

- (11) and (12) Vampire and Bannie taken from Montgomery at the head of the Müller glacier. On the left are the snow-slopes leading to Mt. Burns. In the centre is the nameless glacier, by which Bannie is climbed. On the right is the Müller glacier, bounded beyond by the Sealy range. In far distance is the Malte Brun range.
- (13) Mt. Hamilton (9915 ft.) and Malte Brun (10,421 ft.) from De La Beche. On the left is the Darwin glacier, which continues out of sight bounding the N. face of Malte Brun up to the Col (marked with X) at head of Malte Brun glacier. The N.W. ridge of Malte Brun is the right-hand skyline ridge.
- (14) Taken from lower slopes of La Perouse. On the extreme left is the wall of St. David's Dome, next Dampier, Green's Saddle and Mt. Cook. The couloir between these two is that used on first ascent in 1894. Cf. No. 6 and 'A.J.' xxix. 12, 13.
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THE DOLOMITES IN 1925.

By L. G. SHADBOLT.

(Read before the Alpine Club, March 2, 1926.)

AFTER several seasons climbing among the greater ranges of the Alps, it was with a sense of departing from established tradition that we decided to go to the Dolomites last year. We were prepared to find these rock peaks fairly easy of access, but not for the perfect network of good roads, which make it possible to get to any part of the district in a few hours by car, and in many cases to drive to within an hour of the actual climbing.

These mountains rise abruptly from easy ground, and there is no gradual approach through country becoming more remote and more difficult, nor is there any great mountain barrier, necessitating a long or arduous journey from one side to the other. Most of the peaks, too, have an easy side, and the development of the really unique rock climbing has been on lines similar to the development in Great Britain, though on a very much larger scale, and has been concerned with inventing complicated and difficult routes up the steeper faces. Hence it is to some extent artificial, and it is a little difficult at times to capture the true spirit of adventure and high endeavour, especially when one mentally visualises the cow or other domestic animal, which may be waiting to greet one at the summit.

Harold Porter and I arrived at Toblach on a very wet evening early last July, and were somewhat alarmed to read in a police notice that we might, without warning or hope of redress, be summarily subjected to the processes of dactyloscopy and anthropometry. Nevertheless we stayed the night and drove to Cortina on the following morning, much impressed with the magnificent Höhlenstein Gorge and a glimpse of the Drei Zinnen, as we passed Schludersbach.

Our first expedition was to the Croda da Lago¹ for which we started very late. We reached the Lago da Lago just in time to meet two parties returning from our prospective peak, and here we paused to study the guidebook and the mountain in front of us. The book was vague, but a track was visible on the far side of the lake leading away to the right to an obvious break in the lower wall of the mountain. This we followed and on the top of the lower wall worked back again to the left until we came to the opening of the great gully leading down from the N. peak. Here, we ascended to a saddle below a bluff, and changed our boots for rubber shoes, which we had decided to try instead of the more usual scarpetti. Members of the Equipment Committee will, I hope, be interested to note that we both found these light rubber shoes, fitting closely to the foot, and with a fairly wide golosh, ideal for this type of climbing, and even on wet rocks they seemed to be just as good as, if not better than, the scarpetti. We started up a very steep wall, and we both realised that the work had begun. Shortly the angle eased off and we gradually worked upwards and across until we were in the big gully on our right, after which the climbing was either in the gully, or on its right wall. Some distance up we evidently got off the conventional line, and climbed a very steep face, on which the holds were only just sufficient. I must admit that this face impressed me enormously with its difficulty, 'but,' here I quote from an early description, 'the knowledge that the rope firmly fastened round my chest was held at the upper end by a man who was a model of agile manly strength, gave the sense of security, without which no one ought to trust to chance grips on rock at that height. While I felt the cool rock pressed to my cheek, the contact turned the train of my thought from physical activity to mental reflection, and I realized my isolated position, as a tiny insect perched midway up that vast wall, with half the sky cut off above, and an unthinkable abyss sinking far below.

¹ v. *Der Hochtourist*, III. 212, for route-marked sketch.

