

Makra it narrows down to a single ridge, so sharp in places that there is barely room for a path, and one looks down simultaneously on the waters of the Kunhar, the Jhelum, and the Kishanganga. Our circuit was completed. On October 2 we dropped down to the Kunhar at Gari Habibulla, 14 miles from Domel on the road from Rawul Pindi, through which we had driven just six weeks before: the following evening we were in Abbottabad.

THROUGH THE DINARIC ALPS.

BY DOUGLAS W. FRESHFIELD.

IN the geography books of our childhood we were told of a chain of mountains called the Dinaric Alps. This range—the waterparting between the Adriatic and the Black Sea, between the strong leisurely rivers that dawdle to the Danube and the thin torrents that, when they do not lose themselves underground, race down towards the coast—is in reality only the outer ridge of the complicated hill system which extends over great part of the Balkan Peninsula. Neither in position nor in the character of its scenery can it be called Alpine in the stricter sense of that word. It boasts no eternal snows or glaciers. No guide-book to the Alps has ever included it in its pages. Indeed, until the last few years the traveller found no guide-book at all for this region. In 1898 Hartleben issued the third edition of a volume, well supplied with illustrations, which gives a considerable amount of information as to the main routes.* He has now (1907) supplemented it by a more handy and practical guide.† I propose to use the latter as a peg on which to hang some reminiscences of the short tour through Bosnia and Herzegovina which I made last autumn. It is only thirty years ago that these two provinces were, after a fierce conflict, rescued from Turkish rule and the disorder inseparable from it and came under the government of a civilised State. They had the good fortune to have for their first administrator a statesman of liberal views and rare energy and taste—Baron von Kallay.

Under his rule the long limestone gorges were for the first time pierced by bold high roads and railways. His paternal care went further. In his desire to bring the country within

* *Reiserouten in Bosnien und der Hercegovina.*

† *Illustrierter Führer durch Bosnien und die Hercegovina.*

the zone of European travellers, he saw to the construction of a luxurious bathing establishment near Sarajevo, and built out of public moneys hotels in several attractive situations, such as Jajce and Jablanitza. Nor did he stop at this point. Since the finest product of civilisation is the mountaineer, he did his best to attract him by opening up the principal summits by means of paths and huts and arranging guide-tariffs. Yet the Bosnian highlands remain unknown to all but a very few Englishmen, and our members' names are few and far between in the Strangers' Books of the mountain huts.

From Central Europe there are two obvious ways of approaching Bosnia. The traveller may steam down the Dalmatian coast and take the line that runs from Ragusa or Metkovic to Sarajevo; or he may reach that town by direct rail from Buda Pest in 18 hours. A more attractive route is that from Agram. This imposing city, the capital of Croatia, can be reached from England through the Tyrol or by a very quick service *via* the Simplon, Venice, and Fiume. The steamer that leaves Venice at nightfall threads in the early morning hours the picturesque channels of the Gulf of Fiume between shores that are the Riviera and serve as the health resort of Austria. The hill scenery on the line to Agram is full of interest and variety. Leaving behind it the mesembryanthemums and olives of the coast, the train climbs in wide curves across open slopes, whence it commands bird's-eye views over the gulf with its blue bays, bare grey islands, and deep land-locked harbours. The higher the line climbs the broader becomes the prospect until it gains the summit level (2,985 ft.) on a wind-swept down, where massive wooden screens bear witness to the terrible force of the winter gales and snowdrifts. Here the landscape suddenly changes. A climatic and botanical barrier has been crossed, Italian and Mediterranean influences are left behind. The forests are northern, the buildings Slavonic, wood supplants stone on the hillsides and in the houses. The villages are few and far between, and the timber trade seems to be the principal industry of the inhabitants. The rails run in and out through a labyrinth of forest ridges and deep green glens, watered by pleasant trout streams. It is as pretty a succession of sub-alpine pictures as any railway can show—a more primitive and romantic Jura.

