

son's and mine, except that he seems to have avoided the difficult traverse on the S. face. I remember having noticed footmarks on the snow far below us, which I took at the time to have been made by his party; but I forgot, on reaching a place better suited for such investigations, to see how far back the marks reached. Any such traverse must start a long way back and cut off a great length of the ridge. Farrar, always as ready to put his unrivalled experience at the service of younger climbers as to drive them to despair by his example, tells me that when he did the Teufelsgrat with Daniel Maquignaz they traversed as much as possible. Can this be the reason why he, as well as Eaton and Whitting, declare it is a climb they would not care to do again, while both Williamson and I thought it one of the most enjoyable in our experience? The mere rottenness of the rock cannot be the cause, for Maquignaz declared it was much worse this time than when he did the climb before. Unremitting care is needed at every step; but, granting this, the difficulties are not so great as to distract the mind from the enjoyment of a day spent on this lofty ridge among the grandest scenes in the Alps, and yet great enough to bring ever fresh variety into perhaps the longest climb round Zermatt. Favoured by perfect weather and dry rocks, we had enjoyed a day unmarred by the slightest mishap to any of us. The Devil was not at home that day on his ridge. Two nights later, as I was sleeping at the Bétemps hut, he came in a fury of hurricane and thunder, hail and snow, to avenge himself upon me. But the good hut held out against the storm, and he had to content himself with putting an end to all climbing for the rest of that week.

#### A VARIATION ON THE GUGLIA DI BRENTA.

By C. F. MEADE.

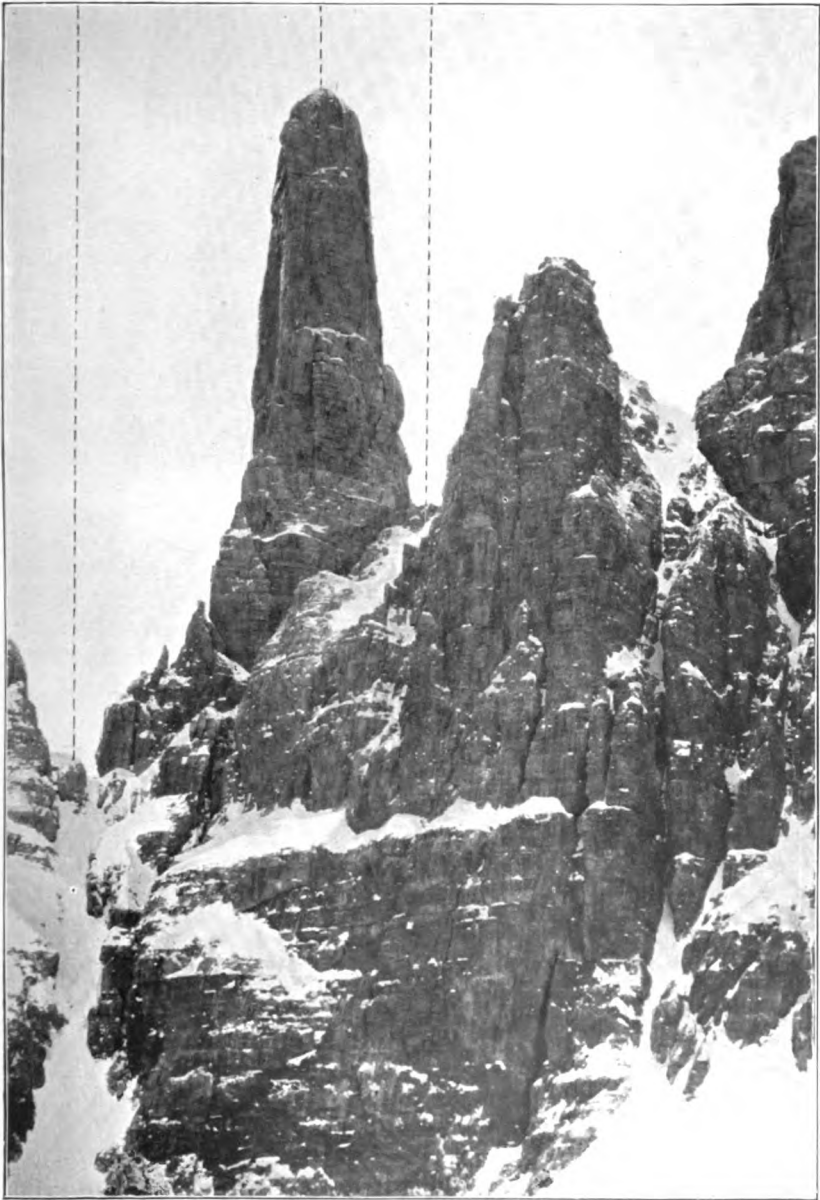
I GIVE a full account of the ordinary way up, since it has never been described in this 'Journal.' Leaving the Rifugio della Tosa on August 19, 1909, with Pierre Blanc, I walked up to the low ridge running into the base of the E. wall of the Guglia between the Bocchette del Campanile and della Guglia. These small passes are respectively N. and S. of the Guglia and divide it from its two neighbours, the Campanile Alto and the Cima Brenta Alta.