I have been told that at such moments travellers have felt uneasy, and I do not doubt it.' From here we worked up the easier continuation of a chimney, back into the main gully between the peaks, and soon came to an unmistakable cave known as the Black Grotto. Emerging from this by the wall on the right, without much trouble, we proceeded by easy rocks to the col between the Croda and the Federa; the summit being reached a few minutes later. In descending, except that we avoided the steep wall by abseiling down an overhanging chimney, we followed our route of ascent exactly.

This expedition made us realize the difficulty of finding the way down these extraordinary rock mountains, and that without some local knowledge we should hardly be able to tackle traverses involving difficult and complicated descents. We, therefore, looked about to find a suitable guide, and were extremely fortunate, first of all, in meeting Joseph Wood, an American member of this Club, and secondly, in finding that he had just finished with Angelo Dibona, who had a few days to spare before his next engagement. We promptly made arrangements with him and decided to try the Kleine Zinne traverse² the next day. Not content with providing us with a guide, Wood offered to drive us over in his car, so that we did not have to leave until five o'clock in the morning. The day proved to be one of the two fine days we had, and starting in glorious sunshine, we picked up Angelo and drove up past Misurina to the nearest possible point to the Zinne. Here we left the car and walked for about an hour and a half, to the East foot of our peak.

Leaving our boots, we started the ascent by the W. face, along a broad ledge with an overhanging roof. This ledge contained one distinctly delicate and difficult step, and for the rest was extremely sensational. We left it by a steep chimney, followed by a long step across to the left. Then straight up a rather holdless section to easy ground, and so to the shoulder between the Kleine Zinne and the Punta di Frida or N. buttress of the Zinne.³

Here we were somewhat surprised, and Angelo extremely annoyed, to see a party of three struggling in the chimney by

² v. *Der Hochtourist*, III. 266 and 267, for route-marked sketches.

³ v. *Der Hochtourist*, III. 269, for route-marked sketch. The usual way to reach the foot of the N. face is, however, from the gap between Grosse and Kleine Zinne whence the W. wall is climbed without any difficulty, and the start for the N. face climb reached.

which the N. face is climbed. They were energetically engaged in hauling up an inanimate fourth in the shape of a huge rucksack, which caused showers of stones to descend remorselessly on those below with every jerk of the rope. Angelo called upon them to desist so that we might pass them, but failed to elicit any intelligible response. With a dramatic air he then suggested that we should try the Fehrmann Kamin further to the W. He hurriedly attacked the wall immediately below the other party and we traversed quickly away to the right, both Angelo and Porter having very narrow escapes from stones during the few seconds we were in the line of fire. We found ourselves on one of the steepest walls I have ever been on, with a terrific drop below. Across this wall we worked upwards and to the right for some distance. This was all difficult work, and the extreme steepness, together with the lack of belays, and the great length of rope out on this long upward traverse, made one realize to the full the peculiar joys of Dolomite climbing, and also feel glad that the leader, dancing about, often nearly 100 ft. away, was one who might be trusted not to fall off. Angelo had never been on this part of the mountain before and did not quite know where to find the Fehrmann Kamin.⁴ It was a great joy to watch his extraordinarily neat style and to observe the rapidity with which he tried and discarded unpromising lines of advance, and picked his way neatly and quickly along and up the least uncompromising slabs. Eventually a sketchy traverse horizontally brought us to a big belay block some 20 ft. from a great yellow patch in the centre of the chimney, a ghastly looking place. The belay block appeared to be lightly and insecurely balanced on a very narrow ledge, but at any rate it was something to put the rope behind. Angelo disappeared upwards behind a curtain of rock. The rope ceased to go out and we could hear him muttering. Then came a request for more rope, which involved my unroping, a somewhat awkward proceeding, balanced as I was on one foot. The extra rope was rapidly devoured, and after some minutes of silence Angelo suddenly reappeared on a double rope, saying that the place would not go without somebody to help him. As far as we could make out from the description we read afterwards, he had tried to get up a part of the chimney which has to be avoided, but no doubt the thought that he had two entirely unknown amateurs on his rope, had something to do with his wise retreat. This excursion across the face had

⁴ v. *Der Hochtourist*, III. 267-8.