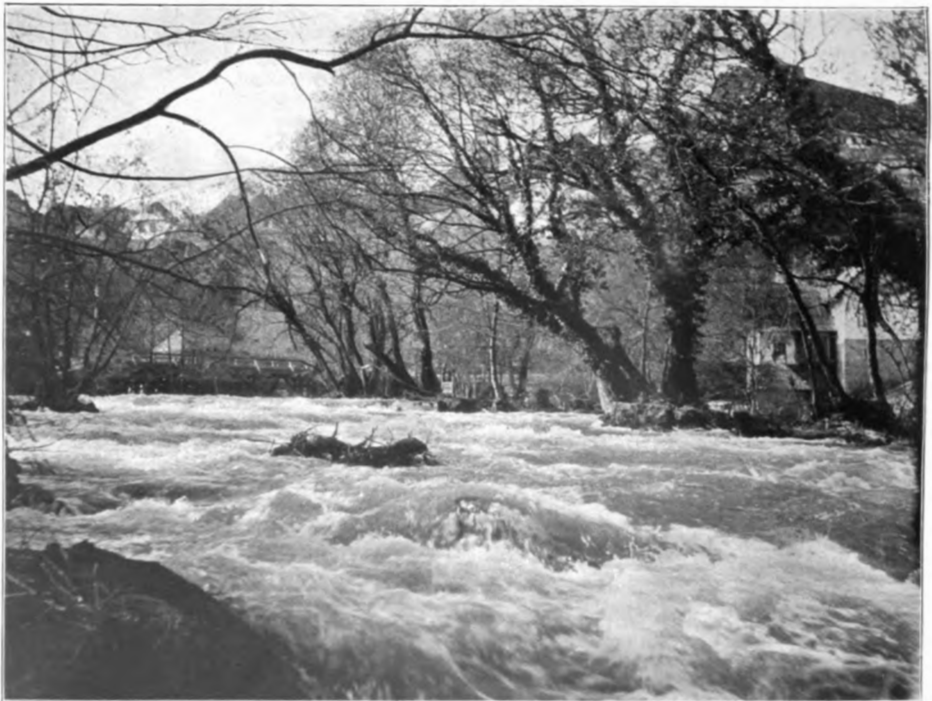
Before the traveller reaches Kronstadt, one of the old fortresses of the military march between Christian and Turk, the hills withdraw. But they are never quite out of sight.



F. F. Tuckett, photo.

THE PRENJ, FROM KONJICA.

Sirani Electric Engraving Co., Ltd.



F. F. Tuckett, photo.

ABOVE THE FALLS: JAICE.

At Agram we turn S., and before reaching Banjaluka the old frontier is crossed. The country is pleasant, but the costumes at the roadside stations are more remarkable than the scenery.

It is not till after the broad fertile basin of Banjaluka has been left that the mountains begin. A mile beyond the scattered town the Urbas issues from a gorge, in the mouth of which the old wooden cottages and mosques of a Turkish village strike a note often to be repeated and characteristic of Bosnian scenery. It is a peculiarity of the local architecture that the smaller mosques have brown wooden minarets, and that these rise from the ridge of their roofs.

