

one suspect that the learned Doctor was not very strong in Russian.

It is unnecessary, I hope, to say that in offering these remarks and corrections I am actuated by no captious spirit. I fully recognise Dr. Merzbacher's great merits and services.

THE ALPINE HISTORY OF MONTE VISO SINCE 1882.

BY WM. ANDERTON BRIGG.

As the last detailed notice of this fine peak appeared in these pages so long ago as 1882* it may be useful to give a summary (for which I am indebted to a well-known authority) of the routes followed by various parties since that date, and thus complete the sketch contained in the new edition of Mr. Ball's 'Western Alps' (pp. 61-4). It may be noted in passing that the summit is not crowned, as there stated, with a cross and a huge bronze statue of the B. V. M., but with a cross of iron lattice work; two *repoussé* bronze *plaques* (one representing our Saviour and the other the B. V. M.) are fixed among the rocks at its base.

1. *S. Face*.—This, the earliest and still the favourite route, is taken from the Q. Sella Hut, near the Sacripante spring, at the head of the Forciollone glen, and needs no further description.

2. *N.W. Face*.—This route, taken from the new Ballif-Viso Hut (2,474 m.), at the very head of the Guil valley, which has superseded the old Refuge des Lyonnais, was first made by M. Guillemin's party, August 12, 1879,† and September 5, 1879, by Mr. Coolidge.‡ It has not attracted many climbers. Mr. Coolidge took it in September, when the rocks are free from snow, and found but few difficulties; but succeeding parties have encountered serious obstacles. The third party, Dr. Chabrand's, on September 8, 1884, was benighted 160 ft. below the summit.§ The fourth, Sig. M. Gattorno's, with Messrs. Evan and Wm. Mackenzie (the latter a boy of thirteen), on July 17, 1890, took 17 hrs. from a bivouac near the Col de Vallante to the summit.|| M. Piaget, of Lyons, on September 6, 1897, took 11 hrs. from the Refuge des Lyonnais to the summit.¶ Two other parties have probably taken this route, but their notes are vague. MM. D., Ch., and Ed. Revel describe an ascent on September 15, 1892,** apparently by the N.E. route, but really, it would seem, by the N.W. route, as M. D. Revel, in writing to Mr. Coolidge on February 5, 1893, asks for particulars of the latter's 1881 route (see below), as he proposed to attempt it

* See Mr. Coolidge's paper, *A. J.*, vol. x. pp. 453-481.

† *Ann. du C. A. F.*, vol. vi. pp. 9-22.

‡ *A. J.*, vol. ix. pp. 353-4, vol. x. pp. 460-2.

§ *Ann. de la S. T. D.*, vol. x. p. 75.

|| *Riv. Mens.*, vol. x. pp. 179-183; *Ann. de la S. T. D.*, vol. xvii. pp. 133-141.

¶ *Ibid.* vol. xxiii. p. 100.

** *Ibid.* vol. xviii. pp. 189-205.

in the following summer, having already accomplished 'the other N. route.' Sig. V. Valbusca climbed from the Colle delle Cadreghe by the 'Cresta Nord'—*i.e.*, it would seem, by the N.W. route.*

8. *N.E. Face*.—This difficult climb (which is taken from the Piano del Rè Hotel) was first made by Mr. Coolidge in 1881,† and has never been repeated in its entirety. Sig. Guido Rey made (July 28, 1898) a useful variation by avoiding the dangerous couloir which leads up to the depression between the Viso and the Visolotto (the Colle delle Cadreghe).‡ His route was practically followed by M. de Cessole (August 31, 1902),§ and by Messrs. J. J. Brigg, Eric Greenwood, J. W. Firth, and myself, with Claudio Perotti as guide (August 3, 1903). Mr. Coolidge, having seen the tracks of all three parties marked on a photograph, is able to say that each follows a slightly different line in the higher part of the climb, on and near the great upper couloir, which is well shown in Mr. Whymper's fine engraving of the peak.|| Mr. Coolidge's route is marked, as also is Sig. Rey's, on a diagram in the 'Bollettino,' No. 54:—

Sig. Guido Rey's Ascent by the N.E. Face (note addressed by Sig. Rey to Mr. Coolidge, under date of October 17, 1903).— 'I have never published a detailed account of my route in 1898 up Monte Viso. What follows are notes taken from my pocket book:

