sight of one of his signals not far ahead. It was gained in time, and, as it was already half-past one, and stones and icicles were beginning to rattle about our ears, we were not sorry to exchange our icy staircase for a more open one of good rock, and work round two or three funnel-shaped bays, leading, no doubt, down to the two chimneys north of that we had come up. Two of the deepest clefts gave us some trouble, but then the easy face of what we took for the highest tooth was gained. On reaching its crown, however, we had the vexation to find that, though it bore the cairn built by Herr Baumann and Nicolussi, there was another crag to the north which overtopped ours, if only by a few feet. The dividing chasm was certainly passable, but the hour was late (3 P.M.) and one of us disinclined for further exertion; we

therefore contented ourselves with the achievement of the Tosa *viâ* the Crozzon, and after taking the requisite observations and noting our elevation—3,076 mètres by aneroid—we turned our faces towards the remainder of our climb.

There was one couloir after we had retraced our steps as far as the head of the long chimney which afforded some amusement, and might, when there is less snow, be decidedly hard to pass. The way in which Nicolussi sprang across it on to very doubtful footing in his well-worn and almost nailless boots, and then lent his back to bridge the difficulty for those following, proved the fearless, well-trained chamois hunter and gallant guide. Several spurs and intervening patches of snow are traversed ere the summit of the Cima Tosa is reached by a rib terminating a little to the S.W. of the snow crest, which we found without cornice for some distance on either side.

The run down to the Rifugio was accomplished ere the Marmolata ceased 'to parley with the setting sun.'

The night brought a thunderstorm, which did not disturb us under our substantial roof, and the sun rose in pale splendour over the Venediger, and ushered in another fine hot day, one of the few of that most treacherous summer.

We employed it in exploring the *Vedretta dei Fulmini*,\* as I venture to christen the hitherto nameless glacier between Torre di Brenta and Cima di Brenta, and in an unsuccessful attack upon the peak next on the south of the *Bocca dei Massódi*, for which we propose the name *Cima Molveno*, as it is conspicuous from that place, whilst *Cima dei Armi* would be appropriate for its neighbour to the southward, which overhangs the *Covel dei Armi* and the *Bocchetta*, by which we reached the glacier, as I had done in June.

A closer inspection of the southern face of the Cima di Brenta convinced us that it might easily be scaled from this side, and we determined on this as our next expedition. The following day, however, proving unfavourable, it was spent in minor excursions, bagging the *Cima Brenta Bassa*, or *Brentolina* (2,780 m. aner.), as Matteo called it—a first-rate point for a general survey of the group.

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\* The term *Fulmini di Brenta* seems to have been originally used for the whole line of crags and aiguilles between Cima Tosa and C. di Brenta; but, since several of the more important of these have been provided with individual names, the term *Fulmini* is used by the guides to designate those included between C. Brenta alta and Torre. The inhabitants of the uplands beyond the Adige, who see this row of teeth above the ridge of Mte. Gazza, call them *I Fulmini di Gazza*.

The next day (the 22nd) was also doubtful, but we made a start at 5 A.M., descending Val Brenta as far as its junction with the northern branch, which runs right up to the foot of Cima di Brenta and terminates in the Bocca dei Massódi at a height of about 2,850 mètres. This valley affords pasture to a limited number of sheep during the later part of the summer, and is called *Brentei* by the shepherds.

Ascending this side valley to a point almost under the northern termination of our route of the 20th, we realised the fact that the route then taken would have been considerably shorter, and involve less useless descent than that chosen to-day.

We left the gully by a rugged channel that appears to lead up between perpendicular buttresses of Cima di Brenta to a gap from which the southern glacier of Vallesinella descends on the opposite side of the ridge. Up this chasm, sometimes in the track of the trickling torrent, at others up wet rocks on the right of it, we worked our way to a broad ledge covered with débris that traverses the flank of the mountain with slight interruptions as far as the Bocca dei Massódi, and at a somewhat greater elevation. Hence there is no difficulty in going by a series of terraces, here called 'seghe,' straight up to the summit of the eastern peak (3,152 mètres), which we reached at 11.40. The ascent had taken 5 hrs. 50 mins. exclusive of halts, and I am satisfied that by the Bocchetta dei Armi the Cima di Brenta may be reached in less than 5 hrs. from the hut.

In spite of gathering clouds we were able to compare the main features of the scene with our notes from other points, and I am afraid we spoke very disrespectfully—certainly more so than I should do now—of the gentlemen whose labours are represented in the 'Spezialkarte.'

