It seems to me nearly time for a skeleton guide-book for mountaineers in the Caucasus to be prepared. It would be a suitable piece of work for an energetic craftsman content to lay foundations for others to build on. I am not without hope that one of the yearly increasing band of Caucasian climbers may be found before long to act on this suggestion.

An official guide-book to the Caucasus has recently appeared in Russian; but, according to M. de Dechy, the mountains are left out—at least, from a mountaineer's point of view.

Note on Illustration.

The prominent mountains comprised in the panoramic view (from right to left) are Dongusorun, Elbruz, the Ciubikevi peak (a rock-tooth), and Otur, immediately below which, just outside the plate, lies the first of the forest passes. Some of the valleys of Lower Suanetia may be distinguished in the right-hand lower corner. The rock-ridges that meet in the Ciubikevi peak surround the head of tho Betsho valley; the N. joins the main chain W. of and close to Dongusorun. This tract was grossly misrepresented in the 5-verst map. Between the Cuibikevi peak and Otur lies the Nakra Valley.

The rocky ridge in the foreground is a long spur which divides the western glaciers and valley of the Leila from the valley of the Ingur.

Exhausted Districts.

BY W. M. CONWAY.

> To give room for wandering is it
> That the world was made so wide.
>
> CARLYLE *after* Goethe.

ON August 13, 1890, I and my guide, Joseph Marie Lochmatter, were staying at the Montenvers Hotel. We were to cross the Col des Hirondelles next day in company of others eastward bound. Every one in the hôtel was sick to death with the *ennui* that pervades all 'centres.' Two or three fine days, and then one bad day: a succession of this kind of thing drives the 'centrist' distracted. First-rate peaks (as they are called) will not come into condition under such circumstances, and the second-rate have no charms for the centrist. So he sits and swears till he can endure it no longer; and sooner or later comes the day when he, knowingly and of malice prepense, starts off to climb rocks which in such weather no one ought to touch—

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thereby unwisely risking his own life and the lives of his guides. 'Centrism' thus becomes one of the most insidious and fatal of Alpine dangers.

On August 13, as I have said, the Montanvers crowd was sick to death of itself and of the place. The beauty of the Mer de Glace had ceased to charm. We had come to loathe the sight of Dru, Jorasses, and Géant. We wanted to be doing something; we needed to be off. But your true centrist, when he has to move, likes to go straight and to fly high. So we were to be driven over the Col des Hirondelles, and seemed doomed to travel from Courmayeur along the old roads, so well known, leading from centre Montanvers to centre Zermatt, there, finally, after a few hours of settling down, to begin railing at the weather once more. Great was my discontent at the prospect. I could make no converts to saner views, and so must have yielded myself, had not the kind night brought relief. Down came the rain and snow with determined persistence, and, to my joy, the Col des Hirondelles, the Dru, the Géant, and all 'first-rate' things were rendered inaccessible for at least a week to come. Now was the chance for the 'excentric.' His little plans began to be not wholly without interest for the haughty centrists. They were received into consideration and ultimately adopted, to the no small disgust of the centric guides.

Your famous guide nowadays is almost always a centric guide. He hates travel. He pines away if taken for long from his accustomed haunts. The flesh-pots of Zermatt and Grindelwald and the tariffs of 'first-rate' peaks have ruined him from the excentric's point of view. The centric guide likes to climb three first-rate peaks and to pouch three first-rate tariffs weekly. In the intervals between climbing he likes to be put up for a nominal charge in a comfortable hotel, where he is fed on the fat of the land, and has plenty of his fellows to talk to. In bad weather he willingly helps his employers to swear, or amuses them by riding in mule races up and down the street, or otherwise playing the fool. He begins life as a centric porter, and ends it as a centric guide. He makes his reputation by doing a few hare-brained new routes up the wrong sides of 'first-rate' peaks. He learns nothing about the Alps as a whole, and nothing about travel. He never acquires the varied crafts of his predecessors, who could make their employers comfortable anywhere, and had some cunning of cookery. The modern guide can open a tin of preserved meat, and there his powers end.