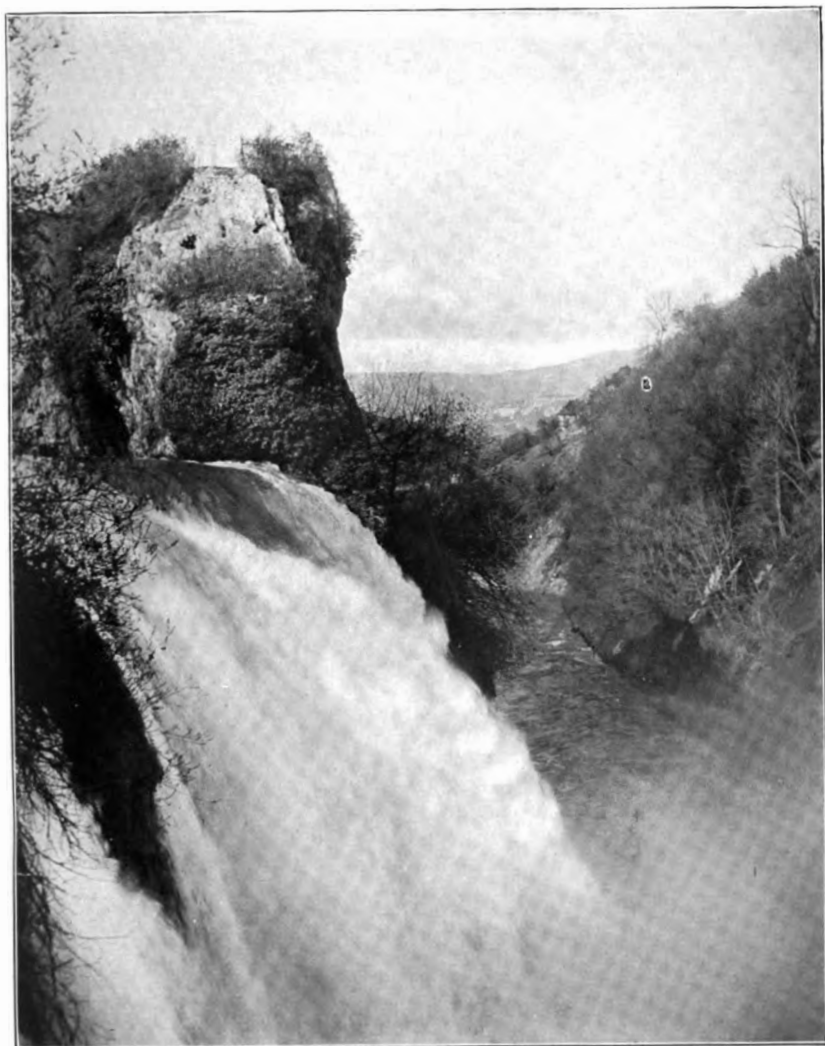
During the seven hours' drive (50 miles) to Jajce (pronounced Yaize) the almost level and perfectly kept road follows the long tranquil reaches of an emerald river through a series of once pathless ravines, separated by soft pastoral basins. The rock is limestone, the woods are mostly beech and fir. The mountains, green and gracious, are on the scale of those of the Gruyère in Canton Bern. At the halfway, beyond an open basin of fields and farmhouses, and under the shadow of a castled crag, a pleasant posthouse offers refreshment for man and beast. The defile continues for miles. White crags impend on the left; on their inaccessible ledges grow tall pines with rigid black horizontal branches. The climax is reached in the last gorge, where the river is fairly throttled between cliffs and the road burrows through a winding tunnel and then leaps to the further bank by a bold bridge—a scene worthy of any of the wildest defiles of the Italian Alps. Then by a sudden transition we find ourselves among green meadows and poplars, where an old pilgrimage church and a mosque stand side by side. The slopes soften, and as the valley bends westwards the old walls and castle, the Italian campanile and Turkish minarets, of Jajce rise in front of the after-glow, we drive through a mediæval gate and an Oriental bazaar and draw up at the door of a modern hotel.

Jajce fascinates all its visitors, and despite recent blemishes—the railroad and the hotel—retains an unique aspect. With Tivoli it has some points in common, but, unlike the Italian town, it stands, not on the verge of a plain, but on the slope of a green mountain-girt basin at the point where a side glen opens on the valley of the Urbas, and that stream has cut itself a deep bed. Its tributary, preserved from sudden floods by a series of lakes a few miles higher up, and thereby deprived of its erosive force, tumbles immediately under the hotel into the main stream from a much

higher level in a broad and most picturesque waterfall. The castle and walled town occupy a rocky ridge projecting from the fertile hillside above the confluence, so that the falling screen of waters forms a part of the background in every view from the opposite slopes. These, except where a wood of exotic pines has been mistakenly planted—the official landscape gardener's ideal in Bosnia is a wood of Christmas trees—are covered with fields, meadows, and copses, amongst which nestle numerous brown hamlets, mostly inhabited by Turks. The stream above the falls is curious and fascinating. Owing to the porousness of its limestone bed the channel has become a labyrinth of reefs over and under and round which the water cascades from one green pool to another. On the larger islets old tumble-down wooden mills find standing room, and willows gain everywhere a hold for their roots. The whole arrangement is fantastic and almost theatrical in its picturesque effect. The road to the lakes keeps company with this charming stream. They are two beautiful tarns enclosed in hills that may remind one of Cumberland, rich in fish and wildfowl, and at their farther end a large Turkish village and a romantically situated tea-house overhanging the water supply a goal for the afternoon drive from Jajce.

A direct railway connects Jajce with Sarajevo, but the traveller will do well to use it only as far as Bugojno, the head of a branch line, eventually to be extended to Spalato. Bugojno is an unattractive town in the centre of one of the flat, broad, hill-girt basins that are frequent in Bosnian scenery. On the next day it is the starting-point for the drive over the Maklan Pass (3,682 ft.), one of the finest roads in the country. It leads from Bosnia into Herzegovina, and crosses the watershed between the Adriatic and the Black Sea. The road climbs out of the Bugojno basin in one long zigzag up a narrow wooded glen in order to gain a high upland platform, the undulations of which are clothed in a broad cloak of beech forest. Here and there tall plane trees and maples suggest the East, and dark fir pyramids or the golden tints of autumn break the pervading verdure. The landscape is free from any prosaic human details. There are none of the signs of peasant proprietorship or communal ownership which meet the eye constantly in Alpine forests. Democracy as a rule is an enemy to romance in scenery as an owner as well as when it comes as a visitor.