My endeavours to record the facts as overlooked from this point were hurried by an approaching thunder-storm, and at the same time impeded by an animated discussion between the other members of our party as to the true name of the peak, Nicolussi arguing, as far as I gathered, that the point on which we stood had always borne the name *Cima della Valle Persé* or *dei Ridi alti*,\* and that the other, slightly lower snowy dome to the westward, is that known in Rendena as *Cima di Brenta*; while my companion, who was supported by his guide, insisted that the eastern peak was Cima di Brenta and the western

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\* 'Ridi' is a term locally (?) applied to steep channels in the face of a cliff, usually water or avalanche courses. Rido = rivo.

Cima della Valle Persé, in accordance with the nomenclature adopted by the Trentine Society.

This nomenclature, however, was adopted under the erroneous supposition that the point of junction in the main chain was to be found in the western peak, which would thus become part of the watershed of the Valle Persé. I have, therefore, no scruples in differing from the Trentine Commission, the members of which now candidly acknowledge themselves to have been quite in the dark as to the positions of most of the peaks and ridges between the Bocca di Brenta and Mr. Tuckett's high pass at the head of Valle Persé. At the same time it is only doing bare justice to Signor de Falkner and his colleague Signor Apollonio to state that their efforts have gone a long way to elucidate the formerly chaotic nomenclature of the group, and I take this opportunity of acknowledging the valuable assistance rendered me, especially by the latter gentleman, in the construction of the accompanying sketch-map.

Let us now look at the facts. The eastern summit dominates the Valle Persé and is less conspicuous from Val Brenta, whilst its western neighbour, the Cima della Valle Persé of the Commission, is entirely invisible from Valle Persé and stands apart from its watershed. If the name *Cima della Valle Persé* is to be retained it seems obvious that it ought to be applied to a peak which naturally belongs to the Valle Persé group. Allowing this, the simplest course, and certainly the right one, had the peaks no history, would be to call the eastern peak *Cima della Valle Persé* and the western *Cima di Brenta*. This with the consent of Mr. Freshfield, who first climbed both peaks, I was prepared to do, and the members of the Trentine Commission, now convinced of the true positions of the two summits, were also *d'accord*. But Signor de Falkner has lately pointed out that if the name *Cima di Brenta* were confined to the lower peak, left nameless by its first visitors (who adopted for the whole *massif* the name by which, without any nice distinction of summits, it was known in Val Rendena at the time of their ascent), questions and confusion might arise as to these early ascents. He therefore proposed, as a compromise to be accepted by all nationalities, that Val Brenta should be allowed to retain the privilege, accorded to it by Mr. Freshfield, of naming the highest summit of its northern boundary *Cima di Brenta*, and that its secondary peak should be distinguished as *Cima di Vallesinella*, a name which we this summer found to be in use amongst the chamois hunters of the district. The advantage in the case of a conspicuous peak of preserving the name by which it is best known

in Alpine literature seems to me and also to Mr. Freshfield to outweigh the possible objections to this course, which is therefore here adopted.

Our descent was made over this western summit, which I make 26 mètres lower than its neighbour. Its snow-capped dome slopes at first gently westwards into a broad plateau of bare rock, and then breaks suddenly into a precipice overhanging the Vedretta della Vallesinella, south, and commanding an extraordinary view into a wild chasm that falls away on the southern side of the lateral ridge dividing Val Brenta from Vallesinella, and ends, I believe, in the chimney by which we began our ascent. The precipice is skirted for some fifty paces to the right to an easy 'scala' by which the upper névé of the glacier is reached, in about twenty minutes from the last summit. Whilst on the rocks the thunder-storm reached us, and, though it was by no means violent, I have never heard the axes sing louder.

The steep glacier was almost entirely covered with snow in a bad condition, but after putting on the rope for the first time in the day we made good progress, plunging and glissading down anyhow. The débris and rough ground above Vallesinella are rather tedious, and, after our wetting, we reached the upper châlet in a condition to enjoy a big fire and an unlimited supply of milk.

Passing over the edge of Monte Spinale on our way to Campiglio, our two Cime and their two glaciers came out clearly, as if to impress their relative positions on our minds or to bid us farewell; for I, at least, was to see them no more for months. I came away fully resolved to revisit these glorious scenes in the coming season, a resolution that circumstances have aided me in fulfilling in ample measure. On my way to Corsica in the middle of May this year (1883), I ascended the Cima Tosa over almost unbroken snow, and enjoyed a perfect view—if possible, surpassed in beauty by that from Monte Gazza the same evening.