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He knows nothing about maps, nothing about mountains visible on the far horizon. He is a highly-developed gymnast, a kind of prize-fighter with the mountains, a Professional such as the true British Philistine creates to help him in all his sports.

Therefore it was that, when my converts—Mr. Ellis Carr and Mr. F. M. Davies—sent off their luggage with mine, and started with me (at ten in the morning of August 14) for an eight days' wandering, our guides Lochmatter and Kaufmann were not enthusiastic. But we went forth gladly in the gorgeous morning, along grass paths and amongst fields and trees and all manner of pleasant lowland places, with the free and careless delight of boys let loose from school. Some miles of high-road, even, did not dull our spirits, for the escape from the laws and hours and twaddling-talk of a centre into the untrammelled freedom of the wanderer's life is a change worth experiencing. Your perfect wander must be in the main without plan or rule. You must have a goal, a few days ahead, at which to meet your luggage, but you must not be certain where you will sleep or what you will climb in the meantime. You must not have your mind set upon anything or you may be disappointed. You must provide no material for disappointment to be made out of. Your pack must be light on your back and you must be in good training. Your one object is to see things you have not seen and to enjoy the unexpected and the unknown. In fact, in a mild way, you must go exploring. To make the fun complete you had better write a guide-book beforehand to the district you are going to explore. When your descriptions turn out right you will be surprised, when wrong you will be amused. Both sensations are pleasant. You never have to blame yourself. The published accounts you abstracted afford you plenty of materials for sarcasm.

So exploring we went, and the first place we lit upon was the Lac de Champey. It used to be well known to climbers thirty years ago, but, since the coming of Centrism, the *Fin de siècle* gymnast has experienced no attraction to its neighbourhood. The place is merely beautiful, with a rare and wonderful beauty; but who will admit that he cares, or, at all events, climbs for beauty, except, indeed, in the form of "a pretty bit of rocks?" A little lake, framed in trees and embosomed in hills, with all the snowy glories of the Grand Combin mirrored in its calm waters and shining beyond it against the clearest sky, formed a picture that we,

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who saw it upon a day of faultless perfection, shall not soon forget. That night we slept at Bourg S. Pierre, having made all preparations for mounting a second-rate peak on the following day.

Mont Vélan is a second-rate peak now, but it once had a first-rate reputation for the doubtless inadequate reason that it commands one of the best panoramas in all the Alps. The neighbouring hills are curiously ill explored, and though we put a good many observations on record, there still remains much to be done. Starting from S. Pierre we ascended through the Valsorey, and in 2¼ hours' walking we reached a convenient breakfast-place by the right moraine of the glacier. Thence we beheld the sunrise bathing half the Mont Blanc range in the fiery glory which even centrists have sometimes quitted *table d'hôte* to watch. Facing south towards the Col du Valsorey, we now had the Vélan on our right hand and the Grand Combin on our left. All the peaks that intervene between these two were at that time wrongly described, and most of them were unclimbed.

From inquiries we instituted it appears that the real names and order of the peaks are as follows :—Reckoning from West to East the first considerable hump (3,406m., Italian map) after the Vélan on the frontier ridge is said to be called Tête de Cordon ; then comes the Chamois Pass, to be mentioned presently. Next is M. Capucin, which is marked M. Cordina, but probably M. Cordina is the Tête de Cordon. The Col du Valsorey follows, and then a long ridge of extremely precipitous aiguilles, none of which has ever been climbed ; they extend all along the East side of the Valsorey glacier, and are called Aiguilles du Valsorey. The first of them, adjacent to the Col du Valsorey, is a three-headed group called Les Trois Frères, or Tre Fratelli (3,270m., Swiss map ; 3,269m., Italian map). Some distance further North is a peak with a big hole in it ; this is M. Percé, or the Fenêtre du Valsorey (3,262m., I. map). These are the only two of the Aiguilles du Valsorey that have names of their own ; they have never been climbed. Continuing along the frontier ridge you come to another three-headed peak (3,418m., I. map), wrongly marked M. Tre Fratelli by the Italian surveyors. Its right name is Aiguilles de Luisettes ; it is connected with the Combin du Valsorey by a depressed ridge, over which the Sonadon glacier makes its great fall. These peaks were also unclimbed. East of them is a col, the Col de Luisettes, then a peak (3,467m., I. map),