For several miles the view was bounded by the steep banks enclosing the green waterless glades in which the road wound.



F. F. Tuckett photo.

Swan Electric Engraving Co., Ltd.

THE FALLS : JAICE.

Then, after passing a few open fields and cottages, it reached a brow from which the ground fell suddenly for some 2,000 ft. from my feet. The deep valley below was surrounded by craggy mountains; those close at hand were grey or ruddy, but the more distant heights borrowed the richest colours from the atmosphere. On the horizon 25 miles off the rocky crests of the Prenj Planina glowed like dark amethysts against a pale blue sky. This view must depend greatly on illumination: on the weather, and the time of the day; as I saw it, it was a most original and striking picture.

The descent began with an admirable but lengthy series of zigzags, which, seen from above, made the hillside look nothing but road. The drive to Jablanitzza is through highly picturesque defiles. That place is a station on the Sarajevo-Gravosa railway; it is also a summer station for the townspeople of torrid Mostar, and has a large hotel run by the Government.

After the attractive descriptions I had heard of it the place somewhat disappointed my expectations. The hotel is buried in an artificial pinewood, and the situation is low (650 ft.), while the mountains round are, at least in autumn, arid and scorched. During my visit sunless skies lent no lights and shadows to soften their asperity.

I have little doubt that in early summer the attractions of Jablanitzza as a climbing centre are far more obvious. The gorge in which it lies is cut to the depth of 7,000 ft. through the very heart of the Dinaric Alps, allowing the waters of the Narenta, the most considerable stream on this side of the Upper Adriatic, to escape to the sea. On the left the double line of peaks of the Prenj Planina rises to the height of 6,965 ft.; on the right stand the Plassa (6,890 ft.) and the Cvrstnica (7,306 ft.). Both are provided with paths and tourist huts, and guides and horses can be hired at the hotel. M. de Déchy had suggested to me that the Lupoglav, the highest tooth of the Prenj, which, as in the case of Pilatus, lies back at some distance from the view-point generally visited, might be still untouched, and I proposed to sleep at the hut and spend a day among the summits.

The ascent to the Prenj lies through a side glen which opens into the main valley three miles below Jablanitzza, so that if a train fits it is well to profit by it to the next station. A mile beyond this the path leaves the water at a small hamlet and climbs a steep hillside in interminable zigzags, exposed to the morning sun and without shade in the lower portion.

The tediousness of this part of the walk is repaid as soon as the crest of the first spur is reached. This spot, known as the Poldiruhe, commands a very fine view of the gorge of the Narenta and the surrounding ranges. The scenery has, I think mistakenly, been compared to that of the Dolomites. In Southern Tyrol the lower slopes are green and rounded; the peaks rise above them as huge, weird blocks or splintered pinnacles. In Herzegovina the mountain gorges and the lower slopes are torn and wild, but the summits are for the most part blunt. The region is now poor in streams, but it bears all the traces of tremendous water action in past ages. Nowhere have I seen glens cut back more deeply into the heart of a range than those on the N. and W. of the limestone plateau along the edge of which stand the Prenj summits. The cleverly contrived horse path henceforth climbs on the side of the buttress dividing two of these glens, making its way between a maze of cliffs by alternately scaling steep gullies and traversing precipitous forest slopes. It commands impressive glimpses into the ravines opposite. Strange caves indent the limestone precipices; pines grow on their jags. I know no landscape elsewhere so much in the style of *Salvator Rosa*.

A slight descent leads to a saddle connecting the spur with the main mass of the Prenj, and a walk through a fine beech forest leads to the tourist hut, which looks out over a wide brown pasture towards the Adriatic and the sunset. Soon after our arrival a mist drifted up and enveloped the hut, but when I walked up the zigzags for 40 mins. I rose above it and could see across the plateau, a limestone waste like that behind the *Aiguille de Varens* in Savoy, the more distant peaks of the *Lupoglav*. The sky was clear to the N., and there seemed a fair prospect for the morrow.