Again in July the same party as last year, after making the first (?) ascent by tourists of Mondifrá I. for the purpose of surveying the central group from the north, passed on the 17th over Cima Falkner from Vallesinella, north, into Valle Persé by the Bocca della Vaile Persé, and so, skirting round the upper screes and along a ledge under Cima di Brenta, reached a pass between that peak and the *Naso* or *Cima del Castello*. Hence it is easy to keep nearly at the same level all the way through the Massódi to the Rifugio.

Next day the Daino was ascended, and found to afford a

most instructive view of all the surroundings of Massódi and Pozza Tramontana, as well as a charming distant view over the Adige and the neighbouring lakes. The route lies behind the mountain as it is seen from the path to the Bocca, and occupies about two hours and three-quarters.

The weather, which had been fine for some time, began to break, and from 10 or 11 o'clock nothing more could be done on this or the succeeding days. Nicolussi had been sent down to San Lorenzo to enquire after the old hunters, the brothers Armi, one of whom, aged 72, came up with him and gave us a good deal of information respecting names and positions of mountains and passes in the direction of San Lorenzo, and, amongst other things, told us that the name *Cime di Vallesinella* is already in use to designate the whole spur of the Brenta *massif* between Val Brenta and Vallesinella. The old boy was immensely amused at the idea of having a Dolomite peak named after him, and told us many adventures connected with the cave at its foot which the three brothers were in the habit of sleeping in 50 years ago.

The whole of that evening we were expecting the arrival of the photographer, Unterweger, from Trent, with his party of assistants and porters, but as they did not arrive before it was quite dark we concluded they must have stopped at the Malga on account of the weather. About midnight, however, De Falkner, being fortunately awake, heard dismal howls at a distance, and before the guides could get into their boots a half-drowned porter staggered into the hut with the information that the whole party were at the Bocca, unable to come down without help. In half an hour or so the room was filled with the unfortunates and their apparatus, which it had cost them fourteen hours' labour to convey from Pinzolo! Even our heartfelt commiseration could not restrain our mirth when, instead of a tin of tongue, which Unterweger had been requested to bring from Trent, he solemnly presented a parcel of strange appearance and over a yard long, with the words 'Signor Cavaliere, ecco la lingua!' and with an action as if he were delivering a field marshal's bâton.

Several endeavours were made, with indifferent success, to secure panoramic photographs of the Tosa group and of the Massódi, but the weather at last confined us to the hut for twenty-four hours, after which we embraced the first opportunity of running down to Campiglio. Those who knew this path in former years would be surprised to find a great portion of it, formerly a well marked track amongst rhododendron and pine scrub, now carried precariously over a waste of ill-con-

solidated débris, the remains of a tremendous rock-slip, which fell from the shoulder of the Tosa in March 1882, and was in the summer of that year so mingled with ice and snow, torn on its way from the Vedretta del Crozzon, that vast portions of it were constantly changing their level in consequence of liquefaction going on below and between the masses. Time and the passage of numerous parties, including two companies of soldiers, have formed a more stable track, but one far from pleasant after heavy rain. The desolation extends from the foot of the glacier under the Bocca to the pastures of Val Brenta alta, and far up on both sides of the valley. The ceaseless cannonades of stones, which last year still descended from the huge white scar near the top of the cliff, and rendered all approach to the great couloir utterly impossible, have now almost ceased; and a German friend, Herr Merzbacher, has just proved the possibility of ascending the Tosa, if not the Crozzon, by this couloir, having succeeded in passing both Bergschründe. They are unusually well bridged this year. He did not, however, get as much as half-way up the couloir, on account of the intense cold and the time spent in cutting steps in hard ice.

A fifth visit to the district has enabled me to obtain a pretty complete idea of the north-eastern and south-western extension of the group. Both these regions, whilst less lofty and of less romantically bizarre formation than the central group, offer an abundance of interesting and beautiful excursions. The forms of the mountains are more massive, and drawn out in more continuous ridges, divided by deep and for the most part very steep, stony valleys, but not cut up by such chasm-like passes as the Bocca di Brenta, Bocca di Vallesinella, and others near the centre of the chain.

An attempt to cross from Val Agola into the Banale, taking Cima di Vallon on the way, was frustrated by dense masses of cloud that enveloped the whole region, before we had time, from the summit, to make out a practicable passage out of the head of the Vallon. We were thus forced to descend that valley, an interminable waste of screes and bare rock terraces, into the head of Val d'Algone, and down the latter to Stenico. The Cima di Vallon is a fine peak, 2,930 mètres. and, from its advanced position and the inferior heights of its subordinate spurs, commands very fine views over Giudicaria, Lares group, Lago di Garda, &c. The approach to it from the west should be made by a gully leading directly up under the western spur, and not, as we made it, by the Vedretta Pagajola and over the shoulder of the peak

of the same name.\* There appears to be a feasible pass from the head of the Vallon almost exactly east of the Cima di Vallon, which would lead into the Malga Prato, and by skirting that to the Forcolotta and so to Molveno—a pleasanter and more remunerative ‘course’ than that down the Val d’Ambies to San Lorenzo. From the Malga in Val Agola the Cima di Vallon can be reached in about five hours, and in about the same from the more commodious Malga dei Bleccii (di Bleccio) at the foot of the Vallon.