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which is the westerly of the two Aiguilles Vertes du Valsorey. The Col Vert divides the twin Aiguilles Vertes. The East Aiguille Verte is doubtless the peak unsuccessfully attacked (August 30, 1888), by Mons. E. Rossier with the guides Biselx and Genoud. He describes the summit as consisting of a 'moving rock pinnacle, which could not be climbed.' He left a bottle as near to the top as he could go, and he remembers the ascent as very difficult. He approached from the North. The col east of this peak is best called Col d'Amianthe. It is followed by a peak variously marked Amianthe (3,600m., S. map; 3,584, I. map) or Mont Sonadon. The name of Gran Testa di By, given it by the Italian surveyors, is a blunder. The Col du Sonadon comes next, and then the Grand Combin. I may as well here complete what has to be said about the nomenclature of the frontier ridge as far as the Col de Fenêtre. The col east of Mont Sonadon is called Col de By (not Col d'Amianthe), but as there has been a blunder made on the maps about this name it is best to call it the West Col de By. Then comes the true Tête de By, or Testa Bianca (3,422m., S. map; 3,421m. I. map), then the East Col de By (3,164m. S. map), and, finally, Mont Avril and the Col de Fenêtre. So much for names—a first instalment.

After dawdling over breakfast as long as we comfortably could we started up the Valsorey glacier. Soon we saw chamois in a great couloir in the face of the Mont de la Gouille on our right. This peak, by-the-by, has never been ascended. The chamois ran up to the top of the couloir and disappeared, but later on in the day we found that they had followed a well-marked track, which had likewise been trodden by other parties of the same beasts. In fact, they were on a regular chamois route, which, so far as I know, has not been followed by travellers. It forms a good pass into Italy from the Valsorey. Having by the couloir reached the upper rocks of the Mont de la Gouille, the chamois traverse rocks to the south, and then descend on to the upper névé of the Valsorey glacier above the seracs. They cross the glacier horizontally, thereby avoiding its many great crevasses; thus they reach the Chamois Pass, which lies between the Tête de Cordon and Mont Capucin. The descent on the south into the Val d'Ollomont is made either by a couloir or by easy rocks near it. Travellers taking this route would then have to cross some rock *débris*, below which they would join the ordinary Col du Valsorey route. The Col du Valsorey is likewise called Col des Chamois, but this

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name should be reserved for the pass which these animals actually use.

Our ascent of the Vélan showed me that the routes numbered 2 and 3 in the 'Climber's Guide' are merely variations of a single route. The upper level of the Valsorey glacier has to be reached by turning the seracs by the right or left bank. From the névé the final ascent may be made by either arête, or, in certain conditions of the snow, you can walk straight up the face to the top. We went to the S.E. arête (overlooking the Val d'Ollomont) and there left our packs, ascending by it to the summit in 20 min. We enjoyed a faultless view, plainly seeing the end of the Lake of Geneva. In the far distance we saw the Val Tournanche mountains, and a single glance at them sufficed to solve the mystery of the Colle Budden, which had puzzled me for years. Corona's 'great snow saddle' was unmistakable, even from so great a distance. The route we followed into the Val d'Ollomont has been described under 'New Expeditions.' I need only add that we were enveloped in cloud on our way down, and so did not pick out the best line of descent. We ought to have followed the central couloir from top to bottom. We should thus have saved time. The couloir is from 4,000 to 5,000 feet long and tolerably steep. We saw no signs of falling stones in it except such as we started ourselves or the masses brought down by winter avalanches. At the foot of this face of the Vélan there are stone débris covering at least a square mile. We followed an obvious path to Valpelline, but the inn there looked so bad that we only waited to engage the single village vehicle, and then, leaving the guides behind, drove off to Aosta to sleep.