Two *gendarmes*, very quiet visitors, came in late and shared our shelter. Next morning the fog was thick, and it unfortunately hung on the peaks all day. I walked up through it to the summit, usually ascended in 1 hr. 40 min. But all I gained was a few momentary glimpses into the abysses, and it was useless to think of venturing beyond the path. In fine weather a climber should go up all the peaks, return to the track, and descend by it past another tourist hut to *Konjica*, a small town and railway station higher up on the *Sarajevo* line.*

* A description of the ascents of all the peaks of the Prenj will be found in the last edition of *Hartleben's Guide*. None offer difficulties to mountaineers.

The second excursion from Jablanitza is the ascent of the Plassa. It has a lake—the Blidinje See—3,880 ft. above sea level, not mentioned in the guide-books, but apparently deserving investigation. This mountain is said to produce abundant Edelweiss; but I did not see any specimens preserved at Jablanitza, and there is none on the Prenj. On the whole, the scenery round Jablanitza is the wildest I met with; the mountains are very precipitous, and in their upper portions naked and severe, while the forest region is striking. But I have no doubt M. de Déchy is right in thinking May and June, when there is a glitter of snow on the heads and a mantle of flowers on the shoulders of the mountains, the better time for a visit. Very good rock-scrambling could doubtless be found by a climber who neglected paths and invented 'new routes' up the steep mountain faces.

To describe in any detail Sarajevo, the capital of Bosnia, would be out of place here. It is a most attractive city. The Austrians have created an European quarter on the new quays of the Bosna. But they have spared the old eastern bazaar and the encircling ring of suburbs. The wooden brown-roofed Turkish houses embosomed in orchards remain almost untouched; a hundred minarets, white or brown, still vie with the tall poplars on the steep slopes which on three sides hem in the city.

Those who prefer quiet may stay at the luxurious Baths of Ilidze, which are built in a gay public garden, half an hour by tram from the town. They are a centre for numerous mountain excursions, detailed at length in the guide-book.

A considerable addition has been made to the attractions of Bosnia by the new railway which runs to the Turkish frontier, throwing out a branch to Visegrad and Servia. The line at present serves only for strategic purposes. But it is obviously in intention, and will probably before long be in fact, a link in a through line to Salonica and Athens. Few lines in Europe have had to encounter greater natural obstacles, or are more interesting both to the lover of landscape and the engineer. For over ninety miles (138 kilometres) it alternately pierces and bridges hitherto pathless gorges, or winds, by the aid of elaborate earthworks, over hills and through dales, where the superb primæval beech forests brought back to my memory those of the southern foothills of the Caucasus. Many illustrations and a full description of this 'Eastern Frontier Railway' are given in our guide-book. It is, however, a pity that the compiler who has added this route to the new edition has dealt with it so

much from an engineer's point of view. The ordinary tourist does not require to know the length of each tunnel, and would prefer pictures which showed less of the rails and more of the scenery they run through. Their gauge is 75 centimetres, that of the other Bosnian lines; and some idea of the character of the difficulties encountered may be got from the fact that (including the branch leading to the Servian frontier at Vardiste) there are ninety-nine tunnels of a combined length of 9 miles and thirty important iron bridges, besides the very heavy revetments necessary to hold up the loose slopes traversed.

The work was only completed in 1906. Those who travel on this romantic railroad, one of the most wonderful in Europe, will be slow to believe that it was made for the sake of tourists or local traffic. Nor will they be disposed to agree with the newspapers, which look on the proposal for its continuation through the Sanjak of Novi Bazar as a 'new departure' on the part of Austrian politicians.

The traveller who does not wish, as I did, to ride down the Montenegrin frontier to Ragusa has a choice of mountain roads by which to return to Sarajevo. Carriages are generally forthcoming in Bosnia.

From Gorasda, a station on the line, a road leads up the idyllic valley of the Drina, a deep, smooth-flowing stream, whose green waters linger in long, still reaches on their way to the distant Danube. The district is famous for its fruit gardens and orchards. My first object was Focha. This is an old Turkish town, once important as the spot where the caravan road from Constantinople to Ragusa entered the mountain passes. Its situation among meadows at the meeting of two rivers, laden with timber rafts, is most charming. Its principal mosque far surpasses in architecture and decoration any at Sarajevo. The minaret is of admirable proportions, the porch is of noble size, the stone-carving of the pulpit and gallery is exquisite, and the interior is painted with delicate designs resembling those of the best ancient Persian tiles and carpets.