Stenico is a place passed unseen by most travellers, as it lies high above the new road through Giudicaria.† It is full of picturesque old houses, many of which still contain some good carved furniture. The road from Stenico to Molveno is interesting as forming part of the old mule road from Trent into Giudicaria. It winds round the steeper and over the easier shoulders of the hills, passing the picturesque villages of Premione, Villa di Banale, Andogno, and Dorsino, and descending to Molini, where the Rivo Bondai emerges from the great bar of débris below Lago di Nembia. There the path to Molveno follows the ascending valley, whilst the old road turns southward again along its other flank and skirts the southern foot of Monte Gazza, here and there hewn in the face of the cliff, to Ranzo and Margone, above the Lago di Toblino.

Monte Gazza, which is ascended from Terlago or Vezzano by a broad paved mule path in  $3\frac{1}{2}$  to 4 hours, affords on the whole the most comprehensive and instructive view of the Brenta group that can be obtained, and may therefore be made with advantage the line of approach by mountaineers new to the district.

One word more in praise of the hut near the Bocca di Brenta, the most complete and comfortable I ever slept in, saving, perhaps, the Knorrhütte on the Zugspitze. Indeed, I venture to think that Mr. Freshfield, when he visits it, will allow that this, like the two others built by the young Trentine Club, makes a worthy exception to his remarks.‡

Matteo Nicolussi deserves to be recommended as thoroughly trustworthy and companionable. Though in knowledge not equal to the best Swiss men, his practical qualifications, especially on rocks, would rank him anywhere as a first-rate guide.

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\* See ‘Alpine Journal,’ vol. viii. p. 398.

† See however Freshfield’s *Italian Alps*, p. 180.

‡ ‘Alpine Journal,’ vol. x. p. 410.

## THE PIZZO D'UCCELLO AND THE SOLCO D'EQUI.

By F. F. TUCKETT.

'Though we travel the world over to find the beautiful, we must carry it with us, or we find it not. . . . That which we carry to it, the same we bring back more fairly illustrated in the memory.'—EMERSON.

MR. FRESHFIELD'S very charming description of the 'Alpi Apuane,' or Carrara mountains, and of his ascent of the Pania della Croce, in the 'Alpine Journal' for February 1876, had set me longing to see something of this lovely *massif*, and so it came about that, after a delightful month spent amongst Tuscan and Umbrian hill towns from Volterra to Urbino, I found myself with François Devouassoud, on the afternoon of May 15 last, ascending the path through the chestnut woods above Cansoli—where the carriage road from Serravezza ceases—to the little mountain village of Livigliani. Of our very interesting expedition on the following day over the summit of the Pania, it may suffice to say that the highest point was reached by a fine snow arête with as knife-like an edge as that of the Lyskamm itself, and a quarter of an hour in length, and that, as I wished to visit Barga in the valley of the Serchio, I chose a different line of descent from Mr. Freshfield, viz. that of the valley of the Torrite di Petroschiana, which debouches at Galliciano. To prevent future comers making the same mistake that we did, I may mention that, having glissaded down the snow slopes in an E.S.E. direction, we found ourselves, at a point 1,000 feet or more below the summit, cut off by what from above appeared an impassable precipice, and had laboriously to toil up again by the rocks on our left, until we came upon indications of a rough track which apparently led from the valley of the Torrite Secca across the ridge connecting the Pania with the Paniella, but was concealed by the snow where it traversed the head of the hollow down which we had at first struck. Thanks to this discovery, after a brief and easy *traversée* of the spur which runs down from the Pania to the S.E., we gained, by a short rock descent, the head of the Costa Pulita, as the steep slope is called which descends to the depression between the Pania and Monte Forato. From this saddle there is a fine view westwards into the upper basin of the Vezza Versiglia, after enjoying which for some time we made for the highest house of the Val Petroschiana, where we were most hospitably received and liberally supplied with milk. Half an hour further down Forno Volasco was passed, and the path then led through a succession of defiles and more open bottoms, which reminded me of the Val Angrogna in the