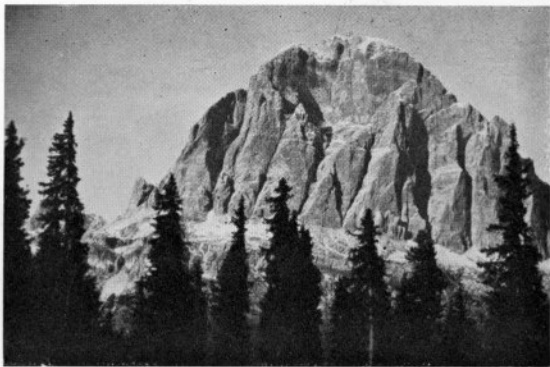
occupied a considerable time and we could hear nothing of the other party, so felt safe in returning by our route of ascent until we could traverse into the ordinary chimney, which we found delightfully comforting and well supplied with holds, after our recent experience. We arrived at the top not far behind the other party, and enjoyed one of the few summit views we ever had in this district.

Angelo pointed out many places where heavy fighting had occurred, particularly on Monte Piano. He also indicated where Sepp Innerkofler,⁵ whom he described as the greatest of a great family of guides, was killed.

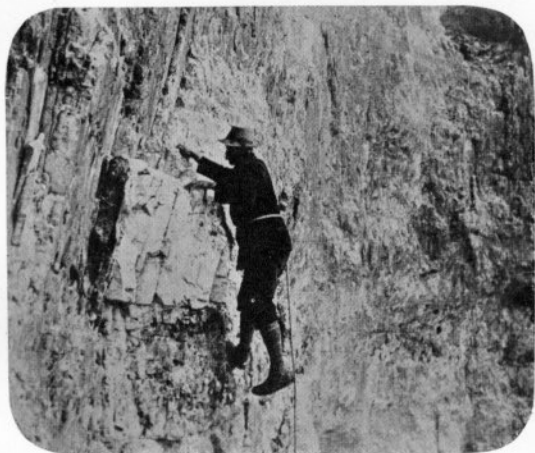
We started down the S. face and a few feet below the summit arrived at the top of the Zsigmondy Kamin, which although plentifully supplied with handholds contains one awkward overhang, below which it is somewhat difficult to effect a lodgment. I do not know whether this is the place of which such a thrilling description is given in 'Dolomite Strongholds.' From the foot of this chimney we passed easily to the shoulder between the N. peak and the S. and then down a series of easy chimneys facing the Grosse Zinne, and thence along a fine traverse right across the face, which ends above a broken buttress sloping easily down to the foot of the gully between the Grosse and Kleine Zinne. I believe this to be the traverse which I had remembered ever since I started reading about the Dolomites, and certainly its situation is exceedingly fine.

The next day the weather was very ominous and instead of walking up to the Tofana hut, which we had intended to do, we ordered a car for 4 A.M. next morning. This arrived punctually, and picking up Angelo and a dependent relative of his we drove up by the main road to beyond Pocol, and thence up an extraordinarily steep, badly made, and dangerous track, until it finally gave out at a point almost level with the foot of the precipitous S. face of the Tofana di Roces. From here it was an easy 45 minutes walk to the start of the climb, which begins at the foot of the buttress near the middle of the face. Hundreds of sheep followed us round, curious to see what we were up to. We discarded boots and all extra impedimenta and handed them over to Angelo's cousin Damiano. This was the first occasion on which we were introduced to a custom, which, as far as I know, is peculiar to the Dolomites, that of hiring a porter to carry everything not wanted on the actual

⁵ v. *A.J.* xxxvii. 388.



TOFANA DI ROCES.



ANGELO DIBONA AT WORK.



LANGKOFEL GROUP.
from Sella joch

climb, round to the summit by an easy route, a custom which neither of us really approved of, but which we felt it necessary to comply with, especially in view of Angelo's climbing alone with us. No doubt it enabled him to deal effectively with any criticisms under this head, and the system seems to be so well developed that it really forms an important bi-product, as it were, of the main business of guiding, and augments the incomes of the weaker brethren.