At Focha the carriage road for the present ends, and the traveller wishing to ride along the Montenegrin frontier to the sea coast must hire horses. It is also the starting-point for two mountain ascents, that of Maglich (7,891 ft.), described in volume x. of this 'Journal' by M. de Déchy, and that of Dormitor (8,758 ft.), the highest mountain in this part of the Balkan peninsula, described by Mr. Cozens-Hardy.* The

* *Alpine Journal*, vol. xvii. p. 405.

latter mountain lies in Montenegro, two days' ride to the south, and it would be well to inquire if the district is safe before planning an ascent. A photograph of it, a double-crested limestone ridge, is given in the Guide-book. I had a distant glimpse of the summits from the last brow before descending to Gatchko.

That small town is two days' ride from Focha. The finest scenery on the route is found in the Sujeska Gorge, where wild crags and forests combine to frame the boldest and most picturesque of all the Bosnian defiles. Here the Guide-book falls into some errors. For the present, and until a new road has been made up the valley, the old paved Turkish caravan track, which cuts off a corner by crossing the hills, is the shorter in time as well as in distance (7 kilometres), and is more picturesque. A new bridge above Focha has already done away with the old ferry at Brod, and the road is shortly to be continued until it reaches Gatchko. The old path, now buried in woods, now emerging on scattered farms and open meadows, climbs and winds over steep hillsides, then crosses a brow commanding an extensive prospect, and finally drops suddenly to a bridge over the stream that flows from the flanks of Maglich. Here there is a Turkish coffee-house. Henceforth there are fine views of the higher ranges in front, and before long the gorge begins. Limestone gorges are apt to be very similar in their main features. The distinction of the Sujeska is due to the very rugged character of the rocks, which break into splintered combs and teeth against the sky-line, and the way in which they are wooded. Dark pines, with stiff horizontal branches, perch upon the ledges, and there is no lack of deciduous foliage to give beauty and variety to the landscape.

The blockhouse of Šuja, in which a good room is reserved for travellers, stands in a most romantic site in the very heart of the defile, where it expands for a space at the opening of a glen falling from Maglich. The mountains around are full of chamois, deer, bears, wolves, and eagles. The actual 'gate,' fortified in Turkish times, where on both sides the rocks touch the stream, is at the upper end of the gorge. At this point the track is carried for a few yards on a wooden balcony above the water.

I have, in the last volume, pointed out that we have here in all probability the rocks of 'Tabernich,' the identification of which has greatly troubled most of the commentators on Dante's 'Inferno.'

The Cemerno Pass (4,528 ft.), also occupied by an Austrian

fortress—there is a fort every five or ten miles along the whole Montenegrin frontier—is on a broad ridge overlooking to the E. pasturages, which feed many cows and sheep, to the W. the waterless undulations of the Herzegovina—a region where rocky reefs rise in endless succession, and there is more stone than grass. Gatchko, the first Herzegovinian townlet, lies in one of the broad level basins, girt by grey hills, characteristic of the Karst. It is a strange, monotonous country, with an air of the desert and the East about it, and, like the desert, capable of brilliant atmospheric effects.

A long day's drive and descent lead to Trebinje, an old fortress on either bank of a sheet of green water, half river and half lake, lying in the centre of a little plain of vineyards and orchards, hemmed in on all sides by steep, bare, strange-shaped hills. The landscape is weird; it has a curious air of individuality; it falls into no class; it is neither European nor Asiatic, though the sharp line between barrenness and the fertility caused by irrigation suggests the East and the desert.

Yet more striking, if less original, is the last descent to the Adriatic. Here we are brought into touch with Venice and Southern Italy. Ragusa itself, an unspoilt mediæval seaport, still enclosed in its gigantic fortifications, is one of the most interesting cities of Southern Europe.

A CLIMB IN THE MAMISON GROUP (CAUCASUS).

By DR. VITTORIO RONCHETTI, C.A.I.

THE traveller who, after leaving the Kasarma Kalaki,* mounts the carriage road leading towards the Mamison Pass (2,825 mètres), on reaching the point where the direction of the road suddenly turns from west almost due north, is compelled, even if not endowed with the feelings of a climber, to linger in admiration before the imposing view suddenly offered to his gaze.

In the background towers the double summit of the Tuilsas Mta, robed in its mantle of eternal snow, whilst the foreground is occupied by an uninterrupted series of lofty peaks. The crest which can be seen rising in a series of very bold spires from the bottom of the Tschantschachi valley displays, beyond

* This is the Kasarma, between Kalaki and Lisri on the Ardon side, and is not to be confused with the high Kasarma Kalaki, which Merzbacher's map shows on the Rion side, between Shkara and Glola.