Putting on scarpetti we left our boots on this ridge and climbed up into the chasm which crosses the base of the E. wall

*B.c. della  
Guglia*

*Guglia di  
Brenta*

*Boc. del  
Companite*



*G. B. Unterwieser, photo.*

*Swan Electric Engineering Co., Ltd.*

**GUGLIA DI BRENTA, FROM THE EAST.**

upwards from right to left. At the head of this chasm, scrambling over a jammed stone, we emerged on the S. face by a traverse of a few yards, and climbed up some very difficult and exposed slabs. In one place Pierre found my shoulders useful to take off from. The slabs constitute the first instalment of difficulty, and we judged them to be only twenty metres in height. When they are conquered the shoulder in the E. arête has been reached, and rock or shale ledges are followed round the N. face above great cliffs, up one or two chimneys (not difficult) on to a broad, easy, horizontal ledge. This walk or terrace extends for about three hundred yards, as far as the S.W. arête of the Guglia. Here, where it ends, begins the ascent of a sixty-metre chimney, tiring, perhaps, though not difficult. At the top of the chimney lies the upper or S. terrace, leading E., and this enticing path must be avoided, for here a short descending traverse of a few metres round the S.W. arête is necessary (*not* a descent of eighty metres as described in one account). After this traverse begin the upper slabs, the second and last formidable obstacle to be encountered during the climb. They resemble the lower slabs, and the difficulties appeared to be of the same kind. Though more 'vertigineux' than the lower slabs they cannot be any longer, and they lead directly to the top of the Guglia.

But at the head of the long chimney we went wrong. Perhaps we became careless, being elated at finding the actual difficulties less terrifying than the accounts volunteered by imaginative natives. Anyhow we allowed ourselves to be lured along the broad terrace running E. Pierre, exploring ahead, beckoned me to come. He had found an iron ring, and we must be on the right track. At the moment we did not know it, but this ring and another had been fixed by one of two guideless climbers who were attempting this new route a few weeks previously. A little above the upper ring he had fallen, and his rope had broken at the ring. His companion, who survived him, succeeded in getting down to Pinzolo safely alone.

I followed Pierre to where our terrace faded into the blank wall of the southern precipice of the Guglia. This precipice, apparently vertical, descends for well over a thousand feet from close under the summit of the Guglia to far below the Bocchetta della Guglia, and on the W. side of that little pass.

Pierre had hitched the rope round a boulder. The iron ring that we had to aim at was visible on our right, diagonally above us on the sheer wall. My task was to kneel as near the vanishing point of our terrace as possible, and to slowly raise

myself, leaning to my right over the abyss as far as I dared, and thus serve with my head and shoulders as a vantage point for Pierre in grappling with the cliff above him. After a hard struggle he wriggled up across the cliff and out of my sight beyond the first ring. As he came to each ring he unroped and re-roped, passing the rope through each in turn for safety. This afterwards involved a like performance on my part, in order to free the rope again. I found it a long and troublesome job, as I did not much care to let go with more than one hand at a time.