Next day we returned to Valpelline and walked up the valley, intending to sleep in the huts by the great By Alp. They were closed, so we were obliged to cross the broad flat basin of the old lake, which now affords such excellent pasture land, and to take shelter in the huts called Zeneco about 20 min. away. We reached them just in time to escape a thunderstorm. The alps at the head of the Val d'Ollomont fill a vast basin, or series of basins, shut in by a very noble set of mountain ranges. We were particularly struck with the great wall of rock on the east, which divides the Val d'Ollomont from the Valpelline. The cowherds called it Les Monts de la Balme, but it is marked on the Italian map as M. Faudery, M. Morion, M. Clapier, and M. Berlo. After seeing both faces of this range we were not surprised to hear that all the peaks on it are still unclimbed.

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The following morning was fine, and we were enabled to carry out our plan of exploring the northern portion of the frontier ridge between the Aiguilles du Valsorey and Mont Sonadon. Carr crossed the Col de Luisettes and made the first ascent of the three Aiguilles de Luisettes (wrongly marked M. Tre Fratelli on the Italian map). Davies and I crossed the Col Vert. We had the shorter job of the two, and so reached the Sonadon névé first. We wandered across it and made our way to the Col du Sonadon. Carr presently descended on to the Sonadon névé, where he joined our tracks and followed us to the Col. The object of our exploration was to find a way from By to the Grand Combin. We are now able to say that that mountain can be ascended from Italy just as easily as from Bourg S. Pierre. The Col Vert gives a better access to it than the Col de Luisettes; not improbably the next col east of the Col Vert would be better still for this purpose. I intend henceforward to call this third col the Col d'Amianthe. Our respective routes having been already described, it suffices here to say that we slept at the Chermontane chalet and that there was a great thunderstorm that night also.

Next morning (August 19) we left Chermontane at 6 A.M. in most evil-looking weather. We went by a roundabout way to the Hautemma glacier, and presently rain commenced, and damped our spirits as well as our bodies. Still we continued to follow the usual Col de Chermontane route, hour after hour, up the extraordinarily level glacier highway; so the rain yielded, and the weather cleared beautifully. But Davies, not to be baulked of a ducking, jumped over a narrow crevasse, and 'landed' in a deep glacier pool on the far side—to our edification, if not to his own. Half an hour later he was as dry as a chip again.

Our goal was the Col de Blancien, which Mr. A. Cust crossed in 1879. If anyone will carefully read his account of that pass,* and will then compare with it his account of the passage of the Col d'Hautemma in 1881,† carefully noting on the large scale map the two routes thus described, or, still better, following them by aid of one of Beck's photographs, which may be consulted in the Alpine Club library, he will find it absolutely impossible to escape the conclusion that the two passes crossed by Mr. Cust were one and the same, and that he had actually forgotten in 1881 what he had done and written in 1879. Accustomed as I

* *Alpine Journal*, vol. ix. p. 365. † *Ibid.* vol. x. p. 492.

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am to alpine misdescriptions, this was a confusion so far beyond the average that I felt extremely desirous to investigate the locality, and, if possible, find out the secret of the mistake. We eventually reached the upper level of the side glacier which descends from between the Bec de la Sciossa (called Oule Cecca on the Swiss map) and the Bec de Blancien. Thence I saw in front of us the two cols with a crest of rock between them, just as they appear on Beck's photograph. It was not till we were quite high up that the mystery solved itself. Cust's two cols proved to be different. The east col is the Col de Blancien, the west col the Col d'Hautemma. Cust in 1881 reached the very point 'marked on the Federal map (original survey)'—i.e., the S.A.C map—Col d'Otemma. But having reached it, he thought he was not there. He thought he was in 'a gap E. instead of W. of the rocky point'—my *crest of rock* above—'shown on the map in the centre of the snowy ridge between the Bec de Blancien and La Sciasso.' But this description of his describes the Col de Blancien, and that only. As a matter of fact, he actually was on the Col d'Hautemma. Moreover, from the col he did actually ascend the real Bec de la Sciossa. He says: 'We ascended the eminence W. of the col under the impression that it was the highest summit of the Sciasso, but an adjoining eminence further W., though lower, appears to be that so called.' There, again, he is wrong. There is no eminence W. of the col, but only N.W. or S.W. The N.W. point is on a side ridge, and it was this point that he mistook for a point on the main ridge. The col between it and the Sciossa, which connects the névés of two branches of the Hautemma glacier, was the col he mistook for the one marked Col d'Otemma in the S.A.C. map. I was as glad to clear up this confusion as I should have been to discover a new pass; but to think of the hours of waste labour that it has caused me, the letters I have had to write about it, the puzzling over maps, the journeys to the Club library to hunt up photographs, and all because of a false description! I again take the opportunity of repeating that, in my opinion, a route undescribed is as if it had not been done, one ill-described is little better.