'July 28, 1898.—Left the Piano del Rè at 2.45 A.M. Mounted by the ordinary Col du Viso track. Halted at the foot of the "Couloir Coolidge" at 4.30 A.M. Left at 5 A.M. Mounted by a little névé, very steep, which ended in a little snow couloir, to (our) left of the "Couloir Coolidge." Mounted straight up the little couloir about 70 mètres, then left it, and took to the rocks on our left, a difficult spot here; then a rock-wall, very steep, but firm, where we climbed quickly. At 6 A.M. we were between 150 and 180 mètres higher than the foot of the little couloir. Crossed the couloir, which comes down from the "gendarmes" on its left side, to its right side, and mounted in the couloir, sometimes cutting steps in the snow and sometimes hugging the rocks on its right flank. Having followed it all its length, at 6.40 A.M. we came to a rock with a rocky promontory ("contrefort") at its head, where we built a "stone-man." Followed along the face of the mountain. At 3,000 m. (about) were overtaken by hail storm, and then by thick snow, and had to halt. Set off again at 7.25 A.M., always in the direction of the big "gendarmes," which we had seen from the foot of the peak. At 8 A.M. reached the base of one of these gendarmes, the most easterly of them—that is to say, looking towards the Viso Mozzo. Made another "stone-man," and set off at once. Mounted about 250 m., and were stopped again by the snow, which fell thickly. Perotti thought we were here 200 m. lower than the

* *Riv. Mens.*, vol. xviii. p. 421.

† *A. J.*, vol. x. pp. 350, 465, 469-473.

‡ *Riv. Mens.*, vol. xvii. p. 293.

§ *Rev. Alpine*, vol. x. p. 37.

|| *A. J.*, vol. x. p. 453.

summit of the Visolotto. At 10 A.M. the sun came out a little; the rocks were all white. We continued the ascent by the rocks of the E. face, very steep, and rather difficult, to the foot of the higher snow-covered glacier. Traversed this glacier in zigzag, as it was very steep. At noon we had cleared the glacier, and reached the rocks forming the great N.E. ridge of the Viso, which comes down from the summit of the Viso. After halting $\frac{1}{2}$ hr. mounted by these easy rocks to the summit (the eastern) at 1.30 P.M. Descent by the ordinary S. face route. Guides: Claudio Perotti, and his brother Francesco as porter.'

M. de Cessole's Ascent of the N.E. Face (summarised from his paper in the 'Revue Alpine,' vol. x. pp. 33-41).

'August 31, 1902.—Left the Piano del Rè (2,019 m.) at 2.40 A.M. by the Fiorenza and Charietto Lakes and the Col du Viso path, leaving the "Couloir Coolidge" on the right, and crossing the vast névé which stretches to the very foot of the N.E. face, reached the point of attack at 5 A.M., near the rock wall which forms the left-hand boundary of the "Couloir Coolidge." Roped and began to climb (2,600 m., about). Instead of taking, above the névé, the little snow couloir which Sig. Rey followed for 60-70 m. we tackled the face of the mountain on our right, which we found, after the first few rocks, very steep ("escarpée"), and in places pretty bad. We thus passed above the "opening" or upper end ("ouverture") of the couloir, and then got into it, and kept by the rocks on the left. Halt for 5 min. at 6.5 A.M. Mounted the higher part of the snow couloir, sometimes a little to the left, sometimes to the right, and followed it up to the top, sometimes keeping to the rocks, sometimes cutting steps in the couloir itself. At the top we left it to turn a gendarme by a truly difficult "rock pitch" ("barre rocheuse"). Noticed on a neighbouring eminence a little pyramid built by M. Rey. Beyond we were met by a rock ridge not less forbidding than the last bit, and rested 15 min. under an overhanging rock glazed with ice (2,950 m., about). We found some water in a crack of the rock, and enjoyed a splendid view of the great Alpine peaks, being favoured with delightful weather. We next came across a rock couloir, and then another of M. Rey's "stone-men." Having crossed another ridge, we turned on to the E. face, almost facing the Viso Mozzo. The great stony ("pierreuse") slope was very easy, and we soon crossed the first snow patch and reached the foot of a vertical rock-face—that where M. Rey had to shelter from a storm.

'We mounted in succession several snow slopes and rock crags ("escarpements"), and halted from 8.35 to 9 A.M. for breakfast (3,250 m., about).