There is no question of the amateur being pulled in such places. Indeed the rope jammed so much in the rings that it often desperately incommoded Pierre in the most precarious situations. For him he was sure that the extreme difficulty occurred some half a dozen metres above the upper ring. As for me, I confess that I was glad, not merely at the taking off place, but also at another place higher up, to grasp the rope and with brazen indifference to the ethics of mountaineering, to pull myself up by its means. The leader could hitch the rope when an occasional rock offered an opportunity, but two hands could not be spared for hauling, and the rope generally jammed in the rings.

At the taking-off place the rope was so much diagonally instead of vertically above me that the question of whether it would slip off a certain knob of rock and swing me right down over the gulf became a pressing consideration. Fortunately it held, for at the taking-off point the last man has practically nothing but the rope to hold to.

I assume the vertical distance between the top of the Guglia and our taking-off place at the end of the terrace to be about fifty metres, and the difficulties do not cease till the top is reached.

On the top Pierre confirmed his suspicions that the correct way was close to the S.W. arête. With this relief we were able to rest and eat, as well as enjoy the contents of our big thermos bottle of tea and white wine. On the way down we met Dimai and Verzi with two distinguished Hungarian climbers. With another party they had watched our mistaken efforts as we crawled, silhouetted against the sky. They had shouted repeatedly to warn us, but had been too far below for us to be able to distinguish words. Dimai and Verzi agreed with Pierre that the slabs of the Guglia were well up to the standard of the most difficult Dolomites. Our variation is a trap to be avoided, and I expect that Pierre is right in thinking that it is the most difficult and sensational precipice

he has ever climbed. In our opinion it is an expedition which ought not to be repeated.

In conclusion I would advise any climber visiting Campiglio to make himself as independent of all local conditions as possible. A climber need not stay at Campiglio, but if he wishes to do so he would probably find the smaller hotels more agreeable. For local guides I should give the preference to Pinzolo, where they acknowledge a tariff. At Campiglio and Campo Carlomagno tariffs are unheard of, but the gentle native is not in that state of primitive innocence which the absence of tariffs might be supposed to imply.

[There is a paper on the first ascent of the Guglia, with a sketch of the route, in 'Empor—Georg Winkler's Tagebuch' (p. 133 *seq.*). See also the masterly and splendidly illustrated monograph of the Brenta Group in 'Zeitschrift d. D.u.Ö.A.-V.,' 1906, 1907, 1908. The last volume contains the best map of the group 1.25000.]

#### ALPINE HUMOUR.

By CHARLES DONALD ROBERTSON.

(Read before the Alpine Club, March 1, 1910.)

AT one time I was sorely tempted to gild the pill of my paper for a picture-loving public by the addition to my title of the words 'illustrated by slides.' The humour of the Alps is indeed so often illustrated by slides that I might have pleaded some justification. Fortunately I was saved from a rearguard action with my conscience by the news that a quorum was to be secured for me by more legitimate means. It only remains for me therefore to preface the *pièce de résistance* of the evening (*absit omen!*) by a feast of ungarnished reason and a flow of Barmecide soul. You may console yourselves, however, by anticipating from me 'the soul of wit.'

First, as to my title. Let me confess in confidence that it was, at its conception, a volcanic rock; a fragmentary exclamation flung out in a heat of exasperation over a too typical account of an expedition; less a title than an expletive. Unfortunately the expletive fell to earth on the head of the Secretary, who sent it back by return of post with an intimation that the Alpine Club wished it reported upon in March. The moral of that is: 'Don't say "damn" to the Recording Angel.' Because he will. By this time my explosive had cooled down, and cold lava is a trifle dispiriting for prolonged