From the pass we descended to Prerayen by the great couloir of the Col de Sassa. We can highly recommend the Col de Blancien as a most noble pass, superior in scenery and other attractions to the Col d'Oren (de la Reuse de l'Arolla). It is, therefore, an important stage in that High-Level Route, which, once so famous, has become almost

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abandoned in these centrist days. The new Prerayen Inn is a very simple place indeed. It is much ruder than Mattmark; but the beds are good, and so is the wine, and there are tinned meats in tolerable abundance. Moreover, there is no danger of its becoming a 'centre.'

The following day (August 20) we intended to cross the great range of peaks which runs southwards from the Dent d'Hérens and divides the Valpelline from the Valtournanche. There has been, and still is, so much confusion about the nomenclature of this ridge, that I was anxious again to study both sides of it and to make inquiries on the spot. I will briefly mention the results arrived at.

Starting from the Dent d'Hérens, the wall of rocks which shuts in the M. Tabel Glacier on the W. is called Les Grandes Murailles. Over this goes the Col des Grandes Murailles. The point from which a ridge juts out to the E., forming the S. boundary of the M. Tabel Glacier, is the Punta des Cors (3,855m.). Close to it comes a very sharp nameless aiguille, climbed by an Italian party last summer for the first time. The Valtournanche Jumeaux (Punta Giordano and Punta Sella) follow, and then the Becca di Guin (3,805m.). South of this is Signor Corona's Colle Budden, and then the Becca Créton (3,637m.), which is wrongly named Becca de Guin on the Italian map. The next point (3,583m.), called Becca Créton on the Italian map, should be named Tour de Créton. Our Col de Créton follows, and then a low point, which one guide at Breuil told me was sometimes called Mont Blanc de Créton. The name is useful, and the peak is white on the Prerayen side. South-west of it is another pass called Col du Château des Dames, and west of that is the Château des Dames itself. Of the succeeding Fontanella group, I know nothing fresh. The point (3,355m.) at the very head of the Cournera valley is named Dôme de Cian—not M. Redessau. The situation of the latter remains a mystery to me. The Col de Cian separates the Dôme de Cian from the Punta de Cian.

The Colle Budden must be a very fine pass indeed. The views we had of it, however, from various points enabled us to clear up the many obscurities in Corona's description, so that we felt free to pursue our investigations in another direction. Accordingly we ascended to the head of the south branch of the Grand Glacier Bellaza, and thus obtained easy access to the Col de Créton. The ascent was steep and most agreeable, and the views were superb; but clouds narrowed around us on the top, and all we could see thence

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was the great precipice which falls away on the side of Valtournanche. We were not prepared for this, as the Italian map marks a wide snow col, giving access to a small glacier on the E. side. We expected to cross this to the south, and thus eventually to reach the Vofrède glacier, and descend by one of the ways to the Château des Dames. The little glacier proved to be some distance away to our right. A great couloir led down from our feet, and invited us to try it. Down that we accordingly started without delay, for a thunderstorm was gathering, and the wind was cold. We had a steep scramble at first, involving short traverses and the like amusements. After a time things improved, and then we perceived a great overhanging rock on our left. The storm was clearly about to burst, so we made for the rock, and lunched beneath it while the great guns of heaven fired a royal salute. The sight was a fine one, and we were able to watch the storm without discomfort. After an hour's rest we started again, and went straight down the snow of the couloir. We passed below the snout of the little glacier, which drains into the couloir, and then we hurried quickly on, lest stones should overtake us; but none fell, and we saw the furrows of no recent falls upon the snow. Breuil was reached without further incident, and ten minutes later the storm broke in real earnest.