'The climb then began to be truly difficult, by reason of the new snow on all the rocks, and got worse as we went on.

'Arrived at 10.10 A.M. at the upper "Couloir Coolidge," close to its narrowest point. The weather, hitherto fine, began to change, and a light mist from the S. came up. Decided to cross the great ice gully ("coulée") which, starting at the summit of the Viso,

becomes a formidable slope ("rampe"), and ends below in a cascade of séracs—25 centim. of new snow on the surface, which had to be swept off before we could cut steps in the ice. Went cautiously through fear of starting an avalanche. Found at the nearest point, on the opposite side, or true left, of the couloir a little ridge, which we followed, in a thick mist, climbing an interminable succession of ice-glazed rocks, covered with new snow. Hard climbing, cold fingers, frozen rope, with glimpses through the mist of the frightful rock precipices of the N. face, and at last of the cross on the summit. Finally a supreme effort landed us on a snow ridge which "leaned horribly over the abyss," after which we joined the final ridge, and stepped quickly on to the eastern summit (8,840 m.) at 2.20 P.M. Descended by the S. face to the hut, and by the tiresome ("fastidieux") Forciollone glen to the Soulières chalets; and to Castel Delfino next day.'

Note.—' We appear to have followed Sig. Rey's route pretty closely, taking up the first little couloir, and touching the first stone-man, but not the second. We found no ice or snow on the rocks, and the snow slope near the top was in excellent condition, allowing us to go right up it with hardly any step-cutting. Some of the rock pitches were very steep, and some of the handholds very loose, but there was nothing supremely difficult. We were five on the rope, and went slowly. Left the Piano del Rè at 8.50 A.M. (August 3, 1903), reached the summit at 3.20 P.M., and the Q. Sella Hut at 6.15 P.M., whence Perotti returned to Crissolo, and we started down the Forciollone glen for Castel Delfino, but eventually spent the night under a rock $\frac{1}{2}$ hr. above the Soulières chalets.

4. *E. Face and Ridge.*—This route, said not to be difficult under ordinary conditions, and quite safe, was discovered by Sig. G. Rey, with the guide Ant. Castagneri, on August 15, 1887, and has become a favourite with Italian climbers, though it does not seem to have attracted many English.*

This route was varied and taken on the descent on July 16, 1900, by Prof. Mario Ceradini, with the guides Cl. and Giuseppe Perotti, the party keeping always on the E. face, without touching the E. ridge, and joining Sig. Rey's route on the large snow patch shown on Mr. Whymper's engraving † just at the foot of the precipitous bit of the E. ridge. The party took 10 hrs. (including halts) from the summit to the Piano del Rè.‡ Their route was followed, also on the descent, by Sig. Besozzi, Casiraghi, and Cattaneo on August 8, 1902.§

5. *S.W. Ridge.*—This route was taken by Sig. C. Grosso and F. Antoniotti, with the guides Cl. and Giuseppe Perotti and D.

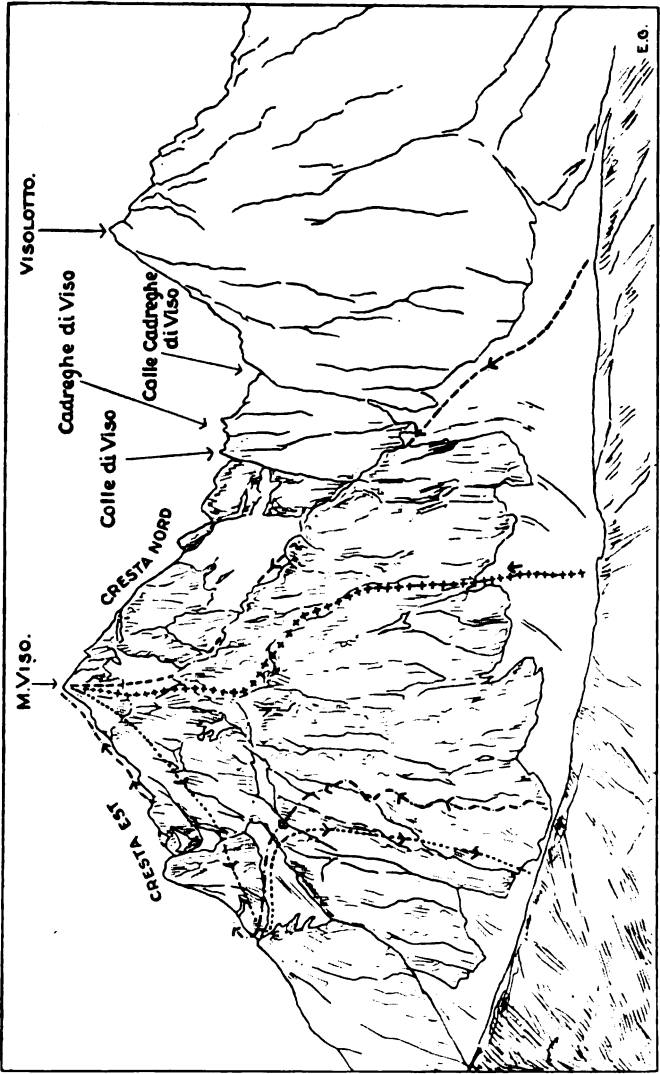
* *Riv. Mens.*, vol. vi. p. 237, vol. vii. p. 308, vol. viii. p. 252, vol. ix. p. 393, vol. x. p. 250, vol. xii. p. 200, vol. xvi. p. 458; *Bollettino*, No. 54, pp. 226-233, with large diagram; *A. J.*, vol. xiv. p. 267; Ball, p. 63.