The climb up the S. face of Tofana di Roces⁶ is a magnificent one. The line of ascent is somewhat complicated. The start is at a ledge on the right of the great gully, which drains the enormous cauldron in the middle of the face, thence up a rather difficult chimney, followed by a series of slabs, traverses and chimneys, to the top of the buttress, where we found a splendid imitation of the well-known Slingsby chimney crevasse on Scawfell, and of about the same standard of difficulty. Above this we worked to the left and came into the great cauldron. The crossing of this is undoubtedly dangerous, as stones fall frequently and freely from the whole great semicircle of cliffs above, nearly all of them eventually coming down the narrow neck which has to be crossed. When we arrived, the whole of the upper part of the mountain was shrouded in thick cloud. We crossed in safety and hurried up easy ground away to the left, pausing to take breath as soon as we could. Just as we stopped the clouds cleared for a moment, and simultaneously with the sun striking the upper crags there was a tremendous bombardment of the place we had so lately passed. We next traversed obliquely upwards and round the tower we were on until we came into sight of the next couloir. After working across this we came to the greatest difficulty of the climb. An awkward series of steps up the side of a slightly overhanging curtain of rock, with a small crack behind, was the obvious route. Angelo, however, traversed out to the right and back along a parallel ledge above, to the head of the straightforward obstacle, up which both of us climbed direct. A short traverse then led to the foot of a long chimney, which provided perfectly delightful climbing. Some easy ground, and then another 100-ft. chimney led to a comparatively easy but wonderfully impressive traverse, which must be nearly 200 ft. in length.

I know of no more airy situation on a mountain than this, for the cliffs drop apparently sheer to the grass-covered scree at the foot. So we turned the precipice, and got on to ground

⁶ v. *Der Hochtourist*, III. 198, for route-marked sketch.

where upward progress could be made once more. There were several interesting problems hereabouts, of which I remember most distinctly the final chimney, which started with a great shallow hollow, with a niche in it, very wide to straddle, with an awkward return to a normal position after the first 10 ft. or so. Fifty feet of splendid chimney climbing brought us out behind a huge chock stone. This about ended the serious climbing, but the top was still a good way off, and the walking to it in rubber shoes, over loose débris, with occasional narrow bits of arête, was trying. Interest was kept up, however, by the numerous traces of the military occupation of this inhospitable spot during the war. Riflemen had evidently been stationed on the summit ridge and mementos of their occupation were strewn everywhere. Angelo's cousin, Damiano, had arrived at the summit ahead of us, and we were glad to be able to change into boots for the tiresome but easy descent to the hut.

The next day we climbed the Punta Fiammes,⁷ a spur of Pomagagnon. This little peak is within easy walking distance of Cortina, and while the climb up the face is interesting and difficult in parts, it can hardly be described as a mountain. We were therefore somewhat surprised to find that Angelo had again provided a porter, one Apollonio, to carry our boots and food to the summit, introducing him with as much solemnity as though we were about to tackle some long and hazardous ascent.

Next day we started in Joseph Wood's Lancia in very doubtful weather for Canazei, and were treated to a wonderful display of skilful driving up over the Falzarego Pass and down past Andraz to Pieve; up to the Pordoi Pass, and then down seemingly endless zigzags to Canazei, the whole journey occupying 2½ hours. Our intention was to go up to the Contrinhaus for the S. face of the Marmolata, but the weather was so bad that after consultation with Angelo we decided to go up to the Vajolet hut instead.

No sooner had we started than the rain came down in torrents. After a wild night, the following morning broke clear, and we walked easily up to the start of the climb below the Stabeler-Turm. Leaving our boots we traversed easily to the gully between the Stabeler and the Winkler-Türme, up this for a short distance, and then along a fairly simple ledge below a perpendicular wall to the foot of a narrow black crack, which

⁷ v. *Der Hochtourist*, III. 172, for route-marked sketch.