Next day we crossed the Theodul to Zermatt, a howling wind preventing the attempt upon a novelty which I had in view, and which I leave the Zermatt centrists to discover for themselves. I spent just twenty-four hours among the central flesh-pots, and then walked down the valley to St. Niklaus, where Coolidge was awaiting me with young Christian Almer. Carr and Davies stayed at Zermatt, and took on young Lochmatter, with whom we were all well pleased.

My plan for August 23 was to wander up to the village of Grächen and there find the site of the house in which Thomas Platter was born. But I was ruthlessly dragged from bed at an early hour, and forced forthwith to start ascending the infinite wall of rocks that shuts St. Niklaus in on the west. Every one who knows this district knows how hopelessly vague is our information about the peaks and passes which lie on the ridge that divides the Turtmann and St. Niklaus valleys. From the Bruneggjoch northwards all is utter confusion till you come to the Augstbord Pass. This is partly the fault of the published maps, which are

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absurdly bad in this district, and partly it is due to the incomprehensible descriptions of ascents made hereabouts, which are all we have to go by. The sheet of the Siegfried map representing this district is not yet issued, so its place has to be supplied by the Dufour and S.A.C. maps.

These mark with tolerable correctness the Inner and Äusser Barrhörner, and the southern half of the Stelli glacier; but further north they do not resemble anything that exists in nature. The results of our day's expedition, which was both successful and enjoyable, were as follows. The two Barrhörner are perfectly distinct, and cannot be mistaken. They are connected by a ridge, over which there lies, and can lie, no pass, for the E. face of it is a practically vertical wall of rock, several hundred feet high, and not broken by any couloir that we could see. The Stellijoch and the Barrjoch exist, but not as described in the 'Climbers' Guide.' North of the Äusser Barrhorn is a cluster of aiguilles, of so peculiar a character that no description of an ascent of any of them could possibly be mistaken for that of an ascent of any other peak in the neighbourhood. Perhaps the name Gässispitzen belongs to them. It is clear that they are virgin peaks. North of them come two higher peaks, something like the two Barrhörner. It is certain that Mr. J. S. Anderson* ascended the most northerly of the pair, and mistook it for the Äusser Barrhorn. We ascended the other one, and found no trace of a previous ascent. Both peaks are built of limestone, and look solid and firm from the distance; but Mr. Anderson described his as utterly rotten, and we found ours to be the same. Pending the discovery of their true names (if they have any), we call them the Inner and Äusser Locker Spitzen. North of Mr. Anderson's peak, the Äusser Locker Spitze, comes the Gässijoch, crossed by the same gentleman in the year 1882.† We were unable to carry our investigations further north than this. Our peak was, perhaps, 100 feet lower than the Äusser Barrhorn. We enjoyed the most superb views of the Mischabelhörner and the Dom. We returned to St. Niklaus, and so I slept for two consecutive nights in the same bed—a thing I had not done since leaving Chamonix. Next day we went down to Stalden, big with plans; but the weather turned frightful, and as, after two days, it did not clear up, we went round to Berisal by road and rail. We

* *Alpine Journal*, vol. xi. p. 118.

† *Ibid.* vol. x. p. 96, and vol. xi. p. 118.

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slept there the night of August 26, and next morning walked up the Wasenhorn, the easy rocks of which, choked with deep snow, were very laborious to mount. Some distance below the top we entered a thick cloud, and never emerged from it again till we reached our inn. We missed our way on the top, and so blundered down a new and very interesting route. Of course it ended by landing us in yet another almost infinitely long couloir, the very ditto of the couloirs on the Vélan, the Col de Blancien, and the Col de Créton. Then I felt happy, for I had luck in couloirs all the summer.