† *A. J.*, vol. x. p. 453.

‡ *Riv. Mens.*, vol. xix. pp. 378-383.

§ *Ibid.*, vol. xxi. p. 15.

Putto, on September 26, 1898. They climbed the Viso di Vallanta (8,672 m.), already ascended by Sig. V. Giordano and P. Gastaldi



in 1891,* from the Q. Sella Hut in 3¼ hrs., descended slightly to a gap on the S.W. ridge of the Viso in 2½ hrs., and then followed

* *Riv. Mens.*, vol. x. p. 296, vol. xi. pp. 2-6, with marked diagram.

this ridge to the summit in 1½ hr.* Sig. Agostino Ferrari repeated this climb in 1899, and took 2¼ hrs. from the Viso di Vallanta to the summit.†

6. *E. Ridge*.—The upper portion of the E. ridge was climbed for the first time, on August 7, 1902, by Signor A. Kind, his daughter Elena, Signori A. Weber and U. Valbusa. This party, from the spot at which Signor G. Rey's route of 1887 bears to the S., in order to mount the E. face, continued along the E. ridge to the summit of the Viso. This ascent was repeated early in July 1903 by Signor A. Centner, with C. and G. Perotti, while Signor A. Brofferio, with the same guides, July 21, 1903, descended from the summit by this route.‡

The accompanying diagram has been made by Mr. Greenwood from a photograph of the N.E. face which illustrates Signor Ceradini's paper in the 'Rivista Mensile' (vol. xix. p. 378), and shows four of the above-mentioned routes.

IN MEMORIAM.

SIR LESLIE STEPHEN.

SINCE John Ball left us in 1889 Leslie Stephen had been the recognised head of the Alpine confraternity in England. He owed this honour not only to his seniority—for he was one of the oldest members of the Club—but still more to his achievements as a mountaineer, to his literary fame, and to the dignity and elevation of his character, which won for him the respect and affection of all our members.

He was born in 1832 in London. His father, Sir James Stephen, was for a good many years the permanent head of the Colonial Office, and for some years professor of modern history at Cambridge. His grandfather, James Stephen, had sat for a time in Parliament, where he distinguished himself by his strenuous opposition to the slave trade and slavery. His great-grandfather, a native of the district of Buchan, in Aberdeenshire, had an adventurous career, which Leslie has sketched in the interesting notices of his family with which his biography of his brother Fitzjames Stephen (judge of the High Court), opens.

Educated for a short time as a home boy at Eton, and thereafter at King's College School, Leslie was sent to Cambridge, where he graduated as twentieth wrangler in 1854. He was presently elected to a Fellowship at his own college, Trinity Hall, and in due course took college work as a lecturer in mathematics and was ordained. After some years, however, his theological views underwent so great a change that he ceased to consider himself a

* *Riv. Mens.* vol. xii. p. 200, vol. xiii. pp. 147–151.

† *Ibid.* vol. xviii. p. 457.

‡ *Ibid.* vol. xxiii. p. 21 and pp. 49–50.