proved to be one of the toughest bits of the whole climb. After ascending a wall on inadequate holds, the crack has to be entered above an impending block which forces the body outwards in a most uncomfortable way. The key to a desperate position is a small sloping heel hold on the very edge of the block, which provides just enough friction for a lift. This crack can be turned by a variation up the right wall, but Angelo was emphatic that it was more difficult and dangerous than the orthodox route. From the upper end of the crack we worked a little to the right to an easier chimney, continuing by more chimney work to a gap, whence on a ledge to the N. side, back to the ridge, and so easily to the top. From here there is a most impressive view of the Stabeler-Turm, across a narrow but profound gap. From the summit the route leads back to a little gully and round to the N., on a terrace, then easily down to a lower terrace, which finally arrives at the W. wall as a small shelf. We then abseiled down a shallow chimney and an overhanging slab, where Angelo instructed us in a method of abseiling⁸ which was new to me. Bringing the rope outside and behind the right leg, in between the legs, and then up the front and round the neck. Grasping the outside rope tightly with the right hand and keeping the left hand low on the neck rope, constantly easing it so that it slides on the leg. We both found this method rather exhausting and extremely wearing on the thigh, but it seems safe so long as you keep the left hand well down, otherwise there is a risk of becoming inverted. A straddle across a yawning chasm established us upon the Stabeler-Turm, which, although steep, opposed no very great difficulties to our advance. After descending two easy chimney-pieces on the N. side, and passing along a fin or down the chimney between it and the main wall, we traversed round to the gap between the Stabeler and the Delago. A projection which breaks out from the Delago, well above the junction between the two towers, enabled us to cross, whence we climbed steep and rather rotten slabs to a platform beneath the terrible looking Pichlriess, which we had noticed from the top of the Stabeler with some awe. This is a very steep crack about 60 ft. high. The start is round an undercut corner to the right and then straight up the crack, which I found very severe, although fortunately there are two places where it is possible to rest, after struggling over the overhanging portions. The hand-holds inside are good and tiny footholds for the left on the

⁸ v. For a good system cf. *A.J.* xxxiii. 212.

outside enable upward progress to be made. The strain on the right arm is severe, and after climbing it I decided that my shoulder, injured two years before, might now be considered cured. We emerged at the summit and after a short halt proceeded downwards by a series of abseils on the S. side. The traverse of these three towers makes a magnificent expedition and is an extraordinary example of complicated and acrobatic rock climbing. The route must have taken a long time to work out and link up in its entirety.

We next spent a short but very delightful day scrambling about the Cinque Torri, climbing the big tower in several directions, and also the Torre Inglese, which seems to have quite a reputation for difficulty in the district.

Our next objective was Cristallo. Leaving Cortina at 4 o'clock, we walked up past Tre Croci and straight on to the Col da Varda. We then worked out to the S.W. ridge by a steep grassy ledge, a little beyond which we discarded our boots and left them and the sacks. This was a tactical error which we never repeated. Proceeding up chimneys and along a little arête, and then traversing to another rib on the left, we finally got into a big gully full of snow, on the side of which we worked up until we came out on a terrace below a huge gendarme, which we had likened on the way up to a baron's coronet, and which was henceforth familiarly known as the 'Red Baron.' We had next to get into the gap between the Baron and the final ridge. This was effected on a long ridge of débris, in a state of most unstable equilibrium, lying at its absolute angle of rest, with a huge drop into a sinister ice gorge below. Porter advanced with the greatest care and with cat-like tread, but even so, it seemed to me, that several tons of rock descended into the abyss. His passage, however, made little difference to the general instability of the place, and in crossing it I added my full quota to the contents of the gorge. Arrived in the gap, we were faced with an extremely steep wall, which seemed to overhang for the first 40 or 50 ft. After climbing 15 ft. straight up, Porter traversed a long way to the right and then back again immediately above me. I climbed straight up to him, preferring the extra strain of the overhanging wall, to the awkward and exposed traverse out and back. After another 100 ft. or so of steep but easy climbing upwards, we arrived at a ledge which we followed westwards. It led us to a shallow depression, up which we went rapidly for 300 ft. A little beyond, we came to a path leading eastwards. We followed this to the junction with the ordinary route, where was a cairn. From here the