We reached the little Veglia Inn wet through and right glad to be under shelter. Thereupon it rained and snowed all next day and the day after, so Coolidge and I sat down and wrote a guide to the Lepontine Alps, thus making the time pass quickly enough. Fortunately, I had a volume of MS. notes with me, and Coolidge had all possible maps, so we were able to do the work as well there as in London. On the 30th the weather cleared, but too late to permit our starting for the ascent of Monte Cistella Alta, a peak I have always much desired to climb. I thought it was a virgin mountain till someone assured me there was a hut on the top! Not to waste the day, we set out after lunch to get the view of Monte Leone from the Avino lake. The glorious scenery attracted us to loftier wanderings, and eventually we found ourselves on the top of the Pizzo Valgrande di Valle (2,530 m.). Seldom have I seen a nobler point of view. On the one side is the mighty cirque of Monte Leone surrounding the cold Avino lake; on the other a sudden precipice falls away in perfectly vertical walls for some thousand feet or more, and the slope below droops steeply down to the depths of the Val Cairasca. A clear view all around enabled us to solve certain topographical difficulties which had long puzzled us. We identified the couloirs in the E. face of the Stichelgrat, by which Monte Leone is ascended from the Avino lake, and we found that the Italian map is wrong in the nomenclature of this ridge. The Pizzo Fnè is the point 2,880m.; the Passo Fnè and the Passo Loccia Carnera are one and the same, the col (2,740m.) being situated a short distance west of the Pizzo Valgrande (2,858 m.). We returned to Veglia by a path leading down from near the Avino lake and over a beautiful ancient wooded moraine, a kind of Brianza in miniature, whence we beheld all manner of lovely views, the foreground being always picturesque and full of variety.

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Next day the weather was again most unpromising, but we could not spend the rest of our lives at Veglia. Moreover, our letters and luggage were awaiting us at Binn. So we buckled on our packs and started off to cross the Ritterpass, a passage already only too well known to us. We soon entered a fog, and, by the time we reached the frontier ridge, snow began to fall. In trying to find the best way down on the north side we wandered along the ridge to the west and so, without knowing it, we got off the main ridge on to the crest of its south buttress. Then we commenced descending the north-west side of this buttress, thinking that we were going down the north side of the frontier ridge into the Binnenthal. We were really going down into the north-east bay of the Mottiscia glen, as we ultimately discovered when it was too late to return. The storm presently broke upon us with great fury, with hail, snow, and driving wind, and we had to run before it for shelter as fast as we could. We followed the path by the valley-torrent and, to our disgust, arrived in due course, not at Binn but at Veglia again, wet through, hungry, and dispirited. The storm continued all day and all the following night, and we awoke on September 1 to find the whole Veglia Alp buried some half-mètre deep in snow. All the sky was black with clouds of snow, blown from the peaks around and whirled about the air. It was clear that climbing was hopeless for at least ten days, so we fought our way out of the wintry region and went down the valley with 500 starving cows. That night we slept at Domo d'Ossola. We then went wandering amongst the hills that form the setting of the Italian lakes, but ascents of the Sasso di Ferro and the like are not matters of interest to the Alpine Club. The wonderful clearness of the next few days enabled me, however, to make one or two observations worth record. From the summit of Monte Nudo, near Luino, we saw the peak of the Finsteraarhorn poking over the ridge of the Lepontine Alps; a week or two later I saw the same peak from Neuchâtel. From the Sasso di Ferro we saw Monte Viso and all the Maritime Alps. From the steamer on the lake of Lugano, at a point just east of Castagnola, I was fortunate enough to have a clear view of all the summits of Monte Rosa. Lastly, I was surprised to find that, from the railway train a short distance outside Bellinzona station on the west, one catches a brief glimpse of the Dom, Domjoch, and Täschhorn.

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