

to my mountain lodestar, the granite rocks, the sparkling falls, and wooded depths of Masino and Val Bregaglia.

The best handbook ⁵ by far for the Ortler range is that published by the C.A.I., and written by Count Bonacossa. It came out early in 1915, and must have been invaluable to the Italian G.S.

A very good map ⁶ of the Sulden Valley and its surrounding peaks has also been issued by the Military Topographical Bureau, Florence. The scale is rather too large, 1:25,000. The old Tyrolese names appear, most fortunately, in brackets under the new Italian ones. I believe a similar map is in preparation of the Trafoi valley.

I am very grateful to Messrs. Withers and Morrish for the loan of their beautiful slides.

THE SCHMADRIJOCH.

(From the late Sir Edward Davidson's Notes.)

Saturday, September 21, 1895.

LEFT Trachsellaunen at 4.35 A.M., accompanied by the landlord of the inn, who wished to go up to the chalets of the Breitlaunen Alp to look after some sheep, goats, and herd-boys he had up there. We put out the lanterns at 5.30 A.M., and reached the upper chalets of the Breitlaunen Alp at 6 A.M., where the landlord left us. We then traversed over very decent slopes, crossing the Schmadribach high up and reaching the moraine at 7 A.M. Later on we stopped at some water to breakfast from 7.40 A.M. to 8.20 A.M. We then reached the ice; went up a narrow couloir next some rocks on the right, down which water was running plentifully between the rock and a casing of ice which was, of course, transparent and let one see the water running down behind it, producing a very curious effect. Above us at this time was a hanging glacier, under whose range we remained for about ten minutes. This was immaterial in the early morning, but might have been less agreeable later in the day.

As soon as we had got up this couloir or gully we traversed to

⁵ *Regione dell' Ortler.* Milano. 1915.

⁶ *Carta della Conca di Sulden,* 1923.

the left, over an ice and snow slope, to the rocks running down from the Grosshorn ridge. We followed these some way, and then had to take to the ice on the right of the rocks, keeping close to them, however, all the time. Here we had a good deal of step-cutting.

At 11.30, just about two-thirds of the way up these rocks, we stopped at a convenient place until 12 o'clock (noon) for a second meal. Then more step-cutting, with Rudolf¹ leading—a short traverse over nasty rocks of a ledgy character over which there was barely enough ice lying to permit of secure steps being cut—and we landed at 2.10 P.M. on the upper glacier plateau immediately beneath the col, and lying in a cirque bounded on the one side by the Lauterbrunnen Breithorn and on the other by the Grosshorn. We traversed quickly across to the right, mounting at last up an easy snow-slope to a well-defined notch in the ridge forming a sort of narrow gateway between two crags standing up on either side out of the (mixed) snow and rock ridge. We reached the col at 2.45 and remained on some rocks on the S. side of it, eating and enjoying the view, until 3.30 P.M.

We then descended by easy rocks for some distance, though it was evident that access to the glacier was barred almost all along the line by steep cliffs from 50 to 200 ft. high.

We eventually, after looking about a good deal, had to get down over some smooth rocks down which a small waterfall was flowing, and had to double our spare (60-ft.) rope over a *saillie* of rock for greater security in so descending. In this way we got pretty well wet-through, as we had to shin down some smooth slabs on hands, knees, and elbows. In ordinary years, however, I have no doubt that such disagreeable manœuvres would be unnecessary, as the glacier would come much higher up the rocks, and probably the bergschrund would also be bridged by practicable bridges. Old Almer wanted to leave our extra rope, but against this wanton sacrifice I, and also Klucker, most energetically protested. We therefore tied the ends together in a safe knot, so as to make an endless loop of the 60-ft. rope, and passed our own 100-ft. rope through the noose, unroping ourselves and going down one by one, by which means we got about 90 ft. of rope support down the rocks. When we had got down to the snow-field we violently agitated the lower rope, and by this means jerked, after several trials, the upper rope

¹ [The guides were Christian Almer himself, his son Rudolf, and Christian Klucker.]

off the rock *saillic*. We kept on the extreme right (descending) of the glacier, and by this means avoided almost entirely those parts of it which were not covered with snow. Usually, I fancy, the descent could be made either pretty straight down the centre or by going over the slopes to the left, near the Anen-Grat; but this year such a course would have involved an enormous amount of step-cutting, as the glacier was, except on the right, almost entirely divested of its usual snow covering. We got on to the moraine on the right of the glacier at 5.50 P.M., stopped here twenty minutes to drink water and to make lemonade with Whympers' fruit-kali, and then went on, over slopes of 'schutt' interspersed with scanty grass and occasional slabs, by an ill-marked sort of shepherd's path which winds along the right side of the moraine-covered upper valley, at a height of some 300 ft. above the stony waste by which the valley itself, from the snout of the glacier to the place where the upper Lötschthal path is reached, is covered. After about forty minutes of this level traverse we found it necessary to descend on to the stony waste—at a place called the 'Heimischeggen' on the Siegfried-Atlas map—and after about twenty minutes over the boulders we got on to the hillside on the right again, whence a very short descent took us down to a path at the head of the Lötschthal which was here, and for some distance down the valley, very well marked. It was now just 7 o'clock, and the light was beginning to give out; however, we went on for twenty minutes more before it became necessary to light the lanterns. The point where we struck the path is near that marked 2182 in. on the map. Soon after we 'lighted up' the path began to go through bits of alpine meadow and to disappear at intervals among thick rhododendron bushes. We speedily lost it—no doubt by keeping too low down—and stumbled about for 1½ hours in the most annoying and tiresome way. At one time I thought we should have had to sleep out in the woods above the Gletscherstafel. However, we eventually reached the chalets of Gletscherstafel and the church (which was lighted up inside, though there was no one in it) at 9.20 P.M., having stopped *en route* for about fifteen minutes at a spring of good water flowing out of moss-covered rock. We reached the village of Blatten at 10.50 P.M., and the Hotel Nesthorn at Ried (Schröder *propriétaire*, vice Lehner) at 11.10 P.M. Old Almer² was, I think, rather tired—but not much more so than I was—after this fatiguing day of 18½ hours!

² [He was nearly 70.]