way was marked at intervals with red stripes, but it took us very much longer than we expected to reach the summit. The ascent had taken so long that we decided to go down by the ordinary route, in spite of the absence of boots or axes. After reaching the cairn, a long rock-ledge led to the col between the Cristallo and the Piz Popena, and we then saw that a steep snow slope would have to be descended for several hundred feet. We had at that time no experience of snow climbing in rubber shoes, and without ice axes. Fortunately the snow was in good condition, and going very carefully we had no difficulty, although I must confess to a certain sense of insecurity for the first 100 ft. or so. We had noticed from above a long succession of scree zig-zags below the snow, crossing from one side of the wide couloir to the other, and it was a most curious thing that when we got off the snow, the zig-zags had completely disappeared, so our sorely-tried and sodden shoes had to put up with a long slide down sharp scree.

We next went up to the Sellajochhaus and after a day of hopeless weather were able to start at 6 o'clock the following morning, when it showed signs of clearing. We had arranged to be back at Cortina that night in order to start for San Martino, so time was short. We hurried up the path for the Fünffinger-spitze. Angelo had told us that the Schmittkamin was impossible, on account of ice, so we made straight for the Daumenscharte route, which starts with a fine chimney. Above this a traverse to the right on an upward slant leads out on to the ridge of the ball of the thumb. We went easily up broken rocks for some 300 ft. till nearly opposite the gap between the Thumb and the First Finger and then into the gap by a neat traverse. We were now faced with a very steep wall; about 40 ft. up we foregathered in a little depression, from which Porter ran out 60 ft. before reaching a belay. Then up a slabby depression to the N. ridge of the First Finger and up this for 30 ft. We stopped to consider whether we should continue up the very steep and difficult ridge ahead or descend by a traverse into an ice couloir between the First and Second Fingers. Porter elected to take the second alternative although we had no axe. The traverse was easy except the final move on to the ice, but a piton was found to guard the leader while making this step. I could see nothing of what was going on after this but slowly paid out rope until fully 60 ft. had gone, when there was a shout from Porter announcing his arrival in the gap. When I got round the corner, I found the gully full from side to side with hard ice, in which there were faint signs of steps, now melted

and re-frozen into slightly rounded hollows in the surface.⁹ Porter told me he had crossed to the right hand side of the gully and climbed mostly on the rock, adding that the holds were small. As I could not see either how to get across the gully, or that there were any holds at all on the far side, I climbed the left side by lying back against rather inadequate handholds with my feet on the ice, but while I did not slip, I never felt really safe, not knowing the extent to which my rubbers would hold on the slippery surface and feeling all the time that they might suddenly skid. Porter said he never felt in any danger, but at the same time the place gave him no great pleasure. We were both extremely pleased to find a solid-looking rope ring in the gap, so knew that our retreat was secure. From the gap we climbed straight up for 15 ft. and then along a ledge of blocks, up a short chimney to a big window, through this back to the left, and so to the summit. We had had some hopes of traversing the peak, but the weather looked so threatening and the condition of the mountain, as evidenced by the amount of ice¹⁰ in the gully, seemed so doubtful, that we decided to descend by the way we came up. We descended rapidly, raced down to the Sellajoch, and got back to Cortina the same evening.

The next day, still in bad weather, we started in Wood's car for San Martino, running through a heavy thunderstorm over the Falzarego Pass, and down to the Lake of Alleghe. This lake was formed by a huge landslide blocking the valley about the year 1770. The water rose, slowly engulfing the village, and it is said that the church tower can still be seen below the surface. We went on through the increasing storm, first to Agordo, then to Fiera di Primiero, and finally up to San Martino.

Next morning we set out for the Cimone della Pala in fairly clear weather, having decided to try the N.W. ridge. After getting well up into the great W. basin of the mountain, we ascended a big gully to a conspicuous drop in the ridge. We then climbed a long depression to its head, and sighted an unknown party of two in a chimney just in front. Porter led away to the left up the steep wall of the ridge and we passed ahead of the others before the second had finished the chimney. A few towers came next and then at a gap where the tower beyond was unclimbable, a long traverse to the right was followed. The traverse completed we had to get back to the ridge, and here were two alternatives, a genuine chimney

⁹ Formerly an old axe was kept here.

¹⁰ There is always some ice in this gully.

leading directly to the notch, or an open gully parallel to the direction of the ridge from which easy ground might lead back to the gap. We went up the first chimney, which in its lower half proved to be a magnificent piece of climbing on perfectly sound rock. I joined Porter at the top of this and he started up the remaining 50 ft., but found its character completely changed and the whole thing entirely rotten. The party we had passed now appeared below, so we told them to go ahead while we waited, and found that they took the open gully on the right. As soon as they were out of the way, Porter, instead of descending, executed a beautiful traverse across steep slabs, into the top of the gully. We then went too far up the gully and after ascending a distinctly difficult chimney found ourselves some distance above the notch and cut off from direct approach to the ridge. A fairly easy descent down steep and rather rotten rocks brought us to the notch. Above this rises a magnificent steep unbroken ridge for some 300 ft., leading up to the foot of the great red tower which forms the preliminary summit. We passed rapidly up this and traversed away to the left until it was possible to regain the ridge beyond the tower by a chimney. A splendid wall almost vertical led out on to the level narrow summit ridge and a few minutes took us to the top. The other party proved to be young Zagonel and an Austrian climber. We had greatly admired Zagonel's style, full of tremendous dash and confidence; a pleasant fellow withal, who did not seem to resent our having passed him; indeed, on the way down, he insisted on our taking the lead. We descended by the ordinary route, which presented little difficulty, a rocky staircase or two, a chimney and a short traverse leading to a steep wall of about 70 ft., which was rather spoiled by a heavy fixed wire rope. Then a snow gully and a most curious tunnel, where we crawled through a dark hole backwards to drop suddenly a few feet on to a patch of ice. Heavy dark clouds were now all around and had it not been for nail-marked rocks and snow tracks, we might have had a good deal of trouble in finding the way to the Passo Bettega. Below this a most ingenious path which appeared and disappeared perplexingly, wound backwards and forwards through precipitous obstacles. Eventually we joined the main Rosetta path, but still there was much country to cover before we reached San Martino. As we arrived, the great red summit tower, with the sun on it, showed for a moment through the masses of cloud, but within ten minutes the usual afternoon thunderstorm broke with severity and continued through the

night. The next day broke clear and we returned *via* the Rolle Pass from which the Cimone della Pala looked most magnificent. From here on to Predazzo and up the valley to Canazei. Then over the Sellajoch and down the valley to the right; over the pass at the head of the St. Ulrich valley, and down by Colfusch to the main valley, then on to Bruneck, whence to the Prager See, a remote and wild lake, which is said to resemble Lake Louise. Soon after leaving here, we ran into the usual afternoon thunderstorm, which accompanied us to Cortina.

ON MATTERS OF FACT.

BY BENSON LAWFORD.

‘PLACE me somewhere in the Valais, ’mid the mountains west of Binn.’ So sang the late Public Orator of Oxford in some very attractive verses, which every member of the Alpine Club ought to have by heart; and now one comes to think of it, would it not be a good plan to make a knowledge of this, or some other piece at the option of the candidate, one of the tests for admission to the Club? We might even go a step farther, and insist upon a public recitation, which should be a most amusing entertainment; and I hereby make Mr. Secretary, and the Committee for the time being, a present of the suggestion. To see a number of young gentlemen, to the limit of ten, who had otherwise satisfied the Committee of their eligibility for admission, publicly introduced to the platform, one by one, at any of the Evening Meetings—perhaps the informal ones, for choice—and solemnly repeating a set piece, would doubtless make for the gaiety of members, if not for that of the candidates themselves. Of course, on the other hand, such a procedure might result in a dearth of candidates, which would be, perhaps, a pity.

However, to return to my text, it is not so much with the mountains west of Binn, as with Binn itself, that my main thesis is concerned; for, having arrived at that time of life when we ‘prefer to walk in places which are reasonably flat,’ my wife and I decided—(and I would here have you observe that the greater includes the less, though modesty forbides me to elucidate the matter further)—we decided, I say, that Binn was, in all probability, the very place for which we